

STRUGGLES OVER STREET NAMES IN DALLAS – Ed Sebesta 8/24/2018, first draft finished 9/20/2018, maps included 4/13/2020 with summary added.

INTRODUCTION:

This is a preliminary study and it will just cover the struggles over naming streets after civil rights leaders from 1981 to the present and may not include all such struggles. Further this study will only encompass the struggles I have identified so far from review of the *Dallas Morning News* articles on this topic.

Further research will be needed to do a comprehensive study of this history and it is the author's plan to do so. There needs to be other publications, newspapers, and texts tracked down and reviewed. It is important that no street renaming after a civil rights leader is overlooked.

However, the strategies, tactics, rationalizations and the racism of the efforts to block renaming are very much revealed even with this limited material examined so far. Also, this preliminary paper is necessary to provide a framework for further inquiry. This is not a simple topic but involves a city trying to maintain a white landscape and resisting equity.

SUMMARY OF STRUGGLES

In the following table *DMN TIME PERIOD* refers to the time the struggle was in the *Dallas Morning News (DMN)* and the struggle may have preceded the *DMN* coverage for a substantial time period. For some streets there have been more than one effort to get a street renamed that wasn't in the *DMN*.

The summary histories will be by street name and will be brief. Discussion of the characteristics of these struggles will be in a following section reviewing them as a group.

DMN TIME PERIOD	STREET RENAMED	NOTES
Sept. 1980 – May 1981	City Council passes ordinance to change name of Forest Ave. to Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. (4/8/1981) . Reported <i>DMN</i> 4/9/1981	Three other proposed renamings rejected by the city council. Malcolm X, Frederick Douglass, Ralph Bunche .
1/18/1988 – Ordinance No. 19832 implementing section in Dallas City Code section on street naming.		
5/18/1988 – Roy Williams and Marvin Crenshaw file suit in federal courts over how Dallas elects city council.		
3/28/1990 – Federal Court ruling that Dallas system of electing the city council is in violation of the Voting Rights Act.		
May 1992 – Oct. 1992	Effort Defeated. Malcolm X .	Struggle to rename Illinois Ave. after Malcolm X
1996 – Ordinance No. 22224 to Dallas City Code section on street renaming.		
July 1997 – Jan. 1998	City Council passes ordinance to change Oakland Ave. to Malcolm X Blvd . Reported <i>DMN</i> 11/13/1997.	Struggle to rename Oakland Ave. after Malcolm X.
May 1999 -- ???	Effort seems to have stalled out. César Chávez .	Suggestion to change some West Dallas street after César Chávez.
July 2002 – Dec. 2003	Hastings St. changed to Maurine F. Bailey Way . Reported <i>DMN</i> 12/31/2003	Effort to rename Hastings Street to Maurine F. Baily.
July 2002 – Dec. 2003	City Council passes ordinance to change Fourth Ave. to J.B. Jackson Jr. Blvd . Reported <i>DMN</i> 12/31/2003 Effort for Heggins defeated .	Effort to rename some street after Elsie Faye Heggins and another after J.B. Jackson Jr.
April 2008 – April 2010	City Council passes ordinance to change South Central Expressway, a service road, to César Chávez Blvd . Reported <i>DMN</i> 4/10/2010.	Long effort with original goal to rename Industrial Blvd. after César Chávez, then Ross Ave., then a strip of a service road for the Central Expressway was chosen.
April 2014 – Nov. 2014	Effort for Nelson Mandela Blvd . defeated	Dwaine Caraway effort to rename Lancaster Road after Nelson Mandela.
Nov. 2014 – Feb. 2015	City Council passed ordinance to change Grand Ave. to Al Lipscomb Way . Reported <i>DMN</i> 2/11/2015	Effort to rename Grand Ave. to Al Lipscomb Way.
Nov. 2014 – Jan. 2015	City Council passes ordinance to change Hatcher Street for Elsie Faye Heggins Street . Reported <i>DMN</i> 1/14/2015.	Effort to rename Hatcher St. to Elsie Faye Heggins Street.

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. BOULEVARD

The first major attempt to rename streets after African American leaders was by Dallas City Council member Elsie Faye Heggins. What is most notable of her effort versus subsequent efforts was the scope of her proposal in renaming. *Dallas Morning News (DMN)* reporting on Heggins efforts starts with a Sept. 12, 1980 article, “Street-naming bid jars firms,” the title and the article shows how the *DMN* was an agent against street renaming.

Heggins proposed that: highway I-45 be named Ralph Bunche Freeway; State Highway 352 be named Frederick Douglas Blvd.; Oakland Ave. be renamed Malcolm X avenue; and for Forest Ave., Kiest Blvd. or Cedar Crest Blvd. to be renamed Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. Though the extent of Martin Luther King Jr. proposed renaming in this article seems to be confusingly worded.¹ Heggins thought big. Subsequent efforts were mostly for one street at a time.

Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X were major civil rights activists of the 20th century. Frederick Douglass was a leading abolitionists in the 19th century. Ralph Bunche helped organize the United Nations after World War II and was a winner of the Nobel Prize in the 20th century.

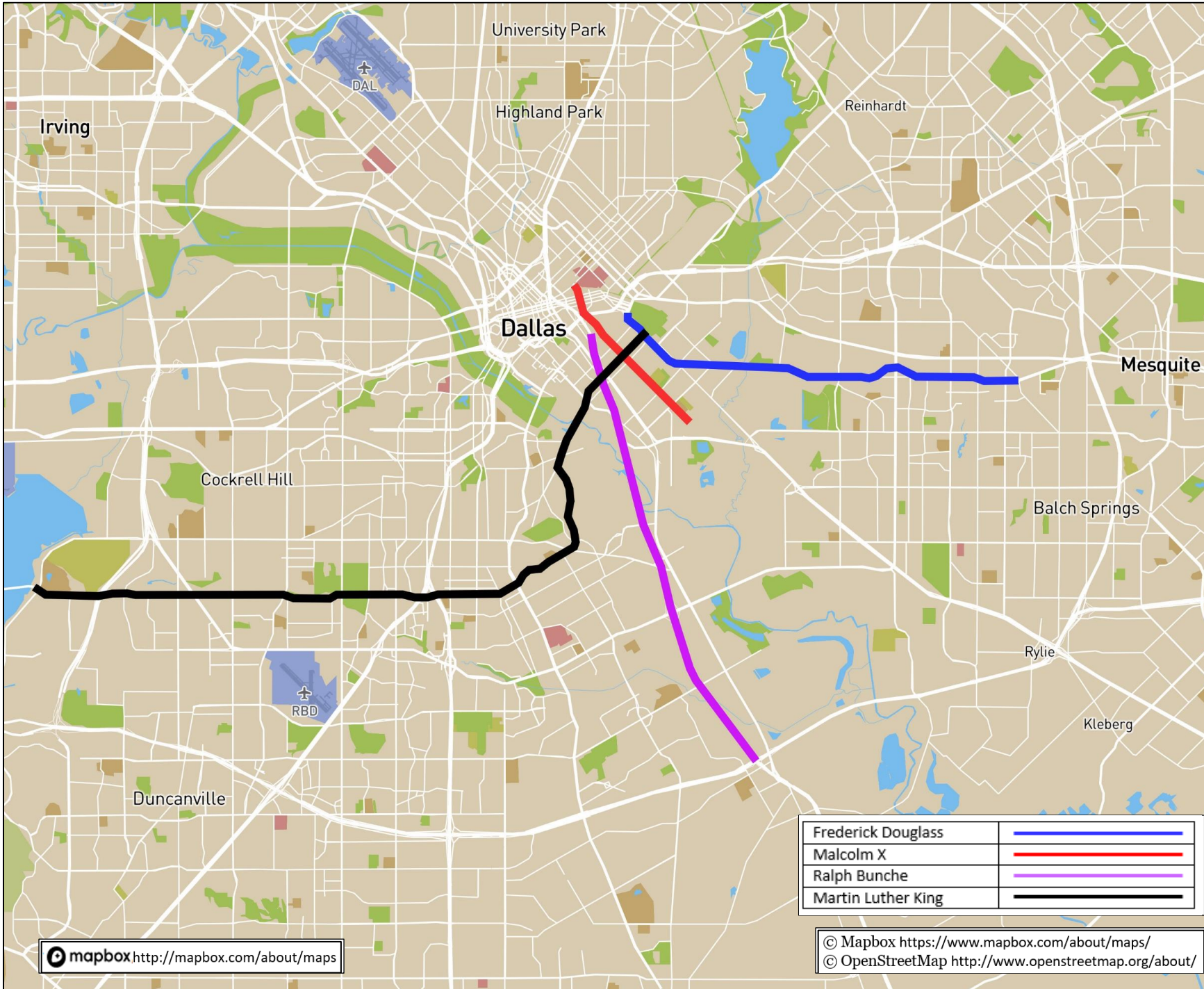
The article reports that the Mayor Robert Folsom said that he wanted Heggins to go through the “normal process,” but Heggins pointed out that “her recommendation already appears to have gotten lost in the process.” The article reports that Heggins had “suggested more than six months earlier to have State Highway 352 near Fair Park be called Frederick Douglass Boulevard.”

Much of the article reports complaints business have against a name change. Joe Johnson was complaining that he had just spent money on a yellow pages ad.² There were businesses with Forest in the name. A “salesman” at the Forest Avenue Pawn Shop said “It would really mess us up,” because as the article asserted, it would require businesses “to go through the process of establishing a new identification for their companies.” However, precisely why these would be great enough difficulties to “jar” businesses as the title proclaims isn’t clear. Certainly current customers of the Forest Avenue Pawn Shop would know where it was regardless of what the signs would say. For new customers, it would be in the news that the street name was changed, and they would be able to drive to the businesses. At some point the business might change its name and signage and it is hard to believe that this would leave people puzzled. How this name change would “really mess up” a business isn’t explained in the article.³

¹ A clearer and not confused report on the extent of Heggins proposal is in a later *DMN* article which is discussed and footnoted in this essay.

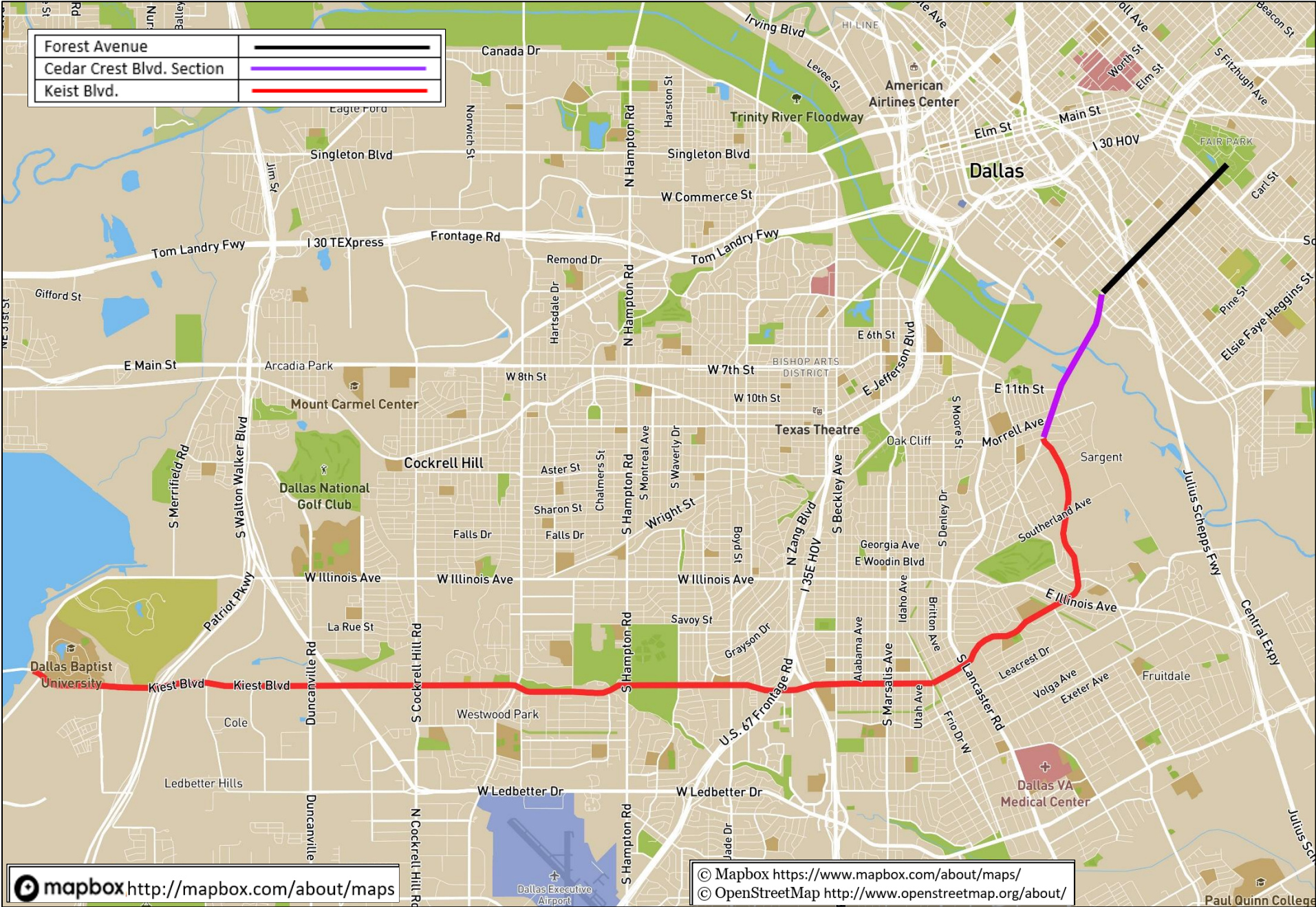
² Prior to the Internet, land line telephone companies and others would publish directories of businesses with a short description and their address. These were printed on a yellow color paper, hence were popularly known as yellow pages. They were published annually. Businesses would purchase an advertisement in these directories and they were distributed for free.

³ Tatum, Henry, “Street-naming bid jars firms,” *DMN*, 9/12/1980, page 41.



Elsie Faye Heggins Vision

The sections of Elsie Faye Heggins' Martin Luther King Blvd.



Since then there have been many streets that have been changed and no reports of great economic hardship for the businesses on those streets that have been renamed.

The *DMN*, 1/29/1981 reports that the Dallas City Council Thoroughfare Committee approved renaming Julius Schepps Freeway to Ralph Bunche Freeway and Cedar Crest Blvd. and Forest Ave. to Martin Luther King Jr.

The article gives a clearer indication of the extent of Heggins's proposal for Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. It was to include all of Forest Ave. parts of Cedar Crest Blvd. and Kiest Blvd. The committee changed it to include all of Cedar Crest and Forest but to leave Kiest Blvd. unchanged because "... recommendations from the urban planning staff and after protests from Kiest Boulevard residents."

Renaming State Highway 352 for Frederick Douglass was turned down according to the article most of the white committee members were concerned that it would "cheat" Robert E. Cullum of recognition.

The article stated that the committee "did not show the same concern for white Jewish businessman and philanthropist Julius Schepps," for which I-45 was then named.

Malcolm X was seen as too radical.

The article reports:

Only Mrs. Davis and committee chairman David McAtee voted for the change. Caldwell and the third black member. Calvin Stephens abstained in the vote.

The meeting was reported as "heated" and the decision of the committee was denounced as racist by Bill Stoner who pointed out that "Once again you've give us a slice of bread while you've run away with the load." The article then reported:

But black committee member Osborn Caldwell, a teacher at James Madison High School on Forest Avenue, told the committee, "This means a lot to the community. You haven't angered a lot of people. In fact, you've made a lot of people happy."

African American committee member Vivian Davis voted against the proposed Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd since it didn't encompass the entire original request made by Heggins.

Julius Schepps Freeway never was renamed Ralph Bunche Freeway with Dallas city council member Max Goldblatt leading the effort against it being renamed. Goldblatt seems to have been a political outsider who also challenged the establishment. Ironically he had been the

victim of an earlier at-system of electing Dallas city council members and had a lawsuit which resulted in there being some single member district seats.⁴

After the decision of the Thoroughfare Committee is reported, Max Goldblatt's criticism are reported in a Feb. 4, 1981, *DMN* article. Goldblatt pointed out that Schepps had been a philanthropist and the article reported, "Goldblatt said Schepps ... also was involved in programs to assist South Dallas and other minority communities."

The stretch that was currently named after Schepps, had only been named Schepps in 1974. Jewish leaders were reported to have been concerned. B'nai B'rith immediate past-president Bob Moss stated that "it is wrong for any street named in honor of an individual to be changed." He claimed that, "I've talked to many people in both the non-Jewish and the black community who agree that it's wrong to change the name of a street that is honoring someone."

Moss also stated that there needed to be a policy "to protect all thoroughfares named for Dallas leaders."

The article reports about Moss, "He said he is a strong supporter of the concept of naming streets in Dallas for black leaders. But Moss said he believes the city can find streets that do not already the [that?] bear the names of former Dallas civil leaders for the renaming."⁵

What isn't considered by Moss is that some, very likely many, former Dallas civil leaders probably should not be honored by any street. Also, Moss doesn't consider that African Americans as an historically oppressed group, only having the right to vote protected by the Voting Rights Act, recently and whose influence was diminished by both poverty and the at-large election system of Dallas for the election of city council members, had been historically excluded from naming streets in Dallas. The white landscape just drops out of nowhere with Moss. How, African Americans might achieve equity in the naming of the Dallas landscape isn't considered at all by Moss and it appears not by anyone else outside the African American community.

The discussion of street naming in 1981 is historically amnesiac.

Goldblatt, as reported in a *DMN* article a couple days later, Feb. 6, 1981, titled, "But Dallas has a Bunche," had discovered that there is already a Bunche Drive in Hamilton Park. It was a neighborhood in Far North Dallas created to provide better housing for African Americans in such a way as to preserve racial segregation in Dallas. Goldblatt then focuses on the issue of duplicate naming. This is something which is against long standing Dallas street naming policies going back to the annexation of East Dallas and other attempts to bring order to Dallas

⁴ "Biographical Note," online page for the Max Goldblatt Dallas City Council Papers, <https://legacy.lib.utexas.edu/taro/dalpub/08520/dpub-08520.html>, printed out 8/25/2018.

⁵ Tatum, Henry, "Renaming of freeway contested," *DMN*, 2/4/1981, pp. 1D, 4D, (database has it wrongly as pp. 31, 4D, it states in the 4D section of the article that it is continued from 1D.)

street naming. Goldblatt in the article states regarding postal mail delivery, “In fact, they’ve told me that they won’t deliver the mail.” However, given that there are zip codes which had already been adopted prior to 1981 the mail would be delivered. However, for dispatching ambulances and police, avoiding duplicate names is important.⁶

However, it is important to understand that this line of argument is to block change. Both streets might have been changed. Another major highway could have been selected. However, the goal is to shut down change, not find a means to have African Americans represented on the landscape.

The naming recommendation then went to the City Plan Commission. A *DMN* article, “Racism charge follows decision on street names,” reports that the City Plan Commission rejected naming streets for Ralph Bunche, Malcolm X, or Frederick Douglas only approving Martin Luther King Jr. and “The decision brought angry charges of racism from some of the blacks in the audience.” The Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. approved by the Plan Commission was an abbreviated version of the original proposal which was to have cross the Trinity River to include parts of Cedar Crest and Kiest Blvd. because as the article reports, “the large turnout of residents on Cedar Crest and Kiest who opposed the proposal.”

Only the two African American members of the Plan Commission voted for all four proposed streets, and the other twelve commissioners voted against them.

Everyone claimed to be supportive of having streets named for African Americans in general in these articles, but found problems in renaming Julius Schepps Freeway and Robert B. Cullum Blvd. Earlier it said that Cullum would be “cheated.”

Julius Schepps was represented as an advocate for minorities. The article reports that “a number of speakers” were opposed to the freeway being named because “Julius Schepps had been so active in the peaceful desegregation of public accom[m]odations in Dallas during the late 1950s.” George Allen who at that time had been the only African American pro tem mayor in Dallas history stated that:

“Mr. Schepps took his chances in the promotion of minorities. He desegregated Dallas a full five years before the passage of federal civil rights laws.”

Former Dallas acting mayor audience Harrison was reported as having the “same sentiments” Allen and asserted that “if Ralph Bunche were here today, he would tell you that Julius Schepps was a great American.”⁷

⁶ Tatum, Henry, “But Dallas has a Bunche,” *DMN*, 2/6/1981, pp. 33.

⁷ Tatum, Henry, “Racism charge follows decision on street names,” *DMN*, 3/13/1981, pp. 1D,39, 42. There seems to be some mix up in the Newsbank database. The article is listed as being on pages 39, 42, but the pdfs of the article say the article is continuing from 1D. It could be that the numbering is from page 1A.

What is not reported is that there is consideration that another major street might be renamed for Bunche instead of Schepps Freeway or Frederick Douglass instead of Cullum Blvd. There is no reported discussion of where African American heroes find representation on the streets and highways of Dallas in a landscape that had been named by a white supremacist regime. Again it is a debate contained in a box of historical amnesia and constrained to discussion of the specifics of particular streets.

Robert B. Cullum shouldn't have any street named after him. He was a member of the Citizens Council in Dallas, the oligarchy that ran things and part of the establishment that accepted the passage of civil rights legislation only through court orders compelling them. He also, against the protests of anti-apartheid activists, allowed the apartheid regime of South Africa have a display at the State Fair for multiple years.⁸ The Robert B. Cullum Blvd. is along Fair Park because of his role as head of the State Fair. None of this showed up in the reporting of the *DMN* in the discussion of street names.

The casting of Julius Schepps as an opponent of segregation is also problematic. Schepps was a member of the Dallas Citizens Council⁹ which again was the oligarchy which ran things and a part of an establishment that accepted the passage of civil rights legislation only through court orders compelling them. The "Dallas Plan" was motivated to have integration, which was going to happen by court order eventually, which the establishment planned to have occur peacefully so as not to hurt the city's image. Businesses was being lost because conventions were refusing to meet in Dallas. Another thing driving the Dallas Plan was a desire to give enough to prevent leadership of the African American community being given over to those less manageable.¹⁰

This representation of Schepps erases the fact that African Americans were frequently in the courts challenging the integration plan of Dallas elites as entirely too slow and the protests against the slow pace of integration.¹¹

As reported in June 23, 1966 *DMN* article titled, "Stemmons Says Bill on Housing is 'Vicious,'" John Stemmons of the Stemmons family of which multiple roadways and freeways is named, denounced the housing provisions of the 1966 Civil Rights bill in his appearance before the U.S. Senate constitutional rights subcommittee as vice-chairman of the Texas Real Estate

⁸ There is a series of articles in the Dallas Morning News, these are some of them. Altweg, Al, "Fair's Foreign Exhibits Aimed at Texas Market," 10/11/1970, pp. 11; Domeier, Doug, "86th State Fair of Texas Opens," pp. 1; No author, "252,876 Flock to Fair Despite Gray Sky, Rain," 10/7/1973, pp. 1; Griffith, Dotty, "Blacks Split on S. Africa Protest," 10/10/1973, pp. 15; No author, "South African Exhibit To Continue at Fair," 10/11/1973, pp. 12; No author, "Resolution Highlights First Duty," 10/27/1974, pp. 6. For his involvement in the State Fair and his role as a leader in the Dallas Citizens Council see the entry for Cullum, Robert Brooks, by Lisa C. Maxwell, Texas State Historical Association, <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fcu57>, printed out 10/1/2018.

⁹ Texas State Historical Association entry, "Schepps, Julius," by Lisa C. Maxwell, <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fsc65>, printed out 10/1/2018.

¹⁰ An interesting article is "Quiet Diplomacy Helpd Dallas Begin Desegregation," by Kevin Merida, *DMN*, 2/24/1985, pp. 33A.

¹¹ Some Dallas Morning News articles on the court cases are: Slepicka, Lynn, "Court Asked to Speed Up Dallas School Integration," 8/28/1965, pp. 1; No author, "CORE Unit Sets Protest," 8/5/1965, pp. 21; Haag, Martin, "Integration Lag Hit by NAACP," 3/6/1960, pp. 1. These are a few the author came across searching the Newsbank database of *DMN* articles.

Association. Stemmons is reported to have demanded that, “the Senate to ‘defeat this vicious bill which would rob us of our birthright,’ and that it would ‘create a Gestapo.’” The article quotes sections of the rest of Stemmons’ screed before the Senate.¹² Further research would likely uncover other street names that really need to be replaced.

Generally, this first attempt to change the naming of some streets was like all the later attempts, a hunt to find problems, obstacles, technicalities to use as a pretext to obstruct renaming streets after African Americans or Hispanics, but not to look to how and where street renaming might be done.

The meeting was heated. *DMN* reported that Plan Commissioner Ed White was in a shouting match with Al Lipscomb had, “nearly led to fisticuffs,” when White jumped from his chair and headed toward Lipscomb.

The title of the April 9, 1981 *DMN* article, “Street name passes after yelling match,” on the Dallas city council session which passed an ordinance renaming Forest Ave. to Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.¹³ The council turned down renaming Oakland for Malcolm X, State Highway 352 for Frederick Douglass and Schepps Freeway for Ralph Bunche. Max Goldblatt got into a shouting match with hecklers in the audience. He was infuriated that they called him a racist because of his opposition to renaming the streets and responded asserting what he felt was his record for civil rights.

Some interesting things are in this article showing that the issue with Robert Cullum Boulevard might have been misrepresented. Bill Forest testified before the council that the request to name State Highway 352 for Frederick Douglass had been made five years earlier. It seems Highway 352 had been named after Cullum even though this other request to have the street named after Douglass had been existing prior and then made a pretext to not name the street after Douglass later.

Several elements in this city council session which are significant.

Goldblatt was quoted, “This isn’t a black-white issue. The issue is whether we are going to spend the next 15 months talking about changing street names or spend that time fighting crime and keeping the tax rate down.” The assertion is that discussion of street names precludes working on other problems and the positioning of street name discussions as being oppositional to working on other problems. More subtly it willfully ignores that the landscape is named, such things as parks, streets, buildings, and has monuments placed on the landscape in the advancement of values. If Goldblatt, or others who came after him, or others who would come in the future want to avoid effort spent on fights, they might consider just accepting the renaming of a street and move on.

¹² Kowert, Nancy, “Stemmons Says Bill On Housing ‘Vicious,’” *DMN*, 6/23/1966, page 7.

