

REVIEW COMMITTEE FOR COUNTY SITING OF MEMORIALS & SYMBOLS

Of the

Suffolk County Legislature

A meeting of the Review Committee for County Siting of Memorials & Symbols was held in Downstairs Conference Room of the William H. Rogers Legislature Building, 725 Veterans Memorial Highway, Smithtown, New York, on January 10, 2007.

Members Present:

Legislator Lynne Nowick - Chairperson
Carol Walsh - Representing Tom Isles-Director/Suffolk County Planning
Brian Bielanski - County Executive Assistant
Ralph Borkowski - Department of Public Works/Landscape Architect
Linda Bay - Representing Legislator Dan Losquadro/Minority Leader
Justin Littell - Representing Legislator Lou D'Amaro

Members Not Present:

Paulette Bartunek - Director/Suffolk County Human Rights

Also in Attendance:

Greg Moran - Aide to Legislator Nowick
Dr. Lehti Laas-Ramos - Regarding Carmen Ramos Calixto-Laas Corner

Minutes Taken By:

Alison Mahoney - Court Stenographer

*(*The meeting was called to order at 10:07 AM*)*

MR. MORAN:

Good morning. Legislator Nowick is on her way but running late and Linda Bay is running late, but I know Legislator Romaine was kind enough to come here today to speak on the first issue on our agenda which is the item with regard to naming the courthouse in Riverhead.

I know you would like to say a few things on it, so I would like to start and allow him to do that so he can make his appointment

LEG. ROMAINE:

Right, my appointment with the County Executive at 10:30, so I don't want to miss that. Yes, I had submitted a -- since I represent the Riverhead community -- and I have to say, having some degree of experience in County Government over the last 21 years, it is highly unusual for someone to submit a resolution concerning someone else's district in the Legislature; unusual is a mild term, I'll leave it like that.

So let me talk about my resolution concerning the courthouse that is being built in my district in Riverhead. That is not the Griffing Avenue Courthouse but the Annex or the extension that is being added, it is not the old courthouse that we're talking about, I think everyone on this committee understands that; correct me if I'm wrong.

MR. MORAN:

Yes.

*(*Linda Bay entered the meeting at 10:08 AM*)*

LEG. ROMAINE:

Okay. I knew Judge Oshrin, obviously because I had served as County Clerk for 16 years and the County Clerk is also the Clerk of the Supreme Court. And Judge Oshrin was the Chief Administrative Judge of Suffolk County, he had been elected twice to the Supreme Court and he died in office as Chief Administrative Judge, unfortunately of Pancreatic Cancer. Judge Oshrin was a respected journalist -- jurist for many, many years and a respected lawyer -- in fact, his practice, if you go out here on Vets Highway and heads toward Commack, you'll run into where his old offices used to be, it was Oshrin and Packman, and I'm sure many of you might know Mr. Packman because he served as County Attorney.

Judge Oshrin was well respected in the legal community and he presided in Riverhead, and that's why some people who know Judge Oshrin suggested to me that it would be appropriate that the extension be named for him since he died in office, since he was the Chief Administrative Judge.

Judge Oshrin, when he had a practice, was -- when he was a practicing attorney, the majority of his practice was with education law, he represented several school districts and several teachers unions. In fact, the first time I met Judge Oshrin was in 1971 and '72 when I worked right down the road in Hauppauge School System, because I was on the Executive Committee of the Teacher's Union and later their Treasurer, and I got to know him well at that time and then we ran into each other again when he was elected to the Supreme Court and I was serving as County Clerk. But that relationship had something to do with it but a great deal of it had to do with recommendations from the members of the Bar Association and members of the legal community who felt it would be appropriate to name the Annex after a Supreme Court Justice who happened to be the Administrative Judge who was elected to two terms in the Supreme Court and who presided in Riverhead, and I thought that that was a good idea. Usually we name our buildings, our court buildings for judges; I was somewhat surprised --

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Hello, sorry I'm late.

LEG. ROMAINE:

Hi. How are you?

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Hello, Legislator Romaine.

LEG. ROMAINE:

And surprised is the understatement of the day. And believe me, when Legislator Stern submitted -- and I see it's on your agenda -- a resolution to name the building in my district for distinguished military veterans; now, while I have nothing with the name, I was neither consulted -- and believe me, I spoke to Legislator Stern and reminded him of some of the Legislative courtesies we sometimes extend.

