

RESOLUTION NO.: R-2024-009

Approving the Honorary Naming of the 800 to 1100 blocks of Washington Street "Columbia's Historic Black Business District"

WHEREAS, the 800 block of Washington Street houses one of Columbia's oldest African American churches, Zion Baptist Church. With a congregation dating back to 1865 and a historic structure listed on the National Register of Historic Places, it has played a key role in numerous historic events and movement in Columbia. Matilda Evens held multiple clinics at the church. Victory Savings Bank hosted shareholder meetings there. Students gathered at the church to engage in demonstrations, including one at the South Carolina Statehouse which led to the U.S. Supreme Court case *Edwards v. South Carolina*; and

WHEREAS, in 1955, under the leadership of Dr. Henry Dobbins Monteith, Victory Savings Bank constructed a new bank building at 919 Washington Street, where it remained until 1985. The 900 block of Washington Street also includes a brick building that once house the Robert Simons' blacksmith, wheelwright, and auto mechanic shop. This building is prominently featured in the images of acclaimed photographer Richard Samuel Roberts; and

WHEREAS, the 1000 and 1100 blocks of Washington Street served as the district's main corridor. Many businesses were located in this area to include the North Carolina Mutual Building, Fannie Land's Hairdresser, Pinckney's Funeral Home, Blue Ribbon Taxi Club, Count's Drug Store, Victory Savings Bank, Phoenix Care, Nathaniel J. Frederick's Law Office, Regal Theater, Richard Samuel Roberts Photography Studio, Dr. Henry Cooper's dental practice, Prince Hall Masonic Lodge, as well as many other businesses; and

WHEREAS, As a result of urban renewal, many African Americans were pushed out of downtown Columbia. There are few structures remaining today. They include Zion Baptist Church, the North Carolina Mutual Building, the Pearson Funeral Home and the Victory Savings Bank building; and

WHEREAS, organizations have worked to preserve and interpret the history of the district. Zion Baptist Church, the North Carolina Mutual Building, Pearson's Funeral Home and the N.J. Frederick home have been listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This historic district has been included on tours and websites. In August of 2023, the Intersection of Main Street exhibit was on display at the Columbia Museum of Art; NOW THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED this 20th day of February, 2024, that the Mayor and City Council of the City of Columbia hereby approve the honorary naming of the 800 to 1100 blocks of Washington Street "Columbia's Historic Black Business District". The design and color of the honorary signs shall be subject to the approval of the Director of Public Works.

Requested by:

Councilwoman Herbert

Approved by:

Cheresa B. Wilson

City Manager

Approved as to form:

City Attorney

Introduced: 2/20/2024

Final Reading: 2/20/2024

Mayor

ATTEST:

Gianna D. Hammond

City Clerk

APPLICATION



HONORARY STREET/FACILITY AND SITE NAMING

Please see submission checklist for materials necessary for application
SUBMISSION MATERIALS MUST ACCOMPANY APPLICATION

Application form and materials are DUE AT 4:00 p.m. thirty (30) days prior to ceremony.

Is the designation: ☒ Street Naming Topper
(sign will be posted above standard city street signs)
☐ Facility and site naming

Checklist: ☒ Application
☒ Council Member Sponsor
☒ Letter(s) of Support

Rev. M. Andrew Davis/Calvernetta Beasley Williams
Applicant Signature*

zionbchurch@yahoo.com
E-mail Address

Rev. M. Andrew Davis/ Calvernetta Beasley Williams
Print Name

801 Washington St., Columbia, SC 29201
Mailing Address

803-779-2809
Phone Number

February 1, 2024
Date

Check and initial acknowledging application requirements.

☒ cbw Signage wording cannot exceed twenty-six characters

☒ cbw Any changes to initial request must be made no more than 20 days prior to ceremony in writing

☒ cbw Signage wording and resolution will be finalized 15 days prior to ceremony

☒ cbw Applicant must provide letter(s) of support from neighborhood association, institution or business(s) impacted by the proposed honorary street, facility or site naming

APPLICATION



HONORARY STREET/FACILITY AND SITE NAMING

1. Name of individual or organization to be honored:

Zion Baptist Church

2. Name of street, facility or site proposed for designation:

Please list the intersecting street and block number. No more than two signs are permitted per designation.

