

COMMITTEE MEMORANDUM

TO: Public Safety and Neighborhood Quality of Life Committee Members

FROM: Rickelle Williams, Interim City Manager

DATE: July 10, 2024

TITLE: DISCUSSION REGARDING CO-NAMING 15TH STREET BETWEEN OCEAN DRIVE AND BAY ROAD IN HONOR OF FORMER CITY MAYOR MATTI HERRERA BOWER.

RECOMMENDATION

The City Administration (“Administration”) recommends that the Public Safety and Neighborhood Quality of Life Committee (“PSNQLC” or “Committee”) discuss this item and provide a recommendation.

BACKGROUND/HISTORY

At the May 15, 2024 City Commission meeting, at the request of Commissioner Alex Fernandez and Commissioner Kristen Rosen Gonzalez, the Mayor and City Commission (“City Commission”) referred an item (C4 A) to the PSNQLC to discuss co-naming of 15 Street located between Ocean Drive and Bay Road in honor of former City of Miami Beach (“City”) Mayor Matti Herrera Bower (“Mayor Bower”).

Mayor Bower is the first woman, as well as the first Hispanic, to serve as Mayor of Miami Beach, where she served with distinction from 2007 through 2013. Mayor Bower also served as a City Commissioner for eight (8) years prior to her period of service as Mayor.

Mayor Bower’s road to community activism began as a Parent-Teacher Association mom, working to save an elementary school from closing. Her enthusiasm, innate leadership and charisma led Mayor Bower to become president of the Parent-Teacher Association (“PTA”) at three (3) Miami Beach public schools, a decade-long record of service. In the process, she became a leading advocate for quality education in Miami Beach and began a long trajectory of service to Miami Beach’s public schools.

Mayor Bower served on the Miami-Dade County School Board Attendance to Boundary and Bi-Lingual Education Committees, the Miami Beach Ad Hoc Committee for Quality Education, the Miami Beach Feeder Pattern and Citizen’s Advisory Committee, the State of Florida Transition Team task force on Reading and Literacy and championed the expansion of the International Baccalaureate Program to all of Miami Beach’s public schools. Through her persistent leadership to ensure quality education for every child in Miami Beach, Mayor Bower achieved the citywide implementation of the International Baccalaureate program, thereby allowing for all students to significantly expand their learning opportunities within our City.

Mayor Bower was also an instrumental part of the campaign to save the historic Art Deco District in South Beach. Inspired by the leadership of her friend Barbara Baer Capitman, Mayor Bower became an early volunteer with the Miami Design Preservation League and served on the Board of Directors for over a decade. She has advocated for responsible growth management and the creation of historic districts around Miami Beach, including the first and most famous, the Miami Beach Architecture District.

In addition, during her tenure as City Commissioner and Mayor, Mayor Bower helped introduce innumerable ordinances and city code amendments that ushered in the modern era of historic preservation in the City, including championing the amendment to the City's Charter to require voter referendum approval prior to increasing floor area ratios in the City, possibly the single most important piece of growth management legislation in the City.

Furthermore, Mayor Bower also helped create affordable housing for low-income elderly and others. To this day, Mayor Bower serves on the Board of Directors of the Miami Beach Housing Authority, which provides quality affordable housing for seniors and others. For many years, she worked closely with Unidad of Miami Beach, Inc., the non-profit community-based organization that operates the North Beach Oceanfront Center and engages in advocacy for seniors, particularly those in the Hispanic community, and provides social services and cultural programming, among other important work performed for the benefit of our entire community.

In addition to being a champion of education, historic preservation, affordable housing, and social services for the elderly, Mayor Bower has supported many social equality initiatives over the years including the adoption of the City's Human Rights Ordinance and the first City-supported gay pride festival and development of the arts, among other causes.

Mayor Bower has left an indelible mark on the City, not only in her support of many worthy causes over the years, but in terms of her personal touch and her belief in the importance of community engagement and transparency in government decision-making. Mayor Bower is a force of nature and a living example of a public servant that has always stayed true to herself, with values that place people above politics.