One of the things that we have as, I guess, the word was comedy in the sense that we get along, is that we don't run against one other, we don't go into each other's districts and propose projects or naming of sites in other Legislative Districts. However, and I guess I'm speaking now on his resolution, obviously I will make those points to the full Legislature should his resolution come before it and they can do what they may, but if they adopt it they will set a standard that will allow me to go into Legislator Stern's District and do whatever I have to do in the Dix Hills area or the Elwood area and that's a bad precedent. As Legislator Nowick will probably know, she certainly would resent someone coming from in from a district nowhere near hers and suggesting projects, proposals, names for buildings in districts that if someone that's a Legislator that say from Southampton suggesting names of buildings --

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

No, it's just not that.

LEG. ROMAINE:

Yeah, well, that's why I thought that was surprising. However, I am here to answer any questions I can about my resolution for Judge Oshrin.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Well, does anybody have any questions? Because when we last met there were a lot of questions brought up about this. Some of them was as far as how much service Judge Oshrin had vis-a-vis how much Judge Chomarty had, as I recall. Judge Chromarty had like 42 years or 46 years of service and that's why there was a building named after him; Judge Oshrin had less.

MS. WALSH:

Twelve.

LEG. ROMAINE:

Right, that's correct.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Twelve years of service.

LEG. ROMAINE:

Right, and Juliette Kunsella had even less, yet the Record Storage Facility in Riverhead is named for her because she served well and that was one of her last accomplishments and she died in office. Judge Oshrin was elected, I believe, to two terms and he was a Chief Administrative Judge, he just wasn't a Supreme Court justice. He served in Riverhead --

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

He was like Judge Chromarty, Chief Administrative Judge, right?

LEG. ROMAINE:

Right, right, that's correct. Judge Chromarty is still alive, I run into him all the time and I have discussions with Judge Chromarty. But he was the Chief Administrative Judge and many people felt he did an excellent job in that capacity; Judge Leis currently serves in that capacity. He worked in Riverhead and there was a feeling that this should be something to acknowledge his memory, and I thought that that would be a nice thing. And it was suggested to me by members of the Bar Association, the legal community, to do something to at least acknowledge his service to the County.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Now, Brian --

LEG. ROMAINE:

And these are people that --

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

-- did you have questions last time when we were here?

MR. BIELANSKI:

No, we -- I just wanted to hear what Legislator Romaine had said.

LEG. ROMAINE:

Okay.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Because I thought I remember you had questions and I thought you had questions, too.

MS. WALSH:

Well, I think that everything that Legislator Romaine stated is the information that we had discussed previously.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Well, while Legislator Romaine is here, I know that -- well, while Legislator Romaine is here, if there is anything that might come up later, because I know you're going to a meeting --

LEG. ROMAINE:

Right.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

-- or if you can think of anything while we have him that bothers you about this or doesn't bother you about this, this would be the time.

LEG. ROMAINE:

I mean, if you have a more appropriate member of the legal community that might be -- that served Suffolk County that might be better honored, I'm all ears.

MR. BIELANSKI:

I think Judge Chromarty suggested that there were a number of jurists who had served for a much longer period of time.

MS. WALSH:

And the question really is does the Annex have to be named right now? You know, it's not that it has to have a name.

MR. ROMAINE:

Well, the Annex -- my understanding, as you know, I look out my window every day and look at the Annex because I'm in the Cornell Cooperative Extension on the other side of the tracks and it is --

essentially the building is just about -- well, the exterior of the building is totally complete, so the only finishing remarks that are being done are the interior of the building and I would assume that it should be ready sometime towards the end of 2007 for cases to be heard there. So I assume at that point there would be some type of dedication ceremony and at that point, prior to the dedication ceremony, either the building should be named for Judge Oshrin; if there's another name, I'm all ears. That was a name that was suggested to me, I happened to have known Judge Oshrin --

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Excuse me; was that from the Bar Association?

LEG. ROMAINE:

From members of the Bar Association.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

The names of the Judges that -- and I have it written down, that were suggested by Judge Chromarty; would you have know them offhand?

MS. WALSH:

I don't know if I have my notes here. I would have -- I would have done more research into this so that I would have information about it. There was Pearson {Hildreth}, John --

LEG. ROMAINE:

I don't know him.

