



Department of Human Service Programs

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TO: Richard C. Rossi, City Manager

FROM: Ellen Semonoff, Assistant City Manager

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RE: Response to Council Order concerning the feasibility of renaming the Area IV Youth Center the "Dr. Robert and Janet Moses Youth Center"

We asked the Director of Youth Programs, Mercedes Soto and the Director of the Area IV Youth Center Nicole Rodriguez to think about the possibility of the renaming of the Area IV Youth Center. We recognize that the decision to rename a Youth Center is a question for decision by the City Council. The leadership of our youth programs talked about the possibility of the renaming with current and many former staff and alumni of the Youth Center. They would welcome and support renaming the Area IV Youth Center in honor of Drs. Robert and Janet Moses. Many former staff and youth center alumni benefitted directly from mentorship and participation in the Algebra Project.

Although current members may not know the history of the contributions of the Moses family, they continue to benefit from their participation in the Young People's Project (YPP), which grew out of the Algebra Project. It would benefit current and future youth center members to learn about the many contributions of these two Cambridge community leaders.

For the past few years, the Area IV Teens have organized a community-wide Black History Month Celebration, which has included speakers who participated in the Civil Rights Movement and who experienced Jim Crow segregation as youth. If appropriate, we would invite Drs. Robert and Janet Moses to be guest speakers at the event this February to commemorate their contributions and announce the renaming of the youth center.

Our youth could work with staff to create a visual timeline which could be posted in the center so that future members could learn about the contributions of Drs. Robert and Janet Moses to the Civil Rights Movement, SNCC, anti-war movement, Dr. Robert Moses' MacArthur Genius Award Fellowship, the founding of the Algebra Project and the founding of the Young People's Project.

We enthusiastically welcome the opportunity to contribute to determining the timeline for planning and execution of these and other activities related to renaming the Area IV Youth Center in honor of Drs. Robert and Janet Moses for serving as role models to countless young men and women across the country and in the City of Cambridge.