ANALYSIS

Under the existing criteria in Section 82-503 of the City Code, city streets may only be co-named in honor of (1) Miami Beach police officers who died or were killed in the line of duty; (2) a public facility located on the street to be co-named; (3) private not-for-profit organizations with significant historic value to the City and associated with structures which have a significant historical value or architectural significance to the City; (4) geographic areas within the City; (5) a commercial establishment that has been in business in the City of Miami Beach for 100 or more years and which is located on the street to be co-named; (6) deceased person who served as the spiritual leader of a prominent religious institution in the City of Miami Beach for 35 or more years and resided in the City of Miami Beach; (7) deceased person who is known for their role as a gay-rights pioneer and as one of the first openly LGBTQ people ever elected to public office in the U.S.; (8) a deceased historical figure who was instrumental in helping Latin American countries achieve independence from the Spanish Empire; (9) a prominent Jewish figure who made significant civic contributions to Jewish history and/or Jewish-related initiatives; (10) a deceased Cuban-American artist who made vast contributions to Latin music history and culture; (11) a deceased photographer who documented the life and residents of Miami Beach; and (12) a deceased spiritual leader of a prominent religious institution in the City of Miami Beach who also made significant civic contributions to the City.

Whenever a request is made to co-name streets, or portions thereof, in the City, Section 82-503(c)(2) of the City Code requires the sponsor to submit the proposal in writing to an appropriate committee (in this case, PSNQLC), which shall include the following: (1) the street, or portion thereof, to be co-named; (2) the proposed co-name of the street, or portion thereof; (3) the reason for the request; and (4) a factual summary confirming that the proposed person falls under the specific criteria outlined in Section 82-503(c)(1)(a) of the City Code.

On April 17, 2024, the PSNQLC discussed an item entitled "Discussion Regarding Co-Naming of a Miami Beach Street In Honor Of Women Who Have Significantly Impacted The City's History

and Culture.” The Committee unanimously recommended to move the item with a favorable recommendation to the City Commission.

At the June 26, 2024 City Commission meeting, the City Commission approved on First Reading an amendment to Section 82-503(c) of the City Code to provide additional criteria for the co-naming of streets in honor of 1) a Grammy-award winning singer, actress, songwriter, author, philanthropist, and businesswoman who made extraordinary contributions to music and culture in the United States and internationally; 2) a deceased internationally renowned art collector who significantly contributed to the City’s arts and culture; and 3) notable women who made significant contributions to the civic and/or political fabric of Miami Beach.

In anticipation of the adoption of the proposed amendment to Section 82-503 of the City Code on Second Reading at the July 24, 2024, City Commission meeting, the PSNQLC may consider and recommend to the City Commission the co-naming of 15 Street between Ocean Drive and Bay Road in honor of former Mayor Matti Herrera Bower. Adoption of the PSNQLC recommendation would be considered by the City Commission at its July 24, 2024, meeting.

Following City Commission approval, the proposed co-naming would need to be sponsored by a Miami-Dade County Commissioner and approved by the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners (“BCC”) via a resolution. Subsequent to BCC approval, the City’s Transportation and Mobility Department staff would coordinate with Miami-Dade County Department of Transportation and Public Works (“DTPW”) staff on the fabrication and installation of the new street co-name signs.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Should the PSNQLC recommend and City Commission wish to move forward with the co-naming of 15 Street between Ocean Drive and Bay Road in honor of former Mayor Matti Herrera Bower, the sign fabrication and installation work would be performed by DTPW; and the City would reimburse DTPW for the costs incurred for the work, which can be absorbed within the Transportation and Mobility Department budget.

Does this Ordinance require a Business Impact Estimate? (FOR ORDINANCES ONLY)

The Business Impact Estimate (BIE) was published on . See BIE at:
<https://www.miamibeachfl.gov/city-hall/city-clerk/meeting-notice/>

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Amount TBD / 106-9615-000349-30-403-529-00-00-00-

CONCLUSION

This item is being presented to the PSNQLC for discussion and a recommendation.

Applicable Area

South Beach

Is this a “Residents Right to Know” item, pursuant to City Code Section 2-17?

No

Is this item related to a G.O. Bond Project?

No

Was this Agenda Item initially requested by a lobbyist which, as defined in Code Sec. 2-481, includes a principal engaged in lobbying? No

If so, specify the name of lobbyist(s) and principal(s): N/A

Department

Transportation and Mobility

Sponsor(s)

Commissioner Alex Fernandez

Co-sponsor(s)

Commissioner Kristen Rosen Gonzalez

Condensed Title

Discuss Co-Naming of 15 St in Honor of Former City Mayor Matti Herrera Bower