MS. WALSH:

Judge Thomas Stark.

LEG. ROMAINE:

I know Tom Stark.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

He was an Administrative Judge, wasn't he?

LEG. ROMAINE:

Yes, he was, he was an Administrative Judge and he just wrote a book about Riverhead history. In fact, I had a conversation with him several weeks ago and it's someone that I definitely would consider if that's the recommendation of this committee.

MS. WALSH:

Fred {Munder}.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

That's an old name.

MS. WALSH:

Dick {Calm} from Brookhaven Town.

LEG. ROMAINE:

These are service -- these must be services in the 60's and 70's.

MS. WALSH:

{Ormand} Richie, Henry Tasker from Southold and Judge Gill.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Were any of them Administrative Judges besides Judge Stark?

MS. WALSH:

When he rattled them off to me, I was just taking notes.

LEG. ROMAINE:

Could I ask someone, since you work in the Planning Department, maybe to get some biographical information on the Judges that you mentioned? The one Judge that I do know from the list that you've read was Judge Stark and that would also -- by the way, that would also be a name that I definitely would consider and I would have to know a little bit more biographical information because the Judges that you read -- and I am somewhat familiar with the Judges in the Supreme Court from the mid 80's on, had to serve in the 60's or 70's or even prior to that because I'm not familiar with their names.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Didn't Judge Stark, doesn't he live in Riverhead?

LEG. ROMAINE:

Yes, he does. And as I said, he just wrote a history of -- of which is on my book shelf at work, because he autographed it and gave me a copy.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Yeah, I remember working there when he was the Administrative Judge.

LEG. ROMAINE:

Right. So I definitely would consider someone like Tom Stark if that's the recommendation of this committee; I'm here to work with this committee.

But I will leave with one last thought. And believe me, I shared my thoughts with Legislator Stern in no uncertain terms, that I thought it was in rather poor taste to suggest naming a building in my district without even contacting me and to submit the resolution. But again, he didn't draft it, it was drafted by the County Exec -- Chief County Executive who faxed it to him; Fortunately he didn't remove the fax number when he submitted the proposal to our Clerk.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Okay? So --

LEG. ROMAINE:

I have to meet with the County Executive now, but I thank you for your attention.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Thank you, Ed.

LEG. ROMAINE:

And let me leave it like this. If you wish to table it and you think we should have more discussion, I'm willing to consider other names.

I put forward Alan Oshrin's name because members of the Bar Association came forward and I had known Judge Oshrin as Clerk of the Court and he was the Administrative Judge, so I knew of him and we've had conversations and stuff like that, and I guess this is their way of saying let's remember someone who served and died in office whose the Chief Administrative Judge. But I'm willing to definitely consider other names from those who served on the bench in Riverhead -- generally speaking, either side of the river -- so that someone is acknowledged for their service in Suffolk County, because I always think it's nice and let's the legal community know that their service is not in vein to be jurists.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Ed, the building that you're naming --

MS. MAHONEY:

Can you speak up, please. I'm sorry, I can't hear you.

LEG. ROMAINE:

Right, the Annex.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

I'm sorry. The Annex that you're naming --

LEG. ROMAINE:

Yes.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Is this going to have rooms, like conference rooms and different things like that inside?

LEG. ROMAINE:

That I don't know. I assume there will be a jury room.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

But there's going to be courtrooms, right?

LEG. ROMAINE:

For example, there will be a jury room there. I don't want to be putting labels on everything, but there will be a jury room there and then there will be courtrooms there.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

That may be another way --

LEG. ROMAINE:

Absolutely.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Let's just say for argument's sake --

LEG. ROMAINE:

You know what, we could find that out.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

We could start building --

LEG. ROMAINE:

Could I ask you to contact DPW to find out?

MR. BORKOWSKI:

Certainly.

LEG. ROMAINE:

To find out how many courtrooms are going to be there? Because we may be able to honor all the Judges that the former Administrative Judge had suggested by naming each courtroom and doing a little thing and maybe a plastic, not a bronze --

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

That might work.

LEG. ROMAINE:

-- where you slip their little history and a photo of them and their service, because they all have photos in their robes.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

The bronze plaques with the photos.

