

**COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
COMMITTEE REPORT**

1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20004

DRAFT

TO: All Councilmembers

FROM: Chairman Phil Mendelson
Committee of the Whole

DATE: December 17, 2019

SUBJECT: Report on Bill 23-172, the “Alethia Tanner Park Designation Act of 2019”

The Committee of the Whole, to which Bill 23-172, the “Alethia Tanner Park Designation Act of 2019” was referred, reports favorably thereon with amendments, and recommends approval by the Council.

CONTENTS

I.	Background and Need.....	1
II.	Legislative Chronology.....	4
III.	Position of the Executive	4
IV.	Comments of Advisory Neighborhood Commissions	4
V.	Summary of Testimony.....	4
VI.	Impact on Existing Law	5
VII.	Fiscal Impact.....	5
VIII.	Section-by-Section Analysis.....	5
IX.	Committee Action.....	5
X.	Attachments	6

I. BACKGROUND AND NEED

On March 5, 2019, Bill 23-172, the “Alethia Tanner Park Designation Act of 2019,” was introduced by Councilmembers McDuffie, Evans, Nadeau, Grosso, Allen, Bonds, R. White, Cheh, and Gray, to officially designate the park located in Square 3581, Lots 16 and Lot 809 as Alethia Tanner Park. The committee print is amended to reference the specific square and lot numbers of the park rather than a street address. An official naming of a public space typically enables installation of signage.

Alethia “Lethe” Tanner and her sisters Sophia and Laurena Browning were born into slavery in the late 1700s in Prince George’s County, Maryland. Alethia Tanner is best known as a businesswoman and philanthropist who bought her own and her family’s freedom.

Alethia and Sophie kept a small garden with the consent of plantation owner Rachel Pratt where she grew produce for her family and was able to sell extra vegetables in local markets. In the early 1800s, Ms. Tanner opened a vegetable market in President’s Square, known today as Lafayette Square. She built up a steady clientele, notably including Thomas Jefferson during his

time as the third President of the United States. By 1810, Ms. Tanner had raised enough money to buy her freedom from Rachel Pratt for the sum of \$1,400 – roughly the equivalent of three years wages of a skilled tradesman.¹

In 1826, Tanner was able to purchase the freedom of her older sister Laurena and five of Laurena’s children including John Cook, Sr. who earned enough money as a shoemaker to pay his aunt back.² In 1828 she purchased the freedom of other nieces, nephews, and their children.³ In all she freed 19 members of her family. She then went on to purchase the freedom of her neighbors including Lotty Riggs and her four children, John Butler who would become a minister, and Charlotte Davis.⁴

Ms. Tanner continued her work in building educational, religious, and social institutions to protect the African American community. In 1807, along with her brother-in-law George Bell and two other men, she contributed funds to start the first school for free Black children in Washington.⁵ The school, known as the Bell School was located on 2nd and D Streets, SE before it was relocated to 1150 Varnum Street, NE (current day grounds of Providence Hospital).

Alethia Tanner has been identified as a “remarkable Christian woman.”⁶ By 1821, Ms. Tanner and several family members – including George Bell and John Cook – along with other parishioners who felt unwelcomed in the predominantly segregated Methodist churches in Washington founded the Israel Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church. At one point, the church was nearly sold at auction by the creditors holding the mortgage and it was Alethia Tanner and her sister and brother-in-law who stepped in to pay the mortgage and save the church. In 1838, her nephew John Cook founded the Union Bethel Church.⁷ By 1872, Israel Bethel and Union Bethel merged into Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Church that is still located on L Street, NW.⁸ Metropolitan AME remains the oldest Black church in the District’s original 10 square miles. As a result of her endeavors, Ms. Tanner was regarded as “the mother of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.”⁹

Alethia Tanner lived to see the District of Columbia Emancipation Act signed into law by Abraham Lincoln on April 16, 1862 and the Emancipation Proclamation less than a year later. By the time of her death in 1864, Ms. Tanner had accumulated property and savings to pass on to her nephews and grandnephews, including a frame house sitting across from what is now Franklin Park on H Street, N.W.¹⁰

¹ John G. Sharp, *Alethia “Lethe” Browning Tanner*, Washington D.C. Genealogy Trails (accessed December 10, 2019, 10:00 AM), <http://genealogytrails.com/washdc/biographies/bio6.html>. [hereinafter Sharp]

² Sharp, *supra* note 1.

