



Renaming of Route 7 and Route 50 in Loudoun County

Task Force Meeting #1

Thursday July 7, 2021, 6:00pm – 7:30pm
Meeting Summary

Project Team Representatives:

John Thomas, Kelly Griffin, Susan Glass (Department of Transportation and Capital Infrastructure, DTCl)

Heidi Kellum (Public Affairs and Communications, PAC)

Mike Fauss, Kristin Brown (Office of Mapping and Geographic Information, OMAGI)

Randall Farren, Heidi Siebentritt (Department of Planning and Zoning, DPZ)

Task Force Members:

Alicia Cohen, Heritage Commission

Cliff Keirce, Heritage Commission

Lori Kimball, Heritage Commission

Robert Pollard, Heritage Commission

Pastor Michelle Thomas, Heritage Commission

Rolando Rosas, Algonkian District appointee

Cheryl Hutchinson, Blue Ridge District appointee

Daniel Eisert, Broad Run District appointee

Mark Miller, Catocin District appointee

Robin Burke, Chair at Large appointee

Gary Smith, Dulles District appointee

Grafton Debutts, Leesburg District appointee

Abby Peterson, Sterling District appointee

Public Observers:

Michelle Cavucci

Renss Greene

Evelyn Spain

Daniel Davies

Introduction and Purpose

John Thomas, DTCI's Assistant Director, Transportation Planning and Traffic Engineering, facilitated introductions of the project team and advised the Task Force that due to COVID -19 restrictions and pursuant to the re-adoption of the of Continuity of Operations Ordinance adopted by the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors on March 16, 2021, the meeting was held in a virtual meeting format. DTCI Project Manager, Kelly Griffin, shared the Task Force's goals, outlined the process, reviewed the project schedule, and facilitated a round table discussion.

The Task Force members introduced themselves and then participated in a facilitated discussion about the project's mission and overall process, elected a chair and secretary, participated in a round table discussion and discussed the projects' next steps in preparation for the Task Force's second meeting.

Mark Miller volunteered to fulfill the role of the Chair of the Committee and Cheryl Hutchinson was nominated for the position of the Chair of the Committee. Subsequent to the meeting, Cheryl Hutchinson declined the nomination for Chair; Mark Miller was appointed to this position. Graton DeButts was designated the task force's secretary.

General Themes and Comments

Each Task Force member was allotted two minutes to provide input and comments on the project's scope and goals. Several themes arose from these comments.

- 1) Using Peoples Names: There are differing opinions on whether names of people should be included as potential names for the two roadways. The Task Force also discussed whether all names should be open for discussion. One concern is that if the group accepts names, Loudoun County may end up in the same place in the future.
- 2) Connection with Fairfax County: There was discussion about naming Route 7, Leesburg Pike for continuity with Fairfax County.
- 3) Name Choice: There was a discussion regarding using names of underrepresented communities or enslaved people.
- 4) Youth: There was discussion about capturing the voice of the County's youth. Related to this topic, discussion occurred regarding polling that has been conducted on social media platforms, mainly Instagram; the results of the polling are that this process should avoid fads and trends (i.e. politicians).
- 5) Public Outreach: The Task Force agreed that extensive public outreach is required for this project. The voices of the Loudoun County citizens need to be heard through a public outreach campaign.
- 6) Cost: Character limit on the signs is key to keep the costs down.
- 7) Using Route Numbers: There were several suggestions from Task Force Members to use Route numbers to name the roads; for example, name the roads Route 7 and Route 50.
- 8) Quality of Submissions: There is concern regarding the quality of public submissions based on previous social media posts and comments.

The following information was taken directly from the chat box comments. Task Force members were encouraged to dialogue through the meeting via the chat box. The information was directly copied from the chat box.

Chat Box Comments

- <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/07/07/binning-byrd-is-sign-that-virginia-can-move-forward/>
- I nominate Cheryl Hutchinson as Chair
- As you consider your vote for task force chair, I put myself forward because of my experience chairing counting boards. I chaired the Library Board of Trustees for 6 years and serve as vice-chair of the Planning Commission with leadership oversight. I would bring a process-oriented approach to keep us on task. Additionally, I have plenty of experience speaking/presenting to the BOS and feel comfortable presenting our list of names and answering their questions openly. Feel free to reach out if you'd like to ask questions.
- I think that is a good point, Mark. I had not realized that about George Marshall.
- The story about Marshall and Israel is complex, and it should in no way eliminate him from consideration. He was the architect of victory in World War against fascism and all that it represented. He was the author of the greatest success in US foreign policy in the 20e, the plan for European reconstruction that bears his name. He was NOT a politician or self-promoter, yet he won the Nobel Peace Prize. And he chose to retire in Loudoun County and devote himself to peaceful pursuits. Loudoun's greatest citizen!
- I guess this just proves the point. Just among us we are already debating whether the first name suggested would be appropriate.
- George C. Marshall also supported segregation on the Armed Forces "The Army's Chief of Staff, Gen. George C. Marshall, said that, in World War II, society dictated that it was absolutely necessary for the War Department to follow a policy of segregation. The military, he reasoned, should not be on the leading edge of change in this regard. However, after the Pearl Harbor tragedy, with increasing numbers of African-Americans entering the service, the Army Air Forces faced the difficult problem of attempting to absorb large numbers of blacks in a relatively short time."
- Robert - And I don't disagree. However, my point was that if one small slice of a person's background could be offensive to one , some or many, then we (the county) could be back in this position in the future.
- OK, but on a humorous note, maybe we should get rid of "Loudoun" County -- I think I heard he was a bad dude. Can't eliminate a name just because someone objects.