

First impression I didn't like it. (I didn't hate it either) about the first viewing did not show colors well

After listening to the presentation, and viewing the "Peoples Flag" in its true colors I was impressed with their process. *Perfect? No. but very good.*

I am satisfied with both the number of schools and diversity of contest contacts.

I was impressed with their outreach to students of all ages, with a 'professional' to teach in small groups

I was impressed with the quantity of designs submitted. Even though most were "armature" there were good ideas presented

I felt the judging was fair with professional oversight

I love that it is NOT copyrighted, and that anyone can use it wholly or in part without consequences.

My biggest objection is the name. "Peoples Flag". I accepted their explanation, and felt this was transparent and appropriate as a "work in progress title"

I think we also need to address that it's "been out there" for several years now, and growing in popularity. If we reject it, will it make a difference?

My feeling is to accept, endorse and change the name.

My conversion came from the Peoples Flag committee's detailed explanation that allayed my fear that the selection was too narrow, too 'unprofessional' and not diverse.

I also discovered that my first choice....the "M-Star" while an instant grabber, did not have staying power over a few days, while the sunrise flag grew to become a favorite. This has happened to me many times with artworks I've had in my gallery.

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I would propose that the MAB reach out to the PEOPLE of Milwaukee and see what their views are. We might be overthinking this process if we learn that the majority of people, that care to respond, love the Sunrise Over The Lake flag. But we might learn that residents don't care for it. I believe that we should seek out input from our city's residents instead of being the "experts" and fixing something that might not be broken.

A proposed one-week survey via local television outlets, radio, all community papers, as well as social media sites to see what the community response is. This could demonstrate the support or lack of interest in the new flag design. It would show the general interest in this subject. (e.g., did people care enough to cast a vote)

It would also be a means to hear from the residents of the City if they have issue with the image, the way the People's Flag process was conducted, inclusion issues, and other elements important to them.

As good stewards of City funds, I suggest that it is our duty to explore more into this topic before deciding on a new design and plans to implement it.

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From Resolution 180339:

“Whereas, Any process to design and adopt a new flag must include input from the entire community through an open, transparent, and inclusive process that includes public hearings open to all segments of the community; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, By the Common Council of the City of Milwaukee, that the Arts Board shall develop a process to determine whether a new flag is necessary; and, be it

Further Resolved, That if the Arts Board determines a new flag is necessary, the Arts Board is directed to establish and implement a process for the consideration, review, and possible recommendation of one or more designs for a new official City flag; and be it

Further Resolved, That if the Arts Board determines a new flag is necessary, it shall develop estimates of the cost to fully implement the adoption of a new flag.”

The Official City Flag Subcommittee (Subcommittee) developed a process to determine whether a new flag is necessary, i.e. the review of voluminous extant articles, books, lectures, City meeting records, social media commentary, etc. as well as the current municipal flag itself.

The Subcommittee further determined that a new municipal flag is indeed necessary based on the clear local interest in a new flag, the national trend for redesign of municipal flags, and the current municipal flag itself, which contains antiquated elements and at least one element that is considered racially insensitive.

The City Legislative Reference Bureau developed estimates of cost on behalf of the Arts Board.

The Arts Board is left with the resolution’s mandate to establish and implement a process for developing designs for a new flag, where said process is open, transparent, and inclusive and affords public hearings for and input from the entire community.

The efforts of the People’s Flag of Milwaukee Initiative and Greater Together were well-intentioned. However, representatives of People’s Flag/Greater Together conceded themselves that they were volunteering their time and are not experts in community engagement to the degree to which the City is accustomed. Yes, People’s Flag/Greater Together cast a wide net to promote the design competition, e.g. traditional media, social media, design workshops, partnering with schools and social service organizations, etc. However, there were significant limitations, e.g. English-only materials and website, no outreach to various segments of the community (elderly, LGBTQ, persons with disabilities, etc.), no demographic information collected, Internet/social media driven, etc. The resulting community participation and support might skew young, technology-rich, and business/professional and not truly reflect the entire City community.

Every design competition is inherently limited by the criteria used to judge the designs. However, the People’s Flag/Greater Together design competition was particularly so. The five design principles identified in *Good Flag, Bad Flag* by Ted Kaye were adopted as criteria for submissions, and the panel of judges included Mr. Kaye himself and Steve Kodis, an admitted proponent of Mr. Kaye. This may have resulted in limited design creativity, a sameness to the entries, and a self-fulfilling prophecy of the finalists and ultimate winner.

Notwithstanding the shortcomings the People’s Flag/Greater Together process and resulting designs, representatives of People’s Flag/Greater Together rightly pointed out that their efforts had a large exposure and resulted in far more entries than previous competitions. And, yet, there has been a significant

amount of criticism from alderpersons and the public that the process was not inclusive and that the winning design is poor and does not represent the entire City.

Given the above and given the desire of some alderpersons to act quickly on this matter, there are at least a few options that the Arts Board could propose for a process to develop designs for a new flag. Selection of a process could be based on balancing time/effort against transparency/inclusivity.

1. Revise the current municipal flag, primarily to remove the racially insensitive element but also to reconsider antiquated elements and otherwise “clean up” the design. This could be done in-house or by contracting a design firm (pursuant to a public procurement). A public comment period (including public hearings) should be established for input from the community before a design is finalized and adopted.
2. Adopt the City logo (image of City Hall with “City of Milwaukee”), City mark (image of Calatrava addition to the Milwaukee Art Museum with “Milwaukee”), City seal, or other City image as the municipal flag. A public comment period should be established.
3. Adopt the People’s Flag/Greater Together competition, in whole or in part, as a de facto public RFP, if it is determined that the process and resulting designs meet at least minimum standards of transparency/inclusivity. It could be as simple as adopting the winning entry. However, although the People’s Flag/Greater Together competition resulted in a clear winner, there is no obligation to accept that winner as the design to be adopted. The field could be opened back up to the 5 finalists or some other portion of the 1,000+ entries (e.g. the 50 semi-finalists), in which a public comment period should be established. A panel of judges should then be appointed by the City to represent all segments of the community. Selection of a winner could be by the panel and/or public rating. The winning entry may very well be the same as the original winner of the People’s Flag/Greater Together competition, but we would have afforded an official opportunity for public input so that the Common Council can make an informed decision when voting on a resolution for adoption.
4. Start all over with a new RFP issued by the City. This could include a provision to “grandfather” in the designs from the People’s Flag/Greater Together competition (whether all 1,000 + entries or the 5 finalists or something in between, to be determined) as well a call for new entries. Again, a public comment period should be established. A panel of judges should be appointed by the City to represent all segments of the community. Selection of a winner could be by the panel and/or public rating.