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Community Mourns The Loss Of Former Seattle City Councilman Richard McIver



Richard McIver

Former Seattle City Councilman Richard McIver, 71, died Saturday night at Swedish Medical Center in Seattle.

McIver, known for speaking his mind and speaking up for under-represented communities, was selected from 114 applicants to fill a vacancy on the Council in January 1997. He was elected to the position that fall, and was re-elected in 2001 and 2005. In 2009, McIver retired from the City Council as he chose not to run for re-election.

McIver, a fifth generation Seattleite, was born to Mildred Artis-McIver and Willaim McIver, II on June 14, 1941. He graduated from Garfield High School in 1959, and received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Western Washington University.

Richard spent most of his career in neighborhood housing advocating for rejuvenation for the unrepresented poor community. Prior to his appointment to the City Council, McIver worked for the Washington Association of Community Economic Development and Tacoma Housing Authority.

During his tenure on the City Council, McIver chaired the Council's Housing & Economic Development Committee; chaired the Council's Budget & Finance Committee from 2004 - 2007; served on the Puget Sound Regional Council's Economic Development and Operations Committee; and served on a host of other city and regional committees.

During the World Trade Organization (WTO) protest in 1999, McIver was driving to a World Trade Organization (WTO) event when was stopped by a Seattle Police Officer who did not recognize him. The officer did not believe McIver was a public official and made his stand spread-eagle against his car while the officer frisked and almost arrested McIver.

Undoubtedly, the Seattle Police (SPD) WTO abuse incident was a very low point in McIver's political career, however, the well-respected, low-key City Councilman used this unfortunate incident as a teaching tool and opportunity to rein in the Seattle Police Department abusive tactics against Black and other minority citizens.

McIver was also instrumental in the establishment of the Rainier Valley Community Development Fund, which was established to help small businesses in Rainier Valley that were impacted light rail construction. McIver served as executive director of the organization after he retired from the Council.

As of press time, the cause of McIver's death was not known. However, he had been battling health issues for some time. McIver, who most recently suffered a stroke, had reportedly regained his ability to walk after three years of rehabilitation.

McIver leave to cherish his loving memory; wife Marlaina Kiner-McIver, daughter Mimi, grandson Michael (Texas), a niece Lisa, Seattle, a host of relatives and other extend family, friends and thousands of political constituents. He was preceded in death by his parents Mildred and William McIver, Jr. and Brother Williams "Billy" McIver III, and an his Uncle, famed civil right attorney, James "Jim" McIver.

Funeral arrangements are pending. Tune into the Z-Twins radio stations (1420 KRIZ, 1560 KZIZ & 1620 KYIZ) for more information as it is released by the family.

Racially Insensitive Game Finds New Home On Amazon

By Chris B. Bennett
Co-publisher/editor

Ghettopoly - a racially insensitive game modeled after the popular monopoly board game - is stirring up controversy once again. The game, which uses stereotypes often related to African Americans as the butt of its humor, was removed from the shelves from Urban Outfitters in 2003 after a nationwide protest by the NAACP that ultimately led to the game being barred from sale in the United States after Hasbro, makers of the game monopoly, sued the inventor of the game, David Chang, for copyright infringement.

According to Kathy Carpano, a spokesperson for Hasbro, "the company was successful in obtaining a default judgment against Mr. Chang and in June of 2006, the Court issued a permanent injunction against the Ghettopoly game and Hasbro was awarded both damages and costs."

However, despite the permanent injunction, the game, which features a pimp, a hoe, a 40-ounce bottle, a machine gun (oozie), a marijuana leaf, a basketball and a piece of crack as game pieces, is once again available for sale - most notably through Seattle-based, online retail giant Amazon at a premium price of \$114.99.

The game's official website automatically re-directs visitors to the page where the product is sold on the Amazon website.

According to a domain registration search, the domain is registered under Ghetto Poly Inc. The domain registration was last updated in August 2013, and lists Chang as both the administrative and technical contact.

In a 2003 interview with The Seattle Medium Chang, who emigrated at age eight from Taiwan with his family, said he views the game as humorous and not degrading.

