



SAVANNAH-CHATHAM COUNTY HISTORIC SITE AND MONUMENT COMMISSION

HONORARY STREET DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION

PETITIONER: CITY OF SAVANNAH, Mayor Van R. Johnson, II / United House of Prayer for All People Church

FILE No.: 23-005921-HM

LOCATION: Ogeechee Road between West 35th Street and West 34th Street

DATE: January 4, 2024

NATURE OF REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting approval of an honorary street designation on a portion of Ogeechee Road, to have an honorary name of "Bishop C.M. Bailey Way". The proposed designation would cover the portion of Ogeechee Road between West 35th Street and West 34th Street.

As per the applicant:

"Honorary street name designations are intended to recognize individuals who have made significant contributions to the community. The designation is temporary assignment of the honorarium and shall not interfere with the official name of the street. Honorary Street Designations DO NOT change the official name of the street, they are only symbolic.

FINDINGS:

The following standards apply:

Article E- Naming and Renaming of Public Property, Facilities and Streets.

General policy. As a general policy, the Mayor and Aldermen find that public property should be named after its principal function, location, or historical reference; however, significant community events, organizations or well-known persons with important contributions to the community, state or nation may deserve public recognition, which may occur by way of naming or renaming public rights-of-way or facilities.

Naming criteria and requirements.

Criteria. Naming or renaming of a public right-of-way or facility shall occur only when the proposed naming or renaming satisfied at least one of the following criteria:

It honors and commemorates a noteworthy person associated with the City of Savannah, Chatham County, the State of Georgia or the United States of America;

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The standard is met. Bishop C.M. Bailey had a notable impact on Savannah and the country through the United House of Prayer and this commemorates the street where one of the church's notable buildings is located.

It commemorates local history, places, events or culture;

It will strengthen neighborhood identity; or

It recognizes native wildlife or natural geographical features.

The standard is met. It commemorates the local history of the area and will strengthen the neighborhood identity through bringing attention to both the local and national efforts of Bishop C.M. Bailey.

Exclusions. *The following shall not be considered for purposes of naming or renaming:*

Persons that resided in the City of Savannah for less than five years, other than prominent national figures;

The standard is met. Bishop C.M. Bailey lived in Savannah for fifteen years and had an impact nationally.

Names assigned to existing public property within the City or unincorporated Chatham County where duplication of the name is likely to lead to confusion; and

The standards is met. Staff is not aware of any other existing public property with a name duplication.

Except as set forth in Section 4-1106 of this Article, commercial names where usage of such name would amount to advertising.

The standard is met. This is not advertising.

Considerations. *Naming requests shall consider:*

The number of residents and businesses directly affected;

Community diversity;

The historical significance of preexisting name or location;

The appropriateness and compatibility of the request in relation to the existing area;

The impact on emergency service delivery; and

Continuity and stability.

The standard does not apply as the honorary street naming will not change the official name of Ogeechee Road, however it will allow for the acknowledgment of the contributions of Bishop C.M Bailey to the City of Savannah.

Additional considerations for persons. *Requests to name a public right-of-way or facility in honor of a natural person should also consider the following:*

Absent extraordinary or extenuating circumstances, the proposed honoree shall be deceased;

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Whether the proposed namesake made a sustained contribution over an appreciable time period, exerted efforts of benefit or significance to local, state or national affairs and/or demonstrated leadership in governmental, cultural or historical affairs, humanitarian efforts, or community development;

Contributions that beneficially changed the nature and characteristics of the community; and

Achievement by a native Savannahian of national or international acclaim in a specific field of endeavor that has reflected positively on Savannah.

Honorary street names are symbolic and do not change the official name of the street. Bishop C.M. Bailey is deceased, and through his work with the church impacted the City of Savannah and nation as a whole with such notable efforts as affordable housing.

Renaming of public property facilities or streets. *All requests to rename public property shall be made in writing and directed to the attention of the City Manager. Such requests shall include:*

In the instance of a park, playground, trail, recreational area or space;

A supporting petition signed by not less than 51 percent of all property owners abutting the subject property;

The present official name of the property;

The proposed new name;

The specific location of the property;

The name address and telephone number of the person requesting the name change;

The City of Savannah, Mayor Van R. Johnson, II is requesting the change. As part of the submission, the applicant included the names of the property owner abutting the subject right-of-way and a signed petition showing the support of 53.33% which meets the threshold requirements for approval from the City.

A statement of reasons supporting the renaming request;

Per the applicant, “This year, the United House of Prayer for All People would have been celebrating the 15th Bishopric Anniversary of our former bishop, the honorable C.M. Bailey, who passed on August 11th, during our 97th Annual Holy Convocation, in Savannah, during the week of September 18th through 24th, 2023. The United House of Prayer was established in West Wareham, MA in 1919 by the late Bishop C.M. Grace. Bishop Grace was succeeded by the late Bishop W. McCollough, who was succeeded by the late Bishop S.C. Madison, who was succeeded by Bishop Bailey.

From that little building in West Wareham, the Lord has blessed the United House of Prayer to grow to include 136 congregations in 27 States and the District of Columbia. There are 17 congregations in Georgia. Our presence in Savannah includes 1805 Ogeechee Rd., 4107 Sixth St., 5009 Montgomery St., 1209 W. Victory Dr., and 2301 Bay St.

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The United House of Prayer has established affordable housing in various communities around the nation, including Savannah, scholarship opportunities for our youth, extracurricular activities to include inter-congregational sports teams, musical bands, and choirs.

Bishop Bailey inspired a dynamic spiritual renewal within the United House of Prayer. He tirelessly traveled throughout the nation teaching and preaching the word of God, encouraging young and adults to rededicate their lives to Christ.

Bishop Bailey had also continued the building programs begun by his predecessors. He had overseen the building of new housing complexes and House of Prayer edifices. He updated the luxury buses to provide our membership with more modern modes of transportation.

As a special tribute to Bishop Bailey, we are seeking to rename a portion of Ogeechee Rd., between 34th and 35th St., as Bishop C.M. Bailey Avenue, Boulevard, Drive, Road, Street, or Way. This renaming has been endorsed by the honorable Mayor of Savannah, Van R. Johnson.”

A thorough discussion regarding the history of the property, including all prior names associated therewith; and

The standard does not apply to this situation because an honorary renaming does not affect the legal name of the street, however, the applicant provided a detailed history of the impact of Bishop C.M. Bailey on the City of Savannah and nation.

An endorsement by the current Mayor, an at-large alderman or the alderman representing the district in which the property is located.

The City of Savannah, Mayor Van R. Johnson, II is requesting this honorary street designation.

PUBLIC NOTICE:

As required in the Master Plan and Guidelines, written notice was sent to all property owners, and the neighborhood association, within 200 feet of the subject property. A sign was posted on the property fifteen days prior to the meeting. As of the writing of this report no comments were received from the public.

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RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL:

The Historic Site and Monument Commission recommend approval to Savannah City Council for an Honorary Street Designation as requested because the proposed honorary street designation meets the standards within *Article E- Naming and Renaming of Public Property, Facilities and Streets*.

DocuSigned by:

Catherine Kostilnik

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**Catherine Kostilnik, PhD, Chair
Historic Site and Monument Commission**

January 4, 2024
Date

DocuSigned by:

Pamela Everett

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**Pamela Everett, Assistant Executive Director for
Melanie Wilson, Executive Director
Chatham County-Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission**

January 4, 2024
Date

DocuSigned by:

Jonathan Mellon

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**Jonathan Mellon, Director of Historic Preservation
Chatham County-Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission**

January 4, 2024
Date