

## ARGUMENT FOR THE NAME CHANGE, FROM RENAME ST\*PLETON FOR ALL:

To residents, we are your neighbors; to businesses, we are your customers; to schools, we are your students and the parents of your students. We want you to know that we did not initiate this “referendum” process, as we believe that more community engagement on the issue should occur before members or delegates vote. However, since you are being asked, **we ask you to vote: (1) FOR renaming our community to something we can be proud of, (2) AGAINST a special assessment, (3) AGAINST an amendment to change this renaming process.**

Here are the facts: Our community takes its name from the former airport that honored Denver Mayor Benjamin F. Stapleton, Member #1128 of the Ku Klux Klan. In the 1920s, there were over 35,000 members statewide; half were in Denver. The electoral power of the KKK controlled politicians, and the Klan terrorized Jews, Catholics, African Americans, Hispanics, and others. Members drove around on Friday nights insulting Jews in the West Colfax area, and they boycotted Jewish businesses. African American homes were firebombed without redress. Irish and Italians, especially teachers, were discriminated against as “papists.” In 1923, when critics learned Stapleton was a Klansman, a recall election occurred. To ensure Klan support, Stapleton promised: “I will work with the Klan and for the Klan in the coming election. And if I am re-elected, I shall give the Klan the kind of administration it wants.” Stapleton survived recall and appointed Klansmen to significant city positions.

Contrary to what some claim about Benjamin Stapleton, Professor Robert Goldberg, author of *Hooded Empire, The Ku Klux Klan in Colorado*, has recently stated: “**Stapleton never ‘publicly split’ from the Klan. He did not fire all of the Klan members in his administration—only those loyal to John Galen Locke [then the Colorado KKK Grand Dragon]. I never found a public apology or statement of regret from Ben Stapleton regarding his membership in the Klan nor his willingness to allow Klan members in his administration to administer Hooded justice or policy. I found no amends, significant or otherwise.**”

In 2001, people of color and their allies began to explain how personally hurtful it is that the place where their families live continues to honor a Klansman through its name. Local organizations have dropped the name, and most recently, in May, DSST removed the name from its school and renamed itself DSST Montview. **Let’s build on their work, begun by our neighbors and continued by our children: to make a principled decision about whom we honor with our community name.** For more information, visit [www.renameforall.com](http://www.renameforall.com).

Additionally, we OPPOSE a special assessment for “rebranding.” The \$300,000 figure was the result of a single company’s informal estimate, without competitive bidding. Other options should be explored: grants, MCA budget surplus, or a contribution by Forest City Stapleton/Brookfield, which itself has rebranded, moving away from the use of “Stapleton” to “80238: 12 Neighborhoods Strong.” However, even if a special assessment were used, the cost per unit would only be approximately \$43. Although businesses using the name Stapleton would not be required to change their names, if they want to do so, there should also be funds available for their assistance. We also OPPOSE the proposed amendment to the Declaration because it would dilute the voting power of residents and amplify the voting power of commercial owners on the name change issue.