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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

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February 16, 2023
Start: 11:11 a.m.
Recess: 11:18 a.m.

HELD AT: COMMITTEE CHAMBERS - CITY HALL

B E F O R E: Shekar Krishnan, Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

- David M. Carr
- Eric Dinowitz
- Robert F. Holden
- Linda Lee
- Christopher Marte
- Julie Menin
- Francisco P. Moya
- Mercedes Narcisse
- Lincoln Restler
- Sandra Ung
- Marjorie Velazquez

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2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Test, test, test. This
3 is a test on a vote on Parks and Recreation. Today's
4 date is February 16, 2023. This is being recorded by
5 Sakeem Bradley.

6 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: At this time, can the
7 host please start the webinar?

8 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good morning and
9 welcome to the New York City Council vote of the
10 Committee on Parks and Recreation.

11 At this time, can everyone please silence
12 your cell phones? Thank you for your cooperation.

13 Chair, we are ready to begin.

14 CHAIRPERSON KRISHNAN: [GAVEL] Thank you
15 so much, Sergeant. Good morning everyone and welcome
16 to our Committee on Parks and Recreation hearing on
17 February 16. Thank you all to my Colleagues and
18 Members of the Committee who have joined. I'd like to
19 read their names for the record, those who are
20 present, Council Member Moya, Council Member Lee,
21 Council Member Marte, Council Member Menin, Council
22 Member Narcisse, Council Member Restler, Council
23 Member Ung, Council Member Carr, and Council Member
24 Eric Dinowitz. Welcome.

25

2 Good morning. I am Council Member Shekar
3 Krishnan, and I am pleased to Chair the Committee on
4 Parks and Recreation. Today, the Committee will vote
5 on Intro 897, a bill that would ceremonially co-name
6 129 thoroughfares and public places throughout the
7 city. We first considered this bill at a Parks
8 Committee hearing on January 31st.

9 Of the many honorees proposed by this
10 piece of legislation, I'd like to call attention to a
11 couple of co-namings that I am proud to have
12 sponsored. One would be Bangladesh Street on 73rd
13 Street in Jackson Heights honoring the Bangladeshi
14 community of our city and recognizing the
15 contributions that they have made and continue to be
16 made by this community. It is the heart of our
17 Bangladeshi community in Jackson Heights and a space
18 of reflection of their power and presence in Jackson
19 Height and across New York City. I am so proud about
20 this co-naming and what it really reflects of the
21 vibrant Bangladeshi culture and community here in
22 Jackson Heights.

23 Another co-naming would recognize John
24 Browne Way which would honor John Browne, an Irish
25 immigrant who served in the U.S. Army and later

2 became a local business and civic leader who engaged
3 in providing needed aid to other immigrants and
4 countless charitable activities. Looking forward to
5 his co-naming as well in our community of Elmhurst.

6 Finally, Asif Rahman Way would honor Asif
7 Rahman who tragically died at the young age of 22
8 when he was struck by a freight truck on Queens
9 Boulevard. Asif was a Bangladeshi immigrant who
10 excelled in school and was a graduate of Queens
11 College. His tragic death spurred his mother, Lizi
12 Rahman, to create a campaign to make Queens Boulevard
13 safer. As a result, over 10,000 people, hundreds of
14 businesses, and dozens of organizations have
15 supported the campaign by signing petitions,
16 participating in community design workshops, and
17 local rallies, all of which have helped to make
18 changes to Queens Boulevard resulting in a safer
19 street for pedestrians. It used to be called the
20 number one boulevard of death in Queens because of
21 the numerous pedestrian fatalities. However, over the
22 years because of the work by our community led along
23 the way by mother Lizi Rahman, I am proud that today
24 there have been substantial improvements to Queens
25 Boulevard to make it safer. I am so grateful for Lizi

2 Rahman's advocacy on behalf of her son and now the
3 memory of her son, despite her tragic death, will
4 live on in our hearts, in our minds, and in the
5 streets of New York City. I am so grateful to Lizi
6 Rahman and the work that we'll continue to do to make
7 our streets safer for pedestrians.

8 I'd like to welcome all who have come to
9 participate in this hearing, and I urge my Colleagues
10 to vote in favor of this legislation.

11 Thank you again, and now we'll take a
12 roll call.

13 We've also been joined by Council Member
14 Holden.

15 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Good
16 morning. William Martin, Committee Clerk. Roll call
17 vote Committee on Parks and Recreation, Introduction
18 897. Chair Krishnan.

19 CHAIRPERSON KRISHNAN: Aye.

20 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Holden.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Aye.

22 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank
23 you. Moya.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MOYA: Aye.

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2 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank
3 you. Dinowitz.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Aye.

5 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Lee.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER LEE: Aye.

7 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Marte.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MARTE: Aye.

9 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Menin.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER MENIN: Aye.

11 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Narcisse.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Aye.

13 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Restler.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Aye.

15 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Ung.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER UNG: Aye.

17 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN:

18 Velazquez.

19 CHAIRPERSON KRISHNAN: I'd like to ask the
20 Clerk if we can hold the vote open for a few minutes
21 for Council Member Velazquez.

22 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Sure.

23 Carr.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: Permission to
25 explain my vote.

2 CHAIRPERSON KRISHNAN: Yes.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: Thank you, Chair. I
4 just want to say a few words about this co-naming
5 bill and then focus my contents on one of them in
6 particular that I had said at the last hearing on
7 this bill, which is for the most honorable Elijah
8 Muhammad so-called. I continue to have great
9 reservations about this particular co-naming. This is
10 an individual who again at the root of his
11 organization had anti-Semitism and spoke about it
12 throughout his life among many, many other
13 controversial words and deeds, and, in my opinion, he
14 is not worthy of having a street co-naming in the
15 City of New York, and we should not even be
16 considering this today, but here we are, and I feel
17 that he fails every test we could possibly put
18 forward, the test based on the values and views of
19 today and the values and views of the time in which
20 he lived and work so in my opinion, I think in the
21 opinion of many in this Body and many in the public
22 at large, this is not something we should be doing
23 today, but, unfortunately, it is packaged with 128
24 other names, many of whom I know to be absolutely
25 worthy of this distinction and I refuse to allow them

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2 to be held hostage to this particular individual in
3 this package and so with that said, I vote aye.

4 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank
5 you. Council Member Velazquez.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER VELAZQUEZ: I echo the
7 sentiments of my Colleague, David Carr. I vote aye on
8 all.

9 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank
10 you. By a vote of 12 in the affirmative, 0 in the
11 negative, and no abstentions, Introduction 897 has
12 been adopted by the Committee.

13 Mr. Chair, that is a full Committee.

14 CHAIRPERSON KRISHNAN: Thank you so much.
15 This hearing is now adjourned. [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 interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date February 20, 2023