¹³ If you check the current maps there is still a short stretch of Forest Ave. remaining beyond where Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. becomes Cedar Crest.

As in future debates, the struggle, the controversy, is asserted to be all the responsibility of those advocating the name change and not those who are resisting.

There is in this article the first advocacy of having a policy of street renaming by Dorothy Ramsey, president of the Dallas Homeowners League.

Another feature of this debate was African American opposition to street renaming. The article reports, “Council member Elsie Faye Heggins had worked for months to try to win support for all four name changes, but even she dropped the battle to change Oakland Avenue for Malcolm X when neighborhood opposition emerged.” Earlier it was residents on Cedar Crest rejecting Martin Luther King Jr. as a new name for the street.¹⁴

Interestingly enough the fact that Forest Avenue had a previous dual identity of being both Forest and Forrest Ave. presumably named after Nathan Bedford Forrest this was never brought up. In articles about Forest Ave. the DMN used to carefully use both spellings in reference to Forest Avenue. You would find the street spelled one way and the other in the same article. In the historical records with the Dallas Council ROAM system have plats with both Forest and Forrest used. It is unclear when the routine reference to Forest Avenue only as Forest occurred and why.¹⁵

As reviewed in another section of this paper, after this city council meeting there were some proposals for prevent street names from being changed or regulated but the city council turned down these proposals and as mentioned earlier Heggins pointed out that they were designed to prevent street renaming.

MALCOLM X: THE FIRST ATTEMPT

Spike Lee was signed on to direct the movie Malcolm X in 1990.¹⁶ It was released Nov. 18, 1992.¹⁷ The public would have been aware that it was in production.

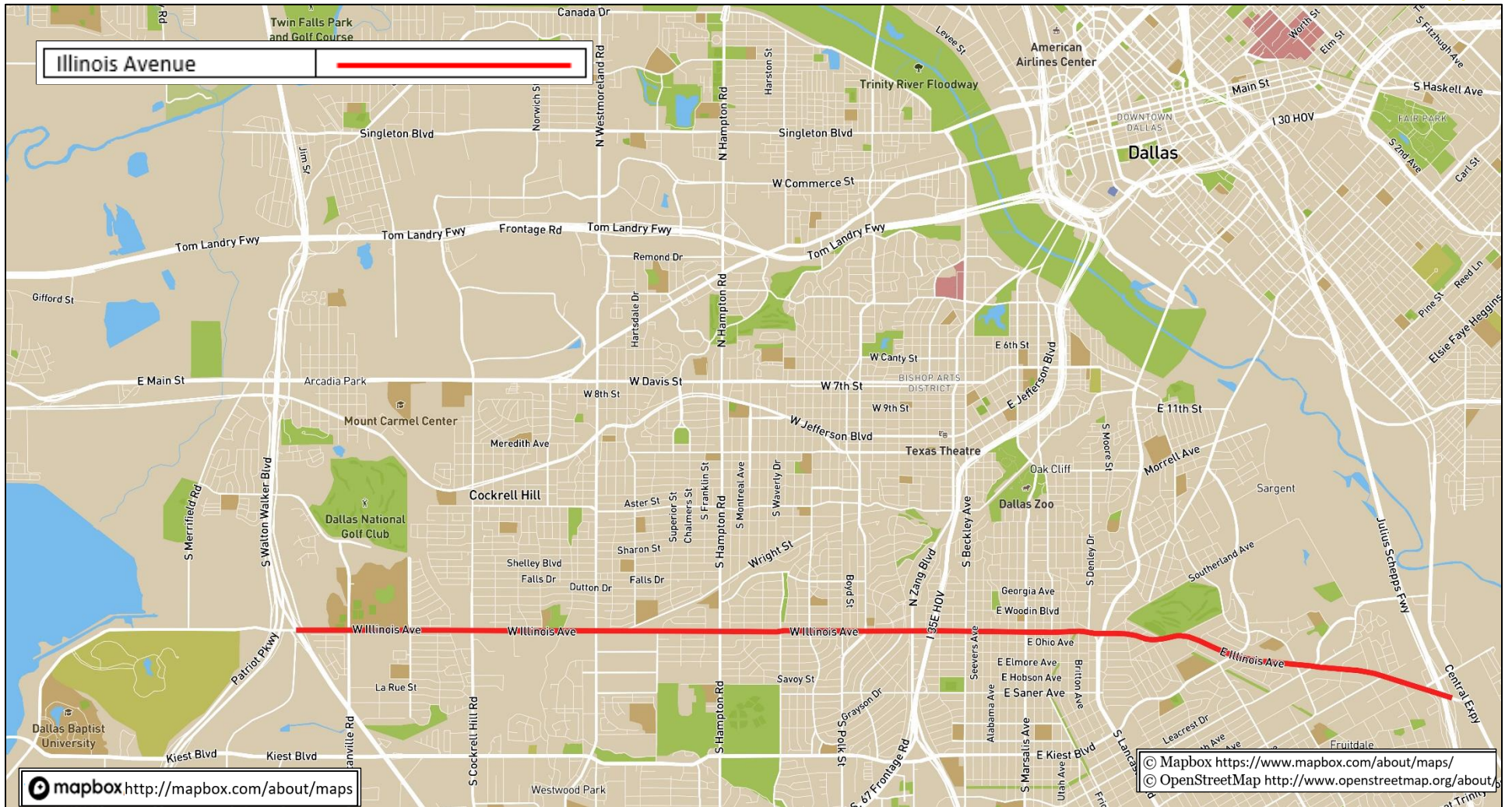
The *DMN* reports on 5/16/1992 that an effort exists to rename Illinois Ave. to Malcolm X Blvd by the Malcolm X Community Council. Marvin E. Crenshaw is the president of the organization.

¹⁴ Tatum, Henry, “Street name passes after yelling match,” *DMN* 4/9/1981, page 25, 26.

¹⁵ The author stumbled upon a plat in the historical books on the ROAM system of Dallas County while looking information for another investigation in which the street was spelled “Forrest.” Searching to the database of *DMN* articles will show both Forest and Forrest in use in articles and as addresses in advertisements. These results have not been published, but will be in the authors work on Dallas white supremacist named streets.

¹⁶ Clark, Ashley, “Malcolm X: Spike Lee’s biopic is still absolutely necessary,” *The Guardian*, Feb. 19, 2015, online, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2015/feb/19/malcolm-x-spike-lee-biopic-black-cinema-selma-the-butler>, printed out 8/25/2018.

¹⁷ [www.imdb.com](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0104797/), online, <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0104797/>, printed out 8/25/2018.



Marvin Crenshaw's proposed Malcolm X Blvd. in **Red**.

Their plan was also to extend Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. into Oak Cliff so it would symbolically intersect with the proposed Malcolm X Blvd.

Also, the article reports the proposal also includes:

Street name changes to honor other local African-Americans also are a part of the proposal, Mr. Crenshaw said. The petition drive seeks to change Grand Avenue to honor the late architect William Sidney Pittman; Oakland Avenue to honor the late businessman Hudson Griffin, owner of a popular dry cleaners on Oakland; and Hatcher Street to honor Charles Asberry, an educator who founded a South Dallas bank.

None of these others proposed street re-namings happened. Grand, Oakland, and Hatcher were renamed after other African American leaders.

Businesses along the proposed Malcolm X route had complaints. Dentists Irby Hunter thought that “my patients wouldn’t have any idea where Malcolm X street is,” presumably because Hunter feels that his existing patients can’t read street signs, or remember how to drive to a place they have driven before, or use street maps. Austin Cook, white owner of Austin’s Barbecue, doesn’t want it changed since his business has been on Illinois Ave. for 42 years which is supposed to be a reason.¹⁸

The *DMN* reports on Feb. 25, 1993 on Crenshaw’s pleas to the city council to name Illinois Ave. after Malcolm X. Crenshaw has a petition of 6,000 people asking for a name change. However, Crenshaw faces opposition in multiple forms.

One opponent is council member Domingo Garcia who states, “People are heavily opposed in my district.” Crenshaw stated that he has signatures on his petition by people in his district.

It would be a feature of fights over street renamings that Hispanics would not support African American efforts and in turn African Americans would not support Hispanic efforts. The usual business complaints are described, new stationary and that somehow customers would be unable to find their way to their business.

The privileging of property owners in the code is a key element of the opposition. From the article:

¹⁸ Wade, Norma Adam, “Street renaming sought – Group wants to honor Malcolm X,” Metro South Bureau, *DMN*, 5/16/1992, page 31A. For the background of Austin Cook, No author, “A look back at Austin’s Barbecue,” *Oak Cliff Advocate Magazine*, 1/27/2011, online, <https://oakcliff.advocatemag.com/2011/01/barbecue-with-a-side-of-heart/>, printed out 8/25/2018.

Although City Council members would make the final decision, such a decision is usually based on what residents want, said Sam Wilson, assistant director of the city Transportation Depart.

They would have had input and sampling from the people to see if they are in favor of it,” he said. “They would also have public hearings.”

In the street renaming process the city is not a neutral figure effectively acts as a lobbyist against the street name change. The abutting property owner opponents of the street name change don’t have to mobilize everyone abutting the street. With the city mailings to every owner abutting the street they are alerted. The proponents of renaming on the other hand have to go out and seek supporters.

This is a key feature of fights over street name changes in that the city resources are mobilized to enable the opposition.

One obstacle to street name changes was easily demolished by Crenshaw. City council members said there was no money to make a street name change. Crenshaw pointed out that the city recently had spent money for a parade for the professional National Football League (NFL) team the Dallas Cowboys.¹⁹

In 1994 the City Plan Commission voted against the change of the name 12 to 1 as reported in the April 15, 1994 *DMN* article, “Street-name vote spurs City Hall scuffle.” As reported by the *DMN*, it was supposed to have been a meeting with things being thrown and scuffles and shouting. The article reported that Sandra Crenshaw had run into the meeting from her office to yell at Marvin E. Crenshaw to stop, who the article pointed out was her cousin.

The opposition argued that it would put a burdensome cost of changing addresses “on everything from stationary to driver’s licenses.” However, a person can move and doesn’t need to have their driver’s license updated. The billings an individual receives usually has a place for address changes. A company’s stationary could just be used up and the next printing have the new address. It isn’t clear what these costs would be, but Danell Lichtenwalter of the Oak Cliff Chamber of Congress stated, “It’s a long street, and the costs would be incredible.” However, even if the aggregate was somewhat high, it would also be that it was a long street and the per capita burden would be little.

The opposition had collected 13,000 signatures whereas it is reported that Marvin Crenshaw had only 4,000. Charles Tupper Jr. held up stacks of paper making up the petition and pointed this out. In this argument he is privileging the property owners abutting Illinois over what might be the needs of the City of Dallas and the general public’s concerns. Tupper uses the petition to nullify any other points, but also to side step having to make any statement about Malcolm X.

¹⁹ Jackson, Audrey A., “Crenshaw urges renaming avenue after Malcolm X,” *DMN*, 2/25/1993, page 28A.

Things are sometimes done for the general good. That is why there is eminent domain. In this case however, the city actually owns the street and the case isn't even a matter of that, but chooses to give domain over the street naming to a class of landowners. It is a medieval throw back. It is like the Queen of England having a claim to all the swans on England's lakes.

However, since the city had done a survey of all the property owners along the way, it could be asked if they effectively did a push poll where a question is asked in such a way to push an opinion. For example, is any information sent about the individual for whom the street is proposed to be renamed? This is a research question remaining to be answered. Regardless the city's survey would be extremely effective in mobilizing opposition.

The real reason for the opposition was revealed in the reporting of one set of reasons given.

One resident feared he might have a problem selling his home if its address were Malcolm X Boulevard. Others said they also worried that naming the street after the fiery African-American leader would inhibit people from visiting businesses.

Charles Tupper Jr. held up stacks of paper of petitions opposed to the renaming and later stated in the hearing, "I think it is obvious that the impact would be severe," referring to the renaming proposal. Tupper moved to have the renaming rejected and as mentioned, it was rejected 12 to 1. Roy Williams was the sole vote in favor of the renaming.²⁰

Roy Williams was an appointee by African American city council member Barbara Mallory. His lone vote for the Malcolm X proposal angered her to the point she had him removed from the City Plan Commission. Given that with the City Plan Commission vote of 12 to 1 against the proposal would necessitate a three-quarters vote of the city council to approve the change effectively terminating the proposal, it can be asked why Mallory would be angered and want to terminate someone who was a hero in democratizing city elections. It of course could be that Williams had not followed her instructions and she wanted to make sure all her appointees understood that she expected them to vote as instructed.

However, in a matter which certainly had the attention of the African American community in Dallas and the Dallas Fort Worth area, if Williams had voted against the renaming, being a civil rights hero, it would have legitimized the rejection of the renaming as merely a technical matter rather than a racial matter.

Williams' support for the street renaming then put a burden on the African American city council members and others in their later vote against the renaming. However, these city council members might pose themselves, they now having to vote against naming a major street for Malcolm X. The vote for Williams' ouster was 12 for and 2 against. Two African Americans wanted Williams and Mallory to reconcile which was a position which you could go

²⁰ Gesalman, Anne Belli, Lundy, Audrey S., "Street-name vote spurs City Hall scuffle," *DMN*, 4/15/1994, pp. 23A.

on record as supporting Williams knowing full well that the rest of the city council would vote him out. However, the vote for Williams ouster by the other city council members was likely that they wanted their appointees to follow their wishes and making an example of Williams would let their appointees understand what might happen if they did not follow their wishes.²¹

The *DMN* reported Mallory's claim as to why she had Williams removed from the City Plan Commission.

Ms. Mallory said her decision to seek Mr. Williams' removal was based primarily on his overall performance...

"What Barbara Mallory is about is harmony, working with people," she said, adding that she perceives Mr. Williams' style as more confrontational than hers.

"I don't think everything is racial," she said.

After Williams' ouster from the City Plan Commission there were cries to recall Barbara Mallory,²² but she was not recalled and there seemed to be little consequence in either her vote against renaming Illinois Ave. or ousting Williams. She was reelected and her time on the city council only ended in 2001 because Dallas had adopted term limits for the city council.²³ Later she was elected to the Texas House in 2006 and was re-elected twice. In 2011 she felt confident to mount a challenge against U.S. House Representative Eddie Bernice Johnson.²⁴ Not supporting a Malcolm X street had no consequences for her career, which only ended because of her own bad political decision to not run for election to the Texas House and challenge U.S. Rep. Johnson.

MALCOLM X: THE SECOND ATTEMPT

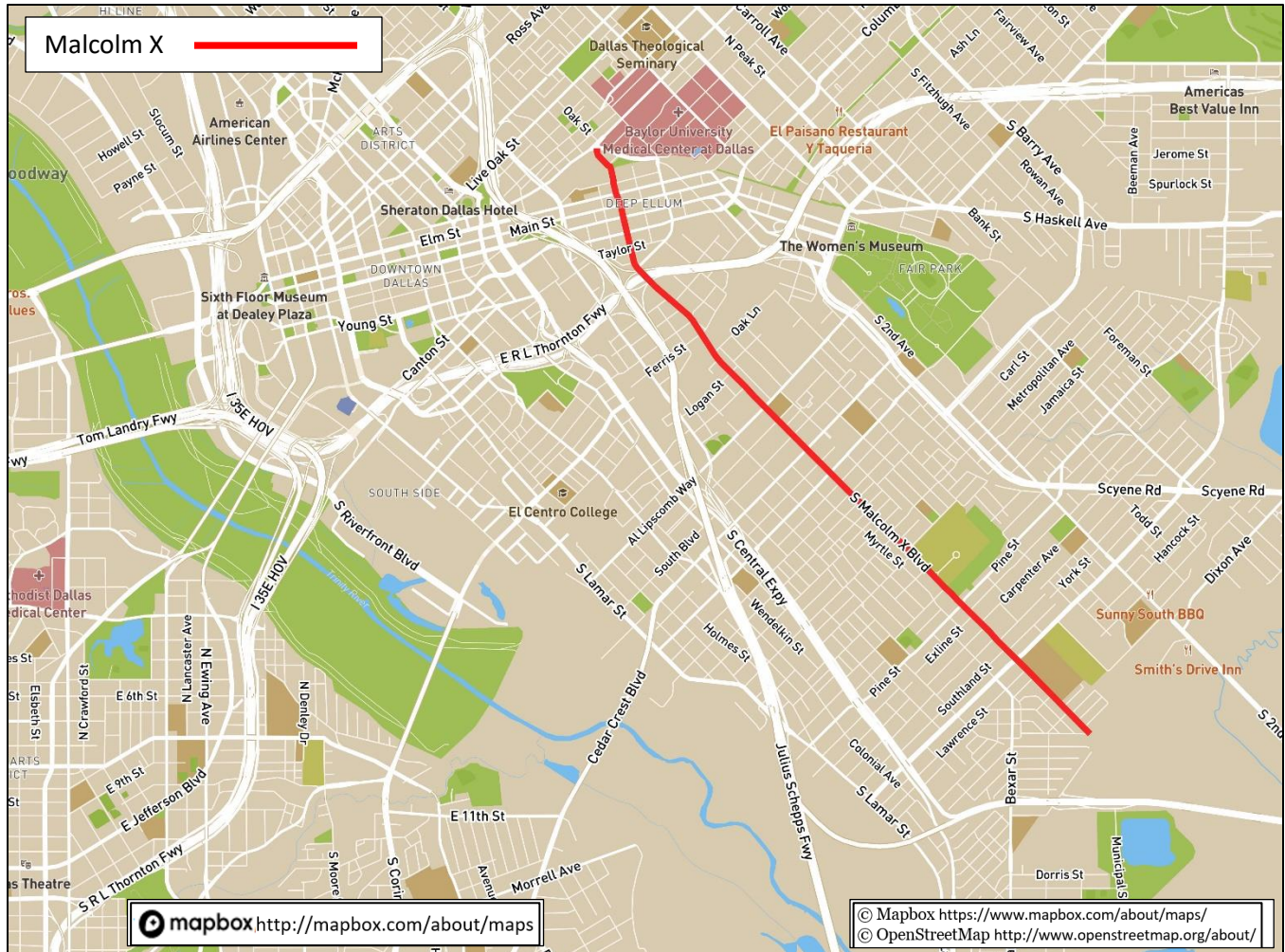
The *DMN*, in a 1997 article, "Drive renewed to name Dallas street for Malcolm X," announces that Marvin Crenshaw, "is reviving his longtime push for a street saluting the late Nation of Islam spokesman."

²¹ Martinez, Sylvia, "Mallory is seeking ouster of appointee to planning panel – He defends vote for honoring Malcolm X," *DMN*, 4/20/1994, pp. 21A; Gesalman, Anne Belli, "Battle likely at hearing on Williams – Activist faces ouster from planning panel," *DMN*, 5/11/1994, pp. 21A; Gesalman, Anne Belli, "Williams removed from city zoning panel – 12-2 council vote backs Mallory's request for ouster," 5/12/1994, pp. 1A.

²² Gesalman, Anne Belli, "Group threatens to recall Mallory over efforts to oust Williams from plan board," *DMN*, 4/23/1994, pp. 34A.

²³ Gillman, Todd J., "Dallas council: In with the old, out with a few – 6 face no challenge, 2 yielding to term limits," 5/2/2001, page 17A.

²⁴ Aasen, Eric, Abshire, Richard, "GOP Rep. Reyna loses race to Latham – Democrat Mallory Caraway wins tight race; Geren holds on," *DMN*, 3/8/2006, pp. 16A; Gromer, Jeffers Jr., "Notes," *DMN*, 12/6/2011, pp. B02, announcing that Barbara Mallory Caraway had decided to run for congress.



However, the campaign now focuses changing Oakland Ave. to Malcolm X with Marvin Crenshaw stating, “That would be a strong intersection where Oakland cross Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard.”

What might be the key factor that made this campaign successful is, as the first line of the article stated, “Many cities have a street named in honor of Malcolm X – but not Dallas, said community activist.”²⁵

It is hard to know how many Malcolm X named streets there were at this time. Najee Ali and Earl Ofari Hutchison in a 1999 article in the Los Angeles time advocating naming a street after Malcolm X stated, “it will make Los Angeles one of at least 10 other cities in America to have a street that bears his name.”²⁶ Given at that at that time one of them would have been in Dallas

²⁵ Adams-Wade, Norma, “Drive renewed to name Dallas street for Malcolm X,” *DMN*, 7/29/1997, page 14A.

²⁶ Ali, Najee, Hutchison, Earl Ofari, “L.A. Needs a Malcolm X Boulevard,” *Los Angeles Times*, 4/24/1999, <http://articles.latimes.com/print/1999/apr/24/local/me-30571>, printed out 8/27/2018.

that means that there might be 9 or more streets in 1997 when the Dallas campaign relaunched that would have been named after Malcolm X.

With more and more cities choosing to have Malcolm X streets, Dallas, in not having a Malcolm X street, or having a fight over having a Malcolm X street, risked projecting a negative image to the nation.

However, another factor enters into this new campaign. Illinois Ave. was major stretch of a very large major roadway of which the name would be very visible and would go through many communities where African Americans didn't predominate.

In contrast Oakland is primarily a street in South Dallas in an African American community and only a short stretch went into Deep Ellum, a community with stores and night clubs for mostly white young people who would consider themselves avant garde.²⁷ Deep Ellum was where the most ferocious opposition to Malcolm X originated.



Malcolm X Blvd. reaching into Deep Ellum in **Red**.

²⁷ A more contemporary term would be “hipster.”

The City Plan Commission in just a couple months later approved the name change reported in *DMN* article Oct. 19, 1997, “Panel Oks renaming street after Malcolm X, S. Dallas proposal faces council vote next month.” The vote was 6 to 3 in favor even though a reported survey by the city of 223 landowners “near” Oakland Ave. had 43 responses, with 33 against and 10 in favor.

There was opposition to this name change. Monica Green, owner of a restaurant a half-block from Oakland Ave., worried about the reputation of Deep Ellum, the article reported that she, “said the name of the convict-turned-black-nationalist leader is associated with crime and controversy.” Quoting Green the article states, “We all want to celebrate the achievements of black Americans in this city, and there are so many other people that are less controversial ...” (partial quote in the article.)

Michael Morris, president of the Deep Ellum Association, representing 100 area businesses, stated “The response of the neighborhood has been a resounding ‘no’ to the name change.” The reasons Morris gave was that there was a great expense in ordering stationary and promotional materials. The cost of new promotional materials Morris summed up as being \$20,000 which divided by 100 businesses meant a cost of \$200 per business which Morris felt was a great burden on them. Morris also worried about the cost of business cards and stationary. Were the businesses stockpiling so much of these things that they were going to be a great loss when the street was finally changed?²⁸

The *Dallas Observer* in an Oct. 16, 1997 article by Thomas Korosec reported the real reasons for the opposition by Deep Ellum landowners and merchants to that name change which was an antipathy to Malcolm. Korosec reports that “though discussion ... was particularly restrained,” discussing the cost of brochures and business cards, “... the sideline comments of several name change proponents, and a few Deep Ellum property owners who oppose the move, showed that harsher feelings lie just below the surface.”

Dan Blanton, Deep Ellum, landlord, developer and owner of four businesses on Oakland denounced the name change, saying “I think it’s a racist proposal,” and “Quite frankly, everybody wants to sweep this under the rug, but as far as I’m concerned, Malcolm X is not somebody I idolize. He was the one calling people like me blue-eyed devils.” Blanton is seemingly unaware that one of the major elements of Malcolm X’s biography is that he moved away from these attitudes after his pilgrimage to Mecca, or perhaps Blanton was aware and was pushing this argument anyways.

This got a response from Charles Hillman, a director with the Afro-American Artists Alliance, “I thought Deep Ellum was supposed to be so artsy-fartsy and progressive. These folk are acting like the Klan ... I think they’re racist.”

²⁸ Lee, Christopher, “Panel Oks renaming street after Malcolm X,” *DMN*, 10/10/1997, pp. 33A.

The public which thinks racism is confined to stereotypes of who racists are, are often surprised that it exists among those who don't fit that stereotype.

Though the Deep Ellum Association was strenuously opposed to Oakland being renamed a Malcolm X Boulevard, they used African American history to promote Deep Ellum on their website.

The Welcome page for the Deep Ellum Association proclaims, “**If it's different, if it's unexpected, if it's alternative, if it's avant garde ... its probably in Deep Ellum.**” [Bold face in original.]

After the introduction the reader is told:

Once the home of blues legends **Blind Lemon Jefferson, Huddie “Leadbelly” Ledbetter, and Lightnin’ Hopkins. Deep Ellum** is now a thriving vibrant urban neighborhood ... [Boldface in original.]²⁹

The article reported Ragsdale’s argument that Oakland was a good choice since most of Oakland Ave. was in an African American neighborhood and that Deep Ellum had been historically a center of African American commerce.

In the article the Deep Ellum Association was reported to have gotten “about 100 signatures” for a petition against a name change. Morris, was concerned to deny that it was about Malcolm X discussing the cost of the change for businesses, stating, “We’d be opposed to this if they wanted to change it to Bob Hope Avenue or Walt Disney Avenue or whatever.” Morris also said that “the most widespread concern is that a change will bring confusion.”

Morris also pointed to the survey and that only 10 out of 43 respondents in a survey of 223 landowners and stated “It strikes me, if you want to change a street name, you’d need to arouse a little support.” Morris statement is based on the idea that landowners along the route are privileged as who should be the deciders regarding a street name. The article quoted a Steve Click who stated, “I’m involved in a development right now at I-30 and Oakland and have spent over a half-million dollars there,” and “it may come as no surprise that all my investors are white. They may not have an adequate knowledge of Malcolm X, but they do feel it’s a controversial name ... Maybe it’s our problem, but it is a problem that can hurt the economic development of South Dallas.”

If it is Click’s problem or his investor’s problem, why isn’t he educating himself, his investors, or seeing that a street name might help educate the public?³⁰ Also, Click’s discussion of the

²⁹ Web page archived at archive.org at web page

<https://web.archive.org/web/19980110224829/http://deepellumtx.com:80/html/welcome.html>, pdf printed 10/2/2018.

³⁰ Korosec, Thomas, “X marks the spot,” 10/16/1997, <https://www.dallasobserver.com/content/printView/6402374>, printed out 8/15/2018.

problem and the uncritical reporting of the DMN assumes that there is no public good greater than real estate development. Why should the public good be secondary by the historical illiteracy of his investors are questions not raised nor asked.

