



Office of the City Clerk

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Legislation Text

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Committee on Transportation and Public Way
City Council December 15, 2021

SUBSTITUTE ORDINANCE

The renaming of Woodard Plaza as Solidarity Triangle WHEREAS, the most important function of public space is to build community; and

WHEREAS, it is with this value in mind that Avondale community members are advocating for redesignating the open space provisionally referred to as "Woodard Plaza" with the name "Solidarity Triangle;" located at the intersection of Milwaukee, Kimball and Diversey Avenues at the entrance of Chicago's Avondale neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, it uniquely recognizes our aspirations to come together as a multicultural and multiethnic community while paying homage to this neighborhood's past as a sanctuary for refugees from Poland; and

WHEREAS, Milwaukee Avenue, which this plaza abuts, is the spine of Chicago's Northwest Side, and links it with Polonia Triangle, the onetime capital of Polish America; and

WHEREAS, the local motto of Avondale as "the neighborhood that built Chicago " is a reference to the strong working-class values which have long been a hallmark of this vicinity's residents; and

WHEREAS, while the ethnic origins of our population has shifted over time, the values of caring for family and neighbors has stayed constant; and

WHEREAS, the diverse customs of Latino, Slavic, African-American, Asian, Jewish, Roma, and Indigenous peoples, alongside many others, are all celebrated with designating this space as Solidarity Triangle, serving as the glue for a robust local tradition of coming together; and

WHEREAS, it was this spirit which gave rise to nearby Unity Park, a local green space created and sustained into the present by community organizing and designating this plaza as Solidarity Triangle will complement that heritage; and

WHEREAS, while the Polish presence in Avondale and Chicago's Polish Village traces back to the 19th century, this part of the city has played a historic role in welcoming Polish exiles of the Solidarnosc (Solidarity) movement in the 1980's; and

WHEREAS, with its roots in trade unionism, Solidarity created an independent political space where alternative institutions, activities, and discourses could develop and flourish; and

WHEREAS, members of Solidarity and its supporters, both in Poland and Chicago, played a crucial part in the revolutions which brought about a peaceful transfer of power throughout Eastern and Central Europe; and

WHEREAS, it was in this locale that an artistic and intellectual ferment burst forth at that time which would influence the future course of Polish culture around the globe; and

WHEREAS, the multilingual array of local residents came together in this space earlier this year to celebrate noted Polish singer Krzysztof Krawczyk who passed away in April as a victim of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic who was once a resident of Chicago's Polish Village (Polska Osada) in the heyday of Jackowo. A similar gathering of Chicagoans passed by this vicinity during the "White March" organized after the passing of Saint Pope John Paul II in 2005; therefore:

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

Section 1. The statements contained in the preamble hereof are hereby made part of this ordinance as if fully restated.

Section 2. A designation is hereby conferred upon the Plaza, which shall hereafter be referred to as "Solidarity Triangle."

Section 3. The Commissioner of Transportation shall prepare and install appropriate signs to mark the designation.

Carlos Ramirez-Rosa Alderman, 35th Ward

Section 4. This ordinance shall take full force and effect upon its passage and publication.