

A 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 the Presiding Officer's Conference Room of the William H. Rogers Legislature Building, Veterans Memorial Highway, Smithtown, New York, on February 13, 2007.

Members Present:

Legislator Lynne Nowick - Chairperson
Melissa Sellers - Aide/Representing Legislator D'Amaro
Linda Bay - Minority Leader Designee
Brian Bielanski - County Executive Designee
Carol Walsh - Suffolk County Planning Designee
Paulette Bartunek - Director/Suffolk County Human Rights
Ralph Borkowski - Department of Public Works/Landscape Architect

Also in Attendance:

Greg Moran - Aide to Legislator Nowick
Lora Gellerstein - Aide to Legislator Cooper
Deborah Harris - Aide to Legislator Stern

Minutes Taken By:

Lucia Braaten - Court Stenographer

[THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 10:42 A.M.]

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Okay. So on the agenda, we are back to Tabled Proposals. ***Proposal to name the Supreme Court Building located on Griffing Avenue in Riverhead the "Alan D. Oshrin Supreme Court Building"***. I believe that was on hold. We were going to come up with some other ideas.

MS. WALSH:

Which I didn't get to.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Okay. So motion to table?

MS. WALSH:

Please.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Second. Do I have a second?

MR. BIELANSKI:

Can I ask before we vote, we have a time period, don't we, on the statute that says if we don't act on something I believe within 60 days or 90 days?

MS. BARTUNEK:

Ninety.

MR. MORAN:

There is a time period --

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

It's a little questionable about time period, from what time, from the time we --

MS. BAY:

Ninety days subsequent to the receipt of such request.

MR. BIELANSKI:

Do we know when we received this?

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Does anybody have the original? There are no representatives here from Romaine's Office. I know we were going to look into.

MR. MORAN:

I will just add, if I may, I did speak with Legislator Romaine this morning just to see if he had any new information to add or anything else. He did not. He basically left it, as you know was discussed at the last meeting, he says it's up to the committee to decide what they want to decide at this point.

MS. BARTUNEK:

This is the same building as Number 3?

MS. HARRIS:

Yes, it is.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

This is in December. We did it in December and January. It sounds to me like --

MR. BIELANSKI:

Later, tabled October 17th.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

October 17th. When did it come to us?

MS. BAY:

I have correspondence from Lisa Keys dated November 29th.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

How about -- I'm not an attorney. Can we make a motion to extend the period of time in which we have to decide pending -- can we do that? Is anybody an attorney here? We can just do it and we are the committee. We just need a little more time.

MS. SELLERS:

I wasn't here last time.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

We were going to come up with some different ideas as to whether we could name maybe different rooms in the new building after various people, rather than name the whole building the "Alan Oshrin Building". I would like to give -- what did Legislator Romaine say, he has no other --

MR. MORAN:

Again, I spoke to him this morning. He said this is moving -- doesn't seem to be moving any further. He would let it go as it is and whatever the committee decides. So it's possible the committee could make whatever decision they make and whatever is worked on sounds like an alternate proposal, if somebody --

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

I would like to keep it tabled for just one cycle, just with due respect to Legislator Romaine, in case he comes back with anything. I think we have enough days. I think it came to us December, January. Let's do it.

MR. BIELANSKI:

If we table it, what will happen is --

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

It will die.

MR. BIELANSKI:

Or Legislator's discretion. He could ask it be taken up at committee, Ways and Means Committee, to make the decision.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

I just thought of something. If he laid it on the table in October, Linda, you would know better, if it isn't considered by December 31st, does it disappear?

MS. BAY:

No, that's at the end of this year. Next January we start new.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Okay. So October was okay for -- okay. If it's okay with the committee, just with due respect, let's just err on the side of safety, and if he comes back to us, it's going -- something is going to happen next time. You know, we have other ideas, just in case Legislator Romaine wants to talk to us one more time.

MS. WALSH:

And you know that was one of the things I wasn't exactly clear on, what it was that we were going to do. At one point, it sounded almost like we should have a search committee or some kind of a naming committee, because when Legislator Romaine was here, he asked about what other suggestions for names.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

You know, what we really -- we don't have to do anything. Frankly, it's going to probably -- if the committee opts not to vote for it, we'll know that next meeting. I just wanted to give it one more cycle. There's no rush to do anything. We'll just give it to until the next meeting. We'll take a vote if it's nay or yay. If it's not, it goes away, if it's yes, it happens. Okay with everybody? Tabled.

(Vote: Tabled 7-0-0-0)

Proposal to dedicate the corner of Pulaski Road and New York Avenue in Huntington as the "Carmen Ramos Calixto-Laas Corner". As you recall, Doctor -- what was her last name?

MS. GELLERSTEIN:

Dr. Laas.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Dr. Laas was here to speak to us. We adjourned this -- we tabled it, but I'm trying to think why we tabled it.

