



OTHER REPORT

Report Date: September 14, 2015
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Meeting Date: September 29, 2015

TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: Civic Asset Naming Committee

SUBJECT: Naming of Street Extension and New Public Street - Switchmen Street and Pullman Porter Street

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT the new public street extension west of Quebec Street and north of East 1st Avenue, shown in heavy black outline on the graphic attached as Appendix A, be named "Switchmen Street".
- B. THAT the new public street between Ontario and Quebec Streets, running north from East 1st Avenue to the extension of Switchmen Street, shown in heavy black outline on the graphic attached as Appendix A, be named as "Pullman Porter Street".
- C. THAT the Director of Legal Services be instructed to bring forward the appropriate amendments to the Street Name By-law.

CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The City Manager submits the foregoing recommendations for consideration.

COUNCIL POLICY

Council uses the Street Name By-Law, No. 4054, to name and regulate public roads in the City of Vancouver. The Civic Asset Naming Committee was established by Council on February 29, 2012, and re-established on December 16, 2014. The Committee approves names to be added to the Names Reserve List based on input from staff

regarding compliance with naming policies and guidelines and also recommends names to Council for new streets and roads, development areas, pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, and other City-owned assets and facilities (excluding Parks and Library assets).

PURPOSE

This report seeks Council approval of naming a new public street in the Southeast False Creek Rail Yard neighbourhood as “Switchmen Street” as it represents an extension of the existing street. It also seeks approval of naming a new public street in the same area as “Pullman Porter Street”.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

On June 28, 2011, City Council approved a recommendation from the former Street Naming Committee to name a new public street in the Southeast False Creek neighbourhood precinct called The Rail Yard as “Switchmen Street”. The name was recommended by the former staff committee as it was felt that new street names in this neighbourhood should be reflective of the area’s former railway uses.

In the 1900s the Vancouver, Westminster, and Yukon Railway (later called the Great Northern/Burlington Northern) had an engine house at the foot of Quebec Street. From this engine house was a track running north across False Creek, west to Columbia Street, and east along the south shore of False Creek (at that time False Creek extended as far east as Clark Drive). Remnants of this area’s former rail transportation functions are reflected in the curved right of way north of First Avenue.

At its meeting on November 3, 2014, the Civic Asset Naming Committee approved the name for this extension of Switchmen Street, as the existing street so named now extends northwest of Quebec Street.

Also at its meeting on November 3, 2014, the Civic Asset Naming Committee approved the name of an additional street which has now been established by way of registration of a Statutory Right of Way in favour of the City for street purposes. Pullman Porter Street was selected in recognition of the role sleeping car porters played in both Black labour history and the history of the railway. The street is in close proximity to the two train stations on Main Street: Union Station, the Great Northern depot demolished in the 1960s and the Canadian National which now serves as the bus, VIA and Amtrak station. All three railroads servicing Vancouver (the CPR, CNR and the GNR) had longstanding relationships with the Pullman Company, and Pullman had a seasonal office in Vancouver to service the cars with agents stationed here from 1936 to 1950. The Pullman Porters’ Club, a popular Main Street gathering place for the predominantly Black porters, was also located nearby, backing on to Hogan’s Alley. Many residents of Hogan’s Alley worked as railway porters, their residences chosen in part because of the area’s proximity to the railway station and multi-ethnic Strathcona. Porters also played an important role in Black labour history. The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters signed its first collective agreement with CP Rail on May 18, 1945, the first time a trade union organized by and for Black men signed an agreement with a Canadian company.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications.

CONCLUSION

The Civic Asset Naming Committee recommends Council approve the names "Switchmen Street" and "Pullman Porter Street" for the street extension and new public street in the Southeast False Creek Rail Yard neighbourhood.

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PLAN TO ACCOMPANY A BY-LAW TO AMEND STREET NAME BY-LAW No. 4054.

DRAWING NOT TO SCALE

