

NEW HAVEN CITY PLAN COMMISSION ADVISORY REPORT

RE: ORDER OF THE BOARD OF ALDERS designating the corner of Dickerman Street and Sperry Street as “Ruth Henderson Corner” in perpetuity, for her love, commitment, great contributions and service to people in the Dixwell neighborhood.

Submitted by: Alder Troy Streater, Ward 21

REPORT: 1648-08

ADVICE: Approve with conditions.

BACKGROUND

This request comes from the Board of Alders regarding an ordinance to designate the corner of Dickerman Street and Sperry Street as “Ruth Henderson Corner” to honor her many contributions to the New Haven community. According to Section 18-2(a)(3) of Title III, Chapter 18, Article I of the City’s Code requires, **“Each submission shall contain:**

- (i) **Plan of the site of the proposed location indicating all structures and street features as well as the proposed signage drawn to scale for review by the city.**
- (ii) **Proposed wording of the signage.**
- (iii) **A petition of at least two hundred fifty (250) city resident signatures in favor of the proposed naming, of which at least two-thirds (2/3 (one hundred sixty-six ((166))) shall be residents of the neighborhood of the proposed sign location.”**

Mrs. Henderson, affectionately known as "Grandma Ruth," has been an unwavering pillar of support and inspiration within the Dixwell community since 1955. Her dedication to uplifting and serving others knows no bounds, as evidenced by her extensive record of community involvement and service. Her career achievements, including being the first African American EKG Technician graduate from Grace Hospital and attaining a Master of Social Work from Springfield College, are testament to her unwavering dedication to personal and professional excellence.

Throughout her career, Mrs. Henderson has made significant contributions to various organizations, including Yale New Haven Hospital, Our Kids within the Department of Social Services, New Haven Board of Education, Forbes House, Scanterbury/Hannah Gray Home, Cornerstone, and Grant Street Partnership. Additionally, her entrepreneurial spirit and ownership of a beauty supply store further highlight her role as a leader and trailblazer within our community. Furthermore, Mrs. Henderson's extensive involvement in local initiatives such as the Dickerman Street Block Watch, Police Review Board, and various church and youth programs underscores her commitment to fostering a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for all residents.

Perhaps most notably, Mrs. Henderson's boundless love and mentorship have touched the lives of countless young people on her home block of Dickerman Street, earning her the endearing title of "Grandma Ruth" to over 600 grandkids. Her legacy of integrity, love, generosity, and dignity is truly unparalleled and deserving of perpetual recognition.

A petition of at least two hundred fifty (250) city resident signatures in favor of the proposed naming has been submitted.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

This proposal in accordance with Title I, Article XIII, Section 2(A) of the New Haven Code of Ordinances states, "**Every Ordinance or Resolution of the Board of Alders relating to the location and use of any street, bridge, boulevard, esplanade, square, park, playground, playfield, aviation field, parking space, public building, the facilities or terminals of any public utility, or the establishment or change in the boundaries of or regulations concerning zoning, shall be at once referred to the City Planning Commission and final action shall not be taken on any such Ordinance or Resolution until the commission shall have reported thereon, provided that the Board of Alders may establish by ordinance a period of not less than sixty (60) Days within which the commission shall file its report with the City Clerk and if no report is filed within such period the approval of the commission shall be presumed.**" Accordingly, the Board of Alders seeks guidance regarding the proposed amendment.

The Board of Alder seeks guidance as to:

- Whether the proposal is aligned with the City's Comprehensive Plan.
- Whether the proposal is "complete" and meets the criteria set forth in Section 18-2(a)(3) of Title III, Chapter 18, Article I of the City Code.

ADVICE

The proposal is aligned with the City's Comprehensive Plan because it:

- Fosters a greater "sense of place" and neighborhood pride
- Honors a community leader who made great contributions to her neighborhood and supported and inspired young people in New Haven

However, prior to the Board of Alders rendering any decisions, the Planning Commission suggests having the applicant meet Section 18-2(a)(3) of the City Code by providing the following as required:

- (i) Plan of the site of the proposed location indicating all structures and street features as well as the proposed signage drawn to scale for review by the city.
- (ii) Proposed wording of the signage.

ADOPTED: March 20, 2024
Leslie Radcliffe
Chair

ATTEST: _____
Laura E Brown
Executive Director, City Plan Department