MS. GELLERSTEIN:

I asked you to table it because there were concerns from the community, which we've ironed out, concern about the size of the sign, all of which were ironed out. I worked with DPW, Huntington Station. We have a landscaper from Huntington who's willing to landscape the area.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

The signage --

MS. GELLERSTEIN:

Yeah, everyone who has had a concern has been addressed. It seems to me it would be good to go. I needed the time to iron out the bumps.

MS. WALSH:

So there's no problem with the other group?

MS. GELLERSTEIN:

No, no. In fact, there was only one gentlemen and there were people speaking for Henry who helped Carmen, and Henry wasn't upset about it. And Henry happens to still be living, so he -- and we -- one of the letters that you received was from the priest who they say was, you know, was integral in making these things happen with her or for her and he was in support of naming the corner after her. So it seems like everyone's concerns are addressed.

MR. BIELANSKI:

Motion to approve.

MS. SELLERS:

Second.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

I have a motion and a second. All in favor? Opposed? Okay. Number two is approved.

(Vote: 7-0-0-0).

Okay. I have a proposal -- thank you.

MS. GELLERSTEIN:

Thank you very much. Have a great day.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Proposal to name the new Supreme Court Building in Riverhead the "Distinguished Military Veterans Supreme Court Building". We had some talk about this the last time.

MS. HARRIS:

Steve was --

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Okay. I think we were talking about the fact that some of us didn't feel it was really a military veterans building. That's what I recall. Did anybody have anything they wanted to say about this? I kind of felt the Supreme Court, I didn't think -- although I think honoring the veterans is always a good thing, I don't think this is particularly the place. I think a court building, if we're going to honor everybody -- anybody, we did talk about other Judges that have served well as far as within the court system, Administrative Judges and that sort of thing. And I think that, in my opinion, there are many things that we can name after the veterans. Certainly, they deserve it. But for me, personally, I think a court building, if we can honor somebody that has been in the court system that has given to the system, that has been an administrator, or whatever it is, we decide over the years, we spoke about when Judge Cromarty's building was named after him, he had forty-two years of service and that's what I see for a court building. I don't know how anybody else feels.

MS. SELLERS:

At the previous meeting, did it meet the criteria? Did we go down the list of criteria? Did it meet it?

MS. WALSH:

I think we just tabled it, we didn't even do anything about it.

MR. BORKOWSKI:

Is this the same building as Number 1?

MS. HARRIS:

Yes.

MR. BIELANSKI:

Yes.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

No?

MS. HARRIS:

Yes.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Now, who are -- the voting members are one, two, three -- you're not a voting member.

MS. SELLERS:

Yes, I am.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

You are?

MS. SELLERS:

Legislator D'Amaro thought I was.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

I think it's the Legislators --

MR. MORAN:

Doesn't say representative of the --

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Are you a voting member?

MS. BAY:

I believe so.

MR. MORAN:

Yes, you are the designee, unless they want to amend that. We'd love for you to vote. It didn't say "Or designee" in Legislator Cooper's bill.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

So does anybody have any thoughts on this?

MS. BARTUNEK:

I'm wondering why we need the word "distinguished". It seems like an awfully long name.

MS. HARRIS:

It's a category by --

MR. BIELANSKI:

Yes.

MS. HARRIS:

It's a category of veterans.

MR. BIELANSKI:

District military veterans awards, and these are the veterans who would be named honoring those distinguished military veterans.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

I could see a Distinguished Military Veterans Plaza within the Supreme Court, but the building is a court building.

MR. BORKOWSKI:

I agree with you.

MS. BAY:

We do have the Veterans Plaza at the Dennison, don't we?

MS. WALSH:

Yes, we do.

MR. BORKOWSKI:

Yes, we have Armed Forces Plaza.

MS. BAY:

So it would almost be a duplication.

MS. SELLERS:

If it meets the criteria, isn't it up to Ways and Means to vote?

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

No, it's up to this committee to recommend.

MS. SELLERS:

Are we basing it on the criteria, or are we --

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

We're looking at the criteria, but we said right at the beginning that we would use our judgment also, because we felt the criteria sometimes is black and white and there are gray areas.

MS. WALSH:

Are these distinguished military veterans, is that a group, I mean, is it an actual group?

MR. BIELANSKI:

No, it's a designation that the Legislature gives particular veterans. It's an award.

MS. WALSH:

The Suffolk County Legislature?

MR. BIELANSKI:

I believe that's how it works. I'm not sure on that, but it's an award that's given out.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

I don't -- I'm not familiar with it.

MS. BAY:

I don't believe the Legislature's involved in that.

MS. WALSH:

It's just -- they're not a group that would have to contribute at least 50% of the development costs.

MR. BIELANSKI:

Well, neither would a Judge if they were named after the -- a Judge, they wouldn't be contributing to the cost of anything either.

MS. WALSH:

It's not a group or organization at all.

