



Legislation Text

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Renaming the 2900 block of North 22nd Street “Ray Murphy Way” to honor Ray Murphy for his tireless service to the North 22nd Street Community.

WHEREAS, Ray Murphy was born June 5, 1945 in McBee, Chesterfield County, South Carolina to Nezzie and Elijah Murphy. He was one of 15 children. At age 12, three of Ray’s older brothers moved his parents and four siblings to Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, Ray Murphy graduated from Benjamin Franklin High School and served two years in the U.S. Army. He met his wife, Gigi, in 1962 and they married in 1976; and

WHEREAS, Ray always spoke about being the seventh son and believed he would always be successful. Having older brothers who were in business and being raised by parents who raised their children by God’s word and business principles, he worked towards becoming an entrepreneur. He initially worked at Boeing Aircraft, and while still there opened a small sandwich shop Beef & Weenies on North 25th Street. After a few years he moved on to open a shoe concession on North 22nd Street; and

WHEREAS, A young black man in his early 20s, when the opportunity to purchase Tommy’s Men’s Shop at 2917 N. 22nd Street became available, he immediately moved to pursue the challenge. With the financing assistance of the U.S. Small Business Administration and the encouragement of his mother, he went through the process and obtained a loan for this purchase. After successfully being approved for a loan, he closed the shoe concession and entered the retail clothing business; and

WHEREAS, By age 26 he had obtained a Dunn & Bradstreet Credit rating, which was not an easy feat for a small black business owner in 1975. He opened Tommy’s Men’s Shop, where he remained for 40 years helping his customers look their best. He helped many within the North 22nd Street corridor to open their businesses by lending advice, mentoring, and assisting with strategies to make their businesses successful. Concurrently, he began investing in real estate and restoring/rehabbing properties along the North 22nd Street corridor, all of which contributed to its viability and keeping it alive; and

WHEREAS, Being a high-energy person, he never stopped. He was a family man and very close to his wife, children, grandchildren, and siblings. He helped many, many families in the Community who had lost loved ones and needed a helping hand to dress them properly for their funeral services, never demanding a penny in payment for those in need. He truly believed in assisting others in need and he lived it; and

WHEREAS, After retiring from the retail clothing industry, he continued to mentor individuals who desired to start businesses, and began engaging more actively in his real estate development projects. Ray was never afraid to take risks when he had a vision of what the successful outcome could be. He was thick skinned, assertive, outer-directed, bold, persistent, and highly reactive. Being the Gemini that he was, he was also lighthearted and caring, and loved making people laugh; and

WHEREAS, Ray was a very active community member and long-time member of the North 22nd Street

Merchants Association. He was a recipient of many awards throughout his tenure on North 22nd Street, and even before that; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE PHILADELPHIA CITY COUNCIL hereby renames the 2900 block of North 22nd Street “Ray Murphy Way” to honor Ray Murphy for his tireless service to the North 22nd Street Community.