What is interesting in the articles about this name change and others is that opponents of name changing though claiming not to be racist themselves, make the assumption that Dallas in general is racist and would be driven away by these street names and assume that this assertion is something that will be accepted by the general public as being self-evident. It doesn't occur to anyone that these arguments are actually arguments to have the street signs as a counter instruction to the public. Uncritical reporting without considering the obvious assumption of this argument against name changing reinforces the argument and avoids revealing the issue of race in Dallas society.

As reported in *DMN*, Nov. 13, 1997, article, "Street renamed for Malcolm X Council Oks plan after Kirk plea," the Dallas City Council voted 8 to 7 to rename Oakland Ave. to Malcolm X Blvd. The character of Malcolm X was debated and Mayor Ron Kirk made a plea to judge Malcolm X's life as a whole and approve the name change.

The article reports that merchants in Deep Ellum expressed fear the name might frighten clients, others that it would be a bad example for children.

At the council meeting the Deep Ellum Association new president Mark Sonna raised the issue of the character of Malcolm X stating, "Ask five people what they think of Malcolm X and you will get five different responses." It is not reported what Sonna thinks of Malcolm X.

Ron Kirk stated, "African-Americans have all struggled with the reality that our children attend schools with names like Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson," and "... Our children run on football fields behind some folks who carry rebel flags and some kids who drive pickup trucks with the Confederate symbol on it ..." Kirk's arguments are somewhat surprising since in 1998 he declared a Confederate Heritage Day for the city of Dallas and made African American Edward Smith, defender of the Confederacy, an honorary citizen of Dallas as reported in the *United Daughters of the Confederacy Magazine*.³¹

The article reports that a former city council member W.C. "Dub" Miller, chairman of an association that operates the Oakland Cemetery in South Dallas, states that those buried there will, "roll over in their graves if the names is changed." The cemetery was the resting place for many of the old families of Dallas.

Miller articulated a theme that was to be repeated in other street name changes, that changing the names was done to spite white people. The article reports Miller's comment, "The issue was not debated. The African-Americans on the council wanted to show their power, and it had

³¹ No author, *UDC Magazine*, Dec. 1998, pp. 28.

nothing to do with the merits.” Miller’s comments implies that those buried in the cemetery were mostly racists.

The vote over the renaming to a great extent but not entirely followed racial lines. Mr. Kirk, Al Lipscomb, Don Hicks, Charlotte Mayes, and Barbara Mallory Caraway, all African American, supported by white council members Larry Duncan and Veletta Forsythe Lill and Hispanic Steve Salazar, voted for the renaming, whereas white council members Alan Walne, Mary Poss, Lois Finkelman, Donna Blumer, Sandy Greyson, and Bob Stimson along with Hispanic John Loza, whose district included Deep Ellum voted against it.

Angry Loza stated, “I can disagree with you and not be a racist,” and “The thing that really gets me is the arrogance that has been displayed toward the neighborhood of Deep Ellum and that is to say that, ‘We are going to shove this down your throat whether you like it or not.’”

However, surely Loza knew that a street has to have one name. It can be asked would it not also be an arrogance to let the owners of a small stretch of the street, about 10% or less, to deny the rest of the street a name change. Further Loza has the idea that the people along the street have a veto power and special privilege in the naming of city property over the rest of the citizens of Dallas.

The fact that African Americans can author the landscape is the issue here and Loza’s reaction to equity on the landscape does tend to show his attitudes regarding race.

There were also the usual arguments against street renaming that the tax money could be spent better elsewhere and that business cards and stationary would have to be changed and the cost would be greatly burdensome.

Marvin Crenshaw was quoted in the article, “But more importantly, it elevates the spirit and provides a sense of accomplishment. I do feel without reservation that this will elevate a sense of dignity within our community. This is much more than symbolism.”

The discussion of street naming by opponents is always that a street name change doesn’t have some direct physical impact. There is a willful ignoring that symbolism, which is applied to everything from our money, to buildings, to streets, in parks with monuments and markers, in places of worship, is done because it does affect how people think of themselves and how they think of others and what values society endorses. In the article, Crenshaw expresses the power of symbolism and then somewhat contradictorily states that it is more than symbolism. Symbolism in discussions of street naming has been used as a label to mean that a renaming is superficial and trivial and this is likely what Crenshaw was rejecting.

James Reese, owner of Reece Barber and Record shop on the southern end of Oakland street, which would be in South Dallas stated that he was at first against it because of cost, but had changed his mind, stating, “The change is worth my little sacrifice,” and “I think it’s is a very

positive change and I applaud the City Council.” Indeed it does appear a street renaming only involves little sacrifices and not some great burden.

In contrast Mr. Bluejacket, owner of India Alley, and David and Winifred Brown of Good Luck Hamburger felt very much oppressed.³²

If the African American community was jubilant over the renaming, Jacquielynn Floyd, ten days later after the report of the City Council, in a *DMN* article, Nov. 23, 1997, “Some doubt new name will solve street’s troubles Malcolm X Boulevard to reflect progress, others say,” positions the name change as having no positive value for the area and divisive.

The description of Malcolm X Blvd. starts with statements:

“To many people, who live there, it will take more than a name change to counteract the crime, poverty, and dope.”

But the measure’s proponents say that the change reflects an important symbolic victory. They hope that renaming the street for the charismatic, controversial civil-rights leader will create a source of pride for South Dallas residents.

Next in the article, Mark Sonna, president of the Deep Ellum Association says that it might scare off customers. No one asks if that means Deep Ellum clientele are racists, which is the obvious implications of this claim.

Then the article states that some, “saw the name change as an awkward clash of racial politics.”

The article details that along the Malcolm X street outside Deep Ellum things are run down, the housing has been allowed to deteriorate, has a crime problem. Some businesses have burglar bars, a man urinated on the side of a building “in full view of the passing traffic.”

The article is positioning changing the name against doing something about these problems. One argument in response is that we might change the street name and also do something about these problems, but arguing this misses the whole point of renaming.

Renaming a street after a civil rights leader is to inspire. That is why there are monuments everywhere and symbols on so many things. But the *DMN* reporting on name changes of streets has remained resolute in being oblivious to the importance of symbols and naming. Not willing to engage the question of why a group which has been an underclass and only got rights in Dallas through federal court action, would want inspiration, to see themselves on the landscape, the *DMN* and other media preclude themselves from seeing a larger question on what is to be done with a white landscape named under generations of white supremacy to give equity to non-white minorities.

³² Lee, Christopher, “Street renamed for Malcolm X Council Oks plan after Kirk plea,” *DMN*, 11/13/1997, pp. 1A.

So the article not only questions the value of the street name change, it brings up that it might be negative causing racial disharmony. What isn't discussed is that the white city council members who voted against it, might consider why they felt it was necessary to vote against it if it was going to cause racial disharmony. The changing of the name itself is supposed to cause an awkward clash of racial politics, not that there are racists elected to city council and they with their agenda against renaming streets are the cause of racial conflict.

One interesting thing in the article is the position of a conservation group Preservation Dallas. The article reports that Catherine Horsey, who is the executive director of Preservation Dallas, had argued against the name change, since the name Oakland was historically important according to her, and that she felt that the name change according to the article was "a political referendum on the life of Malcolm X." She is quoted as saying, "But it's our history. You can't go back and edit it," using an argument that is frequently used to defend Confederate monuments. Changing a name of a street isn't editing history, the assertion is devoid of logic or understanding of what history is. Again there is the refusal to understand a racialized landscape and the need to inspire.³³

TEXAS INSTRUMENTS

In contrast to the struggle for a Malcolm X Blvd. was the catering to the interests of giant semiconductor firm Texas Instruments then finishing a \$2 Billion dollar expansion in Far Northeast Dallas. Texas Instruments requested Floyd Road be renamed Texas Instruments Boulevard. As reported in a Jan. 14, 1998, *DMN* article, "Council may let street be named for TI, Members considering plan to allow honor for businesses."

The article mentions that elected officials "readily expressed support." However there is a problem per city code. As stated in the article, "The proposed name change would violate a city policy prohibiting renaming streets for commercial enterprises." The city planners recommended that Texas Instruments' request be denied based on city policy. This didn't prove to be an obstacle. The article reports:

But the City Council may have found a way to accommodate the global high-tech company: Change the rules.

On Wednesday, council members will considering adopting a policy that would allow a three-quarters council majority to waive street name restrictions on a case-by-case basis.

The proposed name change is for only a part of Floyd Road violating another city code policy that streets have one name along their entire length.

³³ Floyd, Jacquelyn, "Some doubt new name will solve street's troubles Malcolm X Boulevard to reflect progress others say," *DMN*, 11/23/1997, page 1A.

The article talks about the economic importance of Texas Instruments locally which given as a justification for the renaming without misgivings or questions.

The Floyd pioneer family is considered, and they are happy to get a “plaque or kiosk on TI property.” Preservation Dallas is not mentioned in the article. The reduction of the extent of Floyd Road perhaps didn’t worry Preservation Dallas or other historians and a “plaque or kiosk” on private property seemed to be an adequate substitute. It would be interesting to see if a “plaque or kiosk” will satisfy those in the future who argue against street renaming on the basis that history will be lost.

There isn’t concern that people would get lost or confused. Problems that are given for not renaming other streets are not mentioned.

Marvin Crenshaw took note of this catering to Texas Instruments. As the article reports:

If the council agrees to give itself the power to waive street-name restrictions, the city should expect a host of requests to rename roads – not all of them from wealthy corporations, said city activist Marvin Crenshaw.

Mr. Crenshaw, who led a 17-year effort to rename a street for slain black nationalist leader Malcolm X, said leaders were unwilling to bend rules during that campaign.

We’ll have to wait and see if the council is willing to follow its new rules.” Mr. Crenshaw said.³⁴

CÉSAR CHÁVEZ: THE FORGOTTEN ATTEMPT

The *DMN* reported in 5/19/1999 that the Ledbetter Neighborhood Association president Henry Martinez wanted a street named for César Chávez. From the reporting there is no indication that the naming of Oakland Ave. to Malcolm X Blvd. was the inspiration, rather that the Texas legislators had approved May 31st as César Chávez day and it was expected that Gov. George W. Bush was going to sign it.

The article wrongly states to change a name they need to get a petition signed by 51% of landowners on the street. A petition of 51% signed by the landowners is just one of several ways an effort can be initiated in the Dallas city code and isn’t a requirement in the other ways a street name change can be initiated.

³⁴ Ingrassia, Robert, “Council may let street be named for TI Members, considering plan to allow honor for businesses,” *DMN*, 1/14/1998, pp. 25A.

Mayor Pro Tem Steve Salazar said that cooperation of landowners is vital to street names and he doesn't question that the city code gives private landowners privileges over public property and positions these landowners such that if they don't want the street name changed it is a legitimate reason for rejecting it. The article states:

Mr. Salazar cited opponents who argued against Malcolm X name change, saying that it would cost businesses thousands of dollars to change signs and stationary, among other things.

These two statements by Salazar legitimize this argument of cost against renaming of a street, since Salazar calls for getting business support and mentions the issue of the costs. Salazar could have said that expenses are minor, or that he hoped businesses would not find pretext to block a street renaming or that he had hopes that businesses consider the greater good for the community against the minor costs incurred.

This is an ideology which would sabotage Salazar's own efforts to rename a street in the future for César Chávez. Nothing further is reported in the *DMN* of this effort.³⁵

Another factor is that the fees required for any street name change precludes a group of people with modest means from applying especially after they read the code and realize that they have a very poor chance of having a name changed.

MAURINE F. BAILEY, J.B. JACKSON JR., AND THE FIRST ATTEMPT FOR ELSIE FAY HEGGINS

In a July 31, 2002, *DMN* article, "The road to teacher's honor," it is reported that there will be an effort to rename Hastings Street, a one-block long street after Maurine F. Bailey. Bailey was a popular choir director named after Lincoln High School. The effort was led by the Maurine F. Bailey Cultural Foundation with the support of Leo Chaney Jr. who was the city council member representing the neighborhood.³⁶

Shortly thereafter in an Aug. 8, 2002 *DMN* article, "On the road to honoring the past," it is reported that Leo Chaney Jr. is working on two other street renamings. Chaney proposes renaming Trunk Ave., which was near Fair Park, for J.B. Jackson Jr. who was a local activist and a founding member of the Dallas Area Rapid Transit board and Grand Ave. for Else Faye Heggins. Cheney in his choice of streets saw important symbolism of the two streets intersecting. The effort was being led by Marvin Crenshaw. The original effort was for J.B. Jackson when he died in 1998, but the effort had expanded to include Heggins when she died in Jan. 2000.³⁷

³⁵ Aubespain, Eleska, "Ledbetter neighborhood group wants street renamed for Chávez West Dallas' Salazar supporter's proposal."

³⁶ Adams-Wade, Norma, "The road to teacher's honor," *DMN*, 7/31/2002, page 18A.

³⁷ Adams-Wade, Norma, "On the road to honoring the past," *DMN*, 8/7/2002.

It doesn't take long for the renaming efforts for Bailey and Jackson to be successful and as reported in Dec. 31, 2003 *DMN* article, "New street names will honor Bailey and Jackson," that Fourth Ave. near Fair Park will be named for J.B. Jackson, Jr., and the one-block Hastings street has been renamed after Maurine F. Bailey.



Maurine F. Bailey in **Light Blue**.



J.B. Jackson Jr. Blvd. in **Magenta**.

However, there is not any street to be named for Heggins. The article reports:

Mr. Chaney said his next project is to have a street or landmark named for the late community leader and former City Council member Elsie Faye Heggins, but he wants to get community input.

Why no community input hadn't already been solicited from the time of August 2002 when the effort to name a street after Heggins was first reported in the *DMN* is not explained.

Heggins would not get a street renamed for her until 2015, about 12 years later and about 30 years since she had held office. As time progresses people who were once prominent and widely known fade from public memory unless there are active processes keeping that memory alive such as a street name or monument. People tend to forget and new generations born later often know not of those who have gone before. For a person who had been prominent in the 1980s she had run a real risk of fading into oblivion and no street ever being named after her.

CÉSAR CHÁVEZ BOULEVARD: THE LONG STRUGGLE

The struggle over renaming a street after César Chávez was long and contentious. It was revealing of many aspects of power in Dallas, who has it and who doesn't, in particular Hispanics. It reveal the condescension and arrogance of columnists writing for the *DMN*. It also revealed the many tactics to prevent minority streets from escaping a minority neighborhood.

The struggle didn't start out as an effort to rename a street after César Chávez. It started out as an attempt to find a new name for Industrial Blvd. which wasn't felt to be appropriate for re-development of the area as a commercial area as part of a larger Trinity River project. As the April 30, 2008 *DMN* article, "Small crowd shaves Industrial names to 10 – Marcus, Vaughan make cut in vote at sparsely attended meeting." The article states:

Dallas officials want a more glamorous name for the gritty boulevard as they go forward with the Trinity River project, their ambitious plan to transform the river area into a major civic attraction with a downtown park, lakes, trails, greenbelts canoeing, horseback riding and, it is hoped, upscale commercial development on and near industrial.

One of the ten names was César Chávez. The four names proposed after individuals are listed, but the other six names aren't mentioned in the article. The article reported that the City Council Trinity River Committee was going to meet next Tuesday to select three finalists from the ten names. Backers of the Chávez name was reported to be "by those who would like to see his memory honored in cities across America, like that of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr."³⁸

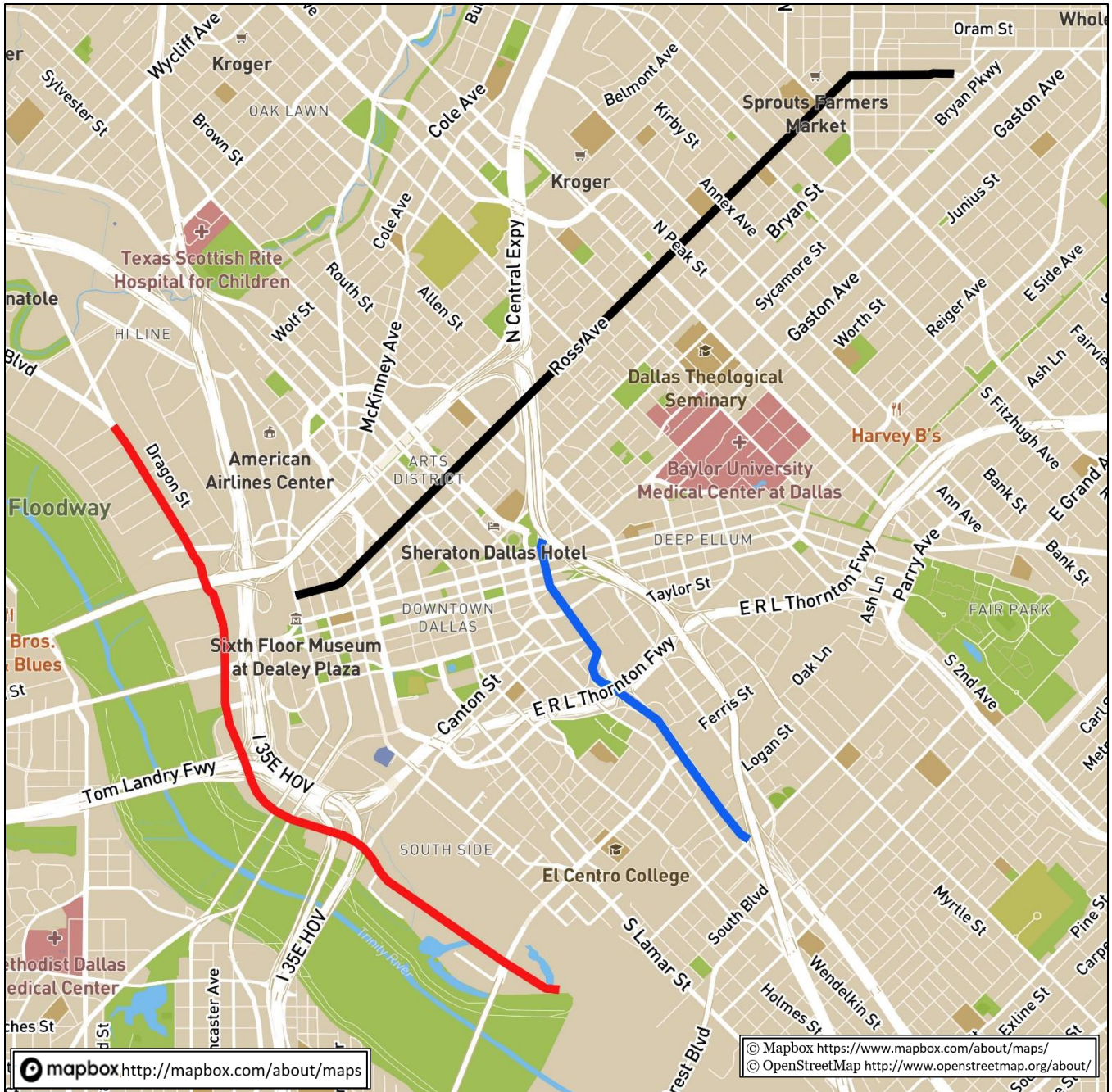
It is likely that the renaming of the street would have been without contest and quietly resulted in some name intended to market the area except for two things that came together and resulted

Mercedes Olivera, writer for the *DMN*, has a May 24, 2008 column titled, "Chávez an appropriate new name for Industrial Boulevard," writes advocating that Industrial Blvd. be named after César Chávez. Surprising for a *DMN* columnist she opens it with:

If city government followed the cue of corporate America, our public institutions, highways and street names would be named after those who could pay for the honor.

And a humble farm worker like César Chávez, whose mission in life was to improve the daily life of his co-workers in the fields, probably would not make the cut.

³⁸ Tamaso, Bruce, "Small crowd shaves Industrial names to 10 – Marcus, Vaughen make cut in vote at sparsely attended meeting," *DMN*, 4/30/2008, page 1B.



In the above the red **—** is the original proposed renaming of Industrial to César Chávez but which became Riverfront instead, the black **—** is the next proposal to rename Ross to César Chávez, the blue **—** is a stretch of a service road which was renamed César Chávez.

She announces that the city is taking a survey online as to what Industrial Blvd. should be renamed and gives the website URL and also the phone number where you can call in a vote as an alternative way of voting.

Olivera lists the other names which included in a list of six names to be voted on, which are Eddie Bernice Johnson Parkway, Riverfront Boulevard, Trinity Lakes Boulevard, Trinityview Boulevard, and Waterfront Boulevard.”

Olivera also quotes Hispanic leaders in favor in favor of naming Industrial Ave. after Chávez. Martin Garza former president of the Dallas Hispanic Bar Association points out that Dallas has streets named after national figures such as Martin Luther King Jr., and former president Lyndon Baines Johnson. Angel Reyes, a Dallas lawyer, points out that Dallas has had a rapid and significant demographic shift and that Dallas population is 40% Hispanic and he projects “a Hispanic-majority city in eight years.” Associate Judge Teresa Guerra Snelson points out that the street will bring public recognition to Chávez’s accomplishments.

Olivera by quoting Reyes is signaling to elites that Hispanics will have the dominating political power in the future. What Reyes will eventually learn is that whether the Hispanic population of Dallas is 40% or more, the money in Dallas is overwhelmingly white or in solidarity with the real estate developers.³⁹

However, Dallas City Council member Elba Garcia in the article is already thinking about having a César Chávez street elsewhere and very significantly in a location in a minority neighborhood where Hispanic-ness won’t escape a Hispanic neighborhood. Elba Garcia does want to see a street named after Chávez, and the *DMN* reports in the article:

But if this effort to rename Industrial to César Chávez Boulevard does not succeed, other opportunities on the south side of the river could come up later, she said.

Elba Garcia knows what real estate developers want for the new name for Industrial Blvd. and is already easing the way for the defeat of Chávez as a name for that Boulevard. Very telling is her suggestion that the opportunities are, “on the south side of the river.” Elba Garcia is already considering what developers would want, and the establishment wants, that is the containment of ethnic identity away from their real estate and real estate developments.⁴⁰

The *DMN* has a May 26, 2008 article, “Street Renaming – For Industrial, a high-tech vote.” The candidate streets, the same mentioned by Olivera, are listed and the website and the phone number through which you can vote.⁴¹

A June 3, 2008, *DMN* article, “Street Renaming – 25,000 vote on changing Industrial – Online and by phone, Dallasites offer opinions – but mum’s the word.” The article reports that city

³⁹ An excellent article to read a discussion of economic inequality and renaming of a street, is “Street name-changes, abjection and private toponymy in Potchefstroom, South Africa,” by Andre Goodrich and Pia Bombardella, in *Anthropology Southern Africa*, Vol. 35 Issue 1-2, pp. 20-30, also online. You can find it online not hidden behind a paywall if you look.

⁴⁰ Olivera, Mercedes, “Chávez an appropriate new name for Industrial Boulevard,”

⁴¹ Tomaso, Bruce, “Street Renaming –For Industrial, a high-tech vote,” *DMN*, 5/26/2008, pp. 1B.

staff is not reporting the results and “But even though the last votes came in Friday, the results won’t be released officially until late this Friday.”

The claim by Dallas city staff is that they are “still trying to compile the votes,” as if they were counting paper ballots and not reading results from a computer system that took votes electronically. The city staff is stating that they are checking whether people voted twice. This is a surprising claim since it would be thought that a high tech system would automatically detect and flag such votes and give an accurate count automatically. However, it could be that Dallas City Hall was really incompetent.

The article reports that the Dallas city council was originally scheduled to vote on it, “at a committee meeting today,” but it is scheduled a week later.

Though the article reports, “And several City Council members said Monday they had no clue.” However, it was likely that a lot of people knew what the results were and realized that they had a real political problem on their hand and needed time to mount a counter effort.

The article points out that the Dallas city council would not want to name the street after César Chávez or Eddie Bernice Johnson because of controversy which the author of the article asserts, “would inevitably stir.” Why this would be “inevitable” is not explained but mentioned as something that could be assumed. Two things need to be considered. There wouldn’t be a controversy if the Dallas city council simply just voted to rename Industrial after either Chávez or Eddie Bernice Johnson. Is it really a big controversy or is it something that real estate developers don’t want. Second, if it is controversial what is the *DMN* saying about the racial attitudes of the people of Dallas?

African American Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Dwaine Caraway is quoted, “Folks are in favor of a name that reflects the Trinity,” and when asked if he would accept the choice of the high tech voting, the article states, “... he bluntly said he would not.” Who were these “Folks” were who didn’t vote in the poll Caraway doesn’t specify.

The article reports that “several council members” stated that the favored names by the city council were those that were incorporating river themes, such as Riverfront Blvd., Trinity Lakes Blvd., Trinityview Blvd., and Waterfront Blvd.⁴²

Again there is no solidarity between Hispanics and African American city council members. A historic opportunity is tossed away. Caraway resigned in 2018 from the city council after a plea bargain with federal prosecutors to accept a seven year sentence for corruption.

A few days later, the *DMN* article, “DALLAS – 50% in poll favor renaming Industrial for César Chávez – But some on council want street’s name to reflect Trinity project,” June 7, 2008,

⁴² Bush, Randolph, “Street renaming – 25,000 vote on changing Industrial – Online and by phone, Dallasites offer opinions – but mum’s the word,” *DMN*, 6/3/2008, page 2B.

reported the results. The article reported 52 percent of the high tech voters had voted for César Chávez. Riverfront Blvd., the name that was ultimately adopted, had only got 19 percent. U.S. Congressional Representative Eddie Bernice Johnson got a little less than 5 percent.

The article itself in the 2nd paragraph argues against Chávez stating that, “The choice to name the road for the legendary civil-rights activist who agitated on behalf of farm workers but had scant ties to Dallas is certain to stir yet more controversy ...” The sentence cleverly praises Chávez but also gives a reason why Industrial Boulevard, despite the *DMN* calling Chávez “legendary,” is not the right choice and thus choosing that name would cause needless controversy because he had “scant ties” to Dallas. The idea that Chávez might have had an impact on the whole nation, a nation that Dallas is within doesn’t seem to occur to the author Rudolph Bush. Though it has to be stated that often Dallas seems to exist outside the nation.

This assertion of Chávez’s not being an appropriate name for a street in Dallas because he had supposedly “scant ties,” is to support the idea that controversy over renaming Industrial after Chávez isn’t a racial issue. The *DMN* in the leading paragraph is promoting a pretext as to why Industrial should not be renamed for Chávez but also that the rejection of Chávez isn’t a racial issue.