LEG. ROMAINE:

Well, I wouldn't do bronze, I don't know if I would go to that expense, but I certainly would do something where, you know, "This courtroom is named for" so and so.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Yeah.

LEG. ROMAINE:

And those are all possibilities. But thank you for your time and I'll be happy to come back. And maybe we can get some research out of DPW and Planning --

MR. BORKOWSKI:

Certainly.

LEG. ROMAINE:

-- on the Judges and the configuration will be set to go.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Exactly.

LEG. ROMAINE:

Okay? Be well.

MS. WALSH:

Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Also, if we -- with due respect to our reporter, if we are talking about different things and we can make it off the record, I think the reporter is getting overwhelmed with all the stuff that -- we've got so much going at once, so if there's times where we can say, "Off the record," because transcribing all these notes gets a little hairy.

Okay, so now we are waiting for -- what's her name?

MR. MORAN:

We're going to have another presentation, I believe it's from the daughter --

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Of?

MR. MORAN:

-- I believe of Carmen Ramos Calixto-Laas.

MR. BIELANSKI:

Lehti Laas.

MR. MORAN:

There you go. You would know better than I, Brian.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Okay.

MR. MORAN:

So I believe she's going to be coming, that's what Lora Gellerstein is upstairs waiting on her arrival.

She just wants to come down and speak to that resolution a little bit.

I will say, and Lora can go into this in greater detail, I believe that this is just informational because I believe her intention is there still needs some technical corrections need to be made, so it might have to be tabled once again for those corrections to be made, but we can still get the information up here in your ultimate decision.

MS. WALSH:

Should we say that we're going to table Judge Oshrin's?

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Yeah, I'll make a motion to table ***Proposal No. 1 - Proposal to name the Supreme Court building located on Griffing Avenue in Riverhead the "Alan D. Oshrin Supreme Court Building"***.

MR. BIELANSKI:

I'll second it.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Okay, so ***Proposal No. 1 is tabled (VOTE: 6-0-0-1 Not Present: Paulette Bartunek)***.

We will wait on Proposal No. 2.

MR. BORKOWSKI:

So I'll bring in a set of plans or a plan of that building so we can work out --

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Yeah, because that might be the way to go.

MR. BORKOWSKI:

The different conference rooms and all that?

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Yeah.

MR. BORKOWSKI:

Okay.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

That might satisfy everybody.

Now let's go to new proposals. And with respect to Legislator Romaine, I will make a motion to table this ***Proposal to name the Supreme Court Building in Riverhead the "Distinguished Military Veterans Supreme Court Building"***. Does anybody want to second that?

MR. BIELANSKI:

I'll Second it.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Okay, so number one ***has been tabled (VOTE: 6-0-0-1 Not present: Paulette Bartunek)***. We'll let them duke it out.

Now, we're going to wait on Proposal No. 2. We can go off the record for a while.

(Brief Discussion Off Record: 10:25 AM - 10:28 AM)

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

We do have a presentation today, and we'll go back on the record with the presentation. Good morning.

DR. LAAS-RAMOS:

Hello. How are you?

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Okay. And if you would like to tell us your name and address the committee.

DR. LAAS-RAMOS:

Hello, everyone. My name is Dr. Laas-Ramos and I am the daughter of Carmen Ramos-Calixto-Laas who I know is something that's before you today. And I would just like to say, surprise, surprise, Mr. Brian Bielanski is here. We volunteer together at Huntington Community First-Aid Squad, I was just newly elected a Board of Director there and Brian is one of our Day Captains. So this is a nice surprise to sit down and see somebody I know here.

And actually, Brian, I will say, helped me last year when my Mom passed away, get some -- we needed some help in getting her home from -- she passed away in New Ghanda, Africa, on some missionary work. And Brian, who I am so indebted for forever, helped me get her story out on Channel 12 News, and from there we were able to get more stories on her to get her home. Also, Steve Israel, Congressmen Steve Israel helped with the Ugandan authorities and decreased the price, originally they were like it's going to cost \$15,000 to get her home, he brought it down to 5,000 which was, of course, more feasible, because at the time I was a student.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

You have quite a family background.

DR. LAAS-RAMOS:

So how would you like to begin this?

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

If you can give us your reasons for justification for the naming.

