Removing Racially Restrictive Language from Your Property
Monday, September 16, 7:00 PM
Our Lady of the Lake Church Jubilee Hall
8900 35th Ave NE, Seattle, WA
(Presentation: 7:00 – 8:00 PM – Work session: 8:00 – 9:00 PM)

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THIS SESSION

BACKGROUND

During the period when Seattle expanded northward, adding language of racial exclusion and segregation within property records was fairly common. Entire sections of our neighborhood were sold with restrictions such as:

No person of a race other than the White or Caucasian race
shall use or occupy any building or any lot,
except that this covenant shall not prevent occupancy
by domestic servants of a different race domiciled with an owner or tenant.

Decades ago, the US Supreme Court rendered such covenants to be unenforceable, but eliminating them altogether is possible and is a means of recognizing the "systemic racism" that continues to exist in our society, and an expression of solidarity with those who are committed to eliminate it.

SEPTEMBER 16 SESSION

On September 16 session, volunteers from ***The Racially Restricted Covenants Project at UW*** *will come to help us understand more about this and help us through the process of removing these covenants. They will present the history of these covenants, and then talk individuals and businesses through the legal process to remove such language from our individual properties. They will help us find the covenants pertaining to our properties (if any) and walk us through filling out the simple form.*

The event is open to all, but aimed at those whose addresses are part of restricted subdivisions, such as Wedgwood Addition and Balch's Wedgwood Park. The project leaders have the most information about the Wedgwood area. Areas in Sandpoint, View Ridge, Inverness and Matthews Beach are known to have such covenants too. Jubilee Hall has WiFi. ***If you have a laptop, you may wish to bring it.***

Here is a link to the Racial Restrictive Covenants Project maps of currently researched restricted properties in King County, including many in Wedgwood:
https://depts.washington.edu/civilr/covenants.htm
The research is ongoing and, at this time, incomplete.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO TAKE ACTION THIS EVENING

(Remember that you can attend just for information and assistance in finding more information about your property.)

To complete the paperwork, you will need to fill out this form with the following information:

- ***LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY (you can find this through King County Parcel Viewer)***
- ***TAX PARCEL NUMBER (also through the King County Parcel Viewer)***

The paperwork is relatively simple, and help will be given to anyone who needs it. It does need to be notarized before being mailed to the State, so Home Street Bank will be generously providing a notary on-site during the meeting, to notarize our forms free of charge. For notarizing, everyone who's named on the deed will need to be present, with a valid ID. With all of the above, many of us will leave the event ready to mail the documents to the State which will then remove these covenants from our properties forever.

If you are not able to complete the paperwork that night. Home Street Bank will, for a limited time, offer free Notary services for this paperwork. Call ahead to schedule.

There is no fee to file the document.
Forms will be available that evening.
You can also print and bring the form to expedite the process.

FURTHER RESOURCES

If you cannot attend the evening session, here is the link to a King County Guide on how to prepare and record a restrictive covenant modification document: https://kingcounty.gov/en/legacy/depts/records-licensing/recorders-office/discriminatory-restrictive-covenants/how-to-prepare-and-record-a-modification

You may also be interested in listening to the NPR 7-minute segment entitled: Racial covenants, a relic of the past, are still on the books across the country. https://www.npr.org/2021/11/17/1049052531/racial-covenants-housing-discrimination

Our thanks to:

- ***The Racially Restricted Covenants Project at UW***
- ***Wedgwood Community Council***
- ***Our Lady of the Lake Church***
- ***Home Street Bank (Wedgwood Branch)***