

David Goens

F.Y.I



NORTH CITY PARK CIVIC ASSOCIATION

January 19, 2005

**Ms. Rosalie Lay-Ramsey
Shorter Community African Methodist
Episcopal Church Steward Board
3100 Richard Allen Court
Denver, Colorado 80205**

Dear Ms. Lay-Ramsey,

Your request of renaming the North East Denver Park was given to NCPA park committee to get the facts on the park. The committee reported back to NCPA board with the following findings:

- a. The area west of Colorado Blvd. between 29th Ave. and MLK Blvd. was a vacant site that was a big concern within the North City Park Neighborhood for many years. It was used for merchandise peddlers, junk cars, and at various times for carnivals. Each of these activities met justifiable resistance by the residents and citizens who were interested in seeing a viable redevelopment of the site in a way that would not undermine the strength and beauty of the North City Park Neighborhood.
- b. There were many rumors of what would be going into this area, such as a Wendy's, a Fine-Cuisine Restaurant, a Adult men entertainment club, and finally, a Denver low-income housing project. At this point, many members of NCPA worked diligently and dedicated much time, meeting after meeting including at least nine public hearings to make this site a community park. During the 1980's City of Denver Mayor run-off election, candidate Pena came to one of NCPA neighborhood monthly meetings asking for NCPA support/vote. NCPA in turn, wanted to know what he was going to do for NCPA along the west side of Colorado Blvd. between 29th Ave. and MLK Blvd. Candidate Pena stated that he would help NCPA to get a park/green belt in this area, and clean-up the mess in this area along Colorado Blvd. Candidate Pena won and finally, the City of Denver officially designated this site as an open-mini park.
- c. An NCPA member designed and made working drawings for the park and submitted the drawing to the Parks & Recreation Department of the City of Denver. The drawings and layout were accepted.

d. **Naming of the Park:** The City and County of Denver has a formal process for the naming of its parks. NCPCA, in cooperation with The Mayor Denver Parks & Recreation Department, and the late District 8 City Councilman Hiawatha Davis, Jr. set up a Park Naming Committee. This Committee was charged with the responsibility of soliciting suggestions from citizens of the community for naming of the park. All suggestions were reviewed by the Committee and five names selected to be presented at NCPCA neighborhood meeting September 26, 1989. Suggestions for names for the park were evaluated on the following two (2) analysis:

- (1) The park shall not be named for any living individual. This was amended by the committee and approved by NCPCA board to read, The Park shall not be named for any individual Living or Dead.
- (2) Each name shall be submitted with a "Vision Statement" given the image, message, and vision which the park may serve, and the extent to which the name symbolizes the vision.

The current NCPCA board voted unanimously to uphold the previous NCPCA board decision not to name the park after any individual Living or Dead. NCPCA agree that the late Rev. Jesse Boyd, Jr. was an outstanding civic and community leader, and also a very close friend and supporter of NCPCA. If there are any questions, please feel free to call.

Sincerely,



Al Rue
President

Penelope Zeller

Denver Colorado 80205

penelope.zeller@gmail.com

303-947-6421

26 July 2011

To: City Council Land Use Committee; Robb, Chair; Montero, Co-Chair; Lehmann; López; Shepherd; Susman

Re: **REQUEST TO TABLE BR11-0548 UNTIL PUBLIC OUTREACH IS PERFORMED**

Dear Land Use Committee Members,

I am a resident of Skyland / North City Park. Shorter Church has forged ahead to rename a Community Park over the questions and objections of many of my neighbors.

HISTORY: Shorter Church desires to rename a public park adjacent to their property to honor a former pastor of the church. The request of (former) Councilwoman to obtain petition signatures was performed, but inspection of the signatures by other neighbors, (then) Council Aides Hunt and Cross, and NCPCA board members showed that only church members and a few neighboring homes signed. Many of the people that signed the petition were church members who live in other areas of Denver and Aurora.

One neighbor on Garfield (one block from the Church) reported that he was verbally bullied by one petition person in order to obtain a signature, which he refused. We have no evidence that an honest effort to have a community meeting and then perform a petition drive in the surrounding community was ever performed.

The one attempt to meet and hear about their desires at the May 2011 NCPCA meeting degraded into demands and shouts by church members who came as guests of NCPCA. The meeting was a disaster and I can personally attest that I felt threatened by the bullish tactics, shouts and demands of our guests.

This 'meeting' occurred after the petition came into question. Therefore, I feel that no heartfelt attempt at fair public process or outreach to gather support or opposition has been attempted by Shorter regarding their application.

While I am only six years in Skyland neighborhood, I have been in District 8 for over 25 years. I recall hearing about the hard feelings that Shorter Church created in the Skyland, Clayton, Greater Park Hill and NE Park Hill communities when they succeeded in changing the name of Jackson Street, between E. 29th and Martin Luther King Blvd, to honor the founder of their Church, the Rev. Richard Allen. Today, I still hear bitter words from neighbors who live on Richard Allen Court about how that 'outreach' transpired.

I am concerned for the long term relations between the community and the church. We live in difficult economic times. Our neighborhood is aging and changing. Acrimonious positions and improper process do nothing to stabilize and strengthen community. The Land Use Committee has an opportunity to effect a true democratic process if BR11-0548.

REQUEST: I strongly urge the Land Use Committee to table this request until such time an appropriate, democratic and fair public outreach is performed regarding this topic.

I am hoping that the Land Use Committee and other city council members, will help Shorter Church become good neighbors to the Clayton, Greater Park Hill, NE Park Hill and Skyland communities with a fair public outreach effort to discuss – not argue – the pros and cons of their request. Once true, democratic public outreach has been performed and the community surrounding the Park has had an opportunity to weigh the pros and cons, then I would welcome this topic moving forward through Council.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Zeller", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Penelope Zeller

Cc: Deborah Fard, Michael Henry, Albus Brooks, David Goens, Steve Nissen (via email)