DR. LAAS-RAMOS:

Well, basically what happened just a few months ago, one of my mother's friends -- she's been a part of the Huntington Station community for over 40 years and she moved to Huntington Station in the early 60's --

MS. WALSH:

Now you're talking about your mother.

DR. LAAS-RAMOS:

Yes, my mother. She moved to Huntington -- I wasn't born in the early 60's. She moved to Huntington Station from Puerto Rico in the early 60's, she met my father, they bought a home in Huntington Station and Huntington Station is the only County, town she's ever resided in until her death, which she went away. She was a huge part of the St. Hugh's community and I am half Puerto Rican, half Estonian, and she really was what I would say the founders of the Spanish community in Huntington Station back in the 60's. And now, I mean, I don't know how familiar you all are with Huntington Station, but it is ever increasing the Hispanic population and she was -- she definitely had a profound impact on the town. And why? Because of St. Hugh's which is located right on Route 110 between Pulaski Road and East 9th Street.

She -- the corner that specifically one of her friends and I, we had discussed was the corner of Route 110 and Pulaski Road. Why this corner means so much is because I will tell you, I would say about five years ago my mother and one of the priests at St. Hugh's organized about a dozen people to

take this corner and basically clean it up. They planted flowers, all of them, and I remember -- you know, I went and I assisted them, I was in school so they did it on a weekend and I remember the following year she did it again, she got people together for this corner and I had donated some impatiens at that point. And I know she did that for about four to five years and one of the people who helped organize it with her wrote one of the letters on her behalf pertaining to that.

Also, some of the other contributions she did to Huntington Station and also to Huntington is she volunteered at the Huntington Senior Center, gave out coffee and tea. And it meant so much to her that when she took her one month vacation to Africa, she made sure she got a friend to take over her job of giving out coffee and juices to the seniors who now her friend, who also wrote a testimony on my Mom's behalf, felt so bad that my Mom passed away and now no one is coming back and giving out coffee and juices to the seniors, that he's continuing it which was very sweet.

Also, another thing my Mom did was on Route 110 -- and again, I don't know how familiar you are with Huntington Station -- and Depot Road there -- it's like a day laborer section there, it's in Huntington Station with a little section for day laborers, and every Thursday morning she would get up at 6 AM and go with one of the priests from St. Hugh's and some other parishioners and they would literally set up a little table for the day laborers to serve them hot drinks, because it's cold in the summer -- in the winter especially -- serve them hot drinks and give them buttered bread, and that was something she did every Thursday morning; I was like, "Wow, Mom," I was even shocked.

In 2001 she was in a car accident where we live on Olive Street, I mean, I'm not sure how far it is but it's about a 15 minute walk to get to where this corner is and the corner is right next to the church. She started walking in the beginning of 2001 and she would take the Route 110 route to go to church, so a lot of people would see her also because Route 110 is such a busy street. And my mother, as she walked, she would have a bag and she would have this little metal contraption I'll call it -- and I actually looked for it so I could bring it in to you guys but I couldn't find it -- and she picked up trash on her way walking back and forth, and she went to church literally every single day and she would pick up trash on Route 110. So this corner is also on Route 110 which means so much to not only me, the community, but also to her because, like I said, I don't see too many -- I don't see anybody going around walking on Route 110 picking up trash and putting it in the garbage and as soon as she would get to church she would throw it out.

Going back to that corner, when my Mom passed away Jacobsen's Funeral Home, which is on the opposite corner, basically donated the services to her because they knew her so well. She used to go to Jacobsen's Funeral Home and say to them, "Whatever flowers you have left over, I'll come get them and if you don't mind, can I just distribute them to the church and to other people in Huntington Station who can't afford flowers," and Jacobsen's was fine with that and they knew my Mom really well. So the summer before she passed -- actually, two summers before she passed away, she gives me this little key, I don't even know -- it's a little thing to open up water. She goes, "Whenever I can't do the watering and you're home from school, do me a favor, cross the street, go to Jacobsen's, they gave me permission to get this little key and basically open it up, get water out of it and cross the street and water the plants that we all planted." I said, "Mom, are you sure I can go to Jacobsen's," she said, "Yes, definitely," and then she passed away and they donated their services. They had said, they were like, "Your Mom was just so special to us and we thought it was sweet that she asked us permission to come use our water and literally cross the street." Let me tell you, I did it and I remember, I used to have to do like six trips across the street with a canister of water just to water these impatiens and all the other various flowers that they had planted earlier in the summer.

