



CITY OF BOSTON
PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT COMMISSION

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
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IN THE PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF BOSTON

**A POLICY FOR NAME CHANGES AND SQUARE DEDICATION FOR PUBLIC
WAY AND PRIVATE WAY IN THE CITY OF BOSTON**

(Effective Date: August 11, 2011)

1. **Jurisdictions:** Consistent with both special and general laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Public Improvement Commission (the "PIC") is vested with, and exercises the street naming authority including square dedication for both public and private ways within the City of Boston. The PIC shall determine such name change, and square dedication in publicly advertised hearings.

2. **Requirements for Street Name Change:**

(a) The street name(s) shall not be eligible for change until and unless such name has been in use for twenty-five (25) years or more;

(b) The changed street name shall not be identical to those of the existing public and/or private ways, whether under the title of street, avenue, way, court, place, alley, or other descriptive title;

(c) The street name change shall not be used to honor any living person;

(d) The PIC shall also take the following additional factors into consideration, including but not limited to (1) public safety, (2) rights of way management and public travel, (3) historic preservation, (4) potential impact on abutting community, and (5) other legitimate concerns.

3. **Certain Definitions and Qualifications for Street Name Change**

(a)(1) The PIC can exercise its street naming authority for purposes of rights of way management or upon petition from the qualified abutting property owners (the "qualified abutters").

(2) For public way, the qualified abutters are those whose property or properties (A) are identified by a parcel ID(s) of the City’s Assessing Department, (B) about the affected street, (C) proof of identity such as valid driver’s license or other government issued-ID, (D) must have a valid deeded address bearing the name of the affected street, and such address must be verified by City’s Inspectional Service Department.

(3) For private way, the qualified abutters are those whose property or properties (A) are identified by a parcel ID(s) of the City’s Assessing Department, (B) about the affected street, (C) proof of identity such as valid driver’s license or other government-issued ID.

(4) For both private and public ways, the qualified abutters include, but not limited to any individual, entity, trust or/and government agencies and authorities.

(b)(1) For public way, each identified parcel ID represents one (1) qualified abutter as defined in Section 3(a)(2), and represents one (1) vote either for or against the name change. Failure to respond to notice, both legal and personal, by qualified abutter within the required timeframe, equals to a vote(s) against the name change. The votes, both affirmative and negative, means votes by ALL qualified abutters.

(2) The vote can be cast in person, by mail or failure to respond to required notice, and must be verified by appropriate means.

(3) For private way, each identified parcel ID represents one (1) qualified abutter as defined in Section 3(a)(3). The voting mechanism and requirements defined in Section 3(b)(1)-(2) serves as a reference, but not required for private way abutters. It is such abutters’ responsibility to determine their own voting mechanism and requirements.

4. Street Name Change and Its Procedure

(a) The petitioners of street name change shall, at their own cost and expense, provide PIC with: (1) for public way, a signed petition by (A) ALL qualified abutters if there are no more than ten (10) such abutters on the affected street; or (B) by no less than fifty percent (50%) of ALL qualified abutters if there are more than ten (10) such abutters on the affected street; (2) for private way, a signed petition by ALL qualified abutters

(3) valid proof of notification to all relevant city department, agencies or other authorities of competent jurisdictions, including but not limited to BPD, BFD, EMS, BTD, ISD, Election Department; and their written responses;

(4) valid proof of notification to transit authorities if the affected street is a transit route; and written responses from such transit authorities;

(5) a letter of recommendation from Boston City councilor(s), and

(6) any other documents and information as may be requested by the City

(b) Upon receiving such petition, the PIC will hold appropriate public proceeding to hear, but will not entertain if, among others, such proposed name change is not

consented to (A), for public way, by ALL qualified abutters or (B), for private way, by ALL qualified abutters.

5. **Street Name Change Order, Recording and Effective Dates**

The PIC will issue an order upon approving a street name change, and such order must be recorded at the Suffolk Registry of Deeds prior to March 1 of each given year. The changed street name will be effective only after March 1 of each given year.

6. **Square Dedication and Its Procedure**

(a) The square dedication is a plate attachment to pole(s), which is located nearest to the affected street.

(b) The square dedication bears no relationship to street name(s) or street address. And it can be used to honor any person, living or deceased, who has had a great impact on the surrounding community.

(c) The petitioners of square dedication shall, at their own cost and expense, provide PIC with: (1) for public way, a signed petition by no less than fifty percent (50%) of ALL qualified abutters as defined under Section 3(a)(2); (2) for private way, a signed petition by ALL qualified abutters as defined under Section 3(a)(3),

(3) valid proof of notification to appropriate city departments and agencies; and their written responses;

(4) a letter of recommendation from Boston City councilor(s); and

(5) any other documents and information as the City may require.

(d) Upon receiving such petition, the PIC will hold appropriate public proceeding to hear, but may not entertain if, among others, such square dedication is not consented to (A) for public way, by more than fifty-one percent (51%) of ALL qualified abutters or (B) for private way, by ALL qualified abutters.

(e) The petitioners shall bear all the cost and expenses for installation and maintenance.

(f) The PIC will issue an order for square dedication, and such order must be recorded at the Suffolk Registry of Deeds.

7. **Notice Requirements and Governing Law**

(a) For purpose of this Policy, unless otherwise designated in writing, all notices shall be in writing, shall be sent or deemed served if delivered by hand, certified or registered mail with proof of return receipt.

(b) All notices and notifications by petitioners of street name change, and square dedication are specifically required to meet the requirements of Section 7(a).

(c) The City, for purpose of street name change and square dedication, is not required to send out personal notice as defined in Section 7(a). The statutory advertisement by the PIC is legal notice, which is deemed received once published for the required time frame.

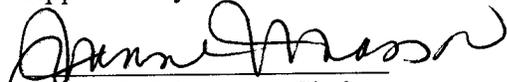
(d) This Policy is governed by the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and specifically the ordinances, policies, rules, regulations and requirements of the City of Boston.

(e) This Policy shall supersede all prior practices for street name changes of both public way and private way, and square dedication within the City. The PIC reserves authority to make further amendment to this Policy.

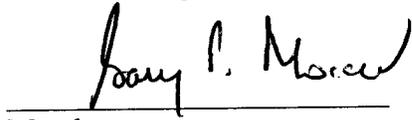
Adopted by Vote of the Public Improvement Commission on 07/28/, 2011.

Attest: 
Executive Secretary

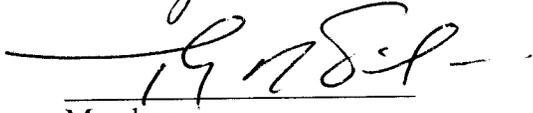
Approved by:


Joanne P. Massacro, Chair

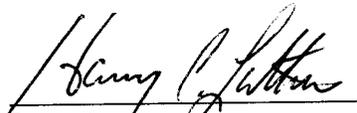

Member


Member


Member


Member

Approved as to the Form


Law Department