Dallas has numerous streets that are named after people who neither were born in Dallas nor were residents of Dallas or just had “scant ties” to Dallas. However, the city of Dallas, exists within a state and within a nation and people and within the changes that national or state leaders affect whether they did happen to live in Dallas or not. César Chávez was a national figure and his actions were national in effect. This is a repeating theme in renaming struggles, persons suspending logic to grasp at some pretext not to rename a street.

The article details the opposition to having Industrial named after César Chávez. In the article City council member Dave Neumann, who is the leader of the city councils Trinity River committee claims that he doesn’t know the results, but rejects the high tech vote stating, “This was not a contest. This was a public survey. The process was not scientific.” Who had claimed it was a contest is not stated, and why being a public survey invalidates the result isn’t explained. The process would not be scientific if there was a claim made on the result. No one was claiming that the result of the voting was representative of general public opinion.

Neumann also argues that the city council is not bound by the poll, stating it wasn’t devised by the city council though the article reports that the poll was “blessed” by Neumann’s committee.

Neumann’s motivation is repeated that he always wanted something that reflected the Trinity.

Whereas Neumann argued against the validity of the poll, the high tech voting as it was called, Mayor Pro Tem Elba Garcia endorsed the poll stating, “All along we said we were going to put it up for a public vote, and the public has spoken,” and she would support what voters want.

The article reports that Steve Salazar and Pauline Medrano could not be reached which is somewhat odd a politician could not be reached considering this was something that would have high visibility and something the Hispanic community would have had keen interest in. So the article reports earlier statements by Salazar and Medrano, which are tepid in support of the Chávez renaming of Industrial. Salazar is reported that he has received input for the Chávez name and “names that reflect natural feature,” but he wants the poll to be given consideration and he wants people to feel involved and engaged. Medrano says that “regardless of the outcome of the poll,” she will give careful consideration to choosing a name. Neither Salazar nor Medrano are reported as stating directly that they want Industrial to be renamed after Chávez.

Some city staffer was likely in trouble since the article states that it is unclear who was in charge of the poll and why did they decide to do it as they did and there will be “questions that are certain to be asked at City Hall in coming days.”⁴³

A few days later, June 10, 2008, *DMN* article, “Industrial Boulevard – Wrong turn on a street’s name? Support in poll may split council along racial lines,” reveals what the emerging factions and arguments will be over the poll and how race is processed in the Dallas political system. It is about the debate prior to that morning’s Trinity River Projects Committee meeting.

In the article the three Hispanic city council members sort of and sort of not support naming Industrial after César Chávez. The article reports that the three, “want the committee to give strong weight to the survey results.” However, Industrial is either named after Chávez or it isn’t. Though in the article reports that Elba Garcia suggests a name like César Chávez Riverfront Boulevard, but the article also reports that due to the length and complexity of this proposed name other city council members don’t consider it a viable choice. Did Elba Garcia really consider it a viable choice?

Salazar is reported again stating that the largest ethnicity in Dallas is Hispanic, but this is stated in support of Salazar’s assertion as reported in the article, “But he cautioned the council against taking the interest of Dallas’ Hispanic community lightly.” He doesn’t demand Industrial Blvd. be named César Chávez.

Martin Garza, former head of the Dallas Hispanic Bar Association states, in reference to the online poll, “wasn’t a close call. It wasn’t a tie, it was a clear win. It would set a distasteful precedent if they were to choose to do otherwise.” However, with the wobbly stance of the Hispanic council members it can be seen that the prospects of changing the name of Industrial Ave. to César Chávez are in serious trouble.

The opponents claimed it wasn’t about race. Mayor Tom Leppert said he wanted a street name “that markets the Trinity project,” and, “I’d like the focus to be away from the politics and onto

⁴³ Bush, Rudolph, “DALLAS – 50% in poll favor renaming Industrial for César Chávez – But some on council want street’s name to reflect Trinity Project,” *DMN*, 6/7/2008, pp. 2A.

the project,” as if not choosing Chávez wasn’t political. Four members of the Trinity Committee, composed of eight members, Mr. Neuman, Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Dwaine Caraway and council members Linda Koop and Mitchell Rasansky were reported as unwilling to vote to rename the street for Chávez, but the article states, “will support a name that includes a natural feature.” The article states again, after reporting the opinions of the Hispanic city council members, “But other committee members, including chairman Dave Neumann, have said they want to see the street named for a natural feature that reflects the Trinity project.”

This choice, Riverfront, for a street which is near the Trinity River might seem like a simple value free choice for a road that is near to the Trinity area river. However, the street doesn’t actually front the river anywhere along its length. Riverfront Blvd. is roughly a half-kilometer from the river along half its length and the other half about three-quarters. The Trinity River itself isn’t visible anywhere from Riverfront Street. What is visible between gaps in the buildings is the levees. It is sometimes close but mostly a ways back from the Trinity River levees which themselves are back from the river some distance. As for natural features a name for Industrial might be Flat Street.

The Trinity River doesn’t have a history of being used for navigation. In fact a significant element in Dallas history are the hopes that the Trinity River might be made navigable and the failed attempts to navigate it. There is no past historical experience to warrant the name Riverfront.

The name Riverfront is a marketing fantasy for a street that is merely closer to the river than other streets in Dallas north of the Trinity but lacking any riverine characteristics.

The Riverwalk in San Antonio is crisscrossed and paralleled by streets with names without connection to riverine fantasies and a walk on it will show how laughable the concept of Riverfront Blvd. in Dallas is.

You could easily come up with other rationalizations for naming the street. The Trinity River was originally named *La Santísima Trinidad* by Alonso De Leon in 1690. Which translates as “Most Holy Trinity.”⁴⁴ The Trinity River’s name is a legacy of the Spanish imperial presence in Texas and a when Texas was part of Mexico. César Chávez for Industrial Blvd. could have been a thematic match with the river’s name and a powerful affirmation to the Hispanic community in Dallas that their lives in the city matter. It would also be in keeping with the Spanish background of Texas with its cities named Corpus Christi (Body of Christ), San Antonio (St. Anthony), etc.

⁴⁴ Gard, Wayne, “Trinity River,” from the online handbook of the Texas State History Association, <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/rnt02>, printed out 9/4/2018. This use of the handbook for a reference here by no means is an endorsement of the TSHA’s handbook, I recommend caution when using it at all times.

What needs to be remembered in reading about this long fight to get a street named after César Chávez is how the struggle is framed. There is controversy as there is in any struggle. There are also complaints about the controversy, but these are positioned as to be something to be blamed on agitators or what the Dallas establishment considers the bad management of racial issues in the city. In conjunction with this, the needs of real estate developers are never questioned, and held to be the prime public good. The fact that these real estate developers are not magnanimous or consider the larger good of the city and are unwilling to consent to Chávez is never considered as a possible interpretation of events. If the street was simply named after César Chávez there would have been no controversy of which so many in the DMN liked to complain.

During the renaming of Industrial Blvd. there isn't any report of Preservation Dallas or other historical societies worrying about the "erasure" of Dallas industrial history embodied in the name of the street.

However most sly is how the desire for racial peace is played against choosing César Chávez as the name for the street.

The *DMN* states, "... the City Council has found itself mired in a controversy it never wanted, but appears primed to split it along racial lines."

The article reports that the proposed Chávez name, "has generated strong feelings around Dallas about the region's ongoing demographic shift, illegal immigration and the legacy of Mr. Chávez." Also, is reported, "... council members and The *DMN* have received dozens of messages from constituents and readers," and of these there are "many" who "connect" the Chávez renaming with the increasing number of Hispanics in Dallas and "illegal immigration."

Has Chávez really generated strong feelings? Of the dozens, exactly how many of the *DMN* "readers" were residents of Dallas, and what fraction of the "many" responses were actually connected to these two issues. For a city of over a million people are unspecified dozens really a significant backlash?

The article states that when the vote comes up on renaming Industrial "many of these issues could sit through the meeting like elephants in the room." Again, with only dozens of these complaints, are they really elephants or just noisy racist mice? Or does the DMN fear these dozens of complains are just a surface manifestation of a much more wide spread racism in Dallas. Also, the article presumes that the readers of it will believe that there are "elephants" and not mice, present at the next meeting sharing the DMN's fears of a larger racism among the people of Dallas.

The article avoids calling the opposition racist even though they are connecting César Chávez, an American born citizens with "illegal immigration." Even Salazar isn't willing to label it as racism. In response to the criticism of the survey by those in opposition that the survey was flawed, Salazar points out that it is the committees own survey and why the other committee

members had a “sudden change of heart” regarding the survey when the outcome was revealed. Salazar states, “It happens to be a Hispanic, and they start downplaying it.”

The proposal of renaming Industrial after Chávez is positioned as a cause of racial discord against the supposedly value free choice of a geographical related name. Mayor Leppert is quoted, “I’d like the focus be away from the politics and onto the project.”

This is also a policy of overcoming racist agitation by giving into it. Dallas could have just named Industrial after Chávez and rejected racist inputs and it would be over. There would be no “splits along racial lines” if some council members didn’t oppose the Chávez name. The proposed Chávez name is blamed for the racist opposition to it.

The central issue is Leppert’s comment that he wants a name, “that markets the Trinity project.” Leppert doesn’t see Chávez as “marketing” the street, likely repeating the sentiments of the real estate developers for the Industrial area. Though the article reports “All of the council members said race and immigration politics shouldn’t be issues,” the opposition to the Chávez name is employing race and immigration politics through the avenue of not wanting controversy but also in the basic assumption that Chávez is not a name capable of “marketing” the area.⁴⁵

Reported by the *DMN*, June 11, 2008, the next day, “Dallas – Industrial’s New Name, for Chávez supporters, a waiting game – Council postpones vote on street’s next moniker,” the Trinity River committee voted to post pone the vote on renaming Industrial until Aug. 5, 2008 the vote.

It was Salazar who had moved that the vote be postponed and this was supported by Elba Garcia and Pauline Medrano. The article reports that Salazar was, “saying the committee should take its time and come up with a solution that ‘could be very good for the Trinity.’”

The article reporting as to Salazar’s position on street renaming and also reasons to postpone. The article quotes Salazar saying, “We had 10,000 people express that they have a very strong support for César Chávez Boulevard. It would be wiser and prudent to step back and say let’s have a look at this.”

These statements don’t make sense if Salazar thinks Industrial should be named after Chávez. The result of the poll is known and needs no study. The comment about needing time to find a solution that is good for the Trinity implies that naming Industrial after Chávez isn’t.

Elba Garcia and Pauline Medrano are reported as supporting postponing the vote and as reported, “suggested they would accept a compromise that would see another street named for Mr. Chávez.”

⁴⁵ Bush, Rudolph, “INDUSTRIAL BOULEVARD – Wrong turn on street’s name?? – Support in poll may split council along racial lines,” *DMN*, 6/10/2008, page 1A.

Salazar's statements do make sense if he is suggesting another street be named after Chávez. After all Salazar's statement about 10,000 people expressing support for a César Chávez Boulevard doesn't say which street would be named for Chávez, and Salazar in his statement is recasting the poll in which César Chávez was suggested as a name specifically for Industrial as some desire that some street somewhere be named after Chávez. This would take time.⁴⁶

The effort to rename Industrial after César Chávez has folded. The struggle over the next two years will be a farce and comedy of failure.

Elba Garcia, Pauline Medrano, and Stephen Salazar in a disastrous move had given up the one major thing which they had to get a prominent street named after César Chávez. Industrial was a street which had already been determined by the establishment as a street that was going to be renamed. The poll, however flawed, had had a result in which César Chávez was the winning choice. The three Hispanic city council members could, as they had been reported as doing, pointed out that the reaction of the establishment was basically the old joke, "Heads I win, tails you lose." Perhaps the poll was badly conceived, but to have it and then disregard it was in bad faith by the city of Dallas. Later after failing in getting Ross Avenue renamed César Chávez the three Hispanic council persons did go back to considering Industrial, but the establishment knew they were not that committed to it, and if Industrial had been abandoned by them once they could abandoned it again. The three by their actions had discredited the reasons which might have proved to be a strong case to name Industrial after César Chávez.

After giving up on Industrial the game just became that of finding a stretch of street that the establishment might give up to have silence.

When Hispanic city council members did make reference to historical memory and fight for a César Chávez street the *DMN* was quick to slam them. In an editorial, "Hits and Misses," June 14, 2008, the *DMN* editors denounced Pauline Medrano in an item titled, "Medrano's moronic moral equivalency." Medrano offense was to remind a Jewish council member, Rasansky that historical memory was important to Hispanics as it is to Jewish people. The article quotes Medrano saying, "In the Jewish community, with all respect, no matter how young or old they will remind you that this will 'never happen again,'" and explaining that in the Hispanic community "César Chávez is respected." This enrages the *DMN* which asserts her, "petty attempt at ethnic one-upsmanship was obscene." However, it wasn't such a thing that the *DMN* claims it is, but merely a cross-cultural comparison.

What this comment does reveal that in the *DMN*'s moral universe there are hierarchies and that Medrano didn't know her place. Medrano's outreach to find commonality is slapped down.

⁴⁶ Bush, Rudolph, "DALLAS – INDUSTRIAL'S NEW NAME – For 'Chávez' supporters, a waiting game – Council postpones vote on street's next moniker," *DMN*, 6/11/2008, pp. 1B.

The white establishment is starting to get annoyed by the insistent demands of Hispanics to exist on the landscape and not be dismissed.

Though the Hispanic city council members were willing to consider other options in substitution for renaming Industrial Blvd. to César Chávez, it seems that the Hispanic community was insisting that Chávez had been clearly the top and majority choice of the survey and they expected it to be named after Chávez.

In the June 17, 2008, *DMN* article, “Renaming Industrial Boulevard – Hispanics press for ‘Chávez’ – Task force to explain why street should honor farm leader.”

A task force was organized headed by Alberto Ruiz who said, “They don’t want to recognize the real culture in Dallas. They want a bland, generic, noninspiring name to overshadow the cultural reality of the city which is Mexican and very American.”

Hector Flores, former national president of LULAC,⁴⁷ called it insulting to have the poll and then ignore the results. He asked why did Dallas city government have the poll if they were going to disregard the result. He called it a “sham.” Hispanic activist Frances Rizo was reported as saying, “We need to remind the council they got the input they asked for and now they need to respect it.”

Ray De Los Santos, LULAC district director, is reported as explaining that the task force will focus why the Dallas Hispanic community is very serious about Chávez and that the city council should take this seriously. De Los Santos also very observantly stated, “If the council only listens to a small portion of their constituents, that spells trouble for our community and creates controversy.”

Steve Blow has a raging, arrogant *DMN* column, “Street name debacle was avoidable,” June 19, 2008, expressing his anger that the renaming process has resulted in Hispanic demands and revealing his dismissive attitude towards them. But the column also reveals his belief that the Dallas city government is often a sham. What triggers this angry column is the creation of a Hispanic task force to press for the Chávez name.

Blow starts his column that the city government should have listened to his suggestion to keep the name Industrial Blvd. and that the survey was a bad idea and that Eddie Bernice Johnson and César Chávez were on the list of possible names because city government wanted to “throw a bone” to the Hispanic and African American community.

His column does correctly point out that the motivation for the name change is marketing. What is interesting is that he feels that it is a given that having a civil rights leader as a choice would only be the result of an ulterior motive, “throwing a bone,” and that having a civil rights

⁴⁷ LULAC is the acronym of the League of United Latin American Citizens.

leader as a name for a street is otherwise not something people might want to choose nor would be a valid choice.

Blow argues that Chávez is “someone with absolutely no connection to Dallas, much less than the Trinity River project,” demonstrating a lack of comprehension that someone might have an influence on the entire nation without visiting every county in every state in the nation. There are Washington and Jefferson streets nearly everywhere in the nation, but neither George Washington nor Thomas Jefferson are known to have ever visited most of these places east of the original thirteen colonies. Blow is grasping for a rationale.

Blow feels that the situation is a “mess,” but is dismissive of Hispanic desires for the street being named after Chávez. In a remarkably arrogant section of his column he writes:

I’m sorry, but this whole rigmarole reeks of pure-dee Big D phoniness.

Is there one deep, genuine emotion contained anywhere in all this? It just strikes me as posing and posturing.

And:

Now Hispanic leaders huff and puff that the memory of Mr. Chávez must be honored. Even if I detect a whiff of insincerity.

It has been 15 years since Mr. Chávez died. Where has this passion to honor him been in the meantime?

And

No, this just feels like political muscle flexing – a way for Latino politicians to leverage some goodies down the road in return for ultimately letting the name change slide.

Blow expresses his complete contempt in the conclusion to his column with the suggestion that Industrial Blvd. be changed to the Spanish name for Industrial which would be *Industrial*.

César Chávez is a great hero to many and in particular the Hispanic community across the nation. There would be among the general population many Hispanics that would support this name change as a means of honoring their hero and to have it be Industrial Blvd. being renamed in the center of the city especially satisfying. Yet this seems to be incomprehensible to Blow. He can’t believe that there is “genuine emotion” behind this. He doesn’t see politicians representing their constituents desires, but just Hispanic politicians that “huff and puff.”

It also doesn’t occur that the popular desire that Industrial Blvd. be renamed after César Chávez is something that no Hispanic leader or politician dare not support.

For Blow there is just Hispanic noise he wants to go away and he wants to just condescendingly express his contempt towards this effort.

As for the titled of Blow's column, the "debacle" is still avoidable, just name it after César Chávez.⁴⁸

However, as a July 12, 2008, *DMN* article, "Ross Avenue eyed as namesake for Chávez," there wasn't support on the Trinity River Corridor Project Committee, for Industrial being renamed César Chávez. So the César Chávez task force decided that Ross Avenue should be renamed. Alberto Ruiz mentioned aspects of the local geography of Ross Avenue which were identified as reasons for the avenue to be renamed after César Chávez. One reason was the Cathedral Shrine of Guadalupe and that on the street was the administration office of the Dallas Independent School District which had more than 60 percent Hispanic enrollment. Aaron Ramirez, president of the Dallas Hispanic Bar Association stated that the street had, "a very Hispanic character to it, with a large number of Latino businesses along the way."⁴⁹

The counter offensive to this new direction is an article by local historian of Dallas, Darwin Payne, in a July 26, 2008, *DMN* article, "We can't roll over Ross' past."

Payne was a professor at Southern Methodist University (SMU) for 30 years before retiring in 2000. He is the author of "Big D: Triumphs and Troubles of an American Supercity in the 20th Century," published in 2000 as well as biographies of local individuals and a centennial history of SMU.⁵⁰

Payne details the history of different individuals who had lived on Ross Ave. in history. For example he points out that, "Two of the nation's most famous women lived on Ross Avenue – Lady Bird Johnson and novelist Katherine Anne Porter."

He concludes with the sentence, "Dallas must preserve the name of Ross Avenue." How changing the name would change history is not explained by Payne. If the street was named after César Chávez would the timeline of the past be affected and Katherine Anne Porter would have lived elsewhere? Is Payne arguing that history would be erased?

Also, notable is how he sanitizes history. He writes, "Here lived families with names still familiar: Caruth, Munger, Coke, Flippen, Belo, Trezevant, Padgitt, Crawford, Atwell, Prather, Tennison, and others." The Confederate histories of several of these individuals is not mentioned.

⁴⁸ Blow, Steve, "Street name debacle was avoidable," *DMN*, 6/19/2008, page 1B.

⁴⁹ Olivera, Mercedes, "Ross Avenue eyed as namesake for Chávez," *DMN*, 7/12/2008, page 13B.

⁵⁰ "Friends of the SMU Libraries to honor professor *emeritus* Darwin Payne at 2016 "Tables of Content," <http://blog.smu.edu/forum/2016/04/25/friends-of-the-smu-libraries-to-honor-professor-emeritus-darwin-payne-at-2016-tables-of-content/>, printed out 9/6/2018,

What Payne doesn't say is that W.H. Prather was part of some eighty Dallas citizens that on March 21, 1868 called for the organization of a Conservative party of Dallas County to restore white supremacy in Texas.⁵¹

Nor does he discuss Belo's Confederate past. Even until this day there is a Col. A.H. Belo Camp 49, Sons of Confederate Veterans, Dallas, Texas with a website <https://belocamp.com> with on 9/6/2018 proudly proclaims that it is "unreconstructed" and has the slogan "Sic Semper Tyrannis!!!" the cry of John Wilkes Booth when he assassinated Abraham Lincoln.⁵²

Other names in Payne's list have Confederate connections.⁵³ Walter Caruth was in the Confederate army.⁵⁴ The Caruth plantation and its slaves are not mentioned.⁵⁵ Edwin E. Flippen was a Confederate soldier.⁵⁶ Col. John Timothee Trezevant served in the Confederate army enlisting twice.⁵⁷ Tom Padgitt worked in a Confederate Army saddle shop.⁵⁸ William Lyne Crawford enlisted in the Confederate army. He was a member of the Texas Constitutional Convention of 1875 which was part of the re-establishment of white supremacy after Reconstruction in Texas.⁵⁹

Payne points out that William Hawley Atwell lived on Ross and lived to preside over "Dallas' first public school desegregation case." What Payne doesn't reveal about Atwell is he was an opponent of school integration. From a 1957 *DMN* article, "Judge W.H. Atwell Thinks High Court Ruling Strayed," which explains that he, "says the Supreme Court in its integration decisions has substituted modern sociological opinions for the Constitution." The article also states:

Judge Atwell twice in the last three years has ruled against immediate integration of Dallas schools. Each time, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals has reversed him.

⁵¹ Lindsley, Philip, "A History of Greater Dallas and Vicinity," Vol. 1 Pp. 79, The Lewis Publishing Co, Chicago, 1909.

⁵² <https://belocamp.com/>, printed out 9/6/2018.

⁵³ The author is researching street name origins and will be publishing a paper and maps at some point in the future as a part of a book on the Dallas white landscape.

⁵⁴ No author, "Woman to be Buried Thursday Came West in Covered Wagon," *DMN*, 5/19/1932, pp. 1,8, Confederate service on page 8.

⁵⁵ In going through historical records you can find that there was a Caruth plantation, what you won't find is a discussion of the plantation and it having slaves. So this is a somewhat tangential record of the Caruth plantation and that it had slaves.

Dillon, David, "On Hallowed Ground," *D Magazine*, <https://www.dmagazine.com/publications/d-magazine/1980/february/on-hallowed-ground/>, printed out 10/12/2018.

⁵⁶ No author, "Mrs. Flippen Dallasite 50 years, Passes," *DMN*, 1/2/1943, pp. 5

⁵⁷ Synder, Bryan, Jr., "Col. J.T. Trezevant Elected to Oldest and Most Distinguished Hereditary Order in Nation," *DMN*, 12/21/1924, pp. 5.

⁵⁸ Duncan, Merle Mears, "Padgitt, Tom," Texas State Historical Association, Online Handbook, <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fpa05>, printed out 10/12/2018.

⁵⁹ No author, "Crawford, William Lyne," Texas State Historical Association, Online Handbook, <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fcr14>, printed out 10/12/2018.

The article lists some other things he has done to attempt to obstruct integration.⁶⁰ The Dallas Independent School district still has a school named in honor of him.

What is very odd about an article that seeks to not change the name of Ross Ave. on the basis of the history of the street is that Payne doesn't discuss the origin of the Ross name of the street.

If he had done so, he would have to reveal its Confederate connections.⁶¹

This is a strange omission since he did provide this information to a group opposing the renaming of Ross Ave. after Chávez. They had a website www.saveross.com and they had articles about who Ross Ave. was named after including their Confederate history. This website was archived by archive.org the archivist of the Internet.⁶² The Archive.org capture of Oct. 2, 2008 has a links titled "General Ross History," "Andrew J. Ross," and "William W. Ross."⁶³ The web page for General Ross has an article by Darwin Payne titled, "The Ross Brothers" with a date of Aug. 15, 2008.

Payne explains that Ross Ave. is named after the brothers Andrew J. and William W. Ross and that, "The brothers, who seemed inseparable, both served in the Confederate army. Andrew was adjutant (captain) in the 22nd Texas Cavalry, and William was a private in the 9th Texas Cavalry."⁶⁴

Payne may have supplied the Ross avenue history, dated August 15, 2008, in response to an Aug. 10, 2008, *DMN* column by Steve Blow, "Perhaps Ross Ave. is due for change," in which he explains that he had no idea who Ross was. He found out and writes:

Well, it turns out that Ross Avenue is named for brothers William and Andrew Ross. And as far as I can tell, their major accomplishment was owning the land where the new avenue was platted. That's it.

Payne would appear again in another street renaming with negative commentary in the future.

But there is no mention in Blow's column of the brothers being in the Confederate army.⁶⁵

Reported in Aug. 6, 2008 *DMN* article, "Street renaming – Chávez camp has long road – Panel's vote shifts focus from Industrial to Ross," the Trinity River Corridor Project Committee

⁶⁰ Bradford, Ben, "Judge W.H. Atwell Things High Court Ruling Strayed," *DMN*, 12/15/1957.

⁶¹ Payne, Darwin, "We can't roll over Ross' past," *DMN*, 7/26/2008, pp. 19A.

⁶² http://web.archive.org/web/*/www.saveross.com, printed out 9/6/2018.

⁶³ <http://web.archive.org/web/20081002051056/http://www.saveross.com:80/>, printed out 9/6/2018.

⁶⁴ <http://web.archive.org/web/20090504035556/http://www.saveross.com:80/generalrosshistory.html>, printed out 9/6/2018. The same article was online at a rightwing website Dallas Blog,

<http://web.archive.org/web/20080927093054/http://www.dallasblog.com:80/200808151003357/dallas-blog/the-ross-brothers.html>, printed out 9/6/2018.

⁶⁵ Blow, Steve, "Perhaps Ross Ave. is due for change," *DMN*, 8/10/2008, pp. 1B.

voted unanimously to recommend that Ross Ave. be named after Chávez and Industrial as Riverfront Blvd. The article reports the next step is that the proposal go to the Dallas Plan Commission and that there was likely to be strong opposition at their meeting to renaming Ross Ave. to César Chávez Blvd. The article also points out that a three-quarters vote is required for the naming if the Plan Commission votes against it or 20 percent of the property owners along Ross file a written opposition. Dwaine Caraway who had initially opposed the renaming switched to voting for the proposal and saying he would support it when it came up before the Dallas city council. Though the proposal was voted for unanimously, three city council members of the committee, Carolyn Davis, Linda Koop, and Dave Neuman are said to be hedging in the article on how they will vote when it comes before the city council.

