

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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July 12, 2016
Start: 10:59 p.m.
Recess: 11:42 p.m.

HELD AT: 250 Broadway - Committee Rm.
16th Fl

B E F O R E: MARK LEVINE
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Darlene Mealy
Fernando Cabrera
James G. Van Bramer
Andrew Cohen
Alan N. Maisel
Mark Treyger

A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

2 [sound check, pause]

3 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Quiet, please.

4 CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: Good afternoon and
5 welcome to the City Council's Committee on Parks and
6 Recreation. I am Mark Levine, our Chair. I am
7 pleased that we are joined today by committee member
8 Darlene Mealy from Brooklyn, Alan Maisel from
9 Brooklyn, and Andy Cohen from the Bronx and a special
10 guest Karen Koslowitz from Queens. So I'm guessing
11 you had a street meeting today. We tried to book the
12 Chamber for the capacity crowd here, but I'm afraid
13 we're going to have to squeeze into the Committee
14 Room. This is our twice a year meeting where we
15 consider street co-namings. We have a package of
16 about 50 streets that we are consider for co-naming
17 and I want to remark on two of them. Actually, we
18 have 65 thoroughfares and public places that we are
19 considering today for a vote. Among them are two I
20 want to highlight. One is in my district, which I'm
21 pleased to be co-sponsor with our colleague Andy
22 King, which we'll co-name the Corner of 156th Street
23 and St. Nicholas Avenue, Bishop Joseph Bell Sr. Way.
24 This corner is outside of the Bishop's home parish of
25 Bethel Holy Church of Mt. Sinai in Washington

2 Heights. In addition to being a longstanding leader
3 of his church, Bishop Bell was also an outstanding
4 educator in New York City Public Schools having
5 distinguished himself as one of the first African-
6 American physics and chemistry teachers in the Bronx
7 in the 1950s. Having been a science teacher and
8 physics in the Bronx in the 1990s, I appreciate that.
9 Another noteworthy naming--and I'm guessing it's
10 Council Koslowitz is here--will be that The Ramones
11 Way honoring the legendary punk rock band at the
12 intersection of 67th Avenue and 110th Street in front
13 of the main entrance of Fort--Forest Hills High
14 School in Queens. The Ramones are, and this is, in
15 fact, sponsored by Council Member Koslowitz. The
16 Ramones are often cited as one of the original
17 pioneers of the punk rock sound, and were a major
18 influence in the 1970s Punk Movement in the United
19 States and the United Kingdom. And which amongst us
20 colleagues has not sat in a particularly frustrating
21 meeting, and had the words of our legendary anthem "I
22 want to be sedated" pop into your head. I know I
23 had. Thank you Council Member--Member Koslowtiz for
24 bringing this to a vote today. I don't believe there
25 are any members of the public who are here to

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2 testify? Is that correct? In which case I'm going
3 to open it to my colleagues who are here to speak on
4 behalf of any of these streets we're considering in
5 this package. Council Member Cohen, right, you have
6 a street you'd like to comment on?

7 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: Thank you, Chair.
8 I would just say that I'm very pleased that the
9 Community Board 8 decided to support the resolution
10 naming a street in--I think West 246th Street, the
11 Henry Hanson Parkway for our former District Manager
12 Grace Belkin. So I thank--

13 CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: [interposing] All
14 right.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: --the committee
16 for all their work to getting this done. Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: Very good. Council
18 Member Koslowitz, might you like I say were on The
19 Ramones Way.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: Sure, I--they
21 went--they still live in my community. The mother
22 and the brother live in my community and, of course,
23 they were very well known and, in fact, now in Forest
24 Hills when you go into the gardens, someone did a
25 mural about The Ramones. So it's very exciting. Now

2 we'll have the street named after them, and I'm very
3 happy and thank you very much.

