

MEETING NOTES

Charlottesville Historic Resources Committee^[1]_{SEP}
Friday, December 11, 2020; 11:00 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Remote meeting via Zoom

HRC Members Present

Rachel Lloyd, Chair
Phil Varner, Co-vice-chair
Sally Duncan, Co-vice-chair
Genevieve Keller
Alissa Diamond
Jalane Schmidt
Heather Hill
Margaret O'Bryant
Ellen Wagner
Dede Smith
William Clay III
Jordy Yager

City Staff Present

Jeff Werner
Robert Watkins

1. Call to order:

11:00 AM: Rachel Lloyd calls the meeting to order. Committee members and staff introduce themselves.

Lloyd opens the floor up for public comment:

James Hingeley speaks in support of Gregory Swanson Way designation.

2. Approval of the agenda:

Dede Smith moves to approve meeting agenda.

William Clay III seconds motion. Motion passes (11-0, Alissa Diamond not yet arrived).

3. Approval of meeting notes:

Smith moves to approve November 2020 HRC Meeting Notes, with addendum about proposed naming committee.

Phil Varner seconds motion. Motion passes (11-0, Diamond not yet arrived).

4. Continuation of Honorary Street Names Policy Work Session:

Committee resumes street names policy review from November meeting.

Varner suggests additional street names policy recommendation that Council shouldn't be limited by a specific set of criteria, and should be free to designate street names even if they don't fit a person or event criterion exactly.

Genevieve Keller acknowledges limitations in terms of numbers of characters on street signs.

Keller asks that numbered streets be preferenced for naming.

Jordy Yager clarifies naming committee proposal, which would mainly be tasked with honorary street names.

Clay proposes a mechanism on the number of street names in specific parts of town.

Keller recommends that review of applications be biannual, and that the City consider other naming opportunities beyond streets.

Committee moves on to review received applications. After discussion, the HRC determined the following recommendations to be sent to Council:

The Historic Resources Committee recommends City Council approve the following naming requests:

1. *Black History Pathway on 4th Street NW between West Main Street and Preston Avenue*
2. *Henry Martin Way on 10th Street NW between West Street and Grady Avenue*
3. *Gregory Swanson Way on 3rd Street NE between East High Street and East Main Street (please note: the Historic Resources Committee suggests that this designation be temporary until such time as the state can mark the location of this historically significant court case with a permanent state marker).*
4. *Via Poggio a Caiano (please note: the Historic Resources Committee suggests that the applicant/city identify a different street for the honorary name than the ones listed in the application, perhaps closer to the streets named for other sister cities)*
5. *Byers Snookie Way on 10th Street NW between Preston Avenue and Henry Avenue*

Applications for the following were not recommended for approval:

1. *The proposed Vinegar Hill Way conflicted with the proposed location of Black History Way, which had significant community support*
2. *The proposed Tony Bennet Way and Tony Bennett Drive were not recommended due to the previous substantial national and community recognition of the individual and the committee's understanding that at least one of the streets noted for honorary naming is only partially located within the city limits*
3. *The proposed honorary names for Wilfred Franklin "88 Keys" Wilson, Jr. and Theodore Gilbert, both musicians, were not recommended because no streets were identified in the applications and because the committee suggests that places associated with music, such as school music rooms or auditoriums, may be more appropriate locations for honoring these individuals*
4. *The proposed Waneeshee Way (for indigenous people) was not recommended due to the apparent lack of engagement with the Monacan Nation and due to the apparent discrepancy between the language of the proposed term and the local language traditionally and historically spoken by Monacan people*
6. Update on Mellon Foundation Monuments Project:
Jalane Schmidt updates HRC on Mellon Foundation Monuments Project. Jalane, representing the HRC, is co-applying for a grant along with Siri Russell, the Lewis and Clark Center, and Andrea Douglas.

The team plans to complete a draft application by the end of January.

7. Review and revise HRC Communication Protocols: [12:45, 10 minutes]
Committee discusses communication protocols. Determine that email quorum is appropriate to support out-of-meeting committee communications. Any member can respond in personal capacity, as long as they acknowledge it as such.



610 East Market Street, Charlottesville, Virginia 22902

December 16, 2020

Ms. Nikuyah Walker, Mayor
City of Charlottesville
610 East Market Street
Charlottesville, Virginia 22902

RE: Honorary Street Designations, Policy and Applications

Dear Mayor Walker:

City Council voted at its September 21 meeting to refer the Honorary Street Designation process to the Historic Resources Committee for further review. Council directed the Historic Resources Committee to review both the policy and the remaining applications. This task is consistent with the committee's purpose: to promote an appreciation and interpretation of local historic resources, both tangible and intangible.

The Historic Resources Committee undertook the review process during its November 13 and December 11 meetings. The following attached notes provide the results of the review process and the related supporting background material.

1. Policy review recommendations
2. Application review recommendations
3. Other related recommendations
4. Links to meeting records

Representatives of the Historic Resources Commission are available to City Council to provide additional clarification if desired. If you have any questions, please contact me at (434) 284-0136 or rwelloyd@gmail.com.

Sincerely yours,

Rachel Lloyd
Chair

Attachment 1 / Policy Review Recommendations

The Historic Resources Committee advises City Council to consider the following updates for the Honorary Street Names policy:

In general

The Historic Resources Committee recommends that City Council retain broad purview in the review and approval process for honorary street naming.