The other thing that I know that she did which was also part of Route 110 and just a little -- a couple of blocks away from where this corner is, there used to be a fruit market on Route 110, close to Depot Road. She asked the people -- and this was prior when she used to drive. She asked the people at the fruit market if they didn't mind after, you know, whatever fruits and vegetables that were still good that they didn't want to sell them anymore, if she could pick them up and distribute them to those in the community that couldn't afford fruits and vegetables, because we all know how expensive they are compared to other foods, and she did that. She literally -- I'd say she did it

twice a week, she picked up fruits and vegetables and she would basically go around Huntington Station and give them to people that she knew had children that really needed nutritious food.

So I wrote her biography, I really don't need to read it, I just basically told you some of the things that are in there. She was born in Puerto Rico in 1940, she had her first daughter at 19 and since Puerto Rico is a Common Wealth of the United States, she decided to come and basically find the American dream in New York and she met my father here. And like I said earlier, they bought their house, their first and only house in Huntington Station and lived there till they both passed away. I was their only child, I have -- the daughter she had when she was 19 is my half sister, I was their only child. And as you can tell, as I told you earlier, my Mom was such a public servant and she -- it kind of rolled over to me, because I've been part of Huntington Station for ten years now. And prior to her passing away, I got my M.D., a month after she passed away I got my Master's in Health Services Administration. So needless to say, she greatly impacted me.

Just some other coincidences, because the way my Mom passed away in Uganda -- by the way, she met some priests at St. Hugh's who worked in Uganda and she befriended them and she kept in touch with them through e-mail and they had always said, "We would love you to come visit our country," and they told her how poor it was and I remember, and I told her she was nuts, she packed two suitcases and only two outfits for herself, the rest of the suitcase were things to bring for the children in Africa. And I was like, "Mom, what are doing to wear?" You know, being I guess the younger person I am, I'm like, "How are you going to be there for a month with two or three outfits," and she's like, "No, don't worry about it." It was cute of her. So the way she passed away is such -- literally, she got there and a week later she passed away with such a bang that I felt it was so ironic that --

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Was she sick?

DR. LAAS-RAMOS:

No, she ended up having a massive heart attack, her first and only, no prior medical history. So she -- when she did pass away, because we were looking for help she did make Newsday, like I said, Brian had assisted us in getting her story on Channel 12, she was also in the Long Islander. And the last picture of her, which was a month before she passed away, she organized these interfaith once a year thing called {Via de la raza} which means Day of the Races which she would invite politicians from Huntington Station, and of course they would come because it was such a huge Spanish event, but it was also something that wasn't just for the Catholic community, it was for the faith.

And it was something that -- a Day of the Races, because it represented -- they tried to have every single -- as many countries as they could represented at this event; my mother organized that. So it always takes place in October around Columbus Day and this was the last picture taken of her, and this is her walking with flowers on top of her head. She had packed this huge basket of flowers, and I actually was representing Puerto Rico so I was ahead of her and I had no clue that she did this. So when people were talking about this corner and naming the corner and possibly getting a garden, she loved flowers so much and, you know, this is a bigger picture of that. Between telling me how she got people together at this corner to plant flowers, at our home we had flowers and then just this beautiful -- literally the last picture of her in New York with a basket of flowers on her head.

Some of the things that -- pictures of my Mom, I couldn't believe it, this is the cover of the Rocky Mountain News. In 1993, when the Pope went to Colorado for World Youth Day, that's my Mom on the cover of the Rocky Mountain News, which I couldn't believe it, I was like, "Wow." She also made this book, with the same picture, about the Pope and his trip to Colorado.

Another thing that my Mom made which I couldn't believe was the front page of the Daily News of 2000 when Cardinal O'Connor passed away, that is my mother at the steps of St. Patrick's Cathedral, which I'm shocked about. And lastly, here's a little picture that I will just pass around to

you, I love this picture, it was sent to me from -- it was just a day or two before she passed away in Uganda, this is her with some Ugandan child and the smile on her face, I'll pass it around, is what literally gave me joy with her passing, it was so bitter sweet and I know how happy she was. And you can tell by looking at that picture that even though she died at the age of 65, and that was way too young to pass away, just by looking at her smiling now and she was helping others which she had always done and thinking -- in Huntington Station and then she continued in Uganda where she ultimately passed away, means so much. So thank you for listening to me.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

We appreciate your story.