4 [pause]

5 CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: Council Member
6 Mealy, please.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Yes, I want to
8 thank you, Chair, for this important meeting. I know
9 I have a lot of other street names that didn't go
10 through. I'm still trying to find out why, but I'm
11 look forward to making sure that the City understand
12 that some people have been pillars of community, and
13 they need to have their name--a street renamed after
14 themselves. We'll be addressing that real soon, but
15 I have two--and this is one of them that we had asked
16 Mr. Montgomery, Geneva Montgomery Way, that's right
17 in Brevard Housing Developments in which I do a
18 concert every year, and I-- We send out white
19 balloons every year in regards to this President of
20 Brevard. For years she made sure the community was
21 strong and vibrant, and right after she passed, her
22 husband passed like two months later. So they are
23 both with the Lord, and we are naming--co-naming this
24 street now Ingram and Geneva Montgomery Way. And I
25 know my community is proud of this. Brevard Houses

2 is going to be excited about this, and I can't wait
3 for the concert. I believe it will be the second
4 week in August that we will be honoring them again.
5 And my second one is John Steptoe--Steptoe Way. You
6 may have heard him. He was a jazz musician, and he
7 passed away. We still don't know really why. But in
8 his 20-year career, he illustrated 16 picture books,
9 10 which he also wrote himself. He was honored. He
10 was a hero, and athletes include in the American
11 Library in 1985. *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters* he
12 wrote in 1988. This was a career writer you could
13 say in our community. He also received the Coretta
14 Scott King Award for illustration *Mother Goddess* in
15 1982. So we have someone that is very strong that
16 will be--have John Steptoe Way in our community. And
17 one is not in my district, but I know Robert Cornegy
18 will be speaking on it at the Stated Meeting. But it
19 was someone that I did know personal, Tohma Faulkner
20 of Bedford-Stuyvesant. She was a strong advocate.
21 This was--she is my shero of Brooklyn. When I was a
22 block association president, this young lady I saw
23 Wonder Woman in here. She did everything in the
24 community, not just in Bed-Stuy. She came to
25 Brownsville to help me sometimes, and did the Bed-

2 Stuy live in Bed-Stuy, and one thing I remember fond
3 of her about when she was in the Brownstoners of
4 Bedford-Stuyvesant, and she said well you could help
5 anyway you can. And I said well I can house sit, and
6 that's when the first--when everyone found out how
7 beautiful Brownsville--I'm sorry, Bed-Stuy was when
8 we did the Brownstoners of Bedford-Stuyvesant. The
9 tour is still going on to this day. That's when you
10 saw the rich texture of the wood--original woods and
11 all our brownstones, and she was a live wire I can
12 say, and she did Bed-Stuy Live. So with all of that,
13 I just want to thank everyone for all they have done
14 to even have a name--a street named after them. So
15 thank you for this opportunity, Chair.

16 CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: All right. Thank
17 you Council Member Mealy. We've been acknowledged by
18 stalwart Parks Committee Member Mark Treyger from
19 Brooklyn, Council Member from Brooklyn. While he's
20 not here today, I do want to acknowledge that our
21 newest colleague Rafael Salamanca has broken what I
22 understand is that all-time record with no fewer than
23 five street co-namings on the docket today. We've
24 got to give him credit for that. Off to a great
25 start, and if there are no further comments, I'd like

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2 to cue the committee clerk please to call the roll
3 call for the vote.

4 CLERK: Committee Clerk Matthew
5 Destefano, Committee on Parks and Recreation. Roll
6 call on the Preconsidered Introduction. Chair
7 Levine.

8 CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: I vote aye.

9 CLERK: Mealy.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Aye.

11 CLERK: Cohen.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: Aye.

13 CLERK: Maisel.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MAISEL: Aye.

15 CLERK: Treyger.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Aye.

17 CLERK: By a vote of 5 in the
18 affirmative, 0 in the negative and no abstentions,
19 the preconsidered item has been adopted.

20 CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: All right. Thank
21 you very much. If--we're going to leave the vote
22 open for 20 minutes because have at least one
23 colleague enroute right now, but I thank you all for
24 joining us. [pause]

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2 CLERK: Committee on Parks and
3 Recreation, continuation of the roll call. Council
4 Member Cabrera.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: I vote aye on
6 all.

7 CLERK: By a vote of--the vote now stands
8 at 6 in the affirmative, 0 in the negative and no
9 abstentions.

10 CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: All right, this
11 concludes our hearing. [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 July 14, 2016