In addition

1. Encourage nominations for a wide range of street name honorees, ideally associated with specific local historic resources on or near the street chosen for honorary naming
2. Provide options for temporary (perhaps 1-5 years) or permanent honorary street names, as specified by the applicant
3. Provide a flexible approach to the named street segment length—to be requested by the applicant but biased somewhat towards shorter street segments (for example: one block rather than a long multi-block street)
4. Create a mechanism to encourage greater geographical distribution of the honorary street names
5. Encourage applicants to consult with the nominee's family members/descendants before applying
6. Request 2-3 letters of support for each nomination; supporting letters may be from residents of the street or other interested parties
7. Consider limiting the honorary street names to numbered streets
8. Consider limiting the number of designees per application cycle, perhaps every two years
9. Provide information about the signs so applicants understand their technical design constraints and future appearance (for example, they will be the standard brown street sign with a limited number of text characters)
10. Improve the application to make it easier to fill out, substituting a set of simple short questions for the longer nomination essay
11. Do not require an application fee
12. Consider undertaking an annual review of honorary street names

Attachment 2 / Application Review Recommendations

The Historic Resources Committee reviewed the applications based on the information provided in each document; their conformance to the intent of the policy and the application requirements; and further guidance described in the preceding attachment.

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2. **Henry Martin Way** on 10th Street NW between West Street and Grady Avenue
3. **Gregory Swanson Way** on 3rd Street NE between East High Street and East Main Street (please note: the Historic Resources Committee suggests that this designation be temporary until such time as the state can mark the location of this historically significant court case with a permanent state marker; please see *Attachment 3* for additional information)
4. **Via Poggio a Caiano** (please note: the Historic Resources Committee suggests that the applicant/city identify a different street for the honorary name than the ones listed in the application, perhaps closer to the streets named for other sister cities)
5. **Byers Snookie Way** on 10th Street NW between Preston Avenue and Henry Avenue

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- The proposed *Tony Bennett Way* and *Tony Bennett Drive* were not recommended due to the previous substantial national and community recognition of the individual and the committee's understanding that at least one of the streets noted for honorary naming is only partially located within the city limits
- The proposed honorary names for *Wilfred Franklin "88 Keys" Wilson, Jr.* and *Theodore Gilbert*, both musicians, were not recommended because no streets were identified in the applications and because the committee suggests that places associated with music, such as school music rooms or auditoriums, may be more appropriate locations for honoring these individuals
- The proposed *Waneeshee Way* (for indigenous people) was not recommended due to the apparent lack of engagement with the Monacan Nation and due to the apparent discrepancy between the language of the proposed term and the local language traditionally and historically spoken by Monacan people

Attachment 3 / Other Related Recommendations

The Historic Resources Committee advises City Council to consider the following additional policies or actions related to honorary naming, in support of the guidance provided by the Blue Ribbon Commission on Race, Memorials, and Public Spaces regarding place names:

1. Create a special naming commission (permanent or ad hoc), composed of representatives from related committees such as the Human Rights Commission, the Historic Resources Committee, and others as appropriate
2. Provide additional interpretation for honorees on a website or in other material to retain a public record of their historical significance and achievement
3. Identify other naming opportunities associated with a wide range of themes and places: music rooms, libraries, gyms, auditoriums, athletic fields, playgrounds, and others
4. Consider pursuing state historic designation for the location of Gregory Swanson's 1950 civil rights case in the United States District Court in Charlottesville against the UVA Board of Visitors
5. Consider consulting with the Monacan Nation as appropriate for naming opportunities related to indigenous culture, history, and related topics

Attachment 4 / Links to meeting records

November 13

Link to Committee Packet

<https://charlottesvilleva.civicclerk.com/Web/Player.aspx?id=873&key=-1&mod=-1&mk=-1&nov=0>

December 11

Link to Committee Packet

<https://charlottesvilleva.civicclerk.com/Web/UserControls/DocPreview.aspx?p=1&aoid=831>

Link to meeting videos

<https://boxcast.tv/channel/arevwckqrofmm9t57myy>

Honorary Street Designations, Policy and Applications / Additional Comments 02.02.21

HRC member Jordy Yager offers the following commentary on the Henry Martin honorary street name application:

- *The historic naming proposal was for a residential street, and the applicant, who does not live in the neighborhood, had shown no signs of communicating with residents of 10th & Page.*
- *The historic naming proposal was for a street in a predominantly Black neighborhood that is currently undergoing a massive white-led gentrification and displacement process, and the applicant had secured only the endorsement of Preservation Piedmont, a white-led non-profit organization that, again, had shown no signs of communicating with Black 10th & Page residents about the naming proposal.*
- *Neither the applicant nor the endorsing party had shown any signs of trying to communicate with Mr. Martin's descendants.*

HRC member Phil Varner offers the following commentary on the Henry Martin honorary street name application:

In my opinion, the process by which historic memorializations happen is more important than the outcomes. To my knowledge, not a single person or group with significant ties to the 10th and Page neighborhood has come out in support of this proposal, even after numerous times before Council. This points to a fundamental flaw in the way this proposal was initiated and the apparent lack of support.

I assume Ms. Craig has good intentions with wanting to memorialize Henry Martin. However, I find it problematic that a white woman who is not a City resident and does not have a specific connection to 10th and Page neighborhood (and even more so because it is a historically Black neighborhood) would initiate a process to honorarily name a street there. While this might have good intentions, the process does the opposite, by having yet another instance of something being imposed upon a minoritized community, without that community either initiating it or being the most integral part of it. Additionally, Preservation Piedmont, which does little work in 10th and Page, has formally supported this without getting input and support from residents of the neighborhood or Mr. Martin's descendants who live in the area.

Because of these factors, I believe this proposal should not go forward now, until significant community engagement can be done.