

**MEMPHIS AND SHELBY COUNTY OFFICE OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
LAND USE CONTROL BOARD STAFF REPORT #**

CASE NUMBER: SNC 11-802

L.U.C.B. MEETING: Jan. 12, 2011

PROPOSED STREET NAME: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue

LOCATION: Existing Linden Avenue beginning on the east side of Wagner Street and extending +/- 3700 feet to the west side of Danny Thomas Blvd.

COUNCIL DISTRICT: 6

SUPER DISTRICT: 8

APPLICANT: City of Memphis

REPRESENTATIVE: John Cameron, City Engineer and Josh Whitehead, Planning Director

REQUEST: Street Name Change from Linden Avenue to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue

OFFICE OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATION:

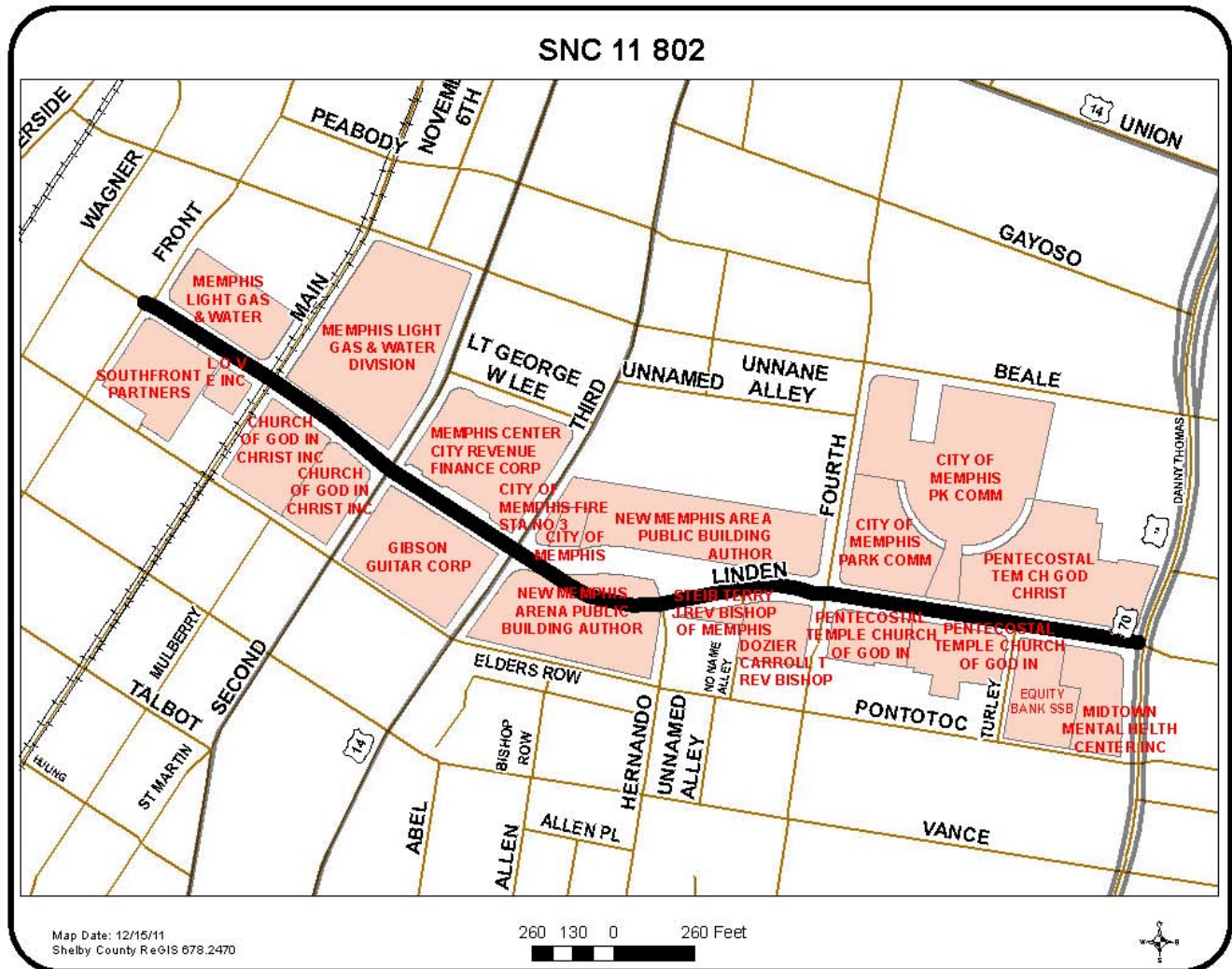
Approval

Conclusions

1. This street name change request is the result of City Council, which by resolution dated December 20, 2011, requested that the City Engineer submit an application to the Land Use Control Board.
2. The City of Memphis, the location of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., is one of a few large cities in America with no street honoring his name. Currently, only a stretch of interstate (Midtown I-240) bears his name.
3. None of the abutting property owners contain addresses along this stretch of Linden Avenue, so no property owners will need to change their mailing address.
4. Linden Avenue is not named after an individual; rather, its name honors Under the Linden Trees Blvd. in Berlin, over which the Brandenburg Gate was built.