³ JESSIE CARNEY SMITH, *NOTABLE BLACK AMERICAN WOMEN*, BOOK II 624 (1996) [hereinafter Smith]

⁴ SMITH *supra* note 2 at 625.

⁵ Sharp, *supra* note 1.

⁶ SMITH *supra* note 2 at 625.

⁷ SMITH *supra* note 2 at 625.

⁸ Carol Ann Dennis, *Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Church, Washington, D.C.*, *BLACK PAST* (September 12, 2014), <https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/metropolitan-ame-church-washington-d-c-1821>.

⁹ SMITH *supra* note 2 at 625.

¹⁰ Sharp, *supra* note 1.

Legal Background

The Street and Alley Closing and Acquisition Procedures Act of 1982, effective March 10, 1983 (D.C. Law 4-201; D.C. Official Code § 9-204.01 *et seq.*) (“Act”) establishes procedures for closing streets and alleys, opening new streets and alleys, and the naming of public spaces. Specifically, the Act authorizes the Council to designate or change the name of any public space in the District of Columbia.¹¹ Public spaces include “any public street, alley, circle, bridge, building, park, other public place or property owned by or under the administrative control or jurisdiction of the District of Columbia.”¹²

The Act establishes a notice requirement for the official designation of public spaces; at least 30 days prior to the scheduled public hearing, the initiator of the proposed designation shall submit a copy of the legislation for review and comment to each Advisory Neighborhood Commission (“ANC”) in which the public space is located. Regarding Bill 23-172, ANC 5E was notified of the proposed name. On December 10, 2019, the Committee received a letter from Commissioner, ANC 5E03, expressing community support for the Alethia Tanner Park Designation.

The Act also promulgates requirements that the Mayor must meet prior to consideration of a public space designation by the Council. First, the Mayor shall provide the Council with comments on the proposed designation submitted by any District agency with jurisdiction over the public space to be designated.¹³ DPR, which will have jurisdiction over the park when completed, attended the November 26, 2019 hearing on Bill 23-172 and submitted comments as part of its testimony, thus meeting this requirement. Second, prior to consideration of a designation by the Council, the Mayor shall provide to the Council a surveyor’s plat showing the public space to be designated, including any adjacent and abutting squares to the designation.¹⁴ The Office of the Surveyor provided the Council with a plat of the designation prior to mark up by the Committee of the Whole and subsequently provided an updated plat reflecting the entirety of the proposed park site. That plat is attached to this report.

After the legislation becomes law and all conditions required by the Council and the Act have been satisfied, the Mayor will install signage denoting the public space name.¹⁵ The signage shall conform to the policies of the agency with jurisdiction over the public space, in this case DPR.¹⁶ Additionally, the Surveyor of the District of Columbia shall record a copy of the act and the Surveyor’s plat in the Office of the Surveyor.¹⁷

Officially designating the park located at 227 Harry Thomas, Sr. Way, N.E. (Square 3581, Lots 16 and 809), in Ward 5, as the Alethia Tanner Park will honor the legacy of Alethia Tanner

¹¹ See D.C. Official Code § 9-204.01 *et seq.*

¹² D.C. Official Code § 9-204.11(2)(A).

¹³ D.C. Official Code § 9-204.22(b).

¹⁴ D.C. Official Code § 9-204.22(c)(1)-(3).

¹⁵ D.C. Official Code § 9-204.24(b).

¹⁶ *Id.*

¹⁷ D.C. Official Code § 9-204.24(c).

as a pioneering African American woman in the District. Thus, the Committee of the Whole recommends the approval of Bill 23-172, the “Alethia Tanner Park Designation Act of 2019.”

