

Legislation Text

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Also naming Kingsessing Avenue between 61st Street and Cemetery Avenue “Paulette Rhone Place,” to honor the life and legacy of Ms. Paulette Rhone, founder and president of the Friends of Mount Moriah Cemetery.

WHEREAS, Paulette Rhone was born and raised in Philadelphia, where she graduated from Philadelphia High School for Girls before attending the University of Pittsburgh to study music. While in college, Paulette pursued her passion for music both inside and outside the classroom, singing regularly in a local jazz band and forming a gospel choir named All God’s Children; and

WHEREAS, Following her graduation from the University of Pittsburgh, Paulette earned an analyst position with the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Ms. Rhone worked at BLS for 24 years before retiring to spend more time with her loving family and to more fully dedicate herself to her true passion, volunteering in her community; and

WHEREAS, In addition to Paulette’s efforts to provide outreach and mentorship for homeless individuals, especially homeless women, in the City of Philadelphia, Ms. Rhone was the founder and president of the Friends of Mount Moriah Cemetery, an organization dedicated to the maintenance and beautification of Southwest Philadelphia’s historic Mount Moriah Cemetery; and

WHEREAS, The mission of the Friends of Mount Moriah was personal for Paulette, as her beloved husband Gilbert was interred in the cemetery in 1993. Telling friends that she could still feel Gilbert’s spirit when she visited Mount Moriah, Paulette quickly became an unofficial steward of the cemetery, which closed due to financial difficulties in 2011. Following the announcement of the cemetery’s closure, as maintenance waned and illegal dumping increased, Paulette founded the Friends of Mount Moriah with the mission of providing ongoing stewardship of the historic cemetery; and

WHEREAS, The Friends of Mount Moriah had a difficult task ahead: providing for the maintenance and beautification of a 380-acre parcel, much of which had become overgrown and blighted in recent years, all on a shoe-string budget. But Paulette met this challenge with perseverance and determination; and the belief that she would one day be able to join her husband Gilbert in the revitalized cemetery where she’d so long felt his presence; and

WHEREAS, Since the Friends of Mount Moriah was established, the organization has worked successfully to beautify countless acres through plantings and maintenance. The Friends have also worked with a team of architects to develop a strategic plan which envisions a revitalized Mount Moriah as a nature sanctuary and part of a green corridor through Southwest Philadelphia that connects Bartram’s Garden to the John Heinz Preserve; and

WHEREAS, Paulette Rhone was a relentless advocate for Mount Moriah Cemetery and for the surrounding Kingsessing neighborhood. Her vision will provide inspiration for her family, friends, and neighbors as they continue to carry out the work that she started. Soon, Paulette will join Gilbert in their final resting place: the revitalized Mount Moriah Cemetery that she worked so tirelessly to preserve; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That Kingsessing Avenue between 61st Street and Cemetery Avenue also be named "Paulette Rhone Place," to honor the life and legacy of Ms. Paulette Rhone, founder and president of the Friends of Mount Moriah Cemetery.