The article reports that city council members Jerry Allen, Ron Natinsky and Mitchel Rasansky are opposed to it. Council member Angela Hunt whose district includes much of downtown area where Ross goes, said that she was hearing opposition. Once concern Hunt expresses is that Ross Ave. has deep historical ties, and the article reports that the Ross brothers were prominent Dallas residents at the time of the Civil War, and the land once belonged to them. What the article doesn't mention is that they were Confederate soldiers.

Two groups which you would think would have a position on the issue, don't. The Catholic Archdiocese was reported that it "had yet to finalize a position," and Downtown Dallas said they "hadn't had a chance to fully review the proposal." Businesses didn't want to comment on the issue and Jill Bernstein, spokeswoman for the Dallas Museum of Art, made a statement that they had no position, before abruptly handing up." The article reports that Mayor Tom Leppert and as the article states, "many on the council took the same position," as that of the group Downtown Dallas.⁶⁶

On the same day, Aug. 8, 2008, James Ragland has a *DMN* column in which he is enraged over the fight to rename a street after Chávez. Ragland is correct in the opening that he is mystified why city officials would have a poll that was unscientific and not have a plan as to what to do with the results.

Ragland redoes the math on the results of the poll to suggest that they mean that the public supports a name like Riverfront. This is done very interestingly in which Ragland takes two contradictory positions. He first points out that that Chávez won with 52 percent of the vote and Hispanic leaders would see it as a, "... major slap in the face to Latinos" and that "They've got a point."

He then totals up the percentages of votes for the other river related names in the poll which he says are equivalent, that they "all pay homage to Trinity River," and comes up with 43.5 percent. With this total he asserts:

⁶⁶ Bush, Rudolph, "Street Renaming – Chávez camp has long road – Panel's vote shifts focus from Industrial to Ross, *DMN*, 8/6/2018, pp. 1A.

This strongly suggests to me that many folks – not just Powers That Be – favor a name reflecting the key feature of the largest public works project in Dallas history: the river.

However, more important is how Ragland sees menace from the Hispanic community. A telling sentence regarding his criticism of the poll is, “His committee unwittingly opened a Pandora’s box, one the city can’t put a lid on quick enough.” Hesiod’s, an ancient Greek writer, had in his book, “Works and Days,” the myth of Pandora. In the story Pandora was warned not to open the box, but does so anyways to satisfy her curiosity and releases all the evils unto the world.

But what was released from this “Pandora’s box,” but the hopes of the Hispanic community that they had an opportunity to change Dallas’s white landscape to reflect them and give them worth.

Ragland quotes Renata de Los Santos of LULAC to support his statement that, “Heck, it’s not even what Latino leaders wanted – until they were lead to believe it was possible.”

This is a historical misrepresentation of what happened. As mentioned earlier in this paper, Mercedes Olivera in her column in the beginning of this effort urged readers to vote for Chávez and they did and the choice of Chávez won the poll. The hope to name Industrial after Chávez was an authentic aspiration of the Hispanic people of Dallas.

It may well be that those Ragland might consider leaders of the Hispanic community then strove to catch up with the aspirations of the Hispanics that voted for Chávez in the poll, but to imply that the hope to have a street renamed after Chávez is inauthentic or not really wanted by Hispanics is false but were led to believe it was something they wanted is false.

Ragland’s comments reveal that the “evil” that has escaped the Pandora’s Box is Hispanic empowerment. He states:

But they can’t shake the establishment’s disdain for renaming Industrial after Chávez. So they’re using the survey as leverage – and as a blunt political instruments.

Who would not resent being disdained? The reference to “a blunt political instrument” implies that Hispanic advocates don’t have legitimate or rational arguments to name a street after Chávez, and implies they are thuggish using political force as a club to overcome reason. It also means he really doesn’t think, “They’ve got a point” as he stated earlier in his column.

In the closure of his column in quoting Mayor Leppert’s view that renaming a street after Chávez, “is a very important one,” and “I am going to be very supportive of that.” Ragland follows ominously with, “Problem is, that may no longer be enough.”

Ragland doesn’t specify what exactly means by this. Does he fear Hispanics will want two or three streets? Maybe they will want a Park also? Perhaps, even an elementary school. Where

might it end? Even, maybe, even they will want a say in the running of Dallas. And they are coming with their “blunt” “instruments.”⁶⁷

One continuing theme of editorials like Blow’s and Ragland and the views of others is a great fear of racial controversy. It might be that of course any city desires racial peace, but it also has to be considered that the racial controversy might be a part of revealing how power is structured in Dallas and how race is managed in Dallas to the disadvantage of minorities. Racial controversies have always the risk that a minority political class might become discredited and a newer more demanding leadership take its place. Most worrisome to the promoters of Dallas they might reveal to the nation the reality of race in Dallas.

The next day, Aug. 7, 2008, the *DMN* has an editorial, “A Worthy Street Fight – Let’s finally remember young Santos Rodriquez,” which is against naming any street after Chávez. It deserves close examination for its masterful manipulations and tactics. It is a breathtaking cynical exploitation of the death of Santos Rodriguez at the hands of the Dallas police.

The editorial starts with declaring that it is a “pointless street-renaming controversy,” resulting from “a bad idea, poorly executed.” The next paragraph refers to the poll which is called “misguided.” The fact that city hall actually felt they had to respond to the results of the poll is called “Dallas city government’s panicked reaction.”

The “misguided” “bad idea” is that city staff without much thought did a poll which led to a result that real estate developers didn’t want. However, there would be no street controversy at all if the inclusion of Hispanics counted more than the inane renaming ideas of real estate developers and the opinions of fringe racists. If Industrial had simply been named César Chávez Blvd., despite that what had happened with the poll had been unintended, it would have been a tremendous thing. It would have resulted in a major section of the city feeling that they were a part of it and that they did count in the scheme of things.

As for the developers, they were the beneficiaries of a huge expenditures in the development of the Trinity corridor. If they didn’t like it, they could have been told to go jump in the pesticide laden Trinity. However, the highest moral imperative of Dallas is real estate development and that was not even imagined by the Dallas establishment.

How “pointless” is this? At some point Hispanics will want to see themselves named on the landscape. The editorial just reeks of annoyance that there are noisy minorities that they are unable to dismiss.

The article then goes on to argue that César Chávez shouldn’t be the name of a major Dallas road. It is a marvel of cunning with two tactics.

⁶⁷ Ragland, James, “Wrong turn taken in street naming,” *DMN*, 8/6/2018, page 1B.

First it starts out praising Chávez as “an authentic hero to U.S. Latinos and deserves the many roads, buildings and parks named for him.” However, as editorial will explain, though Chávez might deserve roads elsewhere, he doesn’t deserve a road in Dallas. The praise is followed with the statement “his ties to Dallas are tenuous at best. He certainly had nothing to do with the Trinity River project.” We name many things after historical figures, so this statement, “He certainly had nothing to do with the Trinity River project,” is quite inane. We name current projects, roads, bridges, streets, buildings, and other elements of the built landscape for people in the past so that they are remembered, not because they had some connection to the build element of the landscape. This is again the grasping for reasons combined with the suspension of thinking to block renaming.

The editorial quotes Elba Garcia that the “Latino community wants today is respect,” to which the editorial replies “Right sentiment, wrong guy, wrong road.”

The editorial points out that William and Andrew Ross were prominent residents in Dallas about the time of the Civil War and asks, “... but does it make sense to throw over a pioneer Dallas family when the city has dozens of streets named, say for trees?” The fact they were part of the Confederate army isn’t mentioned and I don’t believe it was ever mentioned in the *DMN* during the entire controversy.

Then the second element is employed. Naming a street for Chávez is positioned against naming a street for a Hispanic with local roots. The editorial argues that it would be more respectful to name a street after Anita Martinez, first Dallas City Council Hispanic member, and “Tejano heroes like Juan Seguin and Lorenzo de Zavala.”

Then Santos Rodriguez is brought into the argument. The editorial states, “But look at the calendar,” and the editorial points out that the 35th anniversary of the murder of Santos Rodriguez was a few days ago. The editorial recounts the murder of Rodriguez, the historical impact it had on Dallas, and laments “We barely remember his death.”

The editorial concludes that there should be a street named for Santos, and suggests Live Oak, Maple, Cedar Springs or Oak Lawn.” This is positioned as remembering “that some fights are worth having” versus the “political flashpoint of the moment” which is naming a street after Chávez.⁶⁸ The whole editorial just drips smugness and condescension.

This whole editorial against renaming a street for Chávez is cloaked in an expression of concern for Hispanics.

What is also appalling is that in 2015 the *DMN* makes a self-congratulatory reference to this editorial.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Editorial, “A Worthy Street Fight – Let’s finally remember young Santos Rodriguez,” *DMN*, 8/7/2008, pp. 12A.

⁶⁹ Hashimoto, Mike, “Remembering a boy murdered by a Dallas police officer a long time ago,” *DMN*, 7/24/2015, The Blogs, <https://www.dallasnews.com/opinion/opinion/2015/07/24/remembering-a-boy-murdered-by-dallas-police-officer-a-long->

Another *DMN* editorial, “Out of the Inbox,” Aug. 9, 2008, by Joanna M. England, joked that Dallas was sweating over the debate on what street should be renamed for César Chávez. England states, “We’ve received some pretty imaginative suggestions, but many letter writers agreed with the editorial board’s idea that we memorialize Santos Rodriguez and designate a street currently named for trees, not the Ross family.”⁷⁰ The inference that might be drawn from this editorial is that there is broad public agreement with the *DMN*’s position against naming a street for Chávez. However, it was no more definitive of public opinion than the city hall poll which had been won by the choice of naming Industrial after Chávez and derided by so many.

Remarkable, since it was in such contrast to his other appalling columns on street naming, is the *DMN*, Aug. 10, 2008, Steve Blow column, “Perhaps Ross Ave. is due to change.” The column has its failings, it is remarkable only in contrast to his other columns on street renaming.

Blow states that he is surprised by his own thoughts, that initially he was opposed to renaming Ross Avenue. He sees that though he originally opposed renaming Industrial for historical reasons, if a name has to change he approves of the new name Riverfront “to build a little riverside synergy.” Blow also simultaneously patronizes the Latino community and stigmatizes the original online poll with:

And let’s give credit to Latino leaders for understanding that and not waging a battle over Industrial, despite that dialing-for-democracy poll.

The “that” being in reference to “riverside synergy.”

Then in discussing Ross Ave. he points out that he had no idea whom the street was named after and explains that “their major accomplishment was owning the land where the new avenue was platted.”

Blow dismisses the opposition argument that Chávez had no connection to Dallas pointing out the streets named after presidents Jefferson, Madison and Van Buren, (U.S. Presidents), and gives also the examples of Dallas streets Seaside, Oceanview, and Mountain Valley.

Blow also points out that street names are changed in opposition to the argument that street names should stay fixed. He points out that when the street named after Carondelet was extended it was changed to Ross. He mentions that Germania Street was changed to Liberty Street during World War I. That there was a street named after Lindbergh, but later prior to

time-ago, printed out 10/3/2018. The editorial does include the original editorial and says that the proposal was in response to the César Chávez renaming effort. Another reference was Grigsby, Sharon, “How about renaming Latino Cultural Center for Santos Rodriguez,” *DMN*, 9/3/2015, <https://www.dallasnews.com/opinion/opinion/2015/09/03/how-about-renaming-latino-cultural-center-for-santos-rodriguez>, printed out 10/3/2018.

⁷⁰ England, Joanna M., “Out of the Inbox,” *DMN*, 8/8/2008, pp. 18A.

World War II it was renamed after William Francis Skillman because “Lindbergh was just a little too fond of Hitler.”

Blow grasps how street names work their power. He derisively dismisses suggestions of naming the streets Singleton or Live Oak after Chávez stating:

Yes, they would be better, I had to admit to myself, if the goal is to find a more obscure, out-of-the-way street.

Blow, may not know of symbolic accretion, but he instinctively understands that the prominence of the street gives prestige to the name of the street and that the name has to be seen to do its symbolic work. Ross is the avenue on which stands historic churches, prominent cultural institutions such as the Dallas Museum of Art, and tall skyscrapers. Had Ross been renamed it would have symbolically placed Hispanic identity in the heart of Dallas which was then and is now, a place of Anglo-Saxon whiteness, of slaveowner and Confederate and white supremacists streets.

Blow concludes arguing for the street name changing saying:

... And in doing so, let’s honor the changing makeup of our city.

Respecting history doesn’t mean being stuck in it.⁷¹

A couple days later, Aug. 12, 2008, the *DMN* has an article, “Proposed Street Renaming – Ross becomes avenue of diversity and debate – Some have memories and stakes, while others seek recognition.”

Once again the Confederate identity of the Ross brothers is avoided. The article mentions that the street is named after them. Ellen Amirkan of Oriental Rug Cleaning Co. on Ross Ave. is quoted as saying, “To want to change the name of a street that honors one of the early founders of Dallas after someone who is not from Dallas, not from Texas ... it’s a travesty.” The fact that A.H. Belo built the Belo Mansion on Ross in the late 1800s is mentioned, but not that A.H. Belo was a Confederate.

The article reports, “Family histories are a key part of the street’s history, and a part of the city’s. Changing one affects all the rest, locals say.” Bobbie Kraft, 71 is quoted as saying “Ross Avenue has a history all of its own.” And, “I think we ought to leave some things alone.” Again we have the erasing history argument.

The author of this paper did not find that there was the revelation of the Confederate identities of the Ross brothers in any of the *DMN* articles about the debate over renaming Ross after César Chávez.

⁷¹ Blow, Steve, “Perhaps Ross Ave. is due for change,” *DMN*, 8/19/2008, pp. 1B.

The presumed stigmatizing nature of a César Chávez name is implied in some arguments and the idea that this negative attitude towards Chávez is popularly shared. Developer John Sughrue, owner of a 42-story Museum Tower project is reported to feel that Ross Ave. is “a brand” and quotes him saying, “Ross Avenue in Dallas is much like Park Avenue in New York or Michigan Avenue in Chicago.” And, “You change the brand, you risk changing the enterprise.”

Michael Cotten, owner of Ross Avenue Wedding Chapel says he has a lot of Hispanic weddings, and states, “But I can’t imagine that many of my clients would be thrilled going to the César Chávez Wedding Chapel.”

The underlying presumption of Sughrue and Cotten is that there is a widespread negative attitude among white people towards Hispanics that would have a business impact with a name change. For this to be true in Dallas in 2008 says a lot about the racial attitudes in Dallas, yet this conclusion, as in other street controversies where similar objections to street name changes are made, is never drawn by the *DMN* or the opponents of street name changing.

The usual issue of the costs of business cards, stationary, and store signs is brought up as in earlier street name changes.

The article states that some think renaming would have major problems, as an example is this opinion by Danna Moon of Texas Paint & Wallpaper:

Ross Avenue is “just part of our family, and it’s a part of our store,” she said. “We know that we have to change with the times. This is just one area, I guess, that we don’t see needs changing.”

Exactly what Moon is trying to say is not clear, except that she is against the renaming because she is against the renaming.

SMU urban anthropology Professor Robert V. Kemper is reported as saying that renaming a “historic street” is a “no-win situation” for the Dallas City Council. Kemper labels the poll as unscientific and as the “beginning of the crisis.” He sees the results as the “flashpoint” from which the continuing political struggle originated and states, “There’s no easy exit.”

Of course there is an easy exit. There is Industrial which it has been decided that it needs to be renamed, and is not named after any individuals. Industrial has a history also, but it seems no one cares about the industrial past of Dallas. Yes the poll had unintended consequences, the real obstacle are real estate developers who though the beneficiaries of the development expect to be catered to in every detail. As an urban anthropologist he doesn’t seem to be aware of a racialized landscape or anything about the issues of race and place.

Hispanic leaders emphasized the current Hispanic community along a section of Ross Ave. as well as other historical events as to why the street should be renamed after Chávez. The immigration march up Ross Ave. of 500,000 people in 2006 was cited. Again the Cathedral Shrine of the Virgin of Guadalupe along Ross Ave. was mentioned.

Opponents of renaming Ross were careful not to criticize Chávez and usually to praise him, but also advocated that, as the article stated, “... would prefer that street be somewhere else.”

John Fielder, senior pastor at First United Methodist Church at Ross and Akard Street stated that he thought that there needed to be respect for the “Latino community” and that “they should have a prominent venue,” but was against naming Ross Ave. and is quoted in the article as follows:

“But I think of Ross Avenue as our Fifth Avenue ... and in New York, Fifth Avenue was a transcendent stage shared by everyone.”

What makes an avenue a “transcendent stage” or why renaming Ross after César Chávez would take the transcendence out of Ross Street isn’t made clear. Or why a César Chávez street wouldn’t be for everyone isn’t made clear. It is a very powerful statement, a metaphysical one since he is referring to transcendence, that a Chávez name would be deleterious. Why might that be isn’t stated in the article. John Fielder possible views on Ross Avenue being named after Confederate soldiers isn’t reported. Did Fielder not know or did he not care is not known.

The article states that unspecified others suggest other streets that should be considered, “Jefferson Boulevard in Oak Cliff or Northwest Highway or Columbia Avenue.”⁷²

Next month, Sept. 9, 2008, *DMN* has an article, “Dallas Ross Avenue – Chávez had many ties to city – Backers of street name change says he joined 20 protests,” detailing the involvement of Chávez in events in Dallas and a brief mention of the oppositions arguments. The supporters are responding to a criticism that isn’t legitimate and thus legitimatizing it, but they are also shutting down the criticism and in a practical way advancing their cause. However, for other street battles in the future they have legitimized an obstacle to renaming street battles.

The conclusion of the article has a brief mention of the opposition’s reasons to keep the Ross name. Soozy Martin, the leader of www.saveross.com in response said that Chávez influence wasn’t the basis for her supporting the retention of the Ross name. The article concludes with:

“Some people are saying, ‘Why change the history of the street if the Ross brothers had a connection to Dallas?’ she said. “But that is not my argument. For me, the question is: Why are we changing the name of a street that already has a history?”

⁷² Aasen, Eric, Young, Michael E., “Proposed Street Renaming – Ross becomes avenue of diversity and debate – Some have memories and stakes, while others seek recognition,” *DMN*, 8/12/2008, pp. 1A.

Soozy Martin is using the erasing or changing history argument that is so popular in defending Confederate statues. Unlike her website, she isn't reported mentioning that the Ross brothers were in the Confederate army.⁷³

Then the focus shifted back to renaming Industrial after Chávez. The Sept. 19, 2008 *DMN* article, "Dallas – Road Name Debate – U-turn on street names – Leaders reconsider Chávez as moniker for either Ross, Industrial reports that the City Plan Commission has voted 11-3 against renaming Industrial to Riverfront Blvd. This would require a three-quarters vote of the City Council to support Riverfront Blvd. per city code.

The article reports that a 4-member panel of the City Plan Commission had voted against renaming Ross Ave.

So with these two votes Ross Ave. wasn't an option to be renamed after Chávez, but Industrial was now seen as being more a possibility than ever with the City Plan Commission having voted against Riverfront.

There seems to have been some dealings regarding street names. The article reports that Neumann "engineered a deal" with the Hispanic city council members to rename Ross to Chávez in exchange to rename Industrial to Riverfront.

Alberto Ruiz, head of the Chávez renaming effort, saw strategic maneuvering, that when Ross renaming was turned down, the city would be forced to accept the survey results and consider renaming Industrial after Chávez.

The article reported, "The main result of Thursday's action was a confusing mix of denials and recommendations at various city levels."

Again is reported that Chávez is stigmatizing and he assumption that the general public would perceive it that way. In discussing business reactions, James Bush, a lawyer with an office on Industrial Blvd. comments, "The name Riverfront just sounds prettier. It's a place people would want to go to." Presumably Chávez is less pretty, or ugly, and would be a place people might not want to go to.

There is no consideration that flat Riverfront road nowhere near the Trinity River might just sound ridiculous like some developer's "Wandering Meadow Flower Babbling Brook Way" name. Also, a street might have gravity and dignity, or be representative of a city's moral courage against prejudice. Chávez could invoke the fascination with things Southwestern and the nation's Hispanic past. The city of Santa Fe in New Mexico is certainly has a very positive image and is very popular and its full name when founded was La Villa Real de la Santa Fe de

⁷³ LaGuardia, Ignacio, "Dallas Ross Avenue – Chávez has many ties to the city – Backers of street name say he joined 20 protests," *DMN*, 9/9/2008, pp. 1B.

San Francisco de Asís (The Royal Town of the Holy Faith of Saint Francis of Assisi). Dallas could have embraced Texas' Hispanic past.

Finally, unstated, is the assumption of the article, that the desires of real estate developer are absolute above all things no matter how ridiculous or contrary to the interests of the city and not needing critical interrogation.

The *DMN* never considers the fluidity of memory and alternatives but let's stand this Chávez versus riverine binary.⁷⁴

An article the next day, Sept. 20, 2008, in the *DMN*, "Industrial back in play as Chávez tribute," largely contained information that was in the previous day's article, but one item is worth noting. The article reports a recent survey of Ross Ave. business owners, but not who conducted it, which found that 90 were against a name change and only one was for it.⁷⁵

The Sept. 26, 2008 *DMN* article, "Dallas – Panel: Don't change Ross to Chávez – But commission will accept application to rename Industrial," reported that the City Plan Commission, acting on the recommendation of a subcommittee, turned down the renaming of Ross to Chávez. With the Plan Commission voting against Ross being renamed, under city code it would require three-quarters of the city council to vote for it to pass, which mean essentially that Ross would not be renamed for Chávez.

Hispanic leadership interpreted this as meaning that the Hispanic community had political influence, a belief that subsequent events would show to be false.

Hispanic leadership also understood the importance of which street was chosen. District 6 Plan Commissioner John Lozano stated, "When you tell us that you get a street for César Chávez, but it's somewhere where nobody can see it, where nobody will drive on it, where nobody has to see its name, then you're telling us we have to keep invisible. And I am telling you we can't do it anymore."⁷⁶

What Lozano understood was the work that naming something on the built landscape does. It sends a message to the public in general about values, but it only does this if it is seen. Yet, as we will see in this history, in the end the type of street Lozano didn't want to be the street named after Chávez was to a great degree the type of street that was selected.

A couple days earlier James Ragland attacked the activists working to get a prominent street named after Chávez in a Sept. 24, 2008, *DMN* column, "Road name battle still not water under

⁷⁴ Bush, Rudolph, Levinthal, Dave, "Dallas – Road Name Debate – U-turn on street names – Leaders reconsider Chávez as moniker for either Ross, Industrial," *DMN*, 9/19/2008, pp. 1A.

⁷⁵ Olivera, Mercedes, "Industrial back in play as Chávez tribute," *DMN*, 9/20/2008, pp. 3B.

⁷⁶ Bush, Rudolph, "Panel: Don't change Ross to Chávez – But commission will accept application to rename Industrial," *DMN*, 9/26/2008, pp. 1B.

bridge.” His is dismissive, condescending, paternalistic and annoyed, and sees the problem that Hispanics want a street named after Chávez.

Ragland complains that, “Ross was tossed under the bus without any consideration of the street’s history – or its strong allies,” but there is no mention by Ragland that part of the Ross history was that the Ross brothers were Confederates. This seemed to be the case in all references to the history of the Ross Ave. in the *DMN*.

Ragland asserts that having a street isn’t important though he says one thing and then the opposite.

In one sentence he says, “Don’t get me wrong. I understand the value of naming streets ... for folks who share your ethnic and cultural legacy.” However for most of the column he devalues naming. Ragdale immediately after making that statement says:

But you can rename every street in Dallas after a Latino leader and it won’t curb the troublesome Latino dropout rate, fix one pothole in a Latino neighborhood...

Ragsdale asserts that these are the real issues and for which “are the battles worth fighting,” in contrast he states, “A street name isn’t the life-and-death issue that folks are making it out to be. Sorry, it’s just not,” asserting that the goal of street renaming is trivial.

It seems that those who didn’t want Industrial named after Chávez thought it was very important, for they fought for the Riverfront name against all obstacles. And if it wasn’t that important than why wasn’t Industrial just named after Chávez?

Ragsdale becomes willfully ignorant of the importance of names. Society erects monuments, puts people on coins and bills, names buildings, parks etc. after people, to shape values, indicate who has done great deeds and what a great deed is. It doesn’t occur to him that having a prominent symbol that would indicate that Hispanics are part of civil life and society might be a positive symbol to Hispanic youth and work to reduce the dropout rate. Having a feeling that society respects you would be a powerful incentive to strive to achieve within that society.

Ragland characterizes Hispanic struggles for a Chávez street as deriving from emotional and not rational factors, to be actually an emotional fit of temper. He states, “But thanks to the survey, Latino leaders felt slighted and betrayed,” as the reason they are fighting for a street named after Chávez. It isn’t because Hispanics understand the power of the symbols of the built landscape, they are just having a tantrum.

And Ragland is saying all these assertions of his are for the benefit of Hispanics. He worries that they “may be squandering their newfound political leverage” with their demands and advises them wondering, “how many more allies they would gain for far more significant struggles ahead if they showed a renewed spirit of compromise.”

However, if the Hispanic community can't get a street named after Chávez, how much "newfound political leverage" do they have, especially since Ragland has emphasized that it is a trivial thing to achieve.

As for his call for a "renewed spirit of compromise" isn't he just telling Hispanics to know their place and advance their community by winning white approval?

Ragland even quotes Chávez to support his position implying that those working for a street named after Chávez are working contrary to Chávez's beliefs.

Ragland's overall failure is that he just sees the issue of renaming just one street and refuses to realize that the whole built Dallas landscape derives its names from generations of white supremacy, oppression, often brutal, and that it is a white landscape which excludes in its names non-whites.

The historical past is why there have been civil rights leaders and why it is important that they and their struggles be remembered in the future. The historical past is why non-white minorities are not present in the naming of Dallas streets, and why non-white groups would want to see themselves on the landscape that otherwise denies their existence. Instead Ragland insists on ignoring the history of race in Dallas and crankily lecture Hispanics.

Street names of a prominent historical figure like Chávez would inspire Hispanic youth, but also communicate to others that Hispanics are part of Dallas society as first class citizens and that they should act accordingly.

Instead, Ragland complains of the controversy, it is a "brouhaha," he is "worn down" by the controversy. It is a "mess." It has "devolved into the uncivil war" which he asserts is escalating. He laments that it has turned "into a public brawl."

To have a struggle over a street renaming it takes two opposing parties, and yet Ragland attributes all the supposedly trying controversy to Hispanics not willing to give up their struggle. If the Hispanics would just give up there would be the peace of being vanquished.