II. LEGISLATIVE CHRONOLOGY

- March 5, 2019 Bill 22-406, the “Alethia Tanner Park Designation Act of 2019” is introduced by Councilmember McDuffie and referred to the Committee of the Whole.
- March 15, 2019 Notice of Intent to Act on Bill 23-172 is published in the *DC Register*.
- October 25, 2019 Notice of Public Hearing on Bill 23-172 is published in the *DC Register*.
- November 26, 2019 A Public Hearing is held on Bill 23-172 by the Committee of the Whole.
- December 17, 2019 The Committee of the Whole marks up Bill 23-172.

III. POSITION OF THE EXECUTIVE

Ella Faulkner, Deputy Director of Administrative Services, Department of Parks and Recreation, testified that the Executive supports the legislation and applauded the community engagement in selecting the name to put forward to the Council. Her testimony is attached as well as summarized below.

IV. COMMENTS OF ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSIONS

Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner Courtney Segmen, 5E03 sent a letter expressing community support for the proposed naming.

V. SUMMARY OF TESTIMONY

The Committee of the Whole held a public hearing on several bills including Bill 23-172 on Thursday, November 26, 2019. The testimony summarized below pertains to Bill 23-172.

Copies of written testimony are attached to this report.

Susan Cook, Descendant of Alethia Tanner, testified in support of the proposed designation.

Robin-Eve Jasper, President, NoMa Parks Foundation and Business Improvement District, testified in support of the proposed designation.

Ella Faulkner, Deputy Director for Administrative Services, Department of Parks and Recreation, testified that the Executive supports the designation.

The Committee received no testimony or comments in opposition to Bill 23-172.

VI. IMPACT ON EXISTING LAW

Bill 23-172 has no impact on existing law. D.C. Official Code § 9-204.01 authorizes the Council to designate (i.e. name) any public space, including facilities.¹⁸ Further, the Act generally provides that no public space shall be named in honor of any living person or in honor of any person who has been deceased less than two years.¹⁹ Ms. Tanner passed away in 1864.

VII. FISCAL IMPACT

Funds are sufficient in the fiscal year 2020 budget and proposed fiscal year 2021 through fiscal year 2023 budget and financial plan to implement the provisions of the proposed legislation. DPR testified that fabrication of signage for the new park can be absorbed, as noted in the Fiscal Impact Statement (attached).

VIII. SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

<u>Section 1</u>	States the short title of Bill 23-172.
<u>Section 2</u>	Officially designates the park located in Square 3581, Lots 16 and Lot 809 as Alethia Tanner Park.
<u>Section 3</u>	Adopts the Fiscal Impact Statement.
<u>Section 4</u>	Establishes the effective date by stating the standard 30-day congressional review language.

IX. COMMITTEE ACTION

¹⁸ Street and Alley Closing and Acquisition Procedures Act of 1982, effective March 10, 1983 (D.C. Law 4-201).

¹⁹ See D.C. Code § 9-204.05.

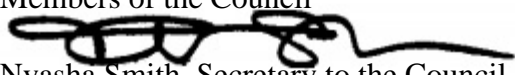
X. ATTACHMENTS

1. Bill 23-172 as introduced.
2. Written Testimony.
3. Letter from ANC 5E03.
4. Surveyor's Plat.
5. Fiscal Impact Statement for Bill 23-172.
6. Legal Sufficiency Determination for Bill 23-172.
7. Committee Print for Bill 23-172.

COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington D.C. 20004

Memorandum

To : Members of the Council

From : 
Nyasha Smith, Secretary to the Council

Date : March 06, 2019

Subject : Referral of Proposed Legislation

Notice is given that the attached proposed legislation was introduced in the Legislative Meeting on Tuesday, March 5, 2019. Copies are available in Room 10, the Legislative Services Division.

TITLE: "Alethia Tanner Park Designation Act of 2019", B23-0172


INTRODUCED BY: Councilmembers McDuffie, Grosso, Bonds, Cheh, Evans, Nadeau, Allen, R. White, and Gray

The Chairman is referring this legislation to the Committee of the Whole.

