

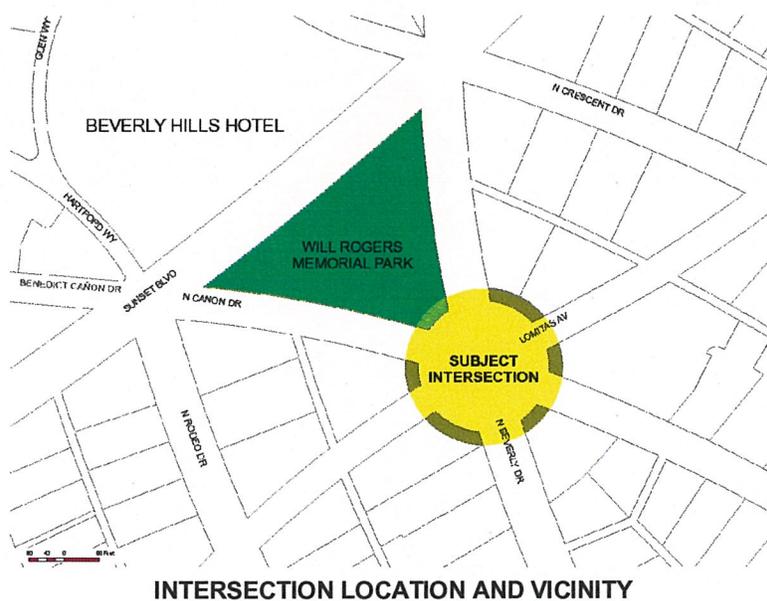


CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: January 12, 2010
To: Honorable Mayor & City Council
From: Larry Sakurai, Principal Planner *LS*
Subject: Request of the Vice Mayor to Discuss the Naming of the Three-Street Intersection Adjacent to Will Rogers Park after Theodor Herzl

INTRODUCTION

Vice Mayor Delshad has asked that the City Council consider naming the intersection of Beverly Drive, Canon Drive, and Lomitas Avenue next to Will Rogers Memorial Park after Theodor Herzl, an author, advocate, and active proponent in the 19th and 20th Centuries for a Jewish state. The City could informally name the intersection through the use of signage such as was done for Fred Hayman Place and William Morris Place. Alternatively, the City could officially name the right-of-way by resolution, as was done for Civic Center Drive in 1986.



INTERSECTION LOCATION AND VICINITY

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DISCUSSION

Public Figure

Theodor Herzl (1860-1904) is often considered the father of modern political Zionism. Herzl began his career in the 1880s as a secular, assimilated Viennese Jew, reflecting a perspective that anti-Semitism in Europe could be addressed through assimilation and political engagement. Beginning in the mid 1880s and through the 1890s, he wrote a series of articles, stories, and plays with insights on human destiny and technology and dealing with social issues of the day. It was during the mid 1890s when, working as a correspondent in Paris to the *Vienna Neue Freie Presse*,* that Herzl's views on Europe's anti-Semitism problem shifted toward resettlement. He became an active proponent for a Jewish state during the late 1890s, and his efforts included the establishment of the First Zionist Congress in 1897 and efforts to lobby various monarchs to back the establishment of a Jewish state. Although Jews had long desired to return to a biblical homeland, Herzl is credited with setting in motion concrete steps toward the establishment of a Jewish state.



Aerial View of the Intersection and Vicinity

Policy

The *City Council Policy and Operations Manual* currently states the following regarding street and sidewalk recognition:

"It is the City's policy not to formally rename streets in recognition of an individual or business. On a case-by-case basis, the City Council may consider informal

* Herzl reported on the Alfred Dreyfus case, in which a Jewish officer in the French army was falsely accused of treason. The affair raised considerable public debate on anti-Semitism in France during the late 1890s.

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recognition of outstanding individuals and businesses with street and sidewalk plaques and signage."[†]

The *Manual* is a compendium of City Council approved policies and practices, together with historical, legal, and general information to provide a common understanding to guide actions of councilmembers and staff.

Process

The last official renaming of a street was Civic Center Drive in 1986. Formerly the south roadway of Santa Monica Boulevard ("Little Santa Monica") between the Civic Center and Doheny Drive (plus a segment of Alpine Drive adjacent to the Civic Center), it was considered isolated from the more familiar stretch of Little Santa Monica Boulevard along the Business Triangle. The process involved consideration and recommendation by the Planning Commission of the street renaming, followed by consideration and action (resolution) by City Council.