Struggles for civil rights have been loud and noisy. There has been opposition to civil rights. One of the arguments for a very gradual program for civil rights to be implemented over decades was that would avoid fights and struggles, and conveniently for those who really didn't want civil rights to be realized to have an argument that seems sympathetic but would delay civil rights to some indefinite future.

Ragland just wants those noisy Hispanics to know their place and be quiet. He is just annoyed that the fictions of racial harmony in Dallas are revealed to be fictions. As he says, "The ruckus is making our fair city look petty and unsophisticated."⁷⁷

⁷⁷ Ragland, James, "Road name battle still not water under the bridge," *DMN*, 9/24/2008, pp. 1B.

Interesting is that Ragland thinks that his column will be accepted by Dallas society in 2008, and the fact that he did write it and it didn't bring upon him widespread ridicule is an indication of what Dallas's society was in 2008, and what it might be in 2018. How many of his arguments were repurposed in debates to retain Confederate monuments in Dallas?

The fact that the *DMN* feels that Ragland has something intelligent to say in 2008 to Dallas society says a lot about the *DMN* as well as Dallas society in 2008.

Steve Blow, in an Oct. 2, 2008, *DMN* column was the first to suggest that the service road for Central Expressway highway which had the same name Central Expressway. He assigns it a Hispanic identity based on the fact that it is close, "a stone's throw," from the "Latino Cultural Center." The street passes next to the Dallas Farmers Market for which Blow states, "It's the perfect location to pay tribute to Mr. Chávez and his struggle for farm workers." Blow also states he agrees with Hispanic leaders that some of the alternatives suggested for a Chávez street are "more an attempt to hide Mr. Chávez than to honor him." Mapping the streets meant to honor civil rights leaders of those originally proposed versus those which were actually renamed shows that they have been placed away from places that weren't considered minority areas.

But this proposed route for a Chávez was significantly shorter than Industrial and Ross and also a route of a lot less significance.

Blow points out one critical aspect of the stretch, which was likely the reason it was ultimately selected in the end. As Blow states:

"Third, the name change would cause minimal disruption to businesses along the route. It's not a street of high-density development. Driving its almost two-mile length, I spotted only one multi-story, multi-tenant building."

It was a street on the margins of downtown.

A couple days later, Mercedes Olivera, in an Oct. 4, 2008, *DMN*, had a column for which she should be remembered as to what type of person she was and what essentially her role in the life of Dallas was, which was a Hispanic for the Dallas establishment.

Fights for civil rights have always been raucous. That because those who support systems of privilege don't give up their privileges without a fight.

Olivera opens her column with the statement, "many Dallas residents are probably tired of hearing about the effort to rename Industrial Boulevard after César Chávez."

Then in the column Olivera asserts that César Chávez "would be embarrassed listen to the debate," about renaming a street after him because Chávez was modest, when Olivera had met him in the past she said Chávez had a "self-effacing manner," and also that he was "a man who had peace of mind."

Olivera then argues that the struggle over the renaming of Industrial is contrary to the values of Chávez stating, “Well, this struggle over Industrial is nowhere near peaceful. Nor is it near resolution.” Peace of mind is a personal mental state and a mode of dealing with life, it doesn’t mean that a person who has peace of mind expects that struggles for social justice to be placid. It is like a person who has heard of lightening in storm expecting a lightening bug to have electrical discharges.

With Olivera’s writing on Chávez’s modesty she is implying that those seeking a César Chávez street are somehow attacking him. How seeking to name something after a great deceased person is hardly an attack on their modesty and it is just nonsensical to make this assertion. It would be immodest if Chávez had asked for a street while alive or had a posthumous request, but it has never been seen immodest for an individual to be selected by others for an honor.

Olivera is attacking the struggle to get a street named after Chávez as being anti-Chávez. She is attacking the struggle for struggling and resulting some unspecified “many” in Dallas to be “tired” of noisy Hispanics struggling.

Olivera doesn’t seem to have any comprehension of the saying, “Where there is no justice there is no peace.” If she did likely she wouldn’t be employed long by the *DMN*.

The rest of his column is about the willingness of Hispanic leaders to compromise. She doesn’t express an opinion about what street should be named after Chávez or whether the poll should be honored or whether there is some objective basis in naming. It is about who is open to compromise and their positions.

It concludes discussing the position of Alberto Ruiz, Chairperson of the César Chávez Task Force, which is that “they don’t want to be pushed all around the city, looking for another street.” Ruiz is quoted saying that Mayor Leppert asks for compromise, but isn’t willing to compromise. Ruiz is reported as stating that his group is going to move forward to rename Industrial.⁷⁸

Given that Olivera has framed the entire discussion that the struggle is something that the public is “tired” of and contrary to the values of Chávez, though she states Ruiz’s position, it is put in the context that sees Ruiz as one who is blocking compromise and is un-Chávez.

(INTERLUDE) HEGGINS: THE SECOND ATTEMPT

Though I title this interlude in the description of the campaign for César Chávez as the second attempt, it well might be that there just one long campaign and it is not getting much news coverage until the end so there really isn’t a break in the fighting for the street name change. However, in this period of time there was the second attempt to rename a street after Elsie Faye Heggins.

⁷⁸ Olivera, Mercedes, “Chávez would be embarrassed over street debate,” *DMN*, 10/4/2008, pp. 3B.

In a Oct. 9, 2008, *DMN* article about a Dallas City Council meeting there is a brief mention of an effort by Marvin E. Crenshaw, described as “Political activist and agitator,” to rename Marilla St. after Elsie Faye Heggins. Dismissively, Crenshaw’s motives are disparaged, the article stating, “... not to be left out of efforts to rename streets for César Chávez and the Trinity River.” The article portrays Marvin Crenshaw as an attention seeker.

The article explains that Marilla is named for the mother of Rev. William Ceiton Young, described as “a 19th-century Dallas religious and political leader.” The fact that Young had been in the Confederate army,⁷⁹ had been an active neo-Confederate in Arkansas ex-Confederates celebrating war criminal Confederate Gen. W.L. Cabell,⁸⁰ and later in the Sterling Price United Confederate Veteran which was historically notable for asking the president of the United States to pardon Joseph Shipp who had been convicted of contempt of court in the only criminal trial ever to have been held by the Supreme Court for Shipp’s collusion with a lynching is not mentioned.⁸¹ The article offers a sanitized history that is an erasure.⁸²

The author has not yet found more information on this campaign.

Victor Medina, local conservative writer,⁸³ delivers a scathing attack on the campaign to get a street named after Chávez, in a Nov. 9, 2008, column in the *DMN*. He uses the stock arguments used to oppose street renaming.

Medina argues that the controversy over the renaming itself is bad. It is a reason he asserts to not have the public, politicians, and “community activists” involved in street naming.

Medina argues that naming a street is not effectual to honor someone. He asserts that, “Naming a street for Mr. Chávez may bring some minimal exposure at first to the man and his legacy, but that’s about it.”

He places the struggle for a Chávez named street in opposition to other issues so as to have the idea that renaming a street is trivial versus a real goal. He writes, “as if having a major street named for him will solve all our cultural problems,” mentioning Hispanic dropout rates in Dallas public schools.

There is in Medina’s commentary a willful ignorance of the power of naming.

⁷⁹ Entry for Rev. W.C. Young in “Memorial and Biographical History of Dallas County, Texas,” Lewis Publishing Co., 1892, pp. 873.

⁸⁰ No author, “Arkansas Reorganize,” *Dallas Daily Herald*, 8/7/1885, pp. 1. For the war criminal activities of W.L. Cabell see Stockley, Grif, “Ruled by Race: Black/White Relations in Arkansas from Slavery to the Present,” Univ. of Arkansas Press, 2009, pp. 53.

⁸¹ Cabell, William Lewis, letter quoted in “Wants Petitions to President,” *DMN*, 11/21/1909, pp. 29. For a history of this notorious case see, “Contempt of Court: The Turn-of-the-Century Lynching That Launched a Hundred Years of Federalism,” by Mark Curriden and Leroy Phillips Jr., Anchor Books, division of Random House, New York, 1999. 2nd edition with epilogue 2001.

⁸² Levinthal, Dave, “Council Meeting,” *DMN*, 10/9/2008, pp. 7B.

⁸³ <http://vicmedina.blogspot.com/p/victor-medina-is-dallas-based-writer.html>, printed out 9/10/2018. Also, accessible via web site www.victormedina.com.

He attacks the motivation of the activists as being attention seeking stating, “Media exposure seems to drive what issues get the most attention.”

Medina takes a different direction to assert that renaming a street is contrary to the values of Chávez. Medina says that Chávez gave away all his possessions so “naming a street for Mr. Chávez seems out of place.” He argues that a library or park should bear his name.

Medina then goes on to attack the idea of a holiday for César Chávez and the holiday for Martin Luther King saying that it just results in a “day off to hang out at the mall” for students.

He closes with an argument that street renaming and holidays are something “easier” than “continuing a fight for the rights of workers.” It needs to be understood that the counter argument to this is more than we can do both. The fact is that streets are named to communicate values and aid in other efforts.⁸⁴

Like with Ragland, Olivera, and Blow there is no comprehension that there is a white landscape, or recognition that the history of racial oppression has kept minorities off the landscape. There is no recognition that controversy could be avoided entirely with a magnanimous decision to name Industrial after Chávez. Instead, the silly fantasies of real estate developers and their ideas of what a desirable name might be is catered too. These real estate developers who will be the beneficiaries of a vast amount of public investment can only think of what they think is their private good.

The plan to get either Ross or Industrial named after Chávez collapses as reported in a Nov. 11, 2008 *DMN* article, “‘Riverfront’ approved; Chávez backers miffed – Council leaves Ross untouched, vows to honor Latino hero,” with the vote by city council 12 to 3 to rename Industrial to Riverfront Blvd. The Hispanic city council members were the three who voted against it.

One reoccurring feature of street renaming battles is that there is no solidarity between Hispanics and African Americans on the Dallas city council. Ross had been rejected before.

The article reports that Mayor Leppert offered a consolation prize of asking the City Plan Commission to find a street for Chávez. Even alternatives to having a street renamed were discussed and it is interesting that alternatives to street renaming were discussed.

At the city hall vote business owners turned out but the article reports that a only couple of dozen Chávez supporters were there and in contrast “they were heavily outnumbered by a group of business- and landowners along Industrial who showed up,” to argue for the Riverfront name. Those supporting keeping Ross Avenue named after Ross the article reported appeared “in large numbers.”

Former council member Craig Holcomb is reported to have “urged the council not to forget the years of work that have been poured into changing the Trinity.” The businesses and

⁸⁴ Medina, Victor, “Streetwise – Something else would better honor Chávez, says Victor Medina,” *DMN*, 11/9/2008, page 10B.

landowners were the benefit of a tremendous amount of public works, but they just couldn't accept a Chávez name.

Alberto Ruiz, head of the Chávez task force expresses a truism about Dallas when he pointed at the land and business owners and as reported, "... suggested that the city was acting in favor of the moneyed and influential at the expense of common people." Ruiz had at least an intuitive understanding of cultural geography. Ruiz is reported as insisting that the Chávez street be downtown and "We don't want it in Oak Cliff. We don't want it in some typical neighborhood."

For the record Mark Bryant, "top executive at Irving-based JPI," was there to speak for Riverfront.⁸⁵

After this defeat there is a paternalistic editorial by the *DMN*, Nov. 13, 2008, "Latino frustrations can be a mobilizing force."

Now the *DMN* reports that there are "Feelings of pent-up bitterness," and city council member Elba Garcia is quoted as saying it, "was a big slap in the face."

In this editorial, there is expressed, really for the first time, the importance of the power of street naming.

There's more to this than symbolism. Any parent, whatever his or her race, can drive down a Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard in this country and use the occasion to tell children how he courageously changed our nation for the better. But where in Dallas is the same opportunity afforded to recall the contribution of Mr. Chávez or any other prominent Hispanic figure?

It can be asked how many parents with white children will be driving down Martin Luther King Blvd.

The editorial shows *DMN* still doesn't understand symbolism.

Streets named after civil rights leaders convey to persons of all races that the civil rights movement is valued by those who have the power to name streets. It signals that the old order has begun to pass away and suggests that everyone should consider how they will live in the new order.

Alberto Ruiz was likely to be aware of this.

This quote might have been a good thing to say in the *DMN* prior to the Industrial Blvd. vote to position the *DMN* as again supportive of naming something after Chávez, just not a street. The editorial wants the downtown farmers market renamed. They are really offering a really small consolation prize.

One thing the editors and the establishment are realizing is that not having a Chávez street says something about Dallas. As the editorial points out that the activists for a Chávez street were

⁸⁵ Bush, Rudolph, "'Riverfront' approved; Chávez bakers miffed – Council leaves Ross untouched, vows to honor Latino hero," *DMN*, 11/11/2018, pp. 1A.

asking for what had been done in, "... other major cities, including Los Angeles, Houston, and Austin." Also pointed out is that eight states have César Chávez holidays. The Dallas establishment is beginning to worry that they might look bad.

The editorial says that the *DMN* has supported a tribute to Santo Rodriquez, and the worth of this support can be seen today in how little has been done.

However, the editorial can't resist in an infuriatingly condescending and paternalist recommendation, in talking about the continuing debate they state:

But they also should not neglect the very real needs deserving immediate attention with Latino neighborhoods – needs that will remain regardless of which street or place name gets changes.

The editors of the *DMN* evidently think that Hispanic leaders might actually forget these problems, and are again putting out the idea that they are competitive with street renaming. If the city had just named Industrial after Chávez in the beginning activists could have moved on to these problems, but the editors seem to have no comprehension of that.

Further, despite the talk of parents talking about people on street signs, they don't seem to have any idea really what that does. If people see a street named after a civil rights hero, it says that the supporters of that hero had the support of the community to name or rename the street. It is about empowering minority members with the thought they are part of the community and not the "others" and also communicating to non-minority members that these minority members are part of the community. This does work to motivate people to solve problems and others not to be prejudicial problems themselves.

With this paternalistic conclusion you realize that the editors were just expressing sentimental thoughts with the discussion of parents and children and street signs.

I think that the establishment realized that they had embittered many and that Hispanic powerlessness was on display. That a Chávez street had to be forthcoming and it couldn't be hidden away in some corner of the city.⁸⁶

After this there was a search for a street to rename. About six months later, in a June 24, 2009, *DMN* article, "Chávez renaming plan has a new address: Young Street – Salazar says effort to honor leader now centered on downtown road, but council support uncertain."

It reports on a scheme to rename another downtown street, Young Street, by city council member Steve Salazar after Chávez. However, Young wouldn't be eliminated from the landscape with his plan which included a proposal to rename a stretch of Canton for Young. Development Service director Theresa O'Donnell said its advantage was there it had few businesses along it. This department had sent letters to property owners along Young Street concerning the name change, but had also send letters to property owners along the southern end of Central Expressway service road.

⁸⁶ Editorial, "Streets and Signposts – Latino frustrations can be a mobilizing force," *DMN*, 11/13/2018, pp. 18A.

Young is merely described as an “early Dallas settler,” and it is being moved and not renamed since as the article explains is that it “is important for historic and symbolic reasons.” However, Young’s Confederate and neo-Confederate identity isn’t mentioned.

Oddly the article reports that A.H. Belo Corporation, then on Young Street, publisher of the *DMN*, couldn’t be reached for comment.

The article reports that it is not certain that this plan to rename Young Street had the support of the Dallas City Council.

From the article it can be seen that city staff is working on renaming Central Expressway service road in parallel with the project to rename Young Street.⁸⁷

However, there was opposition to renaming Young Street as reported June 26, 2009, *DMN*, article “Rename for – Chávez face a long road – Council members cool to Young Street change; Salazar hopeful.”

In the article Mayor Leppert declares that there is no proposal to rename Young Street. Salazar states that his idea had been prematurely made public. The proposal is reported as not yet being official. Other city council members are reported are to be unhappy to have learned of the plan in the media.

Salazar feels very confident he will politically force the renaming of Young to Chávez. The article reports:

But he also suggested that opposing Young could be politically difficult for the council, particularly after it rejected renaming Industrial and Ross.

Salazar is quoted:

If they are against naming a street for César Chávez, we’ll respect that position. But almost 50 percent of the people who live in the city are Hispanic and do want a street named after César Chávez. At some point in time, they have to embrace the community they represent.

Development Services director Theresa O’Donell reports that they did not receive “significant number of responses” either for or against the plan.

The Dallas Historical Society and Downtown Dallas don’t have a position on the name change.

Jim Moroney, publisher and chief executive of *The DMN* said that as a company they were against renaming streets named after individuals, but if the Dallas public felt it was very important to make the change, they would not oppose it.

⁸⁷ Bush, Rudolph, “Chávez renaming plan has a new address: Young Street – Salazar says effort to honor leader now centered on downtown road, but council support uncertain,” *DMN*, 6/24/2009, pp. 1A.

Alberto Ruiz, head of the César Chávez Task Force in the article is reported as saying that he doesn't expect as intense a debate as had happened before in naming a street, and that if Young wasn't chosen there were other prominent streets in Dallas.⁸⁸

The next day, June 27, 2009, *DMN* article, "Signs go up to rename Young – City staff follow memo from 3 council members; mayor, others critical of quick move." Hispanic city council members Steve Salazar, Delia Jasso and Pauline Medrano had sent a memo to city staff to initiate the process to change the Young Street name. The city staff on the basis of a memo started to post signs the previous day, Friday, announcing a plan.

It seems that Mayor Leppert and other city council members were not aware of either the memo or the sign posting according to the article. Salazar claimed that an assistant in his office had mistakenly given the memo to city staff without his knowledge and that he had intended to discuss it with the mayor and other city council members. The mayor and other city council members were not happy with this. Mayor Pro Tem Dwaine Caraway said, "I'm very shocked, and I think other council members feel the same." Caraway said that things like this weren't going to happen in the future.⁸⁹

After this attempt to have a Young renaming slipped through, the effort to rename Young collapsed as reported in a July 2, 2009, *DMN* article, "Street renaming plan nixed – Council member Salazar, still deciding how to honor Chávez, pulls bid to rechristen Young." The proposal was withdrawn. Even whether Chávez would be honored with a street was not certain. The article reports that the three Hispanic city council members met with Leppert "to discuss a number of possibilities for honoring Chávez and local Hispanic leaders."⁹⁰

Steve Blow has a June 28, 2009 *DMN* column, "There's a central option in Chávez debate," in which he announces that his idea of a year ago, to rename the service road Central Expressway (not to be confused with the Central Expressway highway next to it.) is now being seriously considered. He does explain that the name of the street is confusing and that drivers frequently get confused.

In the column Blow really reveals his failure to understand about the need for visibility of a proposed street. Instead he expresses that he thinks the need for a visible street is somehow an attack on white people. He starts out saying that he hopes Hispanic leaders aren't against the idea because it was originally proposed by "a gringo newspaper guy."

He also, "hope Latino leaders will be real honest about motivations. There's an element, I fear, that won't be happy unless a name change is also a thumb in the eye of Dallas."

⁸⁸ Bush, Rudolph, "Rename for – Chávez faces a long road – Council members cool to Young Street change; Salazar hopeful," *DMN*, 6/29/2009, pp. 1B.

⁸⁹ Bush, Rudolph, "Signs go up to rename Young – City staff follow memo from 3 council members; mayor, others critical of quick move," *DMN*, 6/27/2009, pp. 1B.

⁹⁰ Bush, Rudolph, "Street renaming plan nixed – Council member Salazar, still deciding how to honor Chávez, pulls bid to rechristen Young," *DMN*, 7/2/2009, pp. 1B.

He then explains he is progressing in his ability in reading Spanish, and claims “a local Latino said as much in an article ... in Al Dia ...” *Al Día* is the local Spanish language newspaper.

Blow quotes this Hispanic leader as having “griped” about the Central Expressway proposal saying, “They’re telling us. ‘You can have your street downtown, but it has to be in a place that doesn’t stir debate or cause problems.’”

It seems this local Hispanic leader understands exactly what is happening, that there is an effort to choose a place not on the criteria of what would best show the importance of Chávez, but some token marginal place for which there is minimal resistance and opposition.

However, Blow’s response is, “I have to ask: Would a name change we can agree on be so bad?” This is a refusal to recognize what the issues involved are. The statement also has an unspoken presupposition that the problem is Hispanics not accepting what the establishment offers them. It obviously isn’t a name everyone is agreeing on, and instead of recognizing why some might be not accepting of a proposal they are characterized as being troublemakers and anti-white.⁹¹

On Sept. 30, 2009, the *DMN* has the article, “Central eyed for – Chávez – Council members propose downtown street for renaming,” reports that three Hispanic city council members proposed renaming Central Expressway where it is downtown. As the article explains, it isn’t actually the freeway, but a short surface street that runs along it. The article announces that it has the strong support of Mayor Leppert and City Plan Commission head, “Joe Alcantar.” Leppert wants the transition to take two years to minimize the cost to businesses.⁹²

On Oct. 7, 2009, the *DMN* published an editorial, “The Right Fit – City should rename part of Central for Chávez,” supporting the new proposed route. Some details are that it is going to be remade into a two-way boulevard. The editorial states that is never should have been given the expressway label.

The editorial states that a business coalition in 2005 had recommended it be named Central Boulevard.

The editorial states that they still prefer that name, “But this newspaper resisted earlier proposals to rename streets named for families of local historical significance for Chávez, so we recognize the need for compromise.” They also want to “end the bitterness” about renaming a street for Chávez. Since the proposed street has “close proximity to the Dallas Farmers Market,” they feel that it is appropriate for Chávez since he worked to better conditions for farm workers.⁹³

The concern to rename some street after Chávez might also be motivated by the need to not have the current elected leadership of the Hispanic community discredited as being powerless.

⁹¹ Blow, Steve, “There’s a central option in Chávez debate,” *DMN*, 6/28/2009, pp. 1B.

⁹² Bush, Rudolph, “Central eyed for – Chávez – Council members propose downtown street for renaming,” *DMN*, 9/30/2009, pp. 1B.

⁹³ Editorial, “The Right Fit – City should rename part of Central for Chávez.”

The lack of a Chávez street would have sent a powerful message to Hispanics in Dallas of exactly where they fit into the scheme of things.

Continued agitation often works to grind down the credibility of current leadership and open the way for newer and often more militant leadership.

After that the process runs along smoothly and reported in the *DMN*, Feb. 13, 2010, article, “Crowd feels pride, relief after Chávez vote,” when city council voted unanimously to rename South Central Expressway to César Chávez Boulevard.⁹⁴

DMN April 10, 2010 article, “Signs go up for Chávez Boulevard,” reports a city hall event unveiling one of the signs that will go up on César Chávez Blvd. The article opens up referring to, “more than two years of wrangling and racially charged votes.” The event is reported as a happy ending to racial conflict rather than a series of defeats and the Hispanic community getting a consolation prize. The unveiling had Salazar and Leppert together at the unveiling of the signs. The article reported that Leppert said that the renaming was a sign of the city coming together and quoted him declaring, “The reality of it is, the strength of our city is we engage and we include everybody.”

The article concludes that, “though it was a small victory,” it was a recognition of the Dallas Hispanic Community “whose growing numbers and political influence are impossible to deny.” However, the events of the last few years showed that it was quite easy to deny the influence of the Hispanic community in Dallas and hand them a “small victory.”

Salazar who in the end had to go along with this show with Leppert, who had defeated all his efforts, was left, being quoted in the final sentence, “We don’t see it as an ending. We see it as a beginning.”⁹⁵

Despite all the talk by Salazar about the large percentage of Hispanic voters, the battle over Chávez street renaming showed that in the demographic that really counts in Dallas politics, the percentage of wealth, Hispanics counted for very little.

NELSON MANDELA BOULEVARD: THE FAILED ATTEMPT

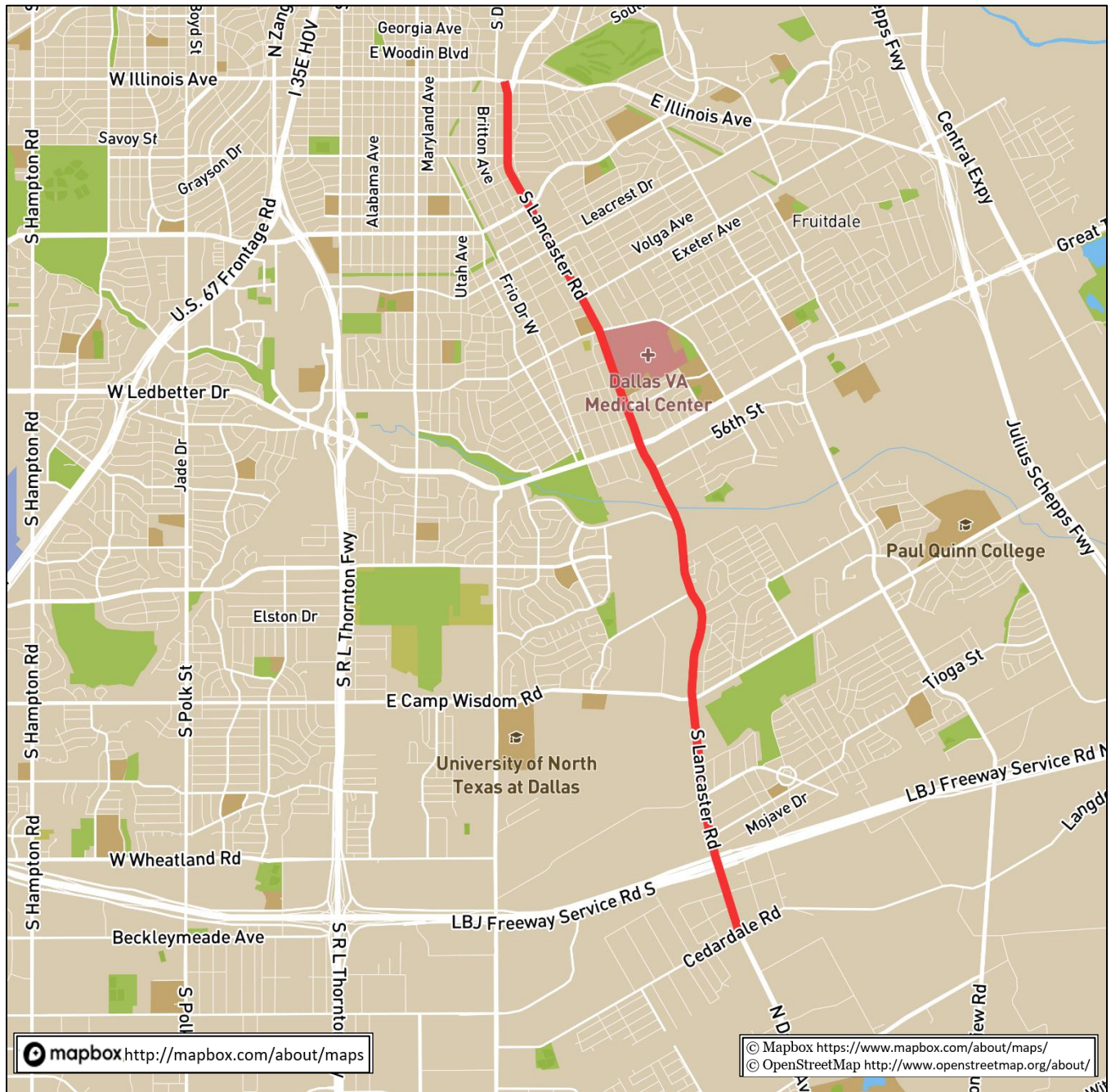
The next attempt to get a street named after a civil rights leader was the short lived effort of city council member Dwaine Caraway to get Lancaster Road named after South African Nelson Mandela.