"Ghettopoly is controversial because its both fun and real life," Chang told The Medium. "The graphics on the board depict every race in the country and both genders. It draws on stereotypes not as a means to degrade, but as a medium to bring together in laughter. If we can't laugh at ourselves and how we each utilize the various stereotypes, then we'll continue

City Council Committee To Host Public Hearing For Community Police Commission Appointees

Seattle City Councilmember Bruce Harrell, chair of the Council's Public Safety, Civil Rights and Technology Committee, will convene a special committee meeting on Weds., Mar. 13 at 5:30 p.m. to consider legislation to move forward on the implementation of the Settlement Agreement with the Department of Justice (DOJ). The meeting will be held the Council Chambers located on the second floor of Seattle City Hall - 600 Fourth Avenue.



Hasbro, the makers of Monopoly, received a permanent injunction against the ghettopoly board game in 2006. Yet, despite the injunction, the game is still available for sale in the United States. Inset Picture: One of the game's 'Ghetto Stash' cards is the equivalent to Monopoly's Community Chest cards.

to live in blame and bitterness."

According to a press release promoting the game, Chang did his market research by watching MTV and studying the lyrics of rap and hip-hop music, and video games provided him insight into the culture of the ghetto allowing him to come up with the names of the properties of the game in just a few hours.

Chang doesn't feel that the game depicts any single group, rather that it pokes fun at everything associated with the ghetto.

"The playing of the game is not to offend people, that's not my intention," stated Chang. "It's a satire. If they can't see that there is nothing I can do about that. I'm not here to convince them otherwise."

However, many African American leaders found the game to be offensive as it allows players to buy crack houses and projects instead of houses and hotels. Property names include: Ray Ray's Chicken and Ribs, Harlem, Busta Rap Recording, Malcolm X Ave., Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. and Hernando's Chop Shop. In addition, instead of having railroads like the original monopoly games, players can purchase liquor stores. One of the Ghetto Stash cards (equivalent to Monopoly's Community Chest cards) reads: "You got yo whole neighborhood addicted to crack. Collect \$50 from each player."

Carl Mack, former president of the Seattle/King County NAACP, did not find the game funny or amusing.

"Everything about the game is degrading," said Mack during an interview with The Medium in 2003. "It promotes every insensitive and racial stereotype that America has been in the forefront of creating with Black folks."

Mack and a former member of the NAACP, Eric Dawson, were the catalyst of the 2003 nationwide protest of the game when they went into the Downtown Seattle Urban Outfitters store and demanded that they game be taken off the shelf.

The recent discovery that the game is once again available for sale, has many in the African American community questioning the availability of the game through a retailer like Amazon.

The Medium contacted Amazon regarding the sale of the game on their website. According to Amazon's website, 'listings for items that Amazon deems offensive are prohibited on Amazon.com. Amazon reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of listings on its site, and remove any listing at any time.' Examples of prohibited listings include, 'Products that promote or glorify hatred, violence, racial, sexual or religious intolerance or promote

organizations with such views.'

When asked by The Medium, if this game [Ghettopoly] would fall under this category? And if so, why is it allowed to be sold on amazon.com. Amazon responded by saying, "Amazon will not be releasing comment."

"All that this is, is another example of a company that is willing to make money off a product regardless of the racial indignity or racial insensitivity of that product," said Mack of Amazon's response. "Amazon is just as guilty as he is [David Chang]. If they know about it and don't do a thing about it then they are just as racially insensitive as this guy, David Chang, is."

"Here is their policy about racial insensitive material," Continued Mack. "Given their policy, they still don't appear to have a problem with selling this [game]. In our minds they don't value diversity, and they certainly don't value the dignity of Black folks as clients."

As of press time, six days after being contacted, Amazon still has the game available for sale on their website.

"It appears to me, that they [Amazon] will not do the right thing until they are forced to do the right thing, and that is something that we should always remember," said Mack.

Seattle's diverse population and are in a position to impartially review and make recommendations on policies related to use of force and biased policing.

The appointments are: Claudia D'Allegri, Sea Mar Community Health Centers, Vice President of Behavioral Health; Lisa Dagaard, Co-chair, Defender Association, Deputy Director; Kate Joncas, Downtown Seattle Association, President and CEO; Bill Hobson, Downtown Emergency

Services Center, Executive Director; Jay Hollingsworth, John T. Williams Organizing Committee; Joseph Kessler, Seattle Police Department, Captain; Diane Narasaki, Co-chair, Asian Counseling & Referral Service, Executive Director; John Page, Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion, Program Coordinator at the Defender Association's Racial Disparity Project; Tina Podlodowski, former Seattle (Cont'd. On Page 2)