

RESOLUTION NO. 172 2021

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE DIVISION OF PARKS AND RECREATION TO CHANGE THE NAME OF SOUTHEND PARK TO DAVIS PARK IN RECOGNITION OF MR. WILLARD DAVIS.

WHEREAS, Mr. Willard Davis, a former Union soldier, Lexington attorney and advocate for Civil Rights, commenced in 1865 to sell 43 lots in Lexington that offered home ownership to former African American slaves in an area between Broadway and Versailles Road that came to be known as Davis Bottom; and

WHEREAS, this residential community grew into an inclusive working class neighborhood enclave whose residents by the 1920s had come to be an ethnic mix of African American, European immigrants and White Appalachian families, that came to have a strong, tight knit sense of neighborhood and unity with a population of over 1,050 by the 1930s, and

WHEREAS, this historically financially impoverished but socially united community "village" continued to be an anchor for generations of families making their homes there where, despite trying circumstances and times, the spirit of this neighborhood and its residents prevailed for many decades more, contributing to the overall cultural experience within Lexington, and

WHEREAS, the road construction project that had first been planned in the 1930s in this area finally commenced in the early twenty-first century, necessitating the demolition of the neighborhood, and resulting in a new road, Oliver Lewis Way, and its additional community improvements, and

WHEREAS, as part of the planning for and development of this road improvement project, this historic neighborhood was documented through photographs, mapping, historic archaeology, archival research and oral history interviews with residents to assure that this unique heritage would not be lost, and including relocating residents that chose to return to the new housing constructed as part of the project, and

WHEREAS, the historic neighborhood also included an evidently much utilized and enjoyed previous park that had long been part of the area and which neighbors talked fondly about in the oral history interviews as having been the site of frequent well attended ball games, popular dances, and people gathering at the park to picnic and visit often.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE LEXINGTON-

FAYETTE URBAN COUNTY GOVERNMENT:

Section 1 – In honor of the historic neighborhood and its residents, the Division of Parks and Recreation is hereby authorized and directed to change the name of Southend Park to Davis Park.

Section 2 - That this Resolution shall become effective on the date of its passage.

PASSED URBAN COUNTY COUNCIL: April 8, 2021

Rinda Gorton

MAYOR

ATTEST:

[Signature]

CLERK OF URBAN COUNTY COUNCIL

374-21: MJG:X:\Cases\CO21-LE0001\LEG\00724836.DOCX