The effort is first mentioned in the *DMN* in an April 9, 2014 column, “In push to rename Lancaster Road for Nelson Mandela, let’s remember Dallas’ own history,” by Rudolph Bush. He praises Mandela, but says, “But my instinct is to be protective of our own history, of Dallas’ history, first, before we give ourselves over to the history of the wider world.” How this renaming damages local history is not made clear. It is the setting up of a false opposition. The

⁹⁴ Olivera, Mercedes, “Crowd feels pride, relief after Chávez street vote,” *DMN*, 2/13/2010, pp. B06. Note the database has Olivera’s name misspelled “Olivers.”

⁹⁵ Bush, Rudolph, “Signs go up for Chávez Boulevard,” *DMN*, 4/10/2010, pp. B02.

name Lancaster he states is “named in a more practical time” because it is the road to Lancaster.



Proposed Nelson Mandela Street in **Red**.

Actually in the “practical time” that Bush refers to many streets were named after individuals and there were just a few that were named after their destination such as McKinney. Streets have been named after people since the beginning of Dallas history. Also, streets from very early on in Dallas have been named after other places outside Dallas, outside Texas, and

outside the United States. Lancaster itself derives from Lancaster, England. This is a false dichotomy in history set up by Bush.

How exactly would the history of Dallas be damaged by the name change isn't explained. Would volumes of the histories of Dallas by John H. Cochran, Philip Lindsley, and John Henry Brown suddenly spontaneously crumble to dust? Perhaps the 7th floor of the Dallas Public Library would be swept by fire.

The nonsensical argument of history being erased used so frequently during the debates about the removal of Confederate monuments were popularized in the debates over renaming streets for civil rights heroes. It should not be surprising since both efforts were about preserving a white racialized landscape.

We are told that Lancaster was settled in 1844 by Roderick Rawlins, but not that he was a Confederate. What Bush doesn't say is that Roderick Alexander Rawlings served in the Confederate Sixth Texas Cavalry and later was elected a Captain.⁹⁶ Bush states that it has been an element of the "city's identity for generations," and "Our history is precious." He ends stating that Mandela "deserves our recognition," but cautions that Dallas needs to be careful "about turning over your own past."⁹⁷

As in past campaigns against street renaming, the opposition praises the individual for whom it is proposed to rename the street, and at the same time advancing one reason or another why a specific street can't be renamed.

The real outrage in Bush's editorials is his willful ignoring of history, his insurances on being oblivious to history, ahistorical, and his clever use of nostalgia.

Why does Dallas not have many streets with indigenous names, African names, and Spanish names? Why is Lancaster named after Lancaster, Kentucky which was very likely ultimately named after the city of Lancaster? If your answer is that Rawlins was from Lancaster, Kentucky you are not really critically understanding of history. Why are there no cities named after African cities in Dallas County. Why are not streets with African names, Spanish names, and Indigenous names common on the landscape?

Where do the names on the landscape come from? Where do the names of the cities come from? Think of what the landscape might look like had there been a different history, had African Americans not come to Dallas via slavery and had not been under a white supremacist regime since the Civil War. If they had been African American real estate developers, prominent business owners, mayors and elected officials, what would the names of our streets look like? There would likely be a Mwanajuma Avenue, a Khamisis Street, an Okonkwo Boulevard, and a Biobaku Road. Perhaps my Microsoft Word would not be flagging these names as misspellings.

⁹⁶ From the entry for Roderick Alexander Rawlings, "Memorial and Biographical History of Dallas County, Texas," The Lewis Publishing Company, Chicago, 1892, pp. 476-478, Confederate service is on pp. 478. This book is online at www.archive.org.

⁹⁷ Bush, Rudolph, "In push to rename Lancaster Road for Nelson Mandela, let's remember Dallas' own history," *DMN*, 4/9/2014, online in The Blogs, but retrieved from Newsbank, May 30, 2018.

Perhaps Lancaster would have been Benin, because it was named after Benin, South Carolina, which was ultimately after Benin in Nigeria from because some landowner immigrated from there, Benin, Nigeria, rather than kidnapped and sent to South Carolina as a slave.

There would be no effort to name cities after civil rights leaders that we now name streets after because they never would have been needed.

The landscape could have had many Native American names since they weren't run off by a campaign of relentless violence.

But African Americans did come via slavery and were brutally suppressed during Reconstruction and kept down by a white supremacist regime which is only in abeyance and partial retreat today because of federal court rulings. A regime which retains its Confederate monuments.

The racialized landscape of Dallas street names is one in which African Americans only exist on a few streets. It is a landscape of street names in which by implication African Americans are aliens.

Non-white communities in Dallas ask for tiny slices of the racialized landscape and they are vigorously oppose. It should tell the reader what type of city Dallas is.

Max Goldblatt, advocated not changing any street name older than ten years old. Perhaps that proposal needs to be inverted and every street name over ten years old at the time of his proposal in 1984 should be re-examined for renaming.

Rudolph Bush, as the footnotes in this paper show, had done a great deal of the reporting on the previously recounted street name struggles in this paper.

Another commentary, by Jim Mitchell, African American editorial writer for the *DMN*, was written as a memo to Dwaine Caraway, was published in the *DMN* blog online, July 22, 2014. In this blog the writer says that it was the "greatest thrill" in the writer's life to have met Nelson Mandela at his home in South Africa. The writer praises Mandela. The author opposes naming Lancaster road after Mandela because, "What made Mandela special is his universality. It inspired people and deeds." The writer states that the writer has grown tired of changing names to honor people. What exactly is tiresome is not explained.

The writer says that the writer isn't proud of what happens on Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.'s and that it "tends to identify that as the black neighborhood," which the writer asserts works against, "the universality of King's life and setting up borders." The writer asserts that Mandela would not be proud of such a street.

It is true that a street named after an African American is often segregated into a depressed area. However, the solution could be seen as naming a street not segregated in a depressed area, but Mitchell isn't looking for where a street can be named after Mandela but instead is looking for a rationale as to how this particular street renaming proposal can be shut down.

If the writer was really concerned about the street location being segregated, a proposal could be made to change the name of Illinois or what would be really wonderful Riverfront Blvd.

The writer then suggests, “A true sign of honor,” such as an endowed chair in civil rights or scholarships. This is suggested as lasting for a long time, as opposed to streets which the writer states “crumble” and “fade with time.”⁹⁸

Why a street would be competitive with doing any of these other activities why it must be a choice between the two activities or that doing one prevents another activity, is not explained.

What is ignored is that streets are experienced by persons from all walks of life who are driving past or on the street or look at a map or hear of it reported in the news as a topic of itself or about someone, some place on the street. Whereas an endowed chair is largely known by a small number of students in a department at the university at which it exists or by the persons who might be reading a chair holder’s papers in an academic journal or some speech at an academic conference. Even then it is usually academics themselves who are aware and concern themselves that so and so professor holds a specific endowed chair. Where the money for an endowed chair would come from is also a question.

It might be that centuries from now Mandela is a footnote in history, but the present need is to have people see Mandela on the landscape now as a means to advance anti-racist values to the public.

It argues against street renaming in a short piece with effusive praise for Mandela. This is similar to the Mercedes Olivera column during the battle to rename a street for Chávez in which she mentions that she had met César Chávez. This is the new tactic to prevent street renaming.

Jim Mitchell side-steps the whole issue of the racialized landscape by pushing the something else is better and refusing to understand any issue of naming the landscape.

Initially the plan for a Mandela Boulevard seems to be moving forward as reported in a July 24, 2014 *DMN* article, “Despite some objections, plan moves forward to rename Lancaster Road as Nelson Mandela Boulevard.” The article states that Scott Griggs and Tennell Atkins are supporting along with Dwaine Caraway are supporting this change. However, the article does describe an opposition which would ultimately defeat the plan. The City Plan Commission voted against it. In the article the Commission is reported to state that there was opposition by Oak Cliff property owners, and that only two people showed up and they were against the idea. Commissioner Bobby Abtahi states that “There does seem to be a lack of support, and it doesn’t seem that this was a groundswell in the community.”

The city did send 320 notices mailed to property owners, of which in reply there were 16 in opposition and 3 in support. Caraway stated that of the opposing many were persons who didn’t live in the area.

The journalist gives an opinion against street renaming, writing:

⁹⁸ Mitchell, Jim, “There are better ways to honor Nelson Mandela than renaming Lancaster Road,” *DMN*, The Blogs, 7/22/2014, from Newsbank, but it is also online, <https://www.dallasnews.com/opinion/opinion/2014/07/22/there-are-better-ways-to-honor-nelson-mandela-than-renaming-lancaster-road>, printed out 9/12/2018.

Name changes also tend to provide a hassle to local merchants and residents. Business owners might have to get new signs and stationary that reflect their new addresses, while longtime residents might have a harder time giving directions to visitors.

This last reason in the above quote, is a new one in arguing against street name changes. Would not anyone with however limited cognitive ability be able to just substitute “Mandela” where they would have said “Lancaster”? Or just say, “Lancaster is now called Mandela”?

Stanford Washington, a resident on Lancaster came up with a new argument not seen in previous renaming contests. She points out that most of the residents are elderly and that it would be difficult for them, “To change all the information at a time like this would be very difficult for a lot of people.” Though actually the only thing that is needed to be done, is flip a piece of correspondence and write a new address on the backside. The post office will deliver mail with the old address for some time.⁹⁹

The purpose of this is to make up an issue of Caraway being mean to old people.

These editorials and articles show fairly clearly what the *DMN* thinks of the idea, but more importantly it shows how arguments to retain the white landscape is largely a grasping for reasons to oppose the name change.

Jim Mitchell has a short, Aug. 13, 2014, item in the *DMN*, “Yes, there is a better way to honor Nelson Mandela.”

He starts the short item with “A couple of weeks ago, I wrote about how I thought there were better ways to honor Nelson Mandela than to rename Lancaster Road.” He explains that his blog post got the attention of Peter Ettenborough who has a company, KonectIDY, which is making a bracelet for a fundraiser a children’s hospital in South Africa. Ettenborough mailed a bracelet to Jim Mitchell knowing full well that it would be used to oppose renaming Lancaster Blvd. after Mandela. The hospital isn’t named but it is part of a

In it he states that he bought a bracelet as a part of an effort to raise money for a children’s hospital in South Africa. He describes the bracelets and what the colors on it mean, and reports that it has the words “Mandela’s wish” and “Legacy of Hope,” and that “All I can say it is really cool, and special. I’m wearing it now.”¹⁰⁰

Exactly why a person might not be able to buy a bracelet for a children’s hospital in South Africa and support changing Lancaster Road isn’t explained. Somehow supporting a change in the name of Lancaster Road isn’t supporting a children’s hospital in South Africa.

This is a common tactic in resisting change to the racialized landscape, always position the change as being against some other worthy project and try to get the advocates fooled into debating which of the two projects are more important. A street renaming project might be in

⁹⁹ Benning, Tom, “Despite some objections, plan moves forward to rename Lancaster Road as Nelson Mandela Boulevard,” *DMN*, 7/24/2014, The Blogs. Also, <https://www.dallasnews.com/news/dallas-city-hall/2014/07/24/despite-some-objections-plan-to-rename-lancaster-road-as-nelson-mandela-boulevard-moves-forward>, printed out 9/12/2018.

¹⁰⁰ Mitchell, Jim, “Yes, there is a better way to honor Nelson Mandela,” *DMN*

the future be made competitive to preventing cruelty to puppies, sick babies needing medicine, crying grandmothers needing help.

What also is happening here is that there is a total refusal to acknowledge the role of street names on the landscape. It should also be an indicator of who can qualify to be an editor at the *DMN*.

Though Mitchell is referring to a hospital in South Africa, he omits mentioning that hundreds and hundreds of places, including many streets, have been renamed in South Africa. XXx.

A Sept. 22, 2014 *DMN* article, “Dwayne Caraway says he has the votes on Dallas City Council to rename Lancaster Road for Nelson Mandela,” reports about an upcoming city council vote on renaming a road for Mandela.

Caraway will need the votes of three-quarters of city council to get Lancaster renamed. This is because the Dallas city code requires a three-quarters vote to overturn the City Plan Commission if they vote against it. This is a sort of backdoor method to have functionally at-large voting districts to protect the white landscape.

The article discusses the issues at the prior City Plan Commission meeting and vote. The position of commissioner Abtahi is repeated that there isn’t support for the name change.

Caraway confidently states that when he makes his case, he expects city council to pass it. Very importantly he also states, “But I am a little disappointed with some of the planning commissioners, especially those that portray themselves to be of African descent.”

The article reports that at an unnamed “Some at Dallas City Hall,” thought this would be “far from a sure thing,” since the street was so long and would affect many people. Speakers at the commission meeting were reported as claiming it was a “sheer logistical nightmare” because of the street’s length. How renaming a street would be a “nightmare” as opposed to the original naming, when there weren’t street poles isn’t explained.

What is interesting is that the article mentions that the Dallas VA Medical Center was on the street and the article states that it has “remained neutral, at least publically,” implying that maybe it was really against the name change.

Caraway argues that the street name change will help change to the street and improve conditions. He is confident that he has the votes, stating, “Now I am lobbying for the votes, and I do have the votes.”¹⁰¹

However, it seems that Caraway didn’t have the votes for the upcoming meeting. In Sept. 24, 2014 *DMN* article, “Private battles become public as Dallas City Council parks vote on Nelson Mandela Boulevard until November,” it is reported that the vote on the name change was postponed until Nov. 12, 2014. Caraway in the city hall meeting was very critical of Vonciel Jones Hill and Tennell Atkins, two African American city council members who Caraway is

¹⁰¹ Wilonsky, Robert, “Dwayne Caraway says he has the votes on Dallas City Council to rename Lancaster Road for Nelson Mandela,” *DMN*, 9/22/2014, also <https://www.dallasnews.com/news/dallas-city-hall/2014/09/22/dwayne-caraway-says-he-has-the-votes-on-city-council-to-rename-lancaster-road-for-nelson-mandela>, printed out 9/12/2018.

reported to have accused of “back-stabbing and betraying him by holding community meetings without his knowledge.” Caraway is reported as impersonating Hill’s “distinctive voice” in mocking her attempt to cancel his renaming proposal and instead name “the unbuilt and unfunded” proposed Trinity River toll road. (As of 9/12/2018 no such road has been built. It was cancelled in a 2017 vote by the city council.¹⁰²) Caraway is reported to have looked at Hill and Atkins and asked if the city council was, “going to continue to bullcorn the African-American community.”

Only one city council member, Carolyn Davis, supported Caraway’s proposal. She also recalled the “contentious battles” to name streets for Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X and asked that Caraway be supported.

From the article you can see that the Veterans Administration hospital was used to oppose the renaming of the street after Mandela. The article reports that most of the speakers were veterans and they gave a variety of arguments, such as the cost of the street name change in terms of streets signs etc., the cost to businesses of the stationary, checks. There was the claim that it was “being thrown down our throat.” Another tactic was to argue that it should be named for a veteran.

Hill focused on the topic of veterans to oppose the name change and is quoted in the article as saying:

I have a number of veterans who live in my district ... and I will not slap American veterans in the face by ignoring their wishes,” she said. “The veterans are not asking for a name change. What the veterans are saying is if you want to change the name – and we don’t – but if you want to change the name, at least honor an American veteran. That in no way dishonors Nelson Mandela. It simply says we recognize the American heroes, every one of them, who has fought, bled and died for this country.”¹⁰³

Why veterans should have the only say and an absolute say is not explained in the article. There is the assertion that a street can’t be named for anyone besides a veteran until every veteran who has died in service of the nation has a street. Given that American war dead are in the tens of thousands at least, this would preclude naming a street for anyone besides a war casualty. Also, given that usually United States war monuments remember the war dead, with lists of names on them, the idea that streets must be exclusively reserved for them is not the usual practice of remembering the war dead. It is an appeal to xenophobia also, of American veterans versus a foreign citizen. Hill’s arguments might not dishonor Mandela but it would preclude Mandela from being honored on any street anywhere in the United States.

Hill is using the presence of the Veterans Administration hospital on a street which happens to be on Lancaster Rd., to be a pretext to position Mandela Blvd. as being anti-Americans.

¹⁰² Wilonsky, Robert, “The Trinity River toll road is dead, and Dallas has Angela Hunt to thank for it,” *DMN*, 8/9/2017, <https://www.dallasnews.com/opinion/commentary/2017/08/09/trinity-river-toll-road-dead-dallas-angela-hunt-thank>, printed out 9/12/2018.

¹⁰³ Wilonsky, Robert, “Private Battles become public as Dallas City Council parks vote on Nelson Mandela Boulevard until November,” *DMN*, The Blogs, 9/24/2014. Though in the Newsbank database it isn’t available online.

The next day, Sept. 25, 2014, *DMN* article, “Caraway withdraws proposal to rename Lancaster for Mandela, subs name of legendary DISD coach Hollie instead,” reports that in response to veterans at the city council asking for the street to be named for an American veterans he had dropped the proposal to name Lancaster after Mandela and instead proposed that it be named after the late Raymond Hollie who was a veteran and a famous coach in the Dallas Independent School System (DISD). Hollie’s biography is detailed in the article.

Caraway said that the new name would support development of the area. The article explains that Mandela had been proposed by Caraway to inspire Hispanic and African American children, presumably Hollie would inspire them to get involved in sports and enlist in the military.

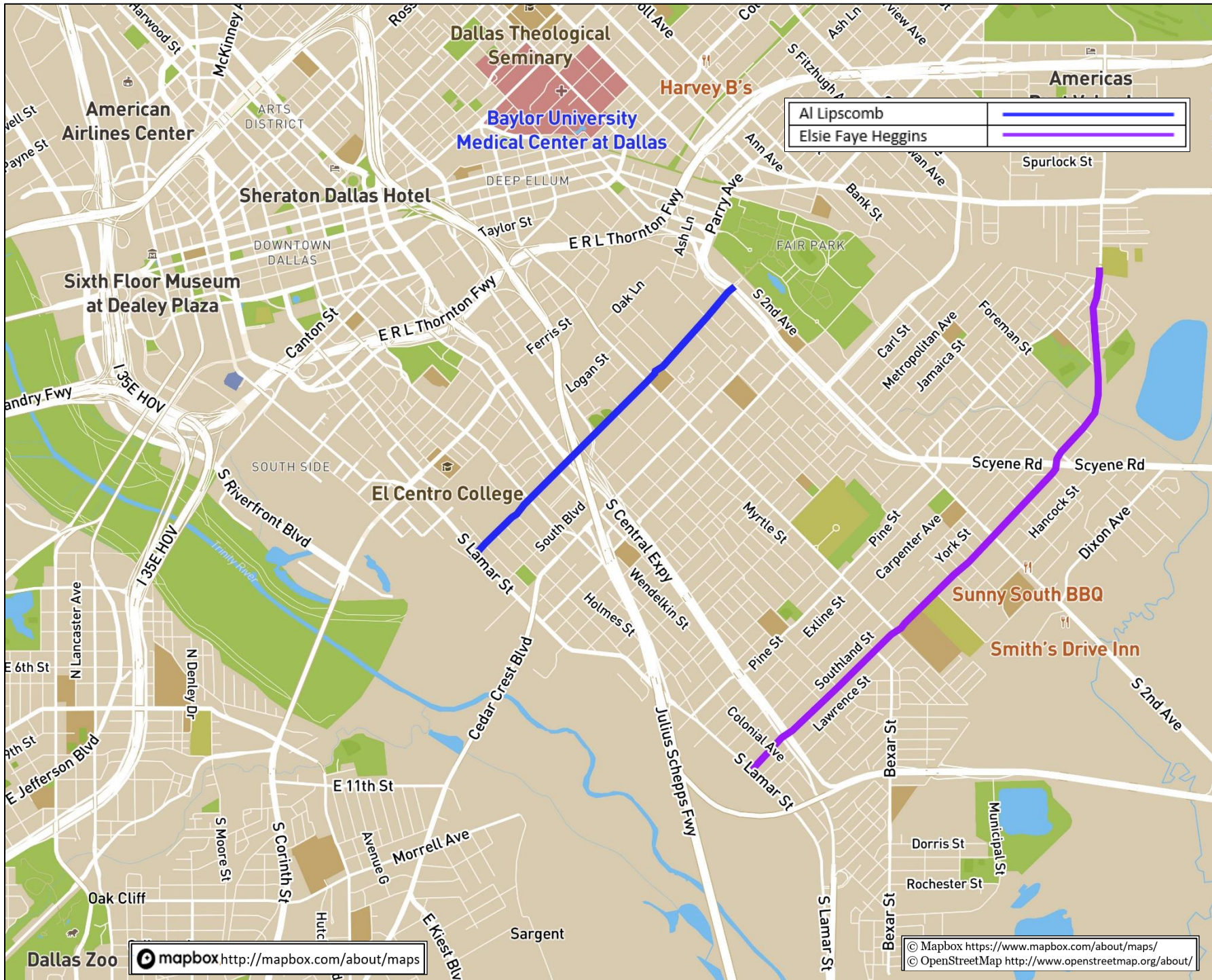
Caraway states that “After all of the comments and all of the shenanigans,” he cancelled it. Caraway also said, “Vonceil Jones Hill proposed naming the Trinity Parkway for Mandela. I will say to her, ‘Go for it.’ I don’t think it will ever happen.” The reporter asked for a clarification on whether he meant the Parkway or the naming and in response Caraway laughed.¹⁰⁴

Later there is a Nov. 12, 2014 *DMN* article, “Southern Dallas won’t have a Mandela Boulevard, but it might get a Hollie Road.” The article has a brief account of why the Mandela proposal failed and that Hollie was a veteran. In the new proposal Caraway has significantly shorted the section for which he wants to rename Lancaster to a segment from Illinois to Ledbetter. This would be 2.6 miles instead of the original 6 miles as reported. More significantly, it would be very much contained in an African American neighborhood. Dallas city code doesn’t want streets to have changing names along their length and so this proposal has an additional obstacle.¹⁰⁵

There isn’t any further reporting on renaming any road after Hollie in the *DMN*. Perhaps it was just a face saving gesture for Caraway.

¹⁰⁴ Wilonsky, Robert, “Caraway withdraws proposal to rename Lancaster for Mandela, subs name of legendary DISD coach Hollie instead, *DMN*, 9/25/14. This is not listed as being in the blog and no page number is given in this Newsbank item. It is online, <https://www.dallasnews.com/news/dallas/2014/09/25/dallas-council-member-pulls-proposal-to-rename-road-for-nelson-mandela>, printed out 9/13/2018.

¹⁰⁵ Benning, Tom, “Southern Dallas won’t have a Mandela Boulevard, but it might get a Hollie Road,” *DMN*, 11/12/2014. Newsbank. No page given. Also, <https://www.dallasnews.com/news/dallas-city-hall/2014/11/12/southern-dallas-wont-have-a-mandela-boulevard-but-it-might-get-a-hollie-road>, printed out 9/13/2018.



AL LIPSCOMB WAY & ELSIE FAYER HEGGINS

A Nov. 26, 2014 *DMN* blog posting, “At Dallas City Hall, a proposal to rename Grand Avenue in honor of Al Lipscomb,” reports that the City Plan Commission Subdivision Review Committee will be discussing the renaming of Grand Ave. to Al Lipscomb Way after city council member Al Lipscomb who died in June 2011. The article briefly points out that street renaming has been highly contentious in Dallas history listing a series of fights over street naming and that this one “involving a lengthy stretch of concrete and a divisive figure remembered as civil-rights leader and bribe-taker – isn’t likely to be any different.” The request was submitted by city council member Carolyn Davis.

Also, briefly mentioned is that the Subdivision Review committee had approved a proposal by Carolyn Davis to rename a part of Hatcher street to Elsie Faye Heggins.

What is a significant development in renaming streets, is plan commissioner Bobby Abtahi saying that he will be asking city staff and the chair of the City Plan Commission to look into having a system of honorary street names which is stated to be used in other large cities such as Chicago and New York.¹⁰⁶

At the meeting, reported in a Dec. 4, 2014 *DMN* article, the Planning Commission Subdivision Review Committee approved the proposal to rename after hearing arguments for and against it. Former city council member mentioned that he was an advocate to better the city. Another speaker referred to his federal bribery conviction and a jail term for selling heroin. One member of the committee, Paul Ridley, opposed it on the grounds that it was, “an inconvenience for property owners and drivers.”

The article also reports that the full City Planning Commission had approved renaming of Hatcher Street for Elsie Faye Heggins. Everyone speaking at the meeting seems to have had praise for Heggins. However, the Dallas Housing Authority had “sent in forms opposing the name change.” They claimed it would financially hurt them. One commission member, Paul Ridley voting against it.

The effort to have honorary street names is still ongoing, commission member Emma Rodgers wants to have honorary street names added to a street rather than renaming the street. The article reports that it is a “plea” by Rodgers “to stop trying to rename streets and instead begin creating honorary designations.”¹⁰⁷

The story of street renaming here splits into two somewhat separate stories. One for Heggins which had a bizarre twist, and one for Lipscomb which had considerable controversy.

