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## Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission

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June 1, 2018

Mayor and City Commissioners:

On May 15, 2018, the Planning and Sustainability Commission (PSC) voted unanimously to recommend to the City Council renaming SW Stark Street to SW Harvey Milk Street.

This hearing followed a City Council hearing February 7, 2018, to waive City Code and allow this application to move forward to rename only SW Stark St and not Stark St throughout the city, as well as a meeting of an appointed Historian Panel that was held on April 2, 2018.

The PSC was provided with the applicant's original application; letters of support from the Downtown Neighborhood Association and Harvey Milk's surviving nephew, L. Stuart Milk, president of the Harvey Milk Foundation; a list of endorsing LGBTQ organizations and community members, as well as area businesses along and nearby SW Stark; a unanimous recommendation letter from the Historian Panel; a budget impact statement from the Portland Bureau of Transportation; and the results of a City Auditor survey of all addressees on or abutting SW Stark St. Also, prior to the hearing the Commission received one letter from a SW Stark St business owner in support of the renaming.

At our May 15 meeting, Stacy Brewster, staff to City Commissioner Dan Saltzman, who has been walking the applicants through the process since September of 2017, provided an overview of the proposal. Among aspects discussed were the purpose and history of street renamings in Portland, as well as the history of the LGBTQ community in Downtown Portland on and surrounding SW Stark St. Staff indicated that discussions were already underway with the Regional Arts & Culture Council, PBOT, LGBTQ organizations and community members, about using this as an opportunity, through murals, historical markers, etc., to raise awareness about LGBTQ history in the Portland region and to honor those figures, organizations and locations significant to the history of LGBTQ civil rights in Portland and the Pacific Northwest.

The Commission asked staff about the results of the auditor's survey of SW Stark and abutting addressees. Of the 114 respondents, 67 indicated their opposition to the renaming. Staff discussed the Commission's role and, ultimately, City Council's in weighing respondents to the Auditor's anonymous survey - which could include duplicated property owners or addressees abutting but not on SW Stark St - with the applicant's ability to gather 2,800+ signatures in support in less than three weeks. Applicants also indicated in oral testimony that they had garnered endorsements of a majority of street-level businesses on SW Stark St. All other oral testimony before the Commission supported the choice of Harvey Milk and the street renaming.



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As has been indicated in past street renamings, our city streets provide context and structure for all Portlanders. Many streets in Portland are named for 19th Century figures important to the city and the country. As the city has grown, it's important to recognize the positive contributions of other prominent figures, as indicated by City Code for street renaming.

The Commission concurs with the Historian Panel's assessment that Harvey Milk fits all criteria as an appropriate person after whom a street may be renamed and agrees that SW Stark St is an appropriate location for the renaming.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Katherine Schultz  
Chair