Attachment

cc: General Counsel
Budget Director
Legislative Services

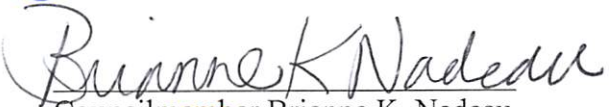
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41




Councilmember Jack Evans



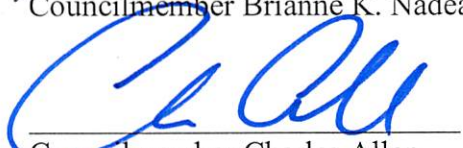
Councilmember Kenyan R. McDuffie



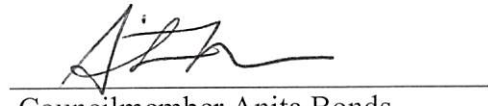
Councilmember Brianne K. Nadeau




Councilmember David Grosso



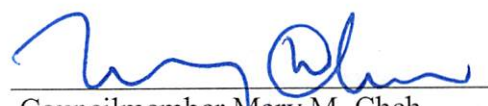
Councilmember Charles Allen




Councilmember Anita Bonds



Councilmember Robert C. White, Jr.



Councilmember Mary M. Cheh



Councilmember Vincent C. Gray

A BILL

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

To designate the park located at 227 Harry Thomas Way, N.E., in Ward 5, as Alethia Tanner Park.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this act may be cited as the “Alethia Tanner Park Designation Act of 2019”.

Sec. 2. Pursuant to section 401 of the Street and Alley Closing Acquisition Procedures Act of 1982, effective March 10, 1983 (D.C. Law 4-201; D.C. Official Code § 9-204.01), the Council designates the park located at 227 Harry Thomas Way, N.E., in Ward 5, as “Alethia Tanner Park”.

Sec. 3. Transmittal.

1 The Council shall transmit a copy of this act, upon its effective date, to the Director of the
2 Department of Parks and Recreation.

3 Sec. 4. Fiscal impact statement.

4 The Council adopts the fiscal impact statement in the committee report as the fiscal
5 impact statement required by section 4a of the General Legislative Procedures Act of 1975,
6 approved October 16, 2006 (120 Stat. 2038; D.C. Official Code § 1-301.47a).

7 Sec. 5. Effective date.

8 This act shall take effect following approval by the Mayor (or in the event of veto by the
9 Mayor, action by the Council to override the veto), a 30-day period of congressional review as
10 provided in section 602(c)(1) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act approved December
11 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code § 1-206.02(c)(1)), and publication in the District of
12 Columbia Register.

Susan Cook's testimony on behalf of Alethia Tanner Park

November 26, 2019

DC City Council

Thank you for allowing me to speak before you on behalf of the naming of Alethia Tanner Park.

There is a belief that you die twice: once when your body physically dies, and a second time when people stop saying your name.

Fortunately for me, I can say that many of my ancestors have not died twice. I can still say their names. I've heard the stories of their sacrifices, of their commitment to justice, and of their work to make the world a bit better for us all. I'm very blessed to have this legacy.

One of my ancestor's stories especially resonates within me.
And that's the story of Alethia Tanner.

Perhaps by now you've heard her story.

The quick version is that Alethia was born into slavery on a plantation in Prince George's County in 1781. She was able to sell vegetables across the street from the White House and with the money that she was allowed to save, she provided the funds necessary to purchase her own freedom in 1810. And over the course of her life, she purchased the freedom of 21 other people from slavery, including her sister Laurana Cook, who is my 4th great-grandmother, and all of Laurana's children, including my 3rd great-grandfather, Rev. John Francis Cook Sr.

In 1827, Alethia was successful enough that she was able to buy her church's building at the corner of 14th and H St when the previous owner had foreclosed on the property. That building would eventually

house her nephew, John F. Cook's church and school, which he used to help educate, provide spiritual comfort, and leadership to many in DC's free black population. But the idea of educating the black population was so threatening to some in DC, that during the 1835 Snow Riot, white mobs angrily gathered at the corner at 14th and H with the intent to destroy this building and to send a message of intimidation to the free black community. In fact, things were so tense, that John F. Cook had to flee the rioting mobs on horseback and didn't return to DC until the following year when things settled down. But Alethia was resilient through it all. She continued on her mission. Saving money. Purchasing the freedom of more people. And ensuring people had a place to learn and worship.

