

Our View

We believe that **Volunteer Park** is the best choice based upon the fact that this park is the product of a unique and very important process: citizens standing together to make their City government do the right thing in the face of significant opposition by their own Mayor and City Council and other powerful parties. We hope our new Mayor and Council will agree.

This park at Pine Meadow was one of the most significant citizen actions in Martinez history. That land had been designated open space in 1973. When, 40 years later, Mayor Schroder and the City Council voted to change that to housing ---the third time the Council had voted to change open space to housing--- citizens fought back to get at least some public benefit from converting open space. Over six years of effort, three lawsuits, a referendum and an initiative, the citizens worked and worked and worked to correct the Council's decision.

And that's why we have this park today.

Especially in these current times when democracy is under attack throughout our nation, it is critical to let everyone know that democracy works, that citizens can change their government's decisions and overcome a bad decision and make it right.

We believe the naming of this park should memorialize that effort and that cornerstone of our democracy. Democracy in action is truly an empowering and inspiring event that we should continually be reminded of...especially in today's political environment.

So we support the name of **Volunteer Park** in honor of those approximately 300 citizens who worked so hard to make a wrong right. The name will make people ask what it means, which is the first step to their learning this important story...and maybe becoming volunteers themselves someday!