



CITY OF ST. HELENS PLANNING DEPARTMENT

MEMORANDUM

TO: City Council
FROM: Jacob A. Graichen, AICP, City Planner
RE: Renaming of “Mill Street” in the Riverfront District
DATE: April 24, 2023

As part of the Riverfront District redevelopment, the street stub next to the property addressed as 330 S. 1st Street that will be extended easterly (toward the river) to Strand Street needs to be renamed.

ORS 227.120 provides the procedure for renaming streets. This includes:

1. Review and recommendation from the Planning Commission

This occurred on March 21, 2023

- 2. Public hearing before the City Council**

The initial hearing was April 5, 2023 (legal notice published March 29, 2023) and the Council decided to continue the hearing to May 3rd (6:30pm) to allow time for citizen input via online survey. More input could be provided at the hearing too.

Crystal King, the city’s Communication Officer intends to be present at the meeting to detail the survey findings. The survey deadline is May 2nd, the day before the continued public hearing, to maximize comment opportunity.

If you want to mull over the survey findings or if we need more input from Columbia 9-1-1 we can continue deliberations at the regular session, to a future meeting.

3. Adoption of street rename by Ordinance
4. Filing with the County (Clerk, Assessor, Surveyor)

Background

Per Ordinance No. 707, which vacated some of this street right-of-way in 1941, this street was sometimes called Mill Street. It is also labeled as Mill Street on approx. 100-year-old Sanborn fire insurance maps. There is already a Mill Street within St. Helens city limits off N. Vernonia Road and pursuant to SHMC 17.152.030(12):

No street name shall be used which will duplicate or be confused with the names of existing streets in Columbia County emergency communications district, except for extensions of existing streets.

Based on this code provision, we consult with Columbia 9-1-1 to ensure new street names are not duplicative and this is a similar situation. Mill Street is clearly duplicative (and thus won't work) and any new name will need Columbia 9-1-1's consent.

As a minor street not aligned with the overall street grid (i.e., it is a midblock street), it will be most appropriate to call it “_____ **Way**” based on typical street naming conventions, similar to “John Gumm Way” between S. 3rd and 4th Streets within the 200 block. **So, it is a question of what word to put before Way.**

Recommendation

Based on the recommendation of the Planning Commission and the initial input from the Council, the following names were thrown in the hat for the community survey:

1. Wapama Way

The Wapama is the name of a famous ship built here. It has a Wikipedia entry:
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wapama_\(steam_schooner\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wapama_(steam_schooner))

2. Nell (or Nelle*) Way

Nellie McCormick is an important historical figure for St. Helens. Some of the Planning Commissioners thought that there should be more female representation in the city's place names. Nellie, the full name, is not used because Columbia 9-1-1 determined it would conflict with emergency response.

*Note that Columbia 9-1-1 was ok with “Nell.” If the Council decides on this one, we'll need to make sure “Nelle” with the additional “e” is ok too.

3. Twilight

The building at 330 S. 1st Street (at the corner of S. 1st and the street in question) was a filming location for the 2008 Twilight movie.
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twilight_\(2008_film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twilight_(2008_film))

4. Lope Way

Name of family that built the building at 330 S. 1st Street (c. 1910) and used as a family home for several decades. Note this is the same building used in the Twilight movie per #3.

The Council also discussed **Kaleva Way**, a nearby hotel that once existed in the area, but Columbia 9-1-1 determined this name is poor for emergency response and was thus excluded from the survey.

Attached: Aerial photo map



NOT TO SCALE

COWLITZ STREET

STRAND STREET

S. 1ST STREET

330 S.
1st St.

? WAY

What should the name be for this street segment between S. 1st Street and Strand Street?

Source: City of St. Helens. Aerial photo from April 2022.