Alethia Tanner used her time on earth to empower not only herself, her family, but also her community. And amazingly, Alethia accomplished all this while, according to the 1850 census, she, herself, was unable to read or write.

Throughout my own life, I have turned to Alethia to inspire me to feel more resilient, when I wanted to give up; to believe in and stand up for myself, when I didn't feel like I belonged or had a voice; to be humble, whenever I'd lose sight of the fact that my successes are because I stand upon others' shoulders.

And in these times, especially when things feel scary, I think a lot about her courage. Her courage to be so bold and so audacious. That she would dare to be a successful black woman in the 1800s when even powerful white men, like Thomas Jefferson were struggling financially. And to be brave when the Snow Riot's angry white mobs came to her corner looking to cause trouble. I can't imagine how frightening those times were, but she persevered and continued to build up her community in spite of it all.

Alethia Tanner is much more than a history lesson. My hope is this park, will spark an interest in her life by those who walk, run, and play there. Alethia continues to live within me whenever I remember and say her name. By naming this park after this remarkable woman, more people will get to know and feel inspired by her story, and also, will continue to speak her name. And by doing so, the amazing, inspirational, resourceful, and resilient Alethia Tanner will continue to live for a long time.

Thank you very much.

**Testimony of Robin-Eve Jasper
President, NoMa Parks Foundation and NoMa Business Improvement District
Before the Committee of the Whole**

**Hearing re: Alethia Tanner Park Designation Act of 2019
November 26, 2019**

Good morning. I am Robin-Eve Jasper, President of the NoMa Parks Foundation and the NoMa Business Improvement District. I want to thank Councilmember McDuffie and his team for crafting and introducing the Alethia Tanner Park Designation Act, and to thank the Committee of the Whole for the opportunity to testify in support of this legislation.

As many of you know, the NoMa neighborhood had no dedicated space for parks until very recently. In 2014, a partnership was established between the District of Columbia government and the NoMa Parks Foundation to develop parks to fit a variety of community needs. Those needs were outlined in the 2012 NoMa Public Realm Design Plan and approved as a framework for public investment through the District of Columbia's Fiscal Year 2014 Budget Support Act. Key benefits of the partnership have been the ability of the NoMa Parks Foundation to engage closely and continuously with the community and the Foundation's capacity to move agilely in the highly competitive NoMa real estate market.

The 2-acre property at 227 Harry Thomas Way NE was the Foundation's second acquisition of private property on behalf of the District. Through a partnership with the adjacent developer, Foulger-Pratt, the Foundation was able to secure an additional half-acre of land as well as some funds for park development at no cost to the District. The additional half-acre of land was valued at \$5.8 million in 2019. The total 2.5-acre parcel is the largest park that the Foundation will develop on behalf of the District. We are pleased to bring forth this amazing public asset for and with the community.

The NoMa Parks Foundation has worked intensively with neighborhood residents and other stakeholders since 2012 to determine their functional and design priorities for parks. After acquisition of the property, the Foundation engaged landscape architecture firm Nelson Byrd Woltz and worked closely with community members on coming up with a great plan for the park. Nelson Byrd Woltz has a special sensitivity for formerly industrial urban lands and the types of landscapes that provide respite in a city. As you may or may not know, the land that is being developed currently as a park once held train tracks and was subsequently used by Pepco. The popular Metropolitan Branch Trail runs adjacent to the site, and through the additional half-acre parcel, the Foundation was able to soften a dangerous turn in the trail into a safer curve.

The plan for the proposed Alethia Tanner Park features a great lawn for gathering and relaxing, a children's playground, a dog park, a small café kiosk, a stage area, a new bike and pedestrian

connection to the Metropolitan Branch Trail, a boardwalk and meadow, and, throughout the park, many native plants and trees as well as seating. We, and the community, hope that Tanner Park will serve as the neighborhood backyard, providing a place to relax, renew, and play. In March of this year, Forrester Construction broke ground on the park. Pending weather-related delays, the park will open in early 2020.

