



City of Chicago



SO2019-8539

Office of the City Clerk

Document Tracking Sheet

Meeting Date:	11/13/2019
Sponsor(s):	Ervin (28)
Type:	Ordinance
Title:	Honorary street designation as "Reverend Homer Gardner Way"
Committee(s) Assignment:	Committee on Transportation and Public Way

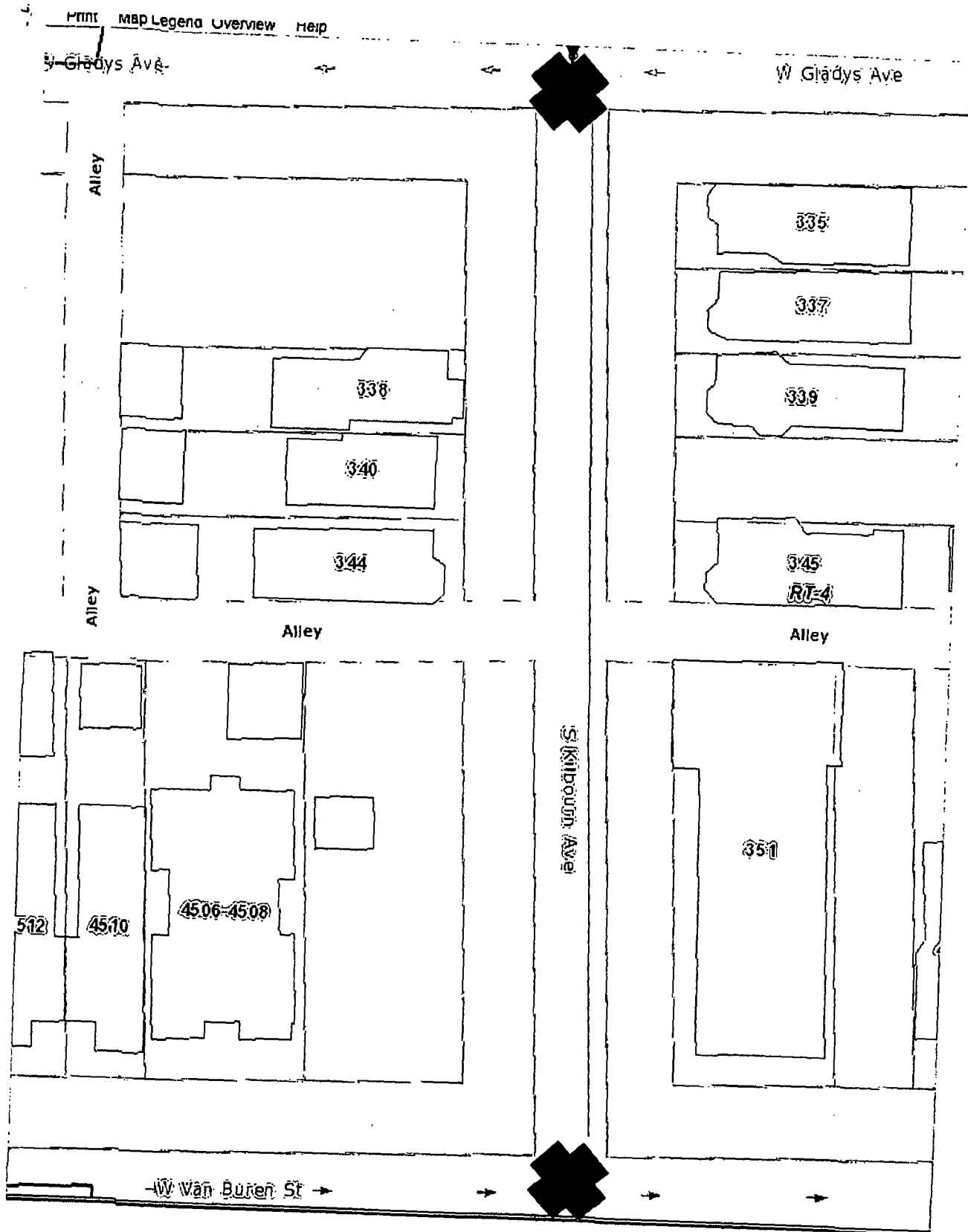
BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHICAGO;

SECTION 1. Pursuant to an ordinance heretofore passed by the City Council which allows erection of honorary street-name signs, the Commissioner of Transportation shall take the necessary action for standardization of South Kilbourn Avenue, between West Gladys Avenue and West Van Buren Street as "Reverend Homer Gardner Way".

SECTION 2. This ordinance shall take effect upon its passage and publication.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JCE', written over a horizontal line.

**Jason C. Ervin
Alderman, 28th Ward**



S. Kilbourn Ave, between W. Gladys Ave and W. Van Buren St

Mr. Jason Ervin, 28th Ward Alderman

2622 West Jackson Boulevard, Suite 200

Chicago, Illinois 60612

Alderman Ervin,

In this life, only a very few people are worthy of the honor of having the street on which they worked and served memorialized. I present the name Rev. Homer Gardner as such a person and the corner of Kilbourn Street and Van Buren Avenue, in Chicago's 28th Ward, as such a street.

The Sun Rise Missionary Baptist church moved to this corner in 1969. The late Rev. A. T. Tilly was our pastor and Homer Gardner was on our Deacon Board at the time. A few years later, Homer was elected Chairman of the Deacon Board. In 1978, Homer was called to the ministry and a year later, he was elected pastor of our congregation. Rev. Gardner served as our pastor from then until 2017, at which time he resigned due to illness. Even at the time of his death in March 2019, he was serving as our Pastor, Emeritus.

In each of these positions Rev. Gardner worked inside and outside of the four walls on Kilbourn and Van Buren. Under his leadership, the church served free meals to the community; held back to school rallies for the children of the area at which food was served and school supplies were distributed; a tutoring program was operated and children from the community attended; a boys basketball team earned trophies; substance abuse and gang and domestic violence prevention seminars were given; community health screenings for diabetes, HIV and hypertension were held; healthy eating and cooking classes were given; a computer lab was opened and training was offered to the community; clothing, coats and boots were donated to the community. Residents from the Men's Habilitative Services shelter were invited to our events.

As you are probably aware, Kilbourn and Van Buren is along the path of the "heroin highway" and has had problems with open corner drug sales. We at Sun Rise have made it a goal to minimize such activity on our corner using "in yo' face" confrontation with God and Rev. Gardner in front. We marched, sang and prayed on the corners to send a message that "We were there and we weren't going nowhere!" This was one corner that they would not take over. We walked the area picking up debris and clearing brush. The drug dealers watched from the hallways. Unfortunately, the next week it needed to be done again....so we did it again; and again, and again.

For fifty years, at our current location, Rev. Homer Gardner was an anchor for our church and its community and he served knowing that all lives mattered. For these reasons, I am submitting his name for consideration for the posthumous honor of a street sign designating Kilbourn and Van Buren, as Rev. Homer Gardner Way.

Please contact me, as indicated above, if further information or action is needed from Sun Rise M.B. Church.

Sincerely,

Rev. Anthony K. Jones, Sr.

Pastor, Sun Rise M.B. Church