

RENAMING OF MONETA AVENUE TO RIZAL AVENUE

Fil-Ams' proposal meets opposition from different ethnicities in Carson

by RENE VILLAROMAN
AJPress

CARSON – A resolution filed by Council Member Elita Santarina to rename Moneta Avenue to Jose Rizal Avenue has met with opposition from its ethnically diverse communities. Speaker after speaker, representing the black, Latino, Pacific Islanders and Anglo constituencies of the city, came forward during Tuesday's council meeting at City Hall to express their opposition to the resolution. They declared that the resolution would entail unnecessary disbursement of city funds,

as well as result in a bureaucratic nightmare, involving thousands of name changes on resident and business addresses, licenses, and other legal documents.

Fe Koons, a community activist, delivered the opening salvo in what would turn out as a contentious hearing on the pros and cons of the street-renaming proposal. "This is not an issue of streets and avenues," Koons told the city council. "If you are aware of the history of the Philippines, Jose Rizal is a great national hero – not even national – Asian, international," Koons said.

"He has monuments in Germany, Cuba, (and) here in San Francisco. It's all around the world." Koons said Jose Rizal's writings, specifically *El Filibusterismo* and *Noli Me Tangere* have inspired many leaders, including Philip Vera Cruz and Cesar Chavez, founders of the United Farm Workers. Koons stated that Rizal's stature as a national hero has parallels in Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King, and Mahatma Gandhi.

Koons told the council that the 30,000 Fil-Ams residing in Carson is an important component of the city. "Our heroes, you need to understand, are

not basketball stars; they are not music icons... They are not golf players, tennis players. They are real heroes, like the World War II veterans who fought for freedom," Koons said. She said that Jose Rizal needed the honor and tribute at this time.

Following Koons' five-minute speech, other residents, some of whom live along Moneta Avenue, spoke before the council, citing the reasons why they opposed the resolution. "What's the need for spending this kind of money to name a street

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