Selection of a proposed name for the park was the subject of a huge, fun, and important community-engagement process. The community submitted more than 120 names for the park; of these submissions, four of the most popular were submitted for a final vote. More than 2,000 votes were cast, and "Alethia Tanner Park" was the clear community favorite, receiving more than 65% of the votes. Significantly, the Foundation issued the voting survey online as well as in postcards mailed to immediate neighbors of the park in the Eckington neighborhood. Presumably, these neighbors will be some of the biggest users and supporters of the park, and the returned postcard votes had a result of 73% in favor of "Alethia Tanner Park."

So who was Alethia Tanner? Since her name was suggested for the park, the Foundation has worked with a community historian as well as descendants of Alethia Tanner, Susan Cook, and Peter Cook, who have graciously shared their time, talents, and research with us. We can tell you that Alethia Tanner was born a slave in Maryland in the 1780s. Known by her family and community as "Lethe," she sold vegetables at a produce stand in Lafayette Park. The funds from these sales enabled her to purchase her freedom as well as the freedom of 20 family members and friends. Alethia Tanner was an entrepreneur and a proponent of education and religion, all centered around community. She did not have children of her own, but through supporting her male relatives in their efforts to form a school for free black children and churches in Washington, she ensured that generations of children would be enriched. We have been inspired by Alethia, and we are looking forward to bringing her story and the values she held to life through Alethia Tanner Park. A goal we have for the park is to host an annual Alethia Tanner Day. The community response to the proposed name has been wonderful, and we hope the Committee is equally excited about honoring this esteemed District Mother.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I am prepared to answer any questions that you may have.

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION



Public Hearing
on

Bill 23-172, the “Alethia Tanner Park Designation Act of 2019”
Bill 23-264, the “Woody Ward Recreation Center Designation Act of 2019”
Bill 23-327, the “James E. Bunn Amphitheater Designation Act of 2019”

Testimony of
Ella Faulkner
Deputy Director of Administrative Services

Before the
Committee of the Whole
Council of the District of Columbia
The Honorable Phil Mendelson, Chairman

November 26, 2019
Room 412
John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20004

Good morning Chairman Mendelson and members of the Committee. I am Ella Faulkner, the Deputy Director of Administrative Services for the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR). I am pleased to testify before you today in proud support of the proposed designations of three community assets within DPR's inventory; the park at 227 Harry Thomas Way, NE in Ward 5 currently called NoMa Green, the Amphitheater in Oxon Run Park in Ward 8, and the Benning Park Community Center in Ward 7.

DPR believes that the naming or renaming of public assets should include as robust of a community engagement process as possible. With regard to Bill 23-172, the "Alethia Tanner Park Designation Act of 2019, we applaud the NoMa Business Improvement District and NoMa Parks Foundation for their efforts in soliciting quantifiable, broad-based community support to garner public input on the future name of NoMa Green, just as they did in the naming of Swampoodle Park. Over two thirds of the more than 2000 survey participants voted to name the park "Tanner Park," in honor of Alethia Tanner. This 2.5-acre parcel, formally owned by Pepco, is north of New York Avenue and bounded by Harry Thomas Way NE on the west and the Metropolitan Branch Trail on the east. Currently under development by the NoMa Parks Foundation, the park will provide outdoor recreation and community gathering space and serve as NoMa's "backyard." The intentional creation of spaces like the NoMa Green is vital for the health and wellness of our residence as the District population grows.

Ms. Tanner, who was born a slave in Prince George's County, Maryland in 1781, purchased her freedom in 1810, as well as the freedom of at least 18 others. During her remarkable life, Ms. Tanner was a business woman, owned real estate, and was a supporter and sponsor of educational and religious institutions for the free African-American community in

Washington DC. In addition to supporting several schools for free African-American children, her entrepreneurial ventures included a produce stand in Lafayette Park, where her large clientele included President Thomas Jefferson. She also funded the education of family members, including her nephew, John Francis Cook, Sr., who founded Fifteenth Street Presbyterian Church. The legacy of Alethia Tanner is one that should be heralded in our city and we at DPR are proud to support Bill 23-172, the “Alethia Tanner Park Designation Act of 2019,” which would name the NoMa Green in her honor.

