

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: JUNE 18, 2003

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: PHILIP SUNDERLAND, CITY MANAGER *PS*

SUBJECT: REPORT ON THE NAMING COMMITTEE'S DISCUSSION OF TWO RECENT PROPOSALS

ISSUE: Consideration of report on the Naming Committee's discussion of two recent proposals.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council receive the report.

DISCUSSION: The Naming Committee, consisting of Councilwoman Del Pepper, Councilman David Speck and myself, met on June 3. We were joined by Jean Federico, Director, Office of Historic Alexandria. At Council's request, we considered two items: the re-naming of Waterfront Park in honor of Colonel John Fitzgerald, and the desire of the family of Clinton Knight to recognize his role in the saving of Gadsby's Tavern.

Under the current Policy on Naming City Facilities, if the Naming Committee believes the re-naming of a facility may be warranted, it is to seek proposals of new names from the public. After receiving and considering the proposals, it may make a recommendation to City Council.

The Committee believed the request to honor the accomplishments of Colonel John Fitzgerald to be of some interest. But it felt that the name of Founders Park, another City park on the waterfront, already honors the early town trustees and founders. While Colonel Fitzgerald's period of significance is somewhat later, the Committee believed that his and others' contributions might be treated as part of a unified sign system, now being considered, for City parks located on the waterfront. These proposed Alexandria Heritage Trail signs, if approved, could be implemented in some of the City's waterfront parks within the next year or so. Staff is currently reviewing the potential for these signs to address not only some of the City founders, but also to recognize the first group of mayors who led the town of Alexandria at the end of the 18th century. The Committee believed an appropriate recognition of Colonel Fitzgerald could be provided in the new waterfront signage that may be placed in Founders Park. It also should be noted that there is already a "Fitzgerald Lane," which is located off Martha Custis Drive and Gunston Road.

At the time of the meeting, members of the committee did not have sufficient information about the contributions of Clinton Knight to Gadsby's Tavern. Since the meeting, Jean Federico has done additional research and has found that Mr. Knight was, indeed, a critical player in the preservation of Gadsby's Tavern. Based on this information, staff will, over the summer, consider alternate opportunities to recognize Mr. Knight either in the Tavern or the Legion building, and will bring a recommendation to the Naming Committee in the fall. Any recommendation from the Naming Committee with respect to Mr. Knight will then be brought forward to Council.

STAFF:

Jean Federico, Director, Office of Historic Alexandria