

COMMITTEE ON PARKS AND RECREATION
CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON PARKS AND RECREATION
VOTE*

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Monday, July 14, 2025

Start: 11:37 a.m.

Recess: 11:51 a.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

B E F O R E: Shekar Krishnan, Chair

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

David M. Carr
Robert F. Holden
Linda Lee
Julie Menin
Mercedes Narcisse
Vickie Paladino
Sandra Ung

COMMITTEE ON PARKS AND RECREATION

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SERGEANT WOOD: Good morning, good morning, this is a microphone check for the Committee on Parks and Recreation. Today's date is July 14, 2025. The location is the Council Chambers, and this recording is being made by Ginelle Yearwood.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Good morning. Good morning. Welcome to the New York City Council vote on the Committee on Parks and Recreation. At this time, please silence all electronics and do not approach the dais. Chair Krishnan, you may begin.

(PAUSE)

CHAIRPERSON KRISHNAN: [GAVEL] Thank you so much, Sergeant. Good morning, everyone. I'm Shekar Krishnan, Chair of the Committee on Parks and Recreation.

Today, the Committee will vote on a Preconsidered bill that will ceremonially co-name 128 thoroughfares and public places throughout the city.

Co-naming bills are the result of the Council's periodic process, where we seek to honor individuals and organizations that have made lasting contributions to our city. Some of these include co-names for active community members, heroic New Yorkers who sacrificed their lives for others, people

who committed their lives to public service, or those who greatly enrich the city's cultural landscape. Of the many honorees proposed by this piece of legislation, I'd like to call attention to a few of the co-namings that I am proud to have sponsored:

My first nomination (INAUDIBLE) co-name an area in my district as *Paddy G's Way*, after Patrick "Paddy" Gilmartin. Paddy started a career in the bar business in the early 1970s. He attended Bishop Dubois High School, an all-boys' Catholic High School in Harlem, before deciding to put college on hold to serve in the Vietnam War, where he was wounded and received a Purple Heart. He established Paddy G's and created a welcoming and inclusive environment that became a community hub for 40 years. His dedication extended beyond his business by providing free home-cooked meals during holidays for those in need. After his death, he was honored with the United States Army Honor Guard Funeral, and his bar continues to operate under the care of his children, ensuring the legacy of this neighborhood institution in Elmhurst. And I was very proud to visit it just a couple of years ago.

My other nomination is for *Ed Sedarbaum & Howard Cruse Corner*. Ed Sedarbaum is regarded as the grandfather of the Queen's LGBTQ movement. His activism began in the late 1980s after the tragic murder-- hate crime murder of Julio Rivera in 1990 in front of the PS-69 schoolyard in Jackson Heights, which was the catalyst for the Queen's Pride Parade that many of us march in today. This galvanized Ed's commitment to LGBTQ rights. He founded Queens Gays and Lesbians United, Q-GLU, in 1991, helping organize the first candidates forum where local politicians were challenged on their stances regarding LGBTQ issues. He also played an essential role in organizing protests against anti-gay curricula in Queens schools, championed the passage of the New York State Hate Crimes Act in 2000, and worked with the Anti-Violence Project to train police officers on LGBTQ issues.

Howard Cruse was an acclaimed gay cartoonist whose strip *Wendel* was featured on The Advocate in the 1980s. He founded the *Gay Comix* anthology series to run work by out creators. He published a graphic novel, *Stuck Rubber Baby*, in 1995, which told the story of a gay man coming of age

in the South during the civil rights era of the 1960s and reflected the author's life. The novel won several awards and was translated into a variety of languages.

Next is *Hank Krumholz Corner*. Henry "Hank" Krumholz, whom I had the pleasure and honor of knowing for many years, was a vital figure for the LGBTQ rights movement in Queens. He played a foundational role in the success and growth of the Queen's LGBTQ Pride Parade, which began in Jackson Heights in 1993. Hank helped to build the event into one of the borough's most significant celebrations of diversity and equality. His professional background with the US Postal Service also proved invaluable to LGBTQ Pride, as his work enabled the parade's organizing committee to efficiently send thousands of physical mailers at a time before digital communication, reaching supporters and elected officials across the city. He also helped establish the first-ever Queens Lesbian and Gay USPS postal cancellation in 1995, marking a historic moment of visibility. Lastly, he helped secure funding for the Queen's Lesbian and Gay Pride Committee by finding advertisers for the Winter Pride Journal. Through his

dedication, practical support, and unrelenting commitment, Hank Krumholz helped transform Queens into a more inclusive and visible home for LGBTQ+ residents. I've had the honor of knowing Hank for many years, working with him, and seeing his work for the LGBTQ community in Queens during that time. But perhaps even more poignantly, I know that Ed Sedarbaum, Howard Cruse, and Hank Krumholz were all close friends of former Council Member and my predecessor, Danny Dromm, who was one of the first openly gay council members in New York City government, and I know that he would certainly say, were he in Chambers today, that he credits a lot of his work and his activism both as an out public school teacher and as a council member, to the work of Ed Sedarbaum, Hank Krumholz, and Howard Cruse.

Finally, Oswaldo Gómez, "*Ms. Colombia*" Way, would recognize Oswaldo Gómez, "*Ms. Colombia*", who was the beloved Queen's cultural icon, known for her vibrant presence and commitment to living life authentically. A native of Medellín, Colombia, Gómez worked as a lawyer before fleeing to New York in the 1970s, escaping political violence and anti-LGBTQ+ persecution. After being diagnosed with HIV AIDS in

the 1980s, and given only months to live, she defied expectations and lived more than 20 years longer, embracing a colorful and public persona that brought joy to countless New Yorkers. Often seen with her parrot Rosita and Poodle Cariño, she was a fixture at local parades and festivals and became a staple of Queen's Pride and a cherished figure in neighborhoods like Elmhurst, Jackson Heights, and the Rockaways. There's nobody in Elmhurst or Jackson Heights who has not seen Miss Colombia across the neighborhood when she was alive.