DR. LAAS-RAMOS:

And I think I made it really evident how important this corner is, to not only her but also the community. She gathered people together prior to what's there now to make it beautiful.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Thank you very much.

MS. GELLERSTEIN:

I have some testimony that she was able to gather, one for everybody, and then I have copies of the biography.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Is this Jon's legislation?

MS. GELLERSTEIN:

Yes. And then I have -- there were some questions that needed to be answered I guess from previous meetings, I have an e-mail from DPW which just states how much it would cost, and then I have a copy of a picture of the corner, to the best of our ability anyway.

MR. BIELANSKI:

If I can just say, while Lehti is still here, I didn't do nearly as much as she gave me credit for in this whole process. But in my 18 years as a journalist, I was able to interview some fantastically important people and some very normal people, those were my favorite stories I covered, talking to people about their stories. And every once in a while I end up going to a funeral or hearing about someone who I really didn't know and I would think to myself, "This would have been a story I would have loved to do," and that's what I learned about Lehti's Mom after she passed away.

DR. LAAS-RAMOS:

Thanks, Brian. Thank you again.

MS. WALSH:

Is there any way that we can scan those documents?

(Brief Discussion Off Record: 10:43 AM - 10:46 AM)

MS. GELLERSTEIN:

I went to -- you'll see the picture I handed out. There is at this moment brick pavers and Belgian block and a flag and signs put in which is -- they were all paid for by a grant to the Huntington Station BID, Business Improvement District. So I went before them this morning to say, you know, "We would like to try and do this, what do you think," I was asked to do that by one of the members, you know, because they had -- this is County property but they went, got the grant and they put this in. They're not completely for this because they believe that Carmen was part of a bigger group that really tended that corner. I think she was before their time and they just -- while we would see flowers, you live there, you know, I would see flowers there or whatever, it was lovely, the BID wanted something more and went with this. I would have to or we would have to, the

County would have to kind of disturb that in some way, so the BID isn't happy.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

The BID?

MS. GELLERSTEIN:

Huntington Station Business Improvement District.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Oh, okay.

MS. GELLERSTEIN:

Yeah, those members, and I went to their meeting this morning at eight. One of their concerns is the signs would be rather large; I spoke to Lorraine Hickey and the signs, standard Suffolk County signs are 18 by 24. What they typically do is one side facing one road and the other facing New York Avenue on the corner like this and they're afraid of how it's going to look. So I told them I would try and see if we can get smaller signs, maybe. I mean, Greg was saying -- I mean, I haven't stood there to see if you can even see a smaller sign driving by there; it's a very busy intersection so it might be --

MR. BIELANSKI:

What if they put a sign that's the same size as the "All-America City" sign?

MS. GELLERSTEIN:

They want the --

MR. BIELANSKI:

Maybe underneath it.

MS. GELLERSTEIN:

They want the "All-America City" sign down because that's kind of a -- I mean, while it's a wonderful, you know, honor, I think it's annually -- I don't know, it's kind of old so they want that down anyway, so they did suggest something in the middle. But Lorraine, like I said, said standard County practice is to put the two green signs with white lettering on either corner, so I can go back to her and see if they'll --

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Well, before we decide on the size of the sign, I think we ought to grasp the --

MS. GELLERSTEIN:

No, I know, I'm just --

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

-- legislation, just to see how everybody -- if there are pros and cons. And then we could work -- if this passed, then maybe we could work on what we -- I think we should talk it over for a while before we worry about the size of the sign.

MS. GELLERSTEIN:

The other thing, too, is if we need to change the resolution, I'm okay with tabling it and getting further information if we needed to. I don't know if you want me to stay for the discussion or not. If there are any questions I can answer at this point I will if you want, and then I can go, it's up to you.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Well, I don't know, does anybody have questions that need to be answered?

MS. WALSH:

I'm just -- did the BID get permission from the County to do this?

MS. GELLERSTEIN:

Yes. And I believe they got a grant to do it, also from the County.

MS. WALSH:

Okay. Because, you know, that's something I didn't realize that -- you know, we could look at a parcel and there could be other things that were planned for it that we didn't even know about.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

That's a very good point.