¹⁰⁶ Wilonsky, Robert, “At Dallas City Hall, a proposal to rename Grand Avenue in honor of Al Lipscomb,” *DMN*, The Blogs, 11/26/2014, also <https://www.dallasnews.com/news/dallas-city-hall/2014/11/26/at-dallas-city-hall-a-proposal-to-rename-grand-avenue-in-honor-of-al-lipscomb>, printed out 9/13/2018.

¹⁰⁷ Finell, Elizabeth, “Street name changes for Al Lipscomb and Elsie Faye Heggins pass first planning steps,” *DMN*, 12/4/2014. Also, <https://www.dallasnews.com/news/dallas-city-hall/2014/12/04/committee-approves-first-step-of-changing-grand-avenue-to-al-lipscomb-way>, printed out 9/13/2014.

Shortly after the City Plan Commission approved renaming Hatcher for Heggins it is reported in a Jan. 14, 2015 *DMN* article, “Dallas City Council approves renaming Hatcher Street for Elsie Faye Heggins,” that the renaming is passed by the city council. The article reports, “The measure gained near-unanimous support, despite urgings of some members to delay it to consider honorary designation instead.” The two who asked for a delay to consider honorary designations were Sandy Greyson and Philip Kingston who praised Heggins as deserving of honor. Greyson further declared, “I don’t support street name changes, period.” She is quoted advocating a separate set of blades about the current sign with the name of the persons being honored. What impact this might be on persons trying to navigate their way through urban streets isn’t discussed in the article. It would likely be a handy argument to then block honorary signs.

This “honorary designation” idea is continuing to be a tactic to oppose the name change.

Dwaine Caraway pointed out that the city of Dallas had been renaming streets for decades, and indeed renaming goes back to the 19th century. As annexations occurred duplicate streets were eliminated.

The article reports that those who live and work along Hatcher are greatly opposed arguing that the address change, “would be a serious cost burden.” In future street renaming battles the people proposing this argument against street renaming should be asked specifics about exactly what these costs are versus their total gross revenue.

The article reports there were six votes to delay the renaming and in the end only Greyson opposed voted to oppose renaming Hatcher.¹⁰⁸ Greyson was the one vote against the removal of the Robert E. Lee statue from Oak Lawn Park in 2017.¹⁰⁹

Thus after fifteen years after the effort begins and over thirty years after she last held office and eighteen years after she dies Heggins finally gets a street. The author of this paper emphasizes that Heggins came close to oblivion.

The *DMN* editorial board at that time had a regular feature, “Hits and Misses.” The Jan. 16, 2015 “Hits and Misses” has as the lead item the renaming of Hatcher to Heggins. It asserts that “We City Hall watchers suffer from street-renaming fatigue,” expressing their lofty disdain for the struggle to have civil rights leaders reflected on the landscape. The renaming of Hatcher to Heggins is called a “gesture” to trivialize it. Heggins is praised but it is a lead in to recommend that the Dallas city hall to consider honorary streets “instead of inconveniencing residents with new street names, but this renaming was definitely worthwhile.”¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ Findell, Elizabeth, “Dallas City Council approves renaming Hatcher Street for Elsie Faye Heggins,” *DMN*, The Blogs, 1/14/2015. <https://www.dallasnews.com/news/dallas-city-hall/2015/01/14/dallas-city-council-approves-renaming-hatcher-street-for-elsie-faye-heggins>, printed out 9/13/2018.

¹⁰⁹ Hallman, Tristan, Wilonsky, Robert, *DMN*, “Court halts Robert E. Lee statue’s removal in Dallas after near-unanimous City Council vote,” 9/6/2017, <https://www.dallasnews.com/news/dallas-city-hall/2017/09/06/robert-e-lee-statue-dallas-removed-city-council-vote>, printed out 9/13/2018.

¹¹⁰ This isn’t in the Newsbank, it is online at <https://www.dallasnews.com/opinion/editorials/2015/01/16/editorial-hits-and-misses>, printed out 9/14/2018.

Which recent street renamings that weren't worthwhile isn't mentioned, but would be a question to ask the *DMN* when the opportunity presents itself.

The bizarre turn of events, was a Jan. 20, 2015, *DMN* article, "Hatcher/Heggins Street's original namesake an anti-KKK crusader?" by Sharon Grigsby. For those not familiar with Dallas history "Grigsby" is a name prominent in Dallas history. There were the Grigsby surveys which encompassed much of the land of early Dallas. I don't know if Sharon Grigsby is descended from these Grigsby, but if she is, it gives a special significance to her column.

Grigsby states, "We City Hall watchers suffer from street-naming fatigue, given the debates in recent years over these symbolic gestures." What are the symptoms of this type of "street-naming fatigue"? Is it like anemia or do you lie in bed exhausted? There is the reference to these renamings as "symbolic gestures," the use of the word "gesture" implies that the renamings are really not of significance.

It might be that the editorial staff of the *DMN* is exhausted from trying to maintain the existing regime and keep the racism in Dallas from manifesting itself. That would be a really tiring task.

However, the major point of this article is that Hatcher Street might have been named after W. Gregory Hatcher who was against the Ku Klux Klan in the 1920s. Notable is that Grigsby goes with this even though the research isn't finished. She does in a subsequent article retract the possibility.

The agenda and purpose of these street name research becomes clear. Grigsby states:

If, in fact, the street was named for Gregory Hatcher, one might say that we have removed the name of an attorney who was one of the courageous few in Dallas who publicly opposed the KKK.¹¹¹

Later in a follow up *DMN*, 1/29/2015 article Grigsby will say, "If in fact, the original 'Hatcher' was a crusader against the KKK, renaming, that street was, in effect, removing the name of one civil rights crusader to replace it with another."¹¹² This is incorrect. As a journalist it could be expected that a person might have a confused understanding history of the KKK in America, for a historian it would be either gross incompetence or dishonesty.

Further in the previous Jan. 20, 2015 article, Grigsby states that:

It's examples such as this that cause Payne and many other historians to regret moves to change the name of streets.

What is the other street or street for which this has happened? At this point on Jan. 20, 2015 there hasn't been a confirmation that this has even happened for Hatcher Street, but Grigsby is talking as if it is a reoccurring thing.

¹¹¹ Grigsby, Sharon, "Hatcher/Heggins Street's original namesake an anti-KKK crusader?" *Dallas Morning News, The: Blogs (TX)*, 20 Jan. 2015, Dallas Morning Views. *NewsBank*, Accessed 29 May 2018.

¹¹² Grigsby, Sharon, "Hatcher Street revisited – a farm family is likely namesake," *DMN*, 1/29/2015. Not able to find on www.dallasnews.com website.

Note that Payne, which would be Darwin Payne who has been the readily available historian in the past to oppose street name changes, is having “regret.” As for the “many other historians” who are they? I really doubt that it is any more than some members of the Dallas Historical Society regretting that the old reactionary regime is passing away.

It needs to be understood historically that many white supremacists have opposed the KKK because they undermine white supremacy by giving it a bad reputation and resulting in support for civil rights legislation. The White Citizens Council during the mid-20th century civil rights era condemned the Ku Klux Klan and urged members not to join.

The establishment in Texas was dead set against the Klan since it was a secret society which used violence and was a threat to law and order and the whole establishment. One obstacle in fighting the KKK was that the KKK of Reconstruction were considered ex-Confederate heroes by mainstream institutions. The lengthy July 3, 1921, *Dallas Morning News* article, “Reconstruction Period Brought about K.K.K.,” has the subtitle, “The Original K.K.K. Worked for Order,” implying the current KKK was not like the KKK of Reconstruction and was bad. The article is a lengthy defense of the KKK being justified during Reconstruction.¹¹³

Another article defending the Reconstruction KKK combined with an attack on the KKK of the 1920s, in the *DMN* was by Col. Charles L. Martin who was a member of the Ku Klux Klan during Reconstruction. Martin argued this in a *DMN* July 2, 1921 article, “K.K.K. Did Not Commit Offenses: No Bodily Harm Done,” denouncing the Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s in Dallas. The article claimed that the Reconstruction Klan was sympathetic towards “negroes” and “consequently no violence was ever used towards the negroes.” This imaginary and wholly ahistorical Ku Klux Klan is contrasted to the contemporary Klan to condemn it as being lawless.¹¹⁴

Whether Payne didn’t supply Grigsby a better understanding of the politics in 1920s Dallas of opposing the KKK or Grigsby decided not to include it in her article isn’t known. However, when a historian is needed to oppose a street renaming for a civil rights leader, Payne always seems to be available.

The other thing is that with all this researching by Grigsby and Payne, they didn’t come across the *DMN* article that W. Gregory Hatcher was, “the newly appointed commander of the Texas Division of the S.C.V.” (Sons of Confederate Veterans).¹¹⁵ This is a group which considered the KKK of Reconstructions great heroes. But that wouldn’t be really useful historical fact to raise alarm over street renaming and might lead people to wonder about other street names – and worse, maybe want to change them also.

¹¹³ Gregory, Hon. Thomas W., address before a joint meeting of the Arkansas and Texas Bar Associations in Texarkana, July 10, 1906 and reprinted in the *Dallas Morning News*, July 3, 1921, pp. 10.

¹¹⁴ Martin, Charles L., “K.K.K. Did Not Commit Offenses,” *Dallas Morning News*, 7/3/1921, page 9, Sunday edition. The article was announced in a *Dallas Morning News* ad on 7/2/1921, page 10 as an “appealing feature.”

¹¹⁵ “High Sons of Confederate Veteran Officials Coming,” *DMN*, 8/17/1918, pp. 1,4.

However, the purpose of this discussion of Hatcher Street becomes clear in the article. Grigsby feels “it’s safe to say,” that the *DMN* editorial board is willing to consider, “open to,” the idea of having “honorary street name designations.”

But it seems that the editorial board has already made a decision because Grigsby writes, “We hope the City Council ... will pursue this change as a wholesale policy,” in opposition of having it considered street by street.¹¹⁶

Nine days later, Sharon Grigsby has a new story about Hatcher Street, in which it is clear for what purpose she is bring up the story of Gregory Hatcher.

In the article we find that Gregory Hatcher was, “Payne’s first assessment, based on his research and knowledge of the neighborhood.” Grigsby then states:

If, in fact, the original “Hatcher” was a crusader against the KKK, renaming that street was, in effect, removing the name of one civil rights crusader to replace it with another’s.

As previously stated this might be an understandable error for a journalist unformed about the history of the KKK, but it is odd that Payne didn’t realize that an anti-KKK crusader in 1920s Dallas should not be confused with being a “civil rights crusader.”

John Slate, city archivist, was quoted making the much more reasonable assessment that the street was named after the Hatcher family who owned a farm in the area. Slate being more careful in his historical assessments and not incompetent, didn’t say it was definitely named after the farm family, but it was more likely than Gregory Hatcher.

Grigsby doesn’t apologize and say we rushed to judgment. She leaves standing the idea that maybe a street might be wrongly misnamed, but just that it didn’t happen this time.¹¹⁷

The *DMN*, had an April 10, 1941 obituary notice that M.C. Hatcher, died, had owned a farm in the South part of Dallas and that Hatcher Street was named after his father.¹¹⁸ Newton Hatcher, has a *DMN* obit, Dec. 25, 1905, stating that he has a home south of the city, died aged 71, and you can deduce that he is likely M.C. Hatcher’s father.¹¹⁹ You can also do some arithmetic and realize that that Newton Hatcher was 27 years old in 1861. What Newton Hatcher did during the Civil War the author of this paper doesn’t know, yet. The author of this paper was able to find out information about Hatcher Street and about W. Gregory Hatcher in about an hour.

¹¹⁶ Grigsby, Sharon, “Hatcher/Heggins Street’s original namesake an anti-KKK crusader?” 1/20/2015. Newsbank. Can’t find online.

¹¹⁷ Grigsby, Sharon, “Hatcher Street revisited – a farm is likely namesake,” *DMN*, 1/29/2015. Newsbank.

¹¹⁸ “M.C. Hatcher, 70, Produce Dealer, Dallas Native, Dies,” *DMN*, 4/10/1941, pp. 10.

¹¹⁹ “Death of Newton Hatcher,” *DMN*, 12/25/1905, pp. 10.

I think that in 2015 the Dallas establishment is realizing that the electorate that they depended on is passing away or has moved to the suburbs and that many are moving to Dallas who are not likely to feel committed to defending the white supremacist past of Dallas. Though the city code has been made and modified to prevent street renaming, but the three-quarters supermajority to rename streets for civil rights leaders is happening.

So there is this effort to have honorary street names as decoys and as a process to block street renaming by shunting it off to this side channel of honorary street names.

The struggle over renaming a street for Al Lipscomb was very different and faced strong opposition.

Rudolph Bush has a Jan. 9, 2015 *DMN* column, "I want to support Al Lipscomb way in Dallas. I can't." Bush writes:

Lipscomb represents something to his southern Dallas constituency that I will probably never really understand. He was a fighter in a time when it was dangerous to fight. He stood up when it was easy to back down. He was one of those intent on bending the system to justice.

Bush points out that there are great men in history but they have their flaws, listing "Kennedy, King, Malcolm, Johnson." (Bush wasn't more specific.) Bush then does a weighing of Lipscomb's virtues and faults.

Bush then lists Lipscomb's good and bad qualities, "a man of contradictions," which really reveal who Bush is.

Bush first states, "Yes, Lipscomb was a street fighting advocate for civil rights. He was often the loudest voice in a room." "Loudest" is the term used, not the most "steadfast" voice, or the most "forceful" voice, or the least likely to back down. We see what a "street fighting advocate" means for Bush, noisy minorities.

Bush then states that people who met him found a "gentile (sic) man" with a "sense of humor," but "His public persona was as a frothing race-baiter." An African American man standing up and fighting is a "frothing race-baiter" to Bush, we now know the meaning of "loudest" in Bush's description.

Bush lists the poor ending of Lipscomb's life and points out that often a militant activist when being given power, a seat at the table, enrich themselves illegally. Bush mentions that Lipscomb helped pass ordinances that aided the monopoly of the Yellow Cab Company, was convicted on bribery charges, but the charges were overturned.

Bush does acknowledge that there are others, who “aren’t naïve,” “know the score,” who still support Lipscomb, “to the point of sainthood.” Bush doesn’t report how these others evaluate Lipscomb and compare it to his weighing on his scale.

Bush states that he wants “to see the scale with clear eyes,” in reference to his weighing on a scale Lipscomb’s virtues and faults. However, if he sees Lipscomb as a “frothing race baiter,” rather than a steadfast fighter in a city whose racism only yields with federal court orders or intense fighting with tooth and claw or both. How clear are Bush’s eyes?

Bush concludes that he is against renaming Grand Ave. after Lipscomb.¹²⁰

Sharon Grigsby has a Jan. 15, 2015 *DMN* column, “‘Yes’ to Elsie Faye Heggins; ‘conflicted’ on Al Lipscomb Way,” which shows her hostility to changing names.

Grigsby asserts that renaming streets, “mostly distract from the significant issues the City Council has the power to affect,” and “But arguing over streets names makes for great theater,” in reference to Dwaine Caraway’s attempt to rename Lancaster Blvd. for Nelson Mandela. The motivations of those who seek to rename streets after civil rights leaders is disparaged. The importance of street names and the power of symbolism is dismissed.

Grigsby states that the proposals to rename streets after Elsie Faye Heggins and Al Lipscomb resulted “quite the conversation” at their editorial board meeting. Heggins got unanimous support from the board Grigsby reports and lists her accomplishments. Also, reported was that the editorial board was going to take each street renaming proposal separately.

Grigsby recounts the history of Lipscomb both the civil rights accomplishments and the trouble with the law. There is a lengthy glowing account of Heggins’s accomplishments.

Interestingly, Grigsby states that Dwaine Caraway points out that when naming decisions were being made, minority members “weren’t allowed a seat at the table.”

But she also uses her column to further attack street renaming. Because of the debate over the renaming a street for Cesar Chavez, she has “street-naming fatigue.” Also, these renamings are position as oppressive to others, Grigsby stating, “And most of us who are in the thick of the debate aren’t the ones actually affected by the outcome. People such as those 300 low-income families on Hatcher Street are.” So not only is street renaming oppressive, it oppresses the poor. Though exactly how is not stated. For low income people is checking the box on the front of a bill for address change and turning it over and writing the address change that difficult?

Grigsby reports John Fullinwider praise for Heggins:

¹²⁰ Bush, Rudolph, “I want to support Al Lipscomb Way in Dallas, I can’t,” *DMN*, 1/9/2015. Not finding an online version.

Despite her confrontational public image, Mrs. Heggins was actually “very soft-spoken” and had a “great heart” Mr. Fullinwider said.

This implies that Heggins strenuous efforts and struggles for civil rights, confronting racism, was a bad thing. Having a “great heart” is something that Heggins has “despite” being this fighter for civil rights. Despite means, “Without being affected by.” I would suggest that Heggins was willing to fight and confront racism because she had a “great heart,” not “despite” it. Similarly being “very soft-spoken” is “without being affected by” being a fighter. Did anyone think she just shouted all day? The word “despite” positions Heggins being a fighter for justice as being against her being a rational being.

Fullinwider’s description of Heggins comforting seems to serve a purpose of making her less scary to white people. Though it should be emphasized that Fullinwider’s presentation might have been selectively quoted by the DMN for the DMN to make Heggins seem less scary.

This report is dated prior to Grigsby columns on the historical origins of Hatcher Street.¹²¹

It doesn’t occur to either Bush or Grigsby that given that the Dallas establishment, including the *DMN*, has fought all the significant street renaming for nearly forty years on one pretext or another by one tactic or another that they have no credibility. That they and the white people in Dallas have taught minority communities that there will be always some ruse, rationalization, pretext or just plain inane babbling to deny any particular street renaming.

Al Lipscomb way was approved by the Dallas City council as reported in Feb. 11, 2015, *DMN* article, “Dallas City Council approves Al Lipscomb Way.” The vote was in favor 9 to 5. There was a petition against the name change, but city staff said it fell short of 20 percent which would have been necessary to require a three-quarters city council approval.

The article recounts Lipscomb’s civil rights history and his history with the courts.

At the city council meeting it was reported that there was heated arguments for and against. One business owner on Grand Ave. said “This is absolutely appalling – Grand Avenue is a historic name.” John Fullinwider is quoted, “By lifting up the cause of the most oppressed people, Al Lipscomb expanded freedoms of everyone in the city,” and “You don’t have to be perfect to move this country towards a more perfect union.”¹²²

What hasn’t happened in all these debates is to acknowledge a white landscape of street names as an output of white supremacy and the encoding the past white supremacist values onto the landscape. The banal white nationalism which defends this white landscape is not recognized and called out as such. The campaigns against renaming are not denounced as the campaigns of banal white nationalism. The fact that the city codes are rigged against renaming, in

¹²¹ Grigsby, Sharon, “‘Yes’ to Elsie Faye Heggins street; ‘conflicted’ on Al Lipscomb Way,” *DMN*, 1/15/2015.

¹²² Findell, Elizabeth, “Dallas City Council approves Al Lipscomb Way,” *DMN*, 2/11/2015.

violation of the intent of the federal court decision for single-districts is not recognized, but are instead seen as objective neutral statues is not recognized.

So future attempts at renaming will encounter all the obstacles faced in the past and there will be new tactics employed, such as the honorary street name and they will go forward blind, and be undercut and beaten down and most likely be defeated.

SUMMARY

There are multiple lessons to be learned from this experience. Some are obvious, endless rationalizations are just thrown up to block naming streets after African Americans. The *Dallas Morning News* reveals itself to be a defender of the white status quo which should surprise no one with intelligence.

There are other lessons to be learned from this historical record. One is that the white landscape will be defended intensely. The street names are the prizes of manifest destiny and the white supremacist history of America and losing them represents losing a white man's land.

Another lesson is the near total lack of alliances in street naming between minority communities in the fight for street renaming.

One important lesson is that streets named after civil rights leaders are segregated into minority communities and seen of value only to minority communities and where the general public, in particular the white public won't see them. This needs to be considered in conjunction in the repeated claims that a street named after a civil rights leader might frighten people away from an area, or frighten people away, or hurt real estate values. It is always alleged that some unnamed others will perceive the area or street negatively but not the speaker expressing the concern that others will see the street negatively.

This leads to two thoughts. One these people claiming a negative impact for the street name change are testifying that the general white public is racist. This is the basis for their claim and it isn't challenged in any of the debates or discussed at all. When the assertion is made it is just accepted. The second thought is that for that reason, the fact that the general white public or at least a significant portion of the white public perceives a street named after a civil rights leader as negative, there needs to be streets with minority identities where white people will experience them frequently or daily basis. The white public needs see in the street names that Africans, Hispanics, and other minorities are part of the life of the land. Minority youths would benefit by seeing minority identities in the general landscape and not ghettoized into minority neighborhoods. It would be beneficial to all races and peoples to see that they are part of the life of the land.

The proposal of Dwayne Caraway to rename Lancaster after Nelson Mandela is a good proposal. However, it might do much more good if a major street in Preston Hollow, the neighborhood of elite white people in Dallas was renamed after Nelson Mandela. It might do

the students of St. Mark's School of Dallas and the residents of Highland Park and University Park to see a Nelson Mandela Road everyday instead of Preston Road. Or perhaps Royal Lane named after Royal Ferris can be named. Perhaps Park Lane that goes past Kelcy Warren's house, the person who paid over a million dollars for the Robert E. Lee statue that was in Turtle Creek Park, should be renamed after Nelson Mandela.

Another consideration comes to mind. For streets named after Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King or Malcolm X, there will be a recognition for generations to come that these were an African or African Americans fighting against white supremacy. But for streets named after Elsie Faye Heggins and J.B. Jackson and others, probably even now these names are largely forgotten and in several generations likely to be known to be named after African Americans by those whose special interest is in Dallas history. To the general public they will just be names without meaning.

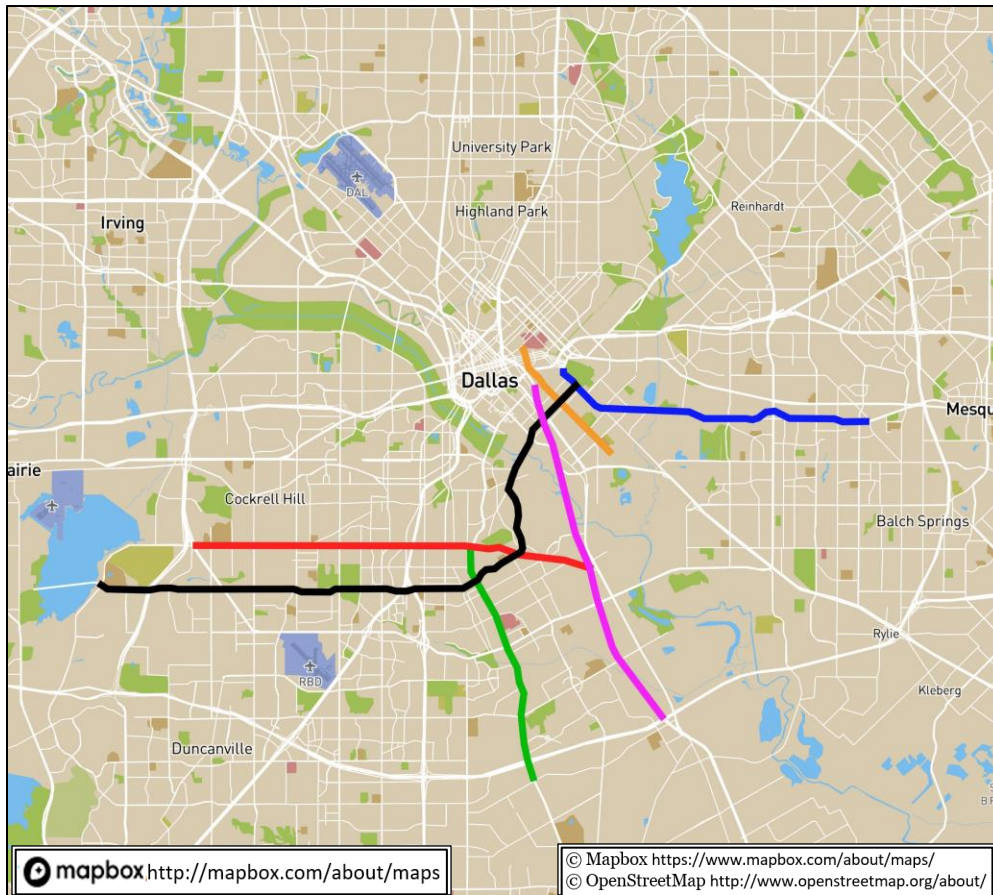
This is a legacy of slavery in that Africans were stripped of their names and culture in being transported to America as slaves. Even if a city or street is named after an African American, Africa isn't on the landscape. Ask people who George L. Allen might be and I doubt many will now that he was an African American leader. In a hundred years people that know that Mrs. Baird bake bread will speculate that perhaps Elsie Faye Heggins made jams or some food product. For lesser known African Americans it is necessarily that something be done so that their names on street signs are seen as African American. Some symbols or sign in the street name sign or some other method needs to be done to achieve this.

As for street renaming as an achievable goal the biggest barrier is a mentality of defeatism and the belief that little can be done, but also a failure to understand why street names are important, why the names on the landscape are important, and what messages they send.

When it is mentioned that maybe 101 street names should be changed it is seen as a wild dream. But this is due to the lack of imagination. These names are not bolted onto the landscape. We don't think of landscape reparations. We don't imagine what it would be like to be living in a city where we frequently and commonly see racial minorities visible on the landscape. We don't see the racialized landscape except in its most obvious forms such as Confederate statues.

For the future we need those who dream and can imagine the deracialized landscape and only see obstacles and not impossibilities.

EPILOGUE A VISION AND THE REALITY



The top map was the dreams of Elsie Faye Heggins, Marvin Crenshaw and Dwaine Caraway. Malcolm X is in **Red**, Martin Luther King in **Black**, Nelson Mandela in **Green**, Frederick Douglass in **Blue**, Ralph Bunche in **Magenta**, and Heggins' Malcom X in **Orange**.

The streets run through Dallas at large and these names will be part of the everyday experience of Dallas persons of all races.

The bottom map is the reality. There is no Nelson Mandela street. The streets are contained in the then African American community. As that district gentrifies it will be interesting to see if any of the names will be retained.

Al Lipscomb is in **Blue**, Elsie Faye Heggins in **Purple**, JB Jackson in **Magenta**, Martin Luther King is in **Black** and though not visible since it is one block long is Maurine Bailey in **Light Blue**.

