



DOCKET ITEM #4

Street Naming Case #2010-0001 - Mark Center Drive

CONSENT AGENDA ITEM

If no one asks to speak about this case prior to the hearing, it will be approved without discussion as part of the Consent Agenda.

Project Name: Mark Center Drive Renaming	Planning Commission Hearing:	May 4, 2010
	City Council Hearing:	May 15, 2010
Proposal: Technical correction to rename a section of Mark Center Drive to Mark Center Avenue.		
Applicant: City of Alexandria, Department of Planning and Zoning		
Staff Recommendation: APPROVAL		
Staff Reviewer: Patricia Escher, AICP patricia.escher@alexandriava.gov		



Figure 1 – Proposed Mark Center Drive Renaming

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. Recommendation

Staff is recommending renaming a section of Mark Center Drive to Mark Center Avenue. The proposed renamed portion of road extends from the intersection of current Mark Center Drive and Seminary Road running in a westerly direct to point where the street has a 90° bend.

B. Summary of Issues

This is essentially a technical correction to eliminate possible confusion about the street names in the Mark Center area. The existing configuration of Mark Center Drive is confusing due to the fact that the private roads that enter into the Mark Center site are also named Mark Center Drive. This confusion could potentially provide an unsafe situation in case of an emergency.

II. BACKGROUND

In 1999, The Mark Winkler Company changed the name of Nottingham Drive to Mark Center Drive. The public road runs from Seminary Road to North Beauregard Street behind the Hilton Hotel; beginning at the intersection at Seminary Road traveling westward for approximately 800 feet, then the road turns northerly to intersect with North Beauregard Street. The Mark Center site has two private roads that enter into the site from Mark Center Drive and during this process they were also named Mark Center Drive.

At that time staff had concerns about naming two streets with the same name, primarily because of public safety issues. However, the applicant firmly believed that because the then Nottingham Drive provided access to a major mixed-use development area known as “Mark Center” that it was imperative that both entrances from Seminary Road and North Beauregard Street be identified as “Mark Center”.

Planning staff suggested that the applicant meet with the Fire Chief to resolve issues involving two streets having the same name. The applicant convinced the Fire Chief that there would be no confusion or conflicts with building addresses because two existing buildings located along the frontage of Seminary Road, the Hilton Hotel and the 4600 Seminary office building, are assigned Seminary Road addresses; and future buildings located on development Plazas 1-A and 1-B will be oriented toward a central plaza where addresses will be designated as “Mark Center Drive”. The Police Department also agreed to the proposed street name change from Nottingham Drive to Mark Center Drive.

While the streets’ name were not an issue with the construction of the first phase of the IDA building or the CNA building, this configuration is now posing challenges upon the completion of the Washington Headquarters Service development and the full build out of the Mark Center site. The City’s primary concern is to maintain consistent addressing and to ensure our public safety departments can easily locate every address across the City.

III. PROPOSAL

Staff is recommending that the approximately 800 foot long section of road beginning at the intersection of Seminary Road through to where the road turns and heads north should be changed from Mark Center Drive to Mark Center Avenue. Staff trusts that this change will relieve the confusion while still maintaining the “Mark Center” identity. Staff believes that:

- Two intersecting streets with the same name is not an ideal situation. By extended Mark Center Drive and wrapping it around a renamed Mark Center Avenue, we've successfully eliminated this occurrence.
- Changing this particular section of Mark Center Drive to Mark Center Avenue does not change any existing building addresses.
- By only changing the street name suffix, we do not lose the Mark Center identity of the area. This is not a widely used concept, but we feel this is the least disruptive course of action, while still accomplishing our goal.

All property owners in the vicinity of this renamed portion of the street have been contacted about the change and have not expressed any objections. Again, this proposed change will not change any existing building addresses.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends **approval** of renaming a section of Mark Center Drive to Mark Center Avenue.

STAFF: Faroll Hamer Director, Planning and Zoning
Gwen Wright, Chief, Development
Patricia Escher, AICP, Principal Planner