Beverly Hills Municipal Code

10-2-307: STREET NAMES:

Any street which is a prolongation or approximately a prolongation of an existing street shall be given the same name; otherwise no street shall be designated by the same name as that borne by any other street in the city, irrespective of the use of any suffix, such as "street", "avenue", "boulevard", "drive", "way", "place", "court", or other similar term. The planning official may recommend to the planning commission a change of the name of any street shown on a subdivision map or to designate a name when no name is shown. If the planning commission approves such recommendation or makes a different recommendation, any such recommendation shall be transmitted to the council for approval or disapproval. (1962 Code § 10-903; amd. Ord. 75-O-1561, eff. 3-4-1975)



It should be noted that the subject intersection was part of the original plan laid out by Wilbur Cook just after the turn of the 20th Century. Maps of the City during the first half of the 20th Century show the intersection being designated as "Civic Center", not to be confused with the Civic Center complex developed during the 1980s, nor Civic Center Drive, as Santa Monica Boulevard South was named in 1986. Reference to the intersection as Civic Center appears to have fallen into disuse from as early as the 1960s. In

formally designating the intersection as Theodor Herzl Circle, the "Civic Center" designation could simultaneously be removed.

Alternatively, the City could informally name the intersection through the use of signage. This was done for Fred Hayman Place (alley with decorative paving between Rodeo Drive and Dayton Way) in 2007 and for William Morris Place (El Camino next to Charleville Boulevard) in 1998.

[†] City Gifts and Recognition Policy, *City Council Policy and Operations Manual*, pp. 65, March 2009.

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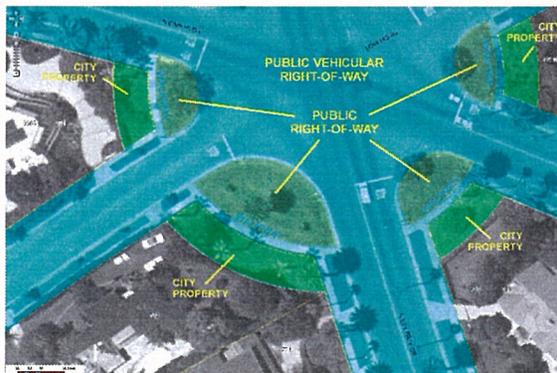


Fred Hayman Place



William Morris Place

Because of the number of streets entering the intersection, the use of street signage to display the name of the intersection could be confusing to motorists unless it is done in a manner to contrast the name of the intersection from the names of the streets. This could be done through the use of color, shape, and/or typeface. Alternatively, the intersection could be identified with a monument sign on one or more of the corners. The City owns all of the parcels adjacent to the right-of-way in fee. In addition, each corner within the right-of-way is landscaped with turf and street trees. If the City Council approves the concept, it is suggested that monument signs could be placed in the landscaped right-of-way.



Property and Right-of-Way Controlled by the City



Southwest Corner of Beverly Drive (left) and Lomitas Avenue (right)

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact of naming the intersection has not been estimated. The costs are largely associated with 1) installation of signage and/or monuments identifying the intersection to the public and 2) in the case of an official renaming of the intersection, nominal costs associated with any updates in City records (e.g. maps, database, etc.). It should be noted that no property possesses a delivery address that would be affected by the name of the intersection; all have addresses on streets entering the intersection.

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RECOMMENDATION

Staff is seeking direction from City Council on the following:

- Whether or not to proceed with naming the intersection;
- If City Council wishes to proceed, what to name the intersection;
- If City Council wishes to proceed, whether to proceed formally with renaming the intersection or to proceed informally with signage/monuments to demarcate the intersection.

If the City Council wishes to proceed with a formal renaming of the intersection, staff will schedule the item for consideration by the Planning Commission and bring forth their recommendations in the near future. If City Council wishes to proceed informally, staff will return at an upcoming City Council meeting with options and costs for signage/improvements for the intersection.

Susan Healy Keene, AICP

Approved By 

Sources:

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Encyclopæda Judaica, 1971

The Jewish Agency for Israel, Department for Jewish Zionist Education:

- *Summary of "Das Neue Ghetto"*, Jacques Kornberg, 1993
- *Summary of "Der Judenstaat"*, Jacques Kornberg, 1993
- *Summary of "Altneuland"*

Wikipedia, 2009

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Final Report, Beverly Hills Historic Resources Survey, Johnson Heumann Research Associates, 1985-86