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Ownership Map

STAFF ANALYSIS

The requested street name change is the result of a resolution approved by the Memphis City Council on December 20, 2011, requesting that the City Engineer file a street name change application with the Land Use Control Board. Under the Unified Development Code (Chapter 9.10), the Land Use Control Board has the authority to change the name of a street, but the City Council may initiate such applications (Section 9.3.3). The City Council resolution (attached) recommended changing the section of Linden Avenue from Front Street to Danny Thomas Blvd., but City Engineering is recommending the block between Wagner and Front at the west end of the segment also be included in the name change so one short block of Linden is not remaining between Wagner and Front. This will involve the renaming the westernmost approximately 3700 feet of Linden Avenue.

The Memphis City Council bases its resolution, in part, on the fact that there is no City street named in this City after Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Only a segment of Interstate 240 through Midtown and South Memphis currently bears his name. Council chose this segment of Linden due to its high profile nature near the FedEx Forum, its historical importance due to its proximity to Clayborn Temple and the fact that none of the abutting property owners contain Linden Avenue addresses. The last factor is important in that no businesses or residences will need to change their address due to this street name change request. Linden Avenue was not named after a family; rather, it was named after the boulevard, Unter den Linden (“Under the Linden Trees Blvd.”) in Berlin over which the Brandenburg Gate was built. Below are images of that street.



Unter den Linden, today



Unter den Linden at end of WWII.

RECOMMENDATION: Approval of the street name change.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Planning District: Downtown/Medical Center

Zoning Atlas Page: 2025/2030

DEPARTMENTAL COMMENTS:

The following comments were provided by agencies to which this application was referred:

City Engineer:

City Fire Division: No comment.

City Real Estate:

City/County Health Department: No comments by the Water Quality Branch & Septic Tank Program.

City Board of Education: No comment.

Construction Code Enforcement:

Memphis Light, Gas and Water:

We do not recommend the street name "Martin Luther King Jr Avenue" for the following reasons that go against our Street Name Guidelines:

(See page 3-5 of attached **Street Naming Guide for Memphis and Shelby County, Tennessee**)

Page 3- #1) This is a duplicate street name. (See attached Word Document showing "Martin Luther King Expressway")

Page 3- #5) The street name is more than 14 characters (including spaces) in length. It is actually 21 characters (including spaces).

Page 4- #8) Labels/street name exceeding two words in length are unacceptable. "Martin Luther King Jr" has 4 words.

Page 4- #12) Street names should not use the first and last name of a person nor should they use two proper names.

Page 4- #13) Using a street name linked to a business located on that street or using the full name of a person in commemoration should be avoided.

Page 4- #15) Punctuation in a street name is unacceptable. "Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue" is unacceptable.

Page 4- #16) Extensions of streets or street segments lying on the same alignment which could be expected to connect should continue the same name. There will be Linden Av to the West of Front St and to the East of Danny Thomas BL. This is unacceptable according to the Street Name Guidelines.

Page 5- #20) The continuity of a single street name should be maintained throughout the entire length of a street to the fullest practical extent even if the street changes alignment.

AT&T/Bell South:

AT&T Tennessee has no comment.

Memphis Area Transit Authority (MATA):

OPD-Regional Services:

OPD-Plans Development:

Memphis Park Commission:

911 System:

Downtown Neighborhood Association:

This project is located on the east side of Danny Thomas and is outside the Downtown Neighborhood Association's boundaries. We have no comments to offer.

South Main Historic District Association:

New Pathways:

Center City Commission:

In 2001-2002, when the City negotiated with Gibson Guitar for the land that FedEx Forum now sits on, Linden Avenue between Front Street and Danny Thomas Blvd. was supposed to be named for Gibson. You might want to check City records to see if Gibson still has a "claim" to that?

There is one office building at 65 Linden (SE corner of Linden and Front) where several private businesses would be affected; however I did not see them on the notification list.

Since the proposed renamed section runs between Danny Thomas and Front, then it leaves one isolated block to the west between Front and Wagner as Linden. If they extended it to Wagner, the Candy Factory condos would be affected. Maybe they should change it from Danny Thomas to Wagner.