MS. GELLERSTEIN:

Because there's an intersection of a County Road and a State Road, so they also had to get permission from the State, they had to follow some regulations from the State as far as setback and that sort of thing, but they went through those.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

This is an intersection of a County and State Road.

MS. GELLERSTEIN:

Yes.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Now, this is the parcel right in here?

MS. GELLERSTEIN:

Yes, this is --

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

And that's --

MS. GELLERSTEIN:

There's like, you know, wood chips and bushes.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Okay. Now who owns this?

MS. GELLERSTEIN:

The County.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

The County, not the State.

MS. GELLERSTEIN:

No, the County. There's a parking lot, this truck is everywhere --

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Oh, that's a truck.

MS. GELLERSTEIN:

Yeah, it's not normally there, it was a bad day.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

It really does make it look ugly;

MS. GELLERSTEIN:

This is the church, actually; that's the school of the church and the church is behind here.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Now, the business district is not relative because of the size of the sign.

MS. GELLERSTEIN:

The size of the sign, they also don't want to --

MS. MAHONEY:

There's a lot of discussion going on here; I don't know who I'm taking down.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Okay, off the record, go off the record.

(Brief Discussion Off Record: 10:50 AM - 10:53 AM)

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Okay, we're back on the record. If everybody is agreement, ***Proposal No. 2 - Proposal to dedicate the corner of Pulaski Road and New York Avenue in Huntington as the "Carmen Ramos Calixto-Laas Corner"***.

I have a motion to -- do I have a motion to table this?

MS. BAY:

Motion to table.

MR. LITTELL:

Second.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Motion to table by Linda Bay, second by Justin Littell. All in favor? Opposed? Okay, ***Proposal No. 2 is also tabled (VOTE: 6-0-0-1 Not Present: Paulette Bartunek)***.

So that concludes our agenda of resolutions. We can go off the record if you want and talk about Standard Operating Procedures.

(Brief Discussion Off Record: 10:53 AM - 11 AM)

Okay, going to open up again. Before closing the meeting, this is the hardest part, we're going to set up a date for the next meeting; it seems to work out, though, when we do it together here. All right, we are now sitting at January 10th.

MS. BAY:

Do you have the committees, the new committee schedule?

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Oh, no; do you?

MS. BAY:

I have it upstairs.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Well, there's going to be Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday --

MS. BAY:

Do you have it down here?

MS. MAHONEY:

We haven't gotten it yet either.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Monday through Thursday committees?

MS. BAY:

Yeah, but we don't know what dates.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Well, doesn't it have to be the week before the --

MS. BAY:

Do you have the General Meeting date?

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Yes.

MS. BAY:

Oh, good, okay.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

The next General Meeting is February 6th, so committee week is the 28th, 29th, 1st, 2nd, so we'll avoid committee week. So committee week is January 28th, 29th, February 1st, the General Meeting is February 6th, so we should make the next meeting of this maybe -- is anybody -- we're closed on the 12th, right?

MR. BIELANSKI:

Yes, there's two weeks in a row, the 12th and the 19th.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Okay, so those two weeks are not good. How about Thursday the 8th of February; that's like a month away, right?

MR. BIELANSKI:

It sounds bad to me.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

That doesn't sound good?

MR. BIELANSKI:

I will not be here that day, my brother is getting married on the 10th, that's why; I knew there was a reason why that date stuck in my head.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Okay, so you're away then all that time.

MR. BIELANSKI:

The following week, or even like that week prior to that Thursday.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Well, that's committee week.

MR. BIELANSKI:

Oh, it is committee week.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Yeah, so that's not good. How about the 13th, February 13th?

MR. BORKOWSKI:

Thursday?

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

No, a Tuesday, then we get into the President's Week and vacation, so Tuesday here at ten o'clock?

MR. BIELANSKI:

That sounds fine to me.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Okay, so that's good. So Tuesday, February 13th at ten o'clock here we're going to have our next meeting and that concludes the business of today. I'll make a motion to adjourn.

MR. BORKOWSKI:

Second.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Seconded over here by Brian. All in favor? Opposed?

We are adjourned.

*(*The meeting was adjourned at 11:04 AM*)*

{ } - Denotes Spelled Phonetically