Corner of Gadsden and Washington Street

800-1100 Blocks Washington Street East to West

3. Attach sheet describing the significant contribution(s) this individual or organization has made in the community:

4. Location, date and time of unveiling ceremony:

March 3, 2024

5. Council Member Sponsor:

Name: Councilwoman Tina Herbert

FOR STAFF USE:

Council Member Sponsor: ☐ Approved ☐ Rejected

Public Works: ☐ Approved ☐ Rejected

Review Type: ☐ Staff ☐ Council _____ Council Date



801 Washington Street
Columbia, South Carolina 29201
Office: 803.779.2809 /Fax: 803.779.1004
Reverend Dr. M. Andrew Davis, Senior Pastor

December 19, 2023

The Honorable Daniel J. Rickenmann
Councilman Howard E. Duvall, Jr.
Councilman Edward H. McDowell, Jr.
Councilman Will Brennan
Councilwoman Aditi Bussells
Councilwoman Tina N. Herbert
Councilman Peter M. Brown
1737 Main Street
Columbia, SC 29201

Supporting Businesses:
Gadsden and Washington Streets

Greetings Honorable Mayor, City Council and Community Businesses:

I am Rev. Dr. M. Andrew Davis, Senior Pastor of the Historic Zion Baptist Church, Columbia, South Carolina located at the corner of 801 Washington Street.

It is commendable of the council to honor great men and women and organizations that have contributed to the advancement of our city by way of memorializing their names on buildings and street corners.

Thank you for honoring those who have had a significant impact in our community. As you continue to consider honoring other organizations by naming street corners, please consider Zion Baptist Church. It is my recommendation that the intersection of Gadsden/Washington Streets be memorially named "Zion Baptist Square." Zion has been the apex of black wall street in the downtown business district for over 157 years and has clearly made a difference in our community. Zion has played and continues to play an integral role in the Civil Rights Movement. Zion remains the launching point for the annual "King Day at the Dome Rally," held each Martin Luther King Day. The "King Day at the Dome" began on the front steps of Zion in January 2000 and culminated in a rally at the State House where thousands of people have gathered to exercise their voice and have collaborated for the purpose of peace and justice in our community.

If our request is accepted this will serve as a marker for future generations.

To our neighborhood businesspeople, thank you for your letter of support. Please email your letter of support to zionbchurch@yahoo.com or sign this signature support letter to show that you are in support of this endeavor. We are thanking you in advance.

Sincerely,

Rev. Dr. M. Andrew Davis
Rev Dr. M. Andrew Davis
Senior Pastor

"Over a century of service to the community"



Center for Civil Rights History and Research
Ernest F. Hollings Special Collections Library

November 10, 2023

Honorable Daniel J. Rickenmann
Mayor of Columbia, South Carolina.
Columbia City Hall
1737 Main Street.
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Dear Mayor Rickenmann:

I am very pleased to write a letter supporting the honorary renaming of the 800 to 1100 blocks of Washington Street as Columbia's "Historic Black Business District." This timely recognition brings renewed attention to a vital and vibrant corridor in Columbia's history.

The 800 block of Washington Street houses one of Columbia's oldest African American churches, Zion Baptist. With a congregation dating to 1865 and a historic structure listed on the National Register of Historic Places, it has played a key role in numerous historic events and movements in Columbia. Dr. Matilda Evans held multiple clinics at the church, Victory Savings Bank hosted shareholder meetings there, and students gathered there to engage in demonstrations, including one at the South Carolina Statehouse that led to the U.S. Supreme Court case *Edwards v. South Carolina*.

On the 900 block of Washington Street, several residential homes were intermixed with businesses, including hotels, grocery stores, and funeral homes. In 1955, under the leadership of Dr. Henry Dobbins Monteith, Victory Savings Bank constructed a new bank building at 919 Washington Street, where it remained until 1985. The 900 block of Washington Street also includes a brick building that once housed the Robert Simions' blacksmith, wheelwright, and auto mechanic shop. This building is prominently featured in the images of acclaimed photographer Richard Samuel Roberts.

Close to the intersection with Assembly Street, the 1000 and 1100 blocks of Washington Street served as the district's main corridor. Here, in 1930, a visitor could find the North Carolina Mutual Building, Fannie Land's Hairdresser, Pinckney's Funeral Home, Blue Ribbon Taxi Club, Count's Drug Store, Victory Savings Bank, Phoenix Café, Nathaniel J. Frederick's law office, Regal Theatre, Richard Samuel Roberts photography studio, Dr. Henry Cooper's dental practice, Prince Hall Masonic Lodge, and many more businesses and institutions. In the years following, the area also included the offices of major civil rights lawyers Harold Boulware and Matthew J. Perry, Jr. and the *Lighthouse and Informer* newspaper, published by John Henry McCray. For

decades, these blocks served as a hub of commerce, especially on the weekends when people from around the region visited for shopping and entertainment. Today, the North Carolina Mutual Building, at the corner of Park and Washington streets, stands as a vital landmark, amid a vanishing historical landscape.