Moving on to Bill 23-327, the “James E. Bunn Amphitheater Designation Act of 2019”, we would note that Oxon Run Park is a jewel in Washington, DC’s crown of outdoor space. It is the home of the second largest cherry blossom tree grove in the District, the Southeast Tennis and Learning Center, and over three miles of trails. Oxon Run Park also boasts the only amphitheater in DPR’s inventory located east of the Anacostia River. Nestled within the park near Mississippi Ave and 13th Street, SE, the amphitheater is a beacon in the community much like its proposed namesake James E. Bunn,

James Bunn was a well-known businessman, former Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner, a driving force in the redevelopment of St. Elizabeths Campus, and the founder of Congress Heights Main Streets. As a longtime member of the Friends of Oxon Run Park, Bunn, as he was affectionately known, was instrumental in securing the park’s Cherry Blossom grove. DPR is happy to join in support of Bill 23-327 the “James E. Bunn Amphitheater Designation Act of 2019,” and in honoring James E. Bunn by naming the Oxon Run Amphitheater after him.

Finally, we are proud that Bill 23-264, the “Woody Ward Recreation Center Designation Act of 2019” seeks to honor one of our own. Benning Park Community Center was first opened in 1971 and will be undergoing an \$11 million modernization in 2020. DPR and the Department of General Services (DGS) are currently working to review proposals for the project’s general contractor. When completed, Benning Park will have improved landscaping and upgraded storm water management, a refashioned entrance, a new elevator, along with other Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance measures, and a state-of-the-art fire safety and security system. We will also be updating the Center’s kitchen and boxing center. The modernization provides the perfect opportunity to effectuate the signage and data updates that accompany a renaming of this significance. If this bill moves forward, by this time next year we will be celebrating the grand reopening of the modernized Woody Ward Recreation Center.

In addition to being a former NFL Player and highly respected member of the community, Woody Ward was a dedicated employee at the Department of Parks and Recreation for 47 years. He was a fixture in the Benning Park Rec, serving at that site from 1988 to 2014, and founding the basketball league that still carries his name. Woody’s commitment to recreation and youth development has made an indelible mark on the DPR and Benning Park community, and his DPR family cannot think of a more fitting honor than renaming the center, which he dedicated much of his life to, in his honor.

We look forward to continuing our work with DGS, community members, and local leaders, as we aim to preserve these community assets and the legacies of these great Washingtonians for generations to come.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify today. I am available to answer any questions that you or the committee may have.

December 10, 2019

Chairman Phil Mendelson
Committee of the Whole
D. C. Council
John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 410
Washington, D.C. 20004

Re: B23-0172, the Alethia Tanner Park Designation Act of 2019

Dear Chairman Mendelson,

I am writing in support of B23-0172, the Alethia Tanner Park Designation Act of 2019.

For the last seven years, the NoMa Business Improvement District and NoMa Parks Foundation have worked closely with the community on the plans for parks in NoMa. The Eckington neighborhood, within which I am an ANC Commissioner for ANC 5E03, was excited in late 2015 when the Foundation acquired the parcel at 227 Harry Thomas Way NE, previously owned by Pepco, to become a future park.

The Foundation held numerous community meetings, presented before ANC 5E, and met with both me and my predecessor, Hannah Powell, to ensure there was community participation throughout the design process. They extended this community outreach into the naming process as well. In 2017, the Foundation asked the community to submit possible names for the future park. In 2018, four finalists, as well as information about each finalist name, were shared with the community. The Foundation advertised the finalists and the process for voting widely throughout the neighborhood, to include sending postcards to residents closest to the park. Over 2,100 people voted for the name of the park, with over 65% of the votes going to "Tanner Park."

The outreach and engagement process for the design and naming of the project has been satisfied such that I am confident that Tanner Park is a name supported by residents in Eckington.

