



## ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

**County Board Agenda Item  
Meeting of September 17, 2011**

**DATE:** September 9, 2011

**SUBJECT:** Renaming of Old Jefferson Davis Highway between Boundary Channel Drive and 12th Street South, effective April 1, 2012.

**C. M. RECOMMENDATION:**

Approve the renaming of Old Jefferson Davis Highway between Boundary Channel Drive and 12<sup>th</sup> Street South to “**South Clark Street,**” effective April 1, 2012.

**ISSUES:** To improve wayfinding for motorists and reduce the confusion between Jefferson Davis Highway (U.S. Route 1) and Old Jefferson Davis Highway, staff has reviewed the appropriateness of renaming Old Jefferson Davis Highway between Boundary Channel Drive and 12<sup>th</sup> Street South. The public review process for the renaming has identified two naming alternatives 1) South Clark Street and 2) Long Bridge Park Drive, which both have public support. South Clark Street has the broadest support, with the support of Transportation Commissioners, the Crystal City BID and the Economic Development Commission. The Long Bridge Design Advisory Committee supported renaming the roadway to Long Bridge Park Drive. In addition the Historic Affairs and Landmark Review Board recommend the name remain as is.

**SUMMARY:** Staff proposes to change the name of Old Jefferson Davis Highway (OJDH) between Boundary Channel Drive and 12th Street South to avoid confusion between Jefferson Davis Highway (U.S. Route 1) and Old Jefferson Davis Highway. The renaming is appropriate at this time because the County now owns the entire segment of OJDH right-of-way. The County is about to complete a major reconstruction of the roadway in conjunction with the County’s opening the Long Bridge Park. The State Code authorizes localities to name and rename streets. The proposed action is consistent with the County street naming and renaming process. Staff recommends renaming of the OJDH to South Clark Street. South Clark Street has the broadest community support and would be consistent with the County’s standard naming convention. Furthermore it would improve wayfinding within the Crystal City area.

County Manager:

*BMD/GA*

County Attorney:

*BAK*                      *GA*

**56.**

Staff: Robert Gibson, Department of Environmental Services

**BACKGROUND:** In February 2010, Arlington County acquired title to the Virginia Department of Transportation owned portion of OJDH. As a result Arlington now owns all of OJDH between Boundary Channel Drive and 12<sup>th</sup> Street South.

Roadway History: This section of roadway represents the only section of OJDH within Arlington County. The northern terminus of the road is at Boundary Channel Drive. At its southern terminus, at 12<sup>th</sup> Street South, the roadway continues as South Clark Street. South Clark Street currently operates as a one-way southbound roadway south of 12<sup>th</sup> Street South. However, the Crystal City Sector Plan calls for South Clark Street to ultimately operate as a two-way roadway to 26<sup>th</sup> Street South. The Crystal City Sector Plan shows the road as “Clark/Bell Street” from 12<sup>th</sup> Street South to 26<sup>th</sup> Street South, using Clark/Bell Street as a place holder for the name of the realigned street (see map on page 4).

A portion of the road has a history as far back as to 1809 when it was part of the Washington-Alexandria Turnpike (later becoming VA State Route 1) which ran from the southern terminus of the Long Bridge to Alexandria. The current roadway consists of a portion of the original right-of-way for U.S. Route 1 (segment 1), and additional right-of-way dedicated to Arlington County by various subdivision approvals in the early 1950s (segments 2 and 3) as shown in the photomap below.

In 1967, segment 1 of Old Jefferson Davis Highway was conveyed from the United States of America to the Commonwealth of Virginia, as recorded in Deed Book 1641, Page 366. On February 23, 2010, the Commonwealth of Virginia quitclaimed and transferred ownership of this right-of-way to Arlington County by a deed recorded in Deed Book 4345, Page 2612. Two additional segments were added to Old Jefferson Davis Highway with subdivisions approved in the early 1950s. Segment 2 was dedicated by a deed recorded in Deed Book 912, Page 366, on January 17, 1950. Segment 3 was dedicated by a deed recorded in Deed Book 1018, Page 112, on September 20, 1951. The Old Jefferson Davis Highway name was assigned to segment 1 when U.S. Route 1 was reconstructed as part of the Pentagon Roadway improvements during the 1940s. The reconstruction left a number of parcels in the area without access to the realigned U.S. Route 1, so segment 1 was maintained to provide access to U.S. Route 1. Later, when segments 2 and 3 were created, they were also named OJDH because they connected to segment 1.

Later the U.S. Route 1 and Interstate 395 interchange ramps were reconstructed again, and today the two roads are separated by grade and series of interchange ramps and bridges. This isolates OJDH, making it difficult and circuitous to get to OJDH from Jefferson Davis Highway.



**Old Jefferson Davis Highway between Boundary Channel Drive and 12<sup>th</sup> Street South**

**DISCUSSION:** A primary concern with maintaining the OJDH name is that it makes wayfinding difficult because it is easily confused with Jefferson Davis Highway (U.S. Route 1), and that there are no direct physical connections between the two roads. There is further confusion because currently south of 12<sup>th</sup> Street South, OJDH continues southbound as South Clark Street.