Since the 1970s, Washington Street has changed dramatically. As a result of urban renewal, many African Americans were pushed out of downtown Columbia. The loss of a customer base and the desegregation of white-owned businesses adversely impacted African American stores and institutions. Today, few of the structures that made up the district remain. They include Zion Baptist Church, the North Carolina Mutual building, the Pearson Funeral Home, and the Victory Savings Bank building.

In the face of the loss of the physical community, organizations have worked to preserve and interpret the district's history. Zion Baptist Church, the North Carolina Mutual building, Pearson's Funeral Home, and the N. J. Frederick home have been listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Columbia SC63, the Center for Civil Rights History and Research, and Historic Columbia have conducted research on the historic district and have included it on tours and websites. In August 2023, these organizations opened the *Intersection on Main Street* exhibit at the Columbia Museum of Art. Based on extensive research on the Historic Black Business District, the *Intersection* exhibit emphasizes the vital role that this area played in African American life in Columbia.

Given this remarkable history and given the recent efforts to highlight the area's extraordinary legacy, I am delighted to join local citizens and organizations in encouraging city leaders to designate the 800 through 1100 blocks of Washington Street as the "Historic Black Business District."

With my best regards,



Bobby J. Donaldson, Ph.D.
Associate Professor, Department of History
James E. and Emily E. Clyburn Chair of Public Service and Civic Engagement
Executive Director, Center for Civil Rights History & Research
bdonaldson@sc.edu
[803.777.2220](tel:803.777.2220)



801 Washington Street
Columbia, South Carolina 29201
Office: 803.779.2809 /Fax: 803.779.1004
Reverend Dr. M. Andrew Davis, Senior Pastor

December 19, 2023

Councilman Tyler Bailey
Councilwoman Tina N. Herbert
Councilman Edward H. McDowell, Jr.
1737 Main Street
Columbia, SC 29201

Greetings,

I am Rev. Dr. M. Andrew Davis, Senior Pastor of the Historic Zion Baptist Church, Columbia, South Carolina located at the corner of 801 Washington Street.

It is commendable of the Columbia City Council to honor great men and women and organizations that have contributed to the advancement of our city by way of memorializing their names on buildings and street corners.

Thank you for honoring those who have had a significant impact in our community. As the council continue to consider honoring other organizations by naming street corners, we are asking that the council consider Zion Baptist Church. It is our recommendation that the intersection of Gadsden and Washington Streets (Corner) as Zion Baptist Square and 800 to 100 blocks of Washington Street from west to east as Columbia's Historic Black Business District. Zion has been the apex of black wall street in the downtown business district for over 157 years and has made a difference in our community. Zion has played and continues to play an integral role in the Civil Rights Movement. Zion remains the launching point for the annual "King Day at the Dome Rally," held each Martin Luther King Day. The "King Day at the Dome" began on the front steps of Zion in January 2000 and culminated in a rally at the State House where thousands of people have gathered to exercise their voice and have collaborated for the purpose of peace and justice in our community.

If our request is accepted this will serve as a marker for future generations.

Zion is prayerful that you will sponsor our request, and we thank you in advance for your support in this endeavor.

Sincerely,

Rev. Dr. M. Andrew Davis
Rev Dr. M. Andrew Davis
Senior Pastor

"Over a century of service to the community"



Reverend Dr. M. Andrew Davis, Senior Pastor

Intersection of Gadsden /Washington Streets

Date	Name (s)	Business
11/11/2023	Matzi Arizaga	Paulin Willey Law Firm



Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Office: 803.779.2809 /Fax: 803.779.1004

Reverend Dr. M. Andrew Davis, Senior Pastor

zionbchurch@yahoo.com

Community Business Signature Support

for

Memorial Street Name

Zion Baptist Church Square

Intersection of Gadsden /Washington Streets

Thank You.

Date	Name (s)	Business
11/1/2023	Darell Thompson Mario Parker	Masters Touch Massage Therapy



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zionbchurch@yahoo.com

Community Business Signature Support
for

Memorial Street Name

Zion Baptist Church Square

Intersection of Gadsden / Washington Streets

Thank You.

Columbia's Historic
Black Business District

Date	Name (s)	Business
12/18/23	Karen Broach	Lorick Office Products



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Columbia, South Carolina 29201
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Community Business Signature Support

for

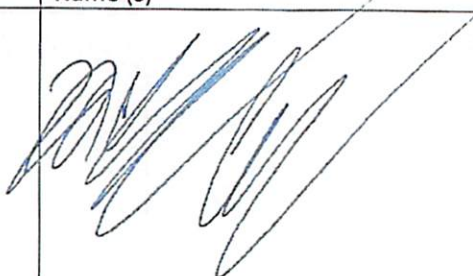
Memorial Street Name

Zion Baptist Church Square

*Columbia's Historic
Black Business District*

Intersection of Gadsden /Washington Streets

Thank You.

