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COMMITTEE ON PARKS AND RECREATION

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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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December 14, 2021
Start: 10:10 a.m.
Recess: 10:21 a.m.

HELD AT: REMOTE HEARING - VIRTUAL ROOM 2

B E F O R E: Peter A. Koo, Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Joseph C. Borelli
Justin L. Brannan
Selvena N. Brooks-Powers
Fernando Cabrera
Darma V. Diaz
Eric Dinowitz
James F. Gennaro
Mark Gjonaj
Robert F. Holden
Mark Levine
Francisco P. Moya
Kevin C. Riley
Carlina Rivera
Eric A. Ulrich
James G. Van Bramer

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2 SERGEANT MARTINEZ: Cloud recording's
3 underway.

4 SERGEANT LEONARDO: Good morning, and
5 welcome to today's Remote New York City Council
6 Hearing for the Committee on Parks and Recreation.

7 At this time, we ask that all Council
8 Members and staff turn on their video for
9 verification purposes. To minimize disruptions,
10 please place cell phones and electronic devices to
11 vibrate or silent. We thank you for your
12 cooperation. Chair, we're ready to begin.

13 CHAIRPERSON KOO: Good morning. I am
14 Council Member Peter Koo, and I'm pleased to chair
15 the Committee on Parks and Recreation. Today the
16 Committee will be voting on a pre-considered bill
17 that will ceremonially co-name 199 Thoroughfares and
18 Public Places throughout the City. These co-naming
19 bills are the result of the Council's process where
20 we seek individuals and organizations that have made
21 lasting contributions to our city. Signs include co-
22 names for active community members, heroic New
23 Yorkers who sacrificed their lives for others, people
24 who committed their lives to public service, or those

1
2 who (INAUDIBLE 1:37) enrich the City's cultural
3 landscape.

4 Of the many people honored by this piece
5 of legislation, I would like to call attention to a
6 couple of co-naming's that I'm proud to have
7 sponsored.

8 Sarah Whiting Way who was a long-time
9 respected community leader and activist in Flushing
10 and Ganesh Temple Street, which honors the Hindu
11 Temple Society of North America, which is one of the
12 first, if not the first, Hindu temple in North
13 America.

14 Today, the Committee will also consider
15 Intro 2462 sponsored by my colleague, Council Member
16 Daneek Miller. This bill will officially rename St.
17 Albans Park in Queens to Archie Spigner Park. This
18 will honor the late Archie Spigner who represented
19 Southeast Queens with great distinction in the
20 Council from 1974 to 2001 and was a great trailblazer
21 in many ways.

22 I'm happy to support these bills, and I
23 urge my Colleagues on the Committee to vote in favor
24 of these pieces of legislation. If there are any of
25 my Colleagues who would like to speak regarding these

1 bills, I will recognize them now. If not, I will ask
2 the Clerk to call the vote. Before I do that, I
3 would like to recognize the following Council Members
4 who are present. Council Members Holden, Cabrera,
5 Borelli, Council Member Brannan, Council Member
6 Riley, Council Member Brooks-Powers, Council Member
7 Gjonaj, Council Member Darma Diaz, and also Council
8 Member Van Bramer, Council Member Ulrich, Council
9 Member Dinowitz, Council Member Rivera, Council
10 Member Gennaro.
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12 If any of my colleagues would like to
13 speak regarding these bills, I will recognize them
14 now. If not, I will ask the Clerk to call on the
15 vote. Thank you.

16 LEGISLATIVE CLERK: Chair Koo, it looks
17 like Council Member Ulrich would like to speak.

18 CHAIRPERSON KOO: Council Member Ulrich.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: Good morning, Mr.
20 Chair.

21 CHAIRPERSON KOO: Are you there? Yes,
22 thank you.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: Yes, Good
24 morning, Mr. Chair. Can you hear me?

25 CHAIRPERSON KOO: Yes.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: Okay, good
3 morning, Mr. Chair and my colleagues. I do want to
4 speak briefly about several individuals whom we are
5 honoring today with the passage of this Bill, all of
6 whom I've known personally for many years and who
7 left lasting impacts, not only on their communities
8 but on the City of New York. The reason why I do
9 want to just say a brief remarks now is because I
10 know tomorrow will be our lasted stated meeting, and
11 I anticipate lots of speeches and remarks made by our
12 colleagues who are departing and we may not have the
13 opportunity tomorrow to say a few words about these
14 individuals whom we are honoring today.

15 Some of whom were submissions that I
16 made, and some were made by some of my colleagues,
17 but first I want to start with Community Board 9 with
18 Ivan Mrakovcic, the former Chair, a longtime member
19 of Community Board 9, an architect, a staple in the
20 Richmond Hill Queens Community, definitely deserving
21 of this honor.

22 Another Community Board 9 member and a
23 longtime friend and confidant of mine, Scott Jordan,
24 who coincidentally was also my daughter's Godfather.
25 We're very close, pillar of his church and local

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2 community in Ozone Park. We're very proud to honor
3 the block where he lived and rename that in his
4 honor.

