

NEW HAVEN CITY PLAN COMMISSION ADVISORY REPORT

RE: DUMP ROAD, Rename as "Edward B. Grant Way" (Alderpersons Jackson-Brooks and Antunes).
REPORT: 1453-11
ADVICE: Approval with notice to affected property owners

BACKGROUND

Edward B. Grant, more affectionately and simply known as Ed Grant, was a pivotal community activist who brought positive and lasting change to his beloved Dixwell community and the City of New Haven. Grant was a staunch advocate for environmental justice in his own community and New Haven, serving as the catalyst and driving force behind the Freddie Fixer environmental movement in the black community, a movement that gave life to the well known Freddie Fixer Parade. Beginning in 1962 with only a broom, a few volunteers, and the desire for social change, the Freddie Fixer Parade has become the African American community's largest annual outdoor event. Grant's intent in organizing such an event was to promote neighborhood beautification, environmental sustainability, taking pride in New Haven's neighborhoods, and community unity. Grant would remain the inspiration and personification of the event for decades to come.

However, Grant's activism went far beyond the Freddie Fixer Parade. During the heyday of social-change activism in New Haven in the 1960s, he helped to organize groups like the Black Coalition and the Angry Young Black Men. He also served in World War II and he marched with Martin Luther King Jr. His decades of environmental activism earned him New Haven's first-ever "Green Award" in 2005, which was presented to him by Mayor John DeStefano. His legacy will continue to live on in the countless lives that he impacted during his decades of unwavering service and social activism.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The Commission believes it is fully appropriate to honor this devoted civil servant and environmental activist in a meaningful way. However, it must be noted that changing the name of a City street has implications, particularly on the businesses with street addresses located on the road. Each street address would be subject to change with the United States Postal Service, and business owners would be impacted by the need to notify clients of the address changes, to change letterhead, etc. The Police and Fire Departments would also be notified of the new street name. Currently, there are several properties and vacant lots on the existing road whose addresses could be affected if the name of the road were to be changed. Strangely enough, despite their location on Dump Road the lots are included in the City's GIS system and tax assessor's records as having Middletown Avenue addresses. The addresses of these lots include: 164, 166, 170, 190, 198, 200, 250, and 256 Middletown Avenue (City Landfill).

ADVICE

The Commission recommends approval and that the Board of Aldermen notify impacted property owners of its hearing on the proposed change.

ADOPTED: June 15, 2011
Roy Smith, Jr.
Vice Chair

ATTEST: 
Karyn M. Gilvarg, AIA
Executive Director