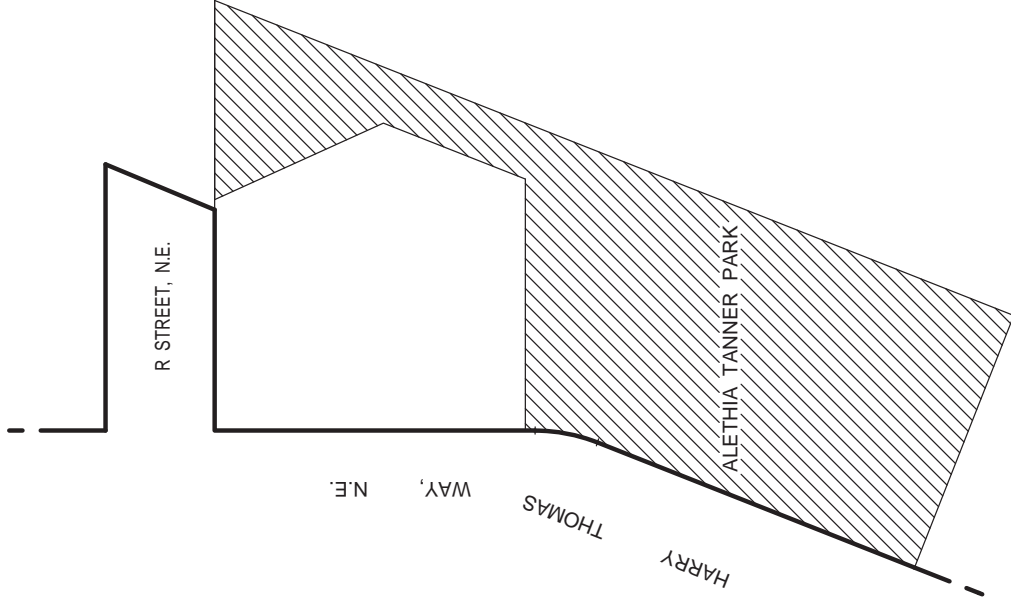
If you have any questions, please contact me at 5E03@anc.dc.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cortney Segmen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Cortney" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Segmen".

Cortney Segmen
Commissioner, ANC 5E03

**NAMING OF A PARK
ALETHIA TANNER PARK
SQUARE 3581**



PURSUANT TO D.C. LAW _____ EFFECTIVE _____,
THE AREA SHOWN THIS: [ZZZZZ] IS HEREBY DESIGNATED AS
"ALETHIA TANNER PARK".

OFFICE OF THE SURVEYOR, D.C.
_____, 2019

I CERTIFY THAT THIS PLAT IS CORRECT AND IS RECORDED.

SURVEYOR, D.C.

SURVEYOR'S OFFICE, D.C.	
Made for: B-23-172	Checked by: _____
Drawn by: A.S.	Record and computations by: B. MYERS
Recorded in: _____	Recorded at: _____
Recorded in Book: _____	Page: _____
Scale: 1 inch = 60 feet	SR-20-0000 File No. 19-11111

1 **DRAFT COMMITTEE PRINT**
2 **Committee of the Whole**
3 **December 17, 2019**

4
5 A BILL

6
7
8 23-172
9

10
11 IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
12
13 _____
14

15 To officially designate the park located in Square 3581, Lots 16 and Lot 809 as Alethia Tanner
16 Park.
17

18 BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this
19 act may be cited as the “Alethia Tanner Park Designation Act of 2019”.

20 Sec. 2. Pursuant to sections 401 and 422 of the Street and Alley Closing and Acquisition
21 Procedures Act of 1982, effective March 10, 1983 (D.C. Law 4-201; D.C. Official Code §§ 9-
22 204.01 and 9-204.22) (“Act”) the Council officially designates the park located in Square 3581,
23 Lots 16 and Lot 809 as “Alethia Tanner Park”.

24 Sec. 3. Fiscal impact statement.

25 The Council adopts the fiscal impact statement in the committee report as the fiscal
26 impact statement required by section 4a of the General Legislative Procedures Act of 1975,
27 approved October 16, 2006 (120 Stat. 2038; D.C. Official Code § 1-301.47a).

28 Sec. 4. Effective date.

29 This act shall take effect following approval by the Mayor (or in the event of veto by the
30 Mayor, action by the Council to override the veto), a 30-day period of congressional review as
31 provided in section 602(c)(1) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December
32 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code §1-206.02(c)(1)), and publication in the District of
33 Columbia Register.