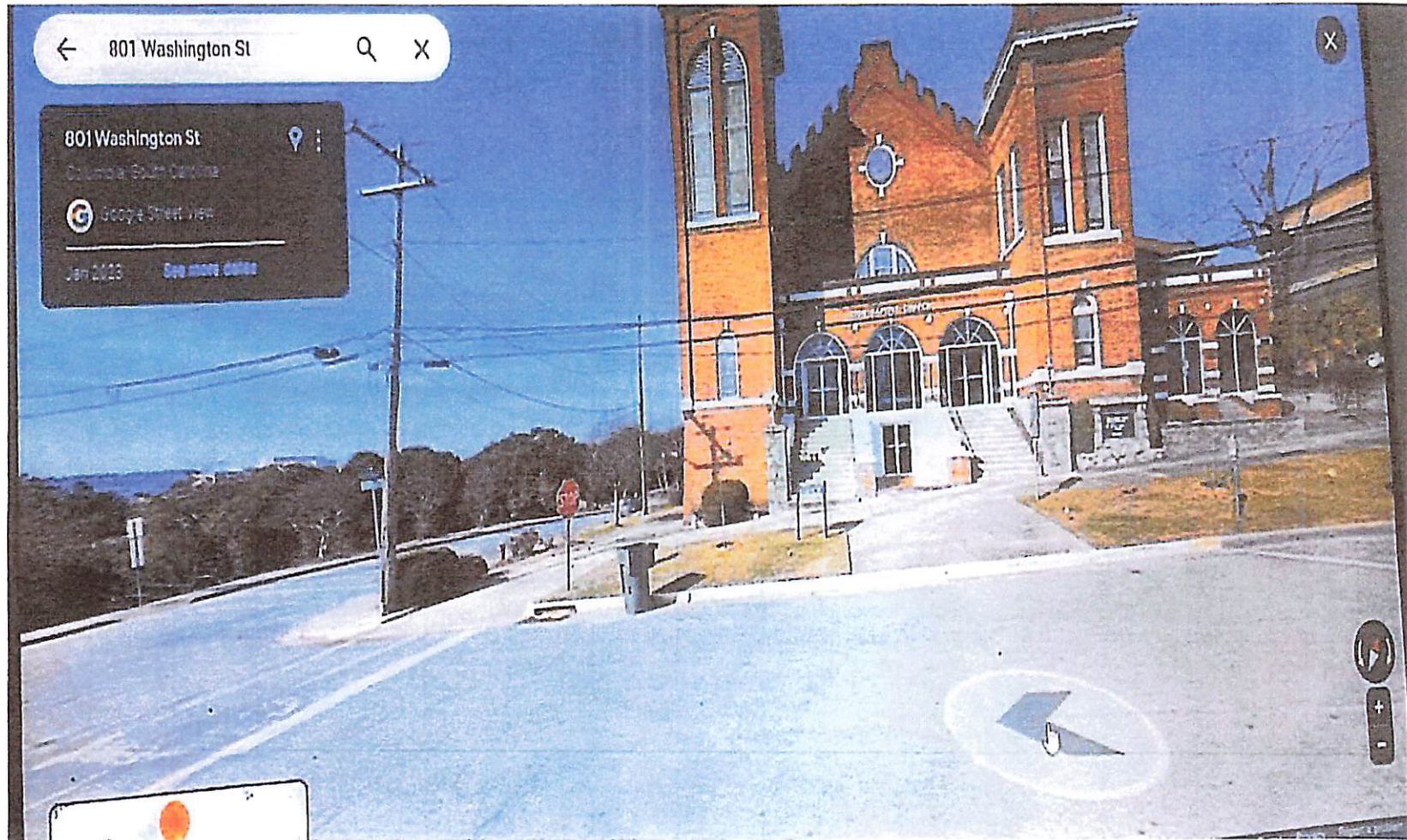
Date	Name (s)	Business
12-18-23		The Architect

* 800 to 1100 Blocks Washington Street



Columbia's Historic Black Business District

Corner Gadsden/Washington



Zion Baptist Square

Belton, Chanique J

From: Herbert, Tina N
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2024 1:32 PM
To: Belton, Chanique J
Cc: McDowell Jr, Edward H; Bailey, Tyler D; Herbert, Tina N
Subject: Request for Street Naming (topper) for Historical Purposes - Washington Street

Columbia's Historic Black Business District is a significant historical asset to the city, but very few people know anything about it. It would be extremely encouraging to local minority owned businesses and young entrepreneurs to highlight it and Zion Baptist. I am imagining that this will also provide opportunities for schools to bring students for field trips. The more that we highlight the significance of the district, the more attention it will receive. This is just the first step!!

Let's get this done during Black History Month!!

Tina Herbert