

City of Beacon

Municipal Naming Policy

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish a uniform policy regarding requests for the naming or renaming of City-owned land and facilities including parks, recreation facilities, buildings, and streets (“City Assets”). This policy provides a guide to ensure that such name designations are compatible with community interests and will enhance the values and heritage of the City of Beacon.

II. GENERAL

- A. The City Council shall have the final authority to name and rename any City Asset and shall have the authority to designate commemorative street names and plaques.
- B. Under extraordinary circumstances that would cast a negative image upon the City, any naming of City-owned facilities in honor of an individual, family or group may be revoked at the discretion of City Council.
- C. The names of individuals or corporations or groups involved in controversial enterprises or activities, such as those that would be detrimental to the mission or image of the City of Beacon, shall be avoided.
- D. The donation of land, facilities or funds for the acquisition, renovation or maintenance of land or facilities shall not constitute an obligation by the City to name the City Asset or any portion thereof after an individual, family or organization.
- E. Any naming or renaming of any City property or other location within the City shall be made by resolution of the City Council.
- F. To avoid duplication, confusing similarity or inappropriateness, the City Council in considering name suggestions, shall review existing park, facility and/or street names, as applicable.
- G. In considering any proposal to name or rename a City Asset, the following questions shall be considered individually and collectively:
 - 1. Will the name have historical, cultural and social significance for generations to come?
 - 2. Will the name engender a strong and positive image?
 - 3. Will the name memorialize or commemorate people, places or events that are of enduring importance to the community or the nation?

4. Will the name engender significant ties of friendship and mutual recognition and support within the community or with those outside of the community?
5. Will the name be identified with some major achievement or the advancement of the public good within the community or the nation?
6. Will the name be particularly suitable for the park or recreational facility based on the location or history of the park, recreational facility or the surrounding neighborhood?
7. Will the name have symbolic value that transcends its ordinary meaning or use and enhance the character and identity of the park or recreational facility?

III. NAMING CRITERIA

A. Naming a City Asset Generally

1. Location. As a general policy, a name should assist the public in identifying its location. The City shall first consider the name of the community area, the names of nearby geographic features, and the names of adjacent schools and streets when it is considering a naming/renaming request.
2. Significant Events, People, and Places. The history of a major event, place, or person may play an important role to preserve and honor a community's history, landmarks, or prominent geographical features. The City may name a City Asset for a major event, place, or person of social, cultural or historical significance to the local area when the City Asset is associated with or located near the events, people, or places of social, cultural or historical significance. The relationship of the event, person, or place to the City Asset must be demonstrated through research and documentation.
3. Outstanding Individuals: This category is designed to acknowledge individuals who have made substantial contributions to benefit the City, local community, park and recreation system, or public library. Naming or renaming a City Asset for an outstanding individual is encouraged for those person's whose significance and good reputation have been accepted in the community, City and/or State/National history. Naming or renaming can be subordinate to the name of the larger City Asset or the City may name an area or portion of the City Asset after an individual, including but not limited to a meeting room, structure, fountain, or garden. The individual must be deceased and shall have performed outstanding service in one or more of the following categories:
 - a. Maintained involvement in a leadership role in civic organizations that are devoted to community improvement.

- b. Provided assistance to the underprivileged, economically disadvantaged or physically and/or mentally handicapped.
- c. Actively promoted and directed community events and activities that have clearly added to the enrichment of the quality and quantity of cultural life within the community.
- d. Actively promoted and implemented effective programs and activities within the community for the City's youth.
- e. Actively promoted and implemented effective programs and activities within the community for the City's senior citizens.
- f. Assumed an active leadership role in developing and implementing programs directed to the improvement of the visual aesthetic appearance of the community at the commercial, public or residential level.
- g. Assumed an active leadership role in developing programs and Facilities directed toward the improvement of community social and health needs as well as programs directed toward humanitarian purposes.

B. *Additional Criteria Applicable for Honorary Street Names*

- 1. The person whose name is proposed for such honorary naming shall have resided in the City of Beacon for at least five continuous or non-continuous years during his/her lifetime, during which time such person shall have preferably resided on the street in question.
- 2. Names shall be unique, easily discernible and simple to pronounce for public safety consideration. Similar sounding or duplicate street names shall not be considered.
- 3. Street names may recognize native wildlife, flora, fauna or natural geologic features related to the community and the City of Beacon.
- 4. Street names shall not contain more than 18-letter characters, including any combination of spaces or letters.
- 5. Cumbersome, corrupted or modified names, discriminatory or derogatory names, from the point of view of race, sex, color, creed, ethnicity, religious affiliation, political affiliation or other social factors are not acceptable.
- 6. Commemorative street name signs are additions to the street name and will not change the street address. Existing street names shall be retained and a supplemental sign or plaque shall be installed. Commemorative street name signs shall consider the same criteria as for naming of streets.

IV. NAMING PROCEDURE

- A. Staff, city residents, community leaders and organizations interested in proposing a name for a park, recreational area or facility must submit written recommendations, petitions, etc. for presentation to the City Council.
- B. The request shall provide clear evidence that the individual to be honored has made significant contributions to the economic vitality and/or quality of life in the Beacon community.
- C. When naming after a person or persons, written documentation of approval by next of kin to be honored (if available/possible) is required as part of the proposal.
- D. Upon a petition to designate a secondary honorary name for an existing street or portion of existing street, the City Council shall refer such petition to the City Historian/City Historical Society for his/her or its report to the City Council regarding the following:
 - 1. Such person's history of contributions to the City of Beacon, County of Dutchess, State of New York.
 - 2. Such person's history of residence in the City, including duration and location of such residence.
- E. The City Council shall consider all requests at a public meeting. The City Council shall provide appropriate public notice of any street or facility naming actions, as required.
- F. The City Council shall allow for public input and comment.
- G. The City Council will confirm adopt a proposed name for a City Asset by resolution.
- H. The City Council has final approval and may reject any naming or renaming request.
- I. The City Council also reserves the right to rename any City Asset for any reason, for instance if the resident, organization, or business for which it is named turns out to be disreputable, becomes disreputable or does not otherwise support the guiding principles set forth in this Policy.