

The following question was asked by Council as an RFI (response for information):

Q: Was Coleman Jewett considered?

A: The name Coleman Jewett was not considered. Mr. Jewett is already recognized at a City park - the Farmers Market - where two bronze Adirondack chairs and a commemorative plaque speak to his multiple contributions to the Ann Arbor community. Photos are attached.

Residents approached CM Grand and CM Ackerman about the prospect of renaming Winchell Park, after concerns were raised about Alexander Winchell, the parks namesake. Winchell was a University of Michigan professor of physics, civil engineering, geology and paleontology. A U of M committee reviewed Winchell's work and noted that "by both contemporary standards and even in the context of Winchell's day, his most notable work – the 1880 book titled, 'Preadamites, or a Demonstration of the Existence of Men before Adam' – was unambiguously racist and out of step with the university's own aspirations in those times."

This task of renaming Winchell Park became the assignment of a subcommittee of the Parks Advisory Commission (PAC). This subcommittee of PAC included staff, commission members, neighborhood and community residents, a member of the local NAACP chapter, and a staff person from the Office of Sustainability and Innovations. Individual committee members selected names for consideration and then the group voted on these initial candidates and selected six to put forth for public consideration. The subcommittee expressed an interest in selecting an individual who was not already commemorated on City of Ann Arbor property (an exception being Dr. Mosher, who has a residence hall named after her on the University Campus).

Voting started at the end of last week and will continue through August. Because Winchell is a neighborhood park, outreach was focused on residents within a ¼ mile of the park, consistent with how we promote a neighborhood park improvement meeting. Postcards were sent to all homes with a ¼ mile area of the park with information on the project, where to read biographies of the candidates, and how to vote. The park is also signed with this information, so users are aware of the project. People are directed to a web page that has information on the exceptional individuals and a link to the survey. Here's a link to the webpage: <https://www.a2gov.org/departments/Parks-Recreation/administrative/Pages/Park-Planning.aspx>



COLTMAN WAS AN ENORMOUS PRESENCE IN THE ANN ARBOR COMMUNITY. HE WAS A DIVERSE, EDUCATIONAL, RECREATIONAL, AND SOCIAL SERVICE. HE WAS A DISTINGUISHED SON OF ANN ARBOR AND DISTINGUISHED HIMSELF AS AN EDUCATOR, BELIEVED BY STUDENTS AND STAFF ALIKE. HE TAUGHT OFF-CAMPUS WITH KINDNESS, HUMOR, AND HARD WORK. A FAVORITE VENDOR AT THE ANN ARBOR FARMERS MARKET FOR FORTY YEARS, HE SAT IN CHAIRS LIKE THESE, AND WELCOMED RESPECTFUL CONVERSATION WITH STRANGERS AND FRIENDS OF ALL AGES, ETHNICITIES, AND CULTURES. WE INVITE YOU TO DO THE SAME.

APPRECIATION TO THE FAMILY, FRIENDS, CITIZENS, LOCAL BUSINESSES, AND ORGANIZATIONS FOR THEIR DONATIONS IN MAKING THIS COMMUNITY GIFT POSSIBLE.

IN MEMORY OF COLEMAN JEWETT
28 DECEMBER 1934 - 23 JANUARY 2013

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