

August 3, 2009

Mayor Bob Foster  
333 W. Ocean Blvd.  
14<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Long Beach, CA 90802

Re: Name change of Somerset Park to Chrissy Strong-Marshall Park

Dear Mayor Foster,

I have looked over the memorandums of Council Member Dee Andrews and Council Member Tonia Reyes Uranga and the final recommendations of the Parks and Recreation Committee regarding the renaming of the park located in the Bixby Terrace neighborhood. Somerset park is surrounded by the Bixby Highlands, Cerritos Park, Bixby Terrace, New Bixby and California Heights neighborhoods.

While reading the background of Chrissy Strong-Marshall I was strongly aware of her devotion and dedication to the children and young people of the Long Beach neighborhoods. I was drawn to the remarks about how she was always a strong advocate for youth and that responsibility to provide adequate space, activities, equipment, and leadership in a park environment. The sentence that best showed her passion follows verbatim.

“She fought hard for kids that lived in Long Beach to ensure that they had an opportunity to play on a youth sports team or simply had a safe place to do their homework after school.”

The previous statements give a lot of reason to doing something special in her memory, but to name a patch of property with curbs, grass, and trees in it falls short of doing her name justice.

As great of a gesture as it may seem, and as worthy as Ms. Marshall is, switching out a name on a sign will do nothing but confuse local people and travelers alike and not benefit any youth.

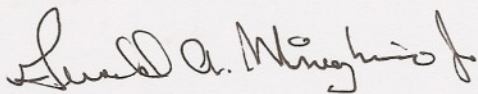
Why not name the youth facility for her and look for ways to fix it up. The community itself may want to be involved in that process. Why not demonstrate that her good works are not forgotten. Let's show that we still know what our kids deserve.

The name change for a park that people use as a point of reference will confuse directions for years to come. Map companies and the maps themselves will be unchanged for quite some time.

As currently proposed, the name change gives nothing to Chrissy Strong-Marshall's name except for an open space with run-down and poorly equipped youth facilities. This name change makes no sense at all.

As the president of the Bixby Highlands Neighborhood Improvement Association and as a part of this neighborhood, I urge you to consider other options for memorializing Ms. Marshall's dedication to our city's youth and park spaces.

Thank you,



Gerald A. Mineghino Jr.  
4301 Boyar Ave.  
Long Beach 90807

The views and opinions expressed are my own and not those of the Bixby Highlands Neighborhood Improvement Association, nor as a commissioner for the Long Beach Airport Advisory Commission.

CC: Members of the City Council  
Pat West, City Manager  
Phil Hester, Parks, Recreation, and Marine Director  
City Clerk