

C4 O REFERRAL TO THE PUBLIC SAFETY AND NEIGHBORHOOD QUALITY OF LIFE COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER NAMING THE 5TH STREET PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE AFTER LATE COMMISSIONER MARK SAMUELIAN.

Applicable Area:



**COMMISSION MEMORANDUM**

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Commission

FROM: Ricardo J. Dopico, City Attorney

DATE: March 19, 2025

TITLE: REFERRAL TO PUBLIC SAFETY AND NEIGHBORHOOD QUALITY OF LIFE COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER NAMING THE 5TH STREET PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE AFTER LATE COMMISSIONER MARK SAMUELIAN.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**BACKGROUND/HISTORY**

**ANALYSIS**

Please place on the March 19, 2025 agenda a referral to the Public Safety and Neighborhood Quality of Life Committee to consider naming the 5th Street pedestrian bridge (the "Bridge") after late Commissioner Mark Samuelian.

As part of the regular baywalk update item on the January 16, 2025 Land Use and Sustainability Committee ("LUSC") agenda, the LUSC voted to recommend that the City Commission refer an item to the Public Safety and Neighborhood Quality of Life Committee (the "PSNQLC") to consider naming the 5th Street pedestrian bridge after the late Commissioner Mark Samuelian.

Whenever a request is made to co-name streets or portions thereof, as defined in Section 82-503 of the City Code, subsection 82-503(c)(2) requires the sponsor to submit the proposal in writing to an appropriate committee (in this case, the 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 subsection 82-503(c)(1)(a) of the City Code.

Currently, Section 82-503 does not include pedestrian bridges in its definitions of rights-of-way eligible for designation or co-designation. Furthermore, since the Bridge will be located in part over the right-of-way that is under the Florida Department of Transportation's jurisdiction, the City is required to obtain the State's authorization for the official naming, which will ultimately require a bill to be adopted by both houses of the Florida Legislature and signed into law by the Governor. Accordingly, should the PSNQLC recommend designating the Bridge in honor of Commissioner Samuelian, the PSNQLC should also make the following additional recommendations: recommend that the City Commission amend Section 82-503 to permit the naming of the Bridge after Commissioner Mark Samuelian, and adopt a Resolution authorizing the City Administration to work with the Florida Department of Transportation and request that the Florida Legislature formally name the Bridge.

A grandson of Armenian immigrants, Mark was the son of working-class parents in Boston, who instilled in him a passion for hard work and dedication to improving this world for the next

generation.

After attending public schools, he became the first in his family to earn a college degree. He graduated cum laude from Georgia Tech with a degree in industrial engineering and later earned an MBA from The Wharton School of Business of the University of Pennsylvania.

As a teenager, Mark became a state chess champion in Massachusetts. As a student at Georgia Tech, Mark was a part of the chess team that ranked in the top 10 in the nation. In Miami Beach, Mark became a volunteer tutor for the chess clubs at Miami Beach High and Nautilus Middle School. Later in his life, Mark would become a master of speed chess, a highly challenging variant of the game requiring fast thinking and split-second decision-making, and was recognized by the U.S. Chess Federation as one of the top 1% of players in the country.

After graduate school, Mark became a professional problem solver, eventually being named partner at the prestigious business consulting firm Accenture. He worked with Fortune 500 companies to solve some of their biggest challenges. This professional experience shaped how Mark would later tackle some of Miami Beach's most complex problems when he was elected as City Commissioner in 2017.

As City Commissioner, Mr. Samuelian approached problem-solving by working with every stakeholder, analyzing the risks and benefits, and making the best decision for the community. As the Miami Herald wrote, Mark "was known for his 'residents first' governing style and a focus on public safety."

Beyond his public service, Mark was also an active leader in many of the region's most important organizations. He served on the Board of Directors for the Miami-Dade Beacon Council and the Board of Governors for the Miami Beach Chamber of Commerce. He was also an Advisory Board Member to the World Affairs Council of Miami, a sustaining Member of Miami Beach United, and a member of Miami Design Preservation League.

## **FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

N/A

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

If applicable, the Business Impact Estimate (BIE) was published on:

See BIE at: <https://www.miamibeachfl.gov/city-hall/city-clerk/meeting-notices/>

## **FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

## **CONCLUSION**

## **Applicable Area**

Citywide

**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):

**Department**

City Attorney

**Sponsor(s)**

Commissioner Tanya K. Bhatt  
Commissioner Alex Fernandez

**Co-sponsor(s)**

**Condensed Title**

Ref. PSNQLC - Naming 5th Street Pedestrian Bridge in Honor of the Late Commissioner Mark Samuelian. (Bhatt/Fernandez) CA

**Previous Action (For City Clerk Use Only)**