I would like to welcome all who have come to participate in this hearing, and I urge all of my colleagues to vote in favor of the legislation before us.

We have been joined today by Council Members Holden, Lee, Menin, Narcisse, and Palladino.

And I now call on the Clerk to take the roll call vote.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Good morning. This is a roll call vote of the Committee on Parks and Recreation on a Preconsidered Intro, the naming of 128 thoroughfares in public places.

We'll start with you, Chair Krishnan.

COMMITTEE ON PARKS AND RECREATION

8

CHAIRPERSON KRISHNAN: Aye on all.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Council Member Holden?

COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Council Member Lee?

COUNCIL MEMBER LEE: (UN-MIC'D)

(INAUDIBLE)

COMMITTEE CLERK: Council Member Menin?

COUNCIL MEMBER MENIN: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Council Member Narcisse?

COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Council Member Ung?

COUNCIL MEMBER UNG: (ABSENT)

COMMITTEE CLERK: Council Member Carr

COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: (ABSENT)

COMMITTEE CLERK: Council Member Paladino?

COUNCIL MEMBER PALADINO: (UN-MIC'D)

(INAUDIBLE)

COMMITTEE CLERK: Chair Krishnan, by a
vote of 6 in the affirmative, 0 in the negative, and
0 abstentions, the Intro has been adopted.

CHAIRPERSON KRISHNAN: Thank you, all. We
are going to hold the vote open for a minute, just in
case Council Member Carr is able to make it as well.

(PAUSE)

COUNCIL MEMBER PALADINO: (INAUDIBLE)

CHAIRPERSON KRISHNAN: We will keep the vote open, and then Council Member Paladino will say a few words on two of her co-namings that are a part of today's legislation.

(PAUSE)

CHAIRPERSON KRISHNAN: I am going to call on Council Member Paladino to say a few words about two of her co-namings today.

COUNCIL MEMBER PALADINO: These co-namings are extremely personal to me. Being born and raised in my district, I know these families personally.

I want to start first with, it's going to be section 95, it's *Chief Eugene T. Kelty Jr. Way*. I'm proud to introduce this legislation that speaks to the honor of a true hero of our city, a lifelong public servant, Chief Eugene, known as Gene Kelty, Jr., through the ceremonial co-naming of a street in his memory. This legislation is more than a symbolic gesture; it is a public and permanent tribute to a man who dedicated his life, both professionally and personally, to the people of New York City.

Gene was born in 1965 in Elmhurst, raised in Whitestone, attended Saint Luke's and Flushing

High Schools, and graduated with honors from CUNY York College. He then embarked on an extraordinary 39-year career with the New York City Fire Department. He was promoted to Battalion Chief in 2003 and exemplified what it means to lead with courage and compassion.

On September 11th, 2001, Chief Kelty was among the brave who answered the call. He accepted. He helped to evacuate New Yorkers from the World Trade Center and remained on site at Ground Zero for weeks and weeks at a time in its aftermath. His actions were heroic, selfless, and ultimately life-threatening, because this year Gene passed away as a result of his 9/11 illness.

Gene's service did not stop at the Firehouse. Since 1984, he was an active and vital member of Community Board 7, eventually becoming its chairman. He played a key role in shaping and advocating for the development of Willetts Point and served as a dedicated member of the Whitestone Boosters Civic Association. Whether it was City planning, community events, or simply helping a neighbor, Gene was always there.

Gene became a very close friend—we kind of grew up together—a go-to person for me in my office throughout my first few years. His knowledge of the community he served was unmatched, and men like him are simply irreplaceable. With this legislation, we propose to co-name a street in the neighborhood he loved, a place he helped shape and protect, as *Chief Eugene T. Kelty Jr. Way*.

Thank you. I have one more, if I may, is that okay, Shekar?

The next one I have is for *Henry Skoros Drive*. And I will be introducing this. I am proud to introduce this legislation to co-name a street in honor of a man whose life was defined by service, generosity, and an unwavering love for his community, Henry Skoros, fondly known as the Mayor of College Point.

For over 15 years, Henry served as a dedicated Little League coach, shaping the lives of countless young athletes. Even after stepping off the field, he continued to support the College Point Little League by sponsoring a team for yet another 10 years. These were not just games; they were opportunities, mentorships, growth, and community.

Henry's spirit of service extended far beyond the ball field.

He supported College Point Volunteer Ambulance Corps and was a faithful usher at Saint Luke's Church. As a founding member of the College Point Board of Trade, Henry worked to strengthen local businesses and create opportunities. His dedication to the community was recognized formally in 1992 and again in 2000. But anyone who lived in College Point didn't need a plaque to know the value of his contributions.

Every holiday season, Henry helped bring joy and light to the neighborhood by sponsoring the Christmas lights displayed along College Point Blvd. He was also a key supporter of the Memorial Day Parade in College Point and the College Point Street Festival, so many of these events brought neighbors together year after year after year.

When a woman was struck in a hit-and-run, Henry didn't hesitate. He stepped up to help her, staying by her side until the emergency services arrived. That is because of who he was, a man who always put others first.

2 Through this street co-naming, we ensure
3 that the name of Henry Skoros remains forever woven
4 into the fabric of College Point. Thank you very much
5 for taking the time.

6 CHAIRPERSON KRISHNAN: Thank you so much,
7 Council Member Paladino.

8 And with that, we will now close today's
9 Parks Committee Vote. Thank you all so much. [GAVEL]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is no interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date August 26, 2025