MR. BIELANSKI:

Right. I just look at a court building as being more than just about the people who work there. I mean, it's a -- a court building is as much for the people of the County as it is for people who work there and do their jobs there. I mean, I wouldn't be opposed to naming it after a Judge.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

I think somewhere along the line that's what's going to come up. My feeling is there's going to be, and you know we're talking here, it doesn't look like it's going to be an Oshrin Building, but my feeling is, somewhere along the line, there is going to be a time and a place and a distinguished member of the Judicial Branch that is going to be a wonderful candidate, maybe not this week or next week or next year, let's hope. And I think that that's going to be the place for that building, because I don't see the veterans -- again, you know, they need to be honored, of course, but that's where you take a plaza and you name it that, or a library within the Supreme Court Building, if you want. There are so many different things that can be named, but the building itself, in my opinion, that's a -- I would think that that's somewhere I see a judicial naming there somewhere,

but that's just my opinion.

MS. HARRIS:

Steve asked to table it and he would like to speak to you.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Sure, if that's okay with the committee. But let's take a look at the list here anyway. There's no doubt in my mind that veterans are deserving, so, I mean, that's why the list is probably not -- how do you say no? That's not even an issue, it's the issue of where the veteran's name goes.

MR. BORKOWSKI:

Where it is appropriate.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Where it's appropriate, yes.

MR. BORKOWSKI:

Naming the monuments, the war they were involved in.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Right. I know when they named the Federal Courthouse, they named it after a Federal -- D'Amato was a Federal Legislator.

MS. BAY:

Right.

MR. BORKOWSKI:

That's the big white one?

MS. BAY:

Yes.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

That's the one behind the Carlton -- Carlton Avenue, the Federal building over there.

MR. BORKOWSKI:

That's after D'Amato?

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

That's D'Amato, yeah. But it's a Federal courthouse. He was a Federal -- he's a Senator.

MS. BARTUNEK:

Right, I agree with you.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

The Arthur Cromarty Courthouse, Arthur Cromarty was an Administrative Judge for many years, many, many years.

MR. BORKOWSKI:

That makes sense.

MS. BAY:

An association, or of an association.

MR. BORKOWSKI:

Yeah a connection, judicial, court, you know, there's a connection there.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

That's what I see. But, certainly, we'll table it.

MR. BORKOWSKI:

Sounds logical to me.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

There's going to be -- come a time, I think there'll be a time, as I said, maybe not this year or next year, where there will be someone who has served a Judicial Branch of government proudly and it's a no-brainer.

MR. BIELANSKI:

We can choose to name it after anyone recommended, not naming it after anything for the time being.

MR. BORKOWSKI:

At this time.

MS. BAY:

The concept of a memorial for -- if Suffolk County is naming distinguished veterans, the concept of that I think is wonderful. I just don't know what the association with the courthouse is. You know, maybe Steve would want to --

MS. HARRIS:

I think Steve would want to speak to you.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

What's the rush to name it anyway?

MS. BAY:

I don't know all the discussion with the Oshrin. The fact that individual court rooms, I think that's much nicer to be able to name court rooms after individuals -- different judges that have served.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

And a plaza within, if anybody wants to name it. You brought up some really good points.

MS. WALSH:

Actually, where they had a lot of service, yes.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

That's why I'm thinking, along the way, there's going to be -- we're in no rush.

MS. WALSH:

That's the thing. Just because there's a new building doesn't mean it needs to be named right away.

MR. BIELANSKI:

Unless, of course, it's named after Legislator Nowick.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

And I've been saying it over and over --

MR. BIELANSKI:

She was pushing for that for five years, so --

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

-- And nobody's taking the bait.

MR. BIELANSKI:

I know.

MS. WALSH:

She's not old enough. She's not old enough, that's it. There you go.

MR. BIELANSKI:

And between now and then she could become a judge, which would make this the perfect location.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

So I'm holding off, we're waiting.

MR. BORKOWSKI:

Might be in competition with Andrew Crecca, right?

CHAIRPERSON:

Yes, yes, yes. My goodness.

MS. BAY:

That would be a discussion, wouldn't it?

MS. WALSH:

You know, I notice the Department of Labor Building across the way and it's named after someone, I have no idea who he is.

MR. MORAN:

Former Commissioner of Labor.

MS. BAY:

Former Commissioner.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Oh, Mike Falcone. Mike Falcone. He was the Commissioner of Labor. Oh, what a fine man.

MS. WALSH:

See now, and we have no information.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

But there's the point. There's the -- it's the Labor Building. He was the Commissioner of Labor. Who was William Rogers?

MS. WALSH:

He was the Clerk of the Legislature.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Legislature Building, Clerk of the Legislature.

MR. BIELANSKI:

What's your point?

MS. WALSH:

And they were all old.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

They named the Smithtown Senior Citizen Center after my father, so I have to go back and tell him that, a senior citizen.

MR. BIELANSKI:

Was he old?

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Yes he is? So do I have a motion? With due respect to Legislator Stern, I'll make a motion to table.

MR. BIELANSKI:

Second.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Second. All in favor? Opposed? And we're going to table that. *(Vote: Tabled 7-0-0-0)*.

I don't see anything else on our agenda. Motion to adjourn. I have a motion and I'll second it. And everybody have a nice afternoon.

[THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 11:08 A.M.]