

Assigning the Ceremonial Name "Vimy Ridge Way" to Glenhurst Avenue

Date: January 17, 2018

To: Etobicoke York Community Council

From: General Manager, Economic Development and Culture

Wards: 17- Davenport

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to recommend that the ceremonial name of "Vimy Ridge Way" be assigned to Glenhurst Avenue.

A ceremonial street dedication does not change the official street name or address information. It does result in the installation of special signage along the selected street.

Transportation Services was consulted during the preparation of this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager, Economic Development and Culture, recommends that:

1. Etobicoke York Community Council assign the ceremonial name "Vimy Ridge Way" to Glenhurst Avenue.
2. Transportation Services erect signage marking "Vimy Ridge Way".

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The estimated cost of erecting signage is \$1,000.00 and will be covered by the 2018 Approved Operating Budget for Transportation Services.

The Acting Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

On July 7, 2015, City Council adopted a set of updated policies for naming City streets and properties. The City of Toronto Street Naming Policy provides guidance on the ceremonial naming of City streets.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2015.EX7.8>

COMMENTS

Councillor Cesar Palacio has submitted a Street Naming Application requesting that the ceremonial name "Vimy Ridge Avenue" be assigned to Glenhurst Avenue. A petition signed by Glenhurst Avenue residents in support of this application has been received. The local Royal Canadian Legion branch has also expressed support.

Vimy Ridge Avenue was created in York Township east of Oakwood Avenue through registered plan 2109, filed in April 1918 by Jethro Crang. In June 1919, York Township Council changed the name of Crang Avenue (then an east-west street running west of Oakwood Avenue) to Vimy Ridge Avenue. The latter now extended from west of Appleton Avenue to Winona Drive. Soon after, a new north-south street called Crang Avenue (intersecting with Vimy Ridge Avenue) was created to commemorate the Crang family, which included prominent building contractors and land developers within the Oakwood community.

Jethro Crang's decision to use the name "Vimy Ridge Avenue" in his new subdivision came almost exactly one year after the Battle of Vimy Ridge. This battle was a stunning but costly victory for the Canadian Corps during the First World War. Vimy was recognized as a major military achievement at the time, though its status as a nation-building event would grow over the following decades.

In April 1928, Mrs. G. Keddie and 27 other residents and property owners on Vimy Ridge Avenue petitioned York Township Council to change the street name to Glenhurst Avenue. Council "deem[ed] it expedient to make the change to comply with the prayer of said petition," and passed bylaw 9552, establishing the new street name.

The rationale for the name change is unclear. The original petition has been lost, and Council's action was not covered by the Toronto newspapers or later historical writings about York Township. While a similarly named street did exist in Greater Toronto (Vimy Avenue in Weston), the change is surprising. The 1920s saw the development of cenotaphs and memorial buildings in the Toronto area and across Canada to honour wartime sacrifices. The Canadian Legion was created to advocate on behalf of

veterans. Work on the Canadian National Vimy Memorial in France also began in this decade.

The 100th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge was commemorated in 2017, and the centenary of the end of the First World War will be marked this year. These events, together with the history of Vimy Ridge Avenue in York Township, make Glenhurst Avenue an appropriate location for the recommended ceremonial naming.

As this Street Naming Application and related documentation complies with the City of Toronto Street Naming Policy, it is recommended that the ceremonial name "Vimy Ridge Way" be assigned to Glenhurst Avenue. The use of the street suffix "Way" (rather than "Avenue," as proposed in the application) avoids confusion with the official street name and is consistent with recent ceremonial street namings in the City of Toronto.

The General Manager, Transportation Services, has been consulted in the preparation of this report.

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SIGNATURE

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