5 Paul Russo. Paul Russo was a young man
6 who died very young, 33 years old. I grew up with
7 Paul. We played Little League together. His family
8 owns Russo's on the Bay and the Villa Russo in
9 Richmond Hill, a renowned local establishment. Paul
10 fought a very brave and courageous battle with
11 colorectal cancer, died several years ago, but to
12 this day continues to inspire people to live a life
13 greater than themselves and to give back to their
14 communities.

15 And Clare Droesch who was just a
16 phenomenal human being, a coach at Scholar's Academy
17 in Rockaway, and somebody who inspired countless
18 young women to achieve their full potential to reach
19 for the stars. Definitely deserving of this honor.

20 There are so many other good people on
21 the list. We can go on and on. But again I do want
22 to just go on the record and, you know, just heap
23 praise on some of these people. They are gone but
24 definitely not forgotten. We are keeping their
25 memories alive. We are honoring their legacies, and

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2 hopefully we are letting the people know in these
3 respective communities that these people made a
4 difference and that we're a better city because of
5 it. So, thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to my
6 colleagues.

7 CHAIRPERSON KOO: Thank you, Council
8 Member. We are also joined by Council Member Levine.
9 Mr. Clerk, any other Members who want to speak?
10 Otherwise, you can make a roll call.

11 LEGISLATIVE CLERK: Thank you. This is a
12 roll call vote of the Committee on Parks and
13 Recreation Intro 2462 and a preconsidered item. We
14 will start with Chair Koo.

15 CHAIRPERSON KOO: I vote aye on all.

16 LEGISLATIVE CLERK: And Council Member
17 Levine?

18 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: Thank you. I
19 vote aye on all.

20 LEGISLATIVE CLERK: Van Bramer?

21 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Aye on all.

22 LEGISLATIVE CLERK: Brannan?

23 COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNAN: Aye on all.

24 LEGISLATIVE CLERK: Gjonaj?

25 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: Aye on all.

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2 LEGISLATIVE CLERK: Holden? Council
3 Member Holden, please.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Sorry. Aye on
5 all.

6 LEGISLATIVE CLERK: Thank you. Council
7 Member Moya?

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MOYA: Aye on all.

9 LEGISLATIVE CLERK: Rivera.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: I vote aye.

11 LEGISLATIVE CLERK: Thank you. Council
12 Member Darma Diaz? Council Member Darma Diaz? Okay,
13 we'll come back. Council Member Riley?

14 COUNCIL MEMBER RILEY: Aye on all.

15 LEGISLATIVE CLERK: Thank you. Council
16 Member Gennaro?

17 COUNCIL MEMBER GENNARO: Aye.

18 LEGISLATIVE CLERK: Council Member
19 Brooks-Powers?

20 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: Aye.

21 LEGISLATIVE CLERK: Council Member
22 Dinowitz?

23 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Aye.

24 LEGISLATIVE CLERK: Thank you. Council
25 Member Ulrich?

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: I proudly vote
3 aye.

4 LEGISLATIVE CLERK: Minority Leader
5 Borelli?

6 MINORITY LEADER BORELLI: Aye.

7 LEGISLATIVE CLERK: Council Member Darma
8 Diaz? Okay, Chair Koo. By a vote of 14 in the
9 affirmative, 0 in the negative, and 0 abstentions,
10 both items are adopted.

11 CHAIRPERSON KOO: Thank you. Before I
12 adjourn my last Hearing as Parks Committee Chair, I
13 would like to take this time to thank Chris, Patrick,
14 Chima and Monica, my amazing Committee Staff, for the
15 last past two years. They are responsible for
16 vetting and finalizing this list of almost 200 names
17 that we are honoring today and deserve to be
18 recognized for all of their efforts. Thank you, all
19 of you. With that, I adjourn my last...

20 LEGISLATIVE CLERK: Council Member Koo,
21 Council Member Koo.

22 CHAIRPERSON KOO: Thank you. [GAVEL]

23 LEGISLATIVE CLERK: Council Member, Council
24 Member Koo.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER DARMA DIAZ: (INAUDIBLE) my
3 volume was low.

4 LEGISLATIVE CLERK: I'm sorry. Can we hold
5 the...

6 CHAIRPERSON KOO: Yeah, yeah, I'm here.

7 LEGISLATIVE CLERK: Thank you so much.
8 Council Member Darma Diaz would like to vote.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER DARMA DIAZ: I apologize.
10 My... the vote is yes. I apologize. I didn't realize
11 my speaker was extremely low, and I wasn't hearing the
12 conversation. Thank you.

13 LEGISLATIVE CLERK: Thank you as well.
14 Chair Koo...

15 CHAIRPERSON KOO: (INAUDIBLE) thank you.

16 LEGISLATIVE CLERK: The revised vote, Chair
17 Koo, is 15 in the affirmative, zero in the negative,
18 and zero abstentions.

19 CHAIRPERSON KOO: Thank you very much. The
20 meeting is being adjourned. [GAVEL]

21 COUNCIL MEMBER DARMA DIAZ: Thank you,
22 Chair Koo.

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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 January 28, 2022