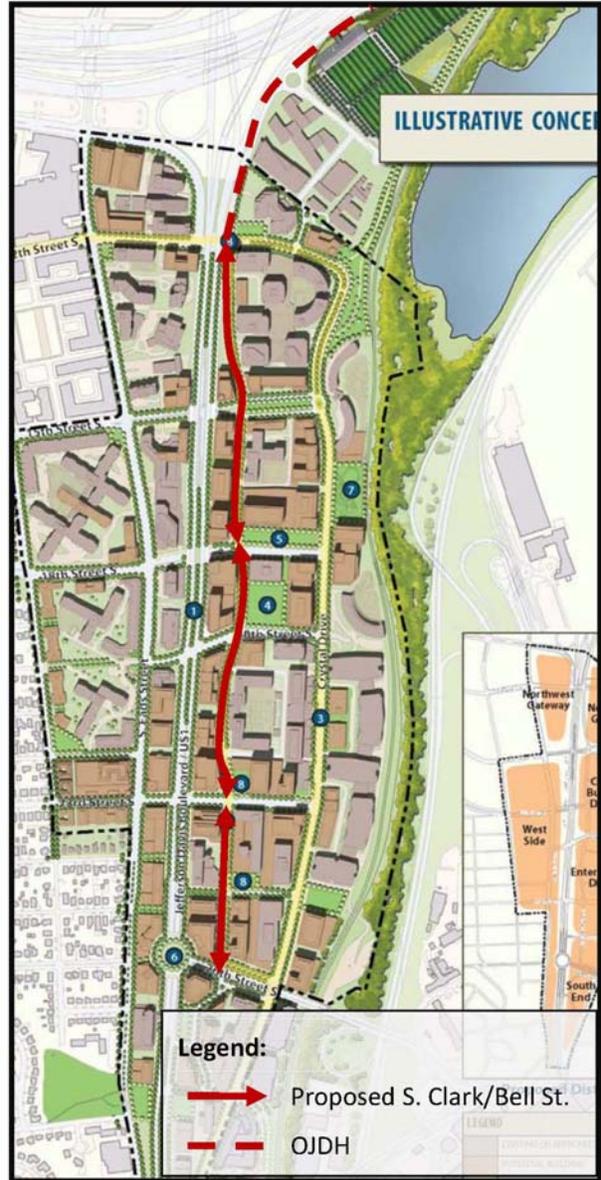
Staff anticipates that as the area redevelops, more motorists will become confused between OJDH and Jefferson Davis Highway. Renaming the road as South Clark Street would reduce this confusion with Jefferson Davis Highway (U.S. Route 1) making wayfinding for motorists easier.

The Crystal City Sector Plan calls for South Clark Street to be realigned and reconstructed as a two-way street between 26<sup>th</sup> Street South and 12<sup>th</sup> Street South (shown in the plan as Clark/Bell Street.) Renaming the OJDH to South Clark Street would maintain naming continuity from Boundary Channel Drive to 26<sup>th</sup> Street South. This would better link the area with Crystal City to the south, unifying the two developed areas and making wayfinding in the area easier. South Clark Street would also be consistent with Arlington’s standard numeric/alphabetic street naming convention, which Long Bridge Park Drive would not.

With the County's Phase 1 development of Long Bridge Park projected to be completed this fall and the OJDH roadway project scheduled for completion on early spring 2012, now is an appropriate time to consider the renaming of Old Jefferson Davis Highway.



Existing Southbound S. Clark St.



Proposed Two-Way S. Clark/Bell St.

Renaming Alternatives: Staff worked with the community to identify and evaluate the appropriateness of renaming the roadway to one of three possible alternatives. The names discussed included South Clark Street, Fort Runyon Drive and Long Bridge Park Drive.

South Clark Street was considered because it represents the most logical street name fitting Arlington County's standard street naming system. The name is also appropriate because South

Clark Street would be a logical extension from its southern terminus at 12<sup>th</sup> Street South. South Clark Street could be approved as a new street name because north of 12<sup>th</sup> Street South, there are no other South Clark Street segments within the County. Changing the name to South Clark Street would also help to better link the area between 12<sup>th</sup> Street South and Boundary Channel Drive with Crystal City, as South Clark Street is widely recognized as being part of Crystal City.

Long Bridge Park Drive was recommended by the Long Bridge Park Design Advisory Committee to help unify the roadway and the planned park. The park represents the most significant development planned for the area and a major public investment in the redeveloping area. The park is planned as a two phase project with multi-purpose fields, an aquatics facility and an esplanade which will link the park to Crystal City via a connection at 12<sup>th</sup> Street South to Crystal Drive. The first phase of the project is planned to be completed this fall with the opening of the multi-purpose fields and the esplanade. The second phase of the park, with the construction of the aquatics facility, is currently in the planning phase.

Staff also considered a naming alternative that would highlight some of the history in the area, and consulted the president of the Arlington Historical Society who suggested Fort Runyon Drive. Fort Runyon was one of the first forts constructed by the Union Army in Arlington at the onset of the Civil War. The largest fort constructed in Arlington during the war, Fort Runyon was built to protect the critical junction of the Washington-Alexandria Turnpike and the Columbia Turnpike. The fort was located approximately 5,000 feet south of the Long Bridge.

Public Process: In order to include key stakeholders in determining the appropriateness of renaming OJDH, staff worked with four County advisory bodies: the Economic Development Commission (EDC), the Long Bridge Park Design Advisory Committee (LBPDAC), the Historic Affairs and Landmark Review Board (HALRB) and the Transportation Commission (TC).

The Economic Development Commission was given a presentation on the issue at their July 12, 2011 meeting. The EDC expressed its support for the renaming of OJDH to **South Clark Street**. The EDC cited three reasons for its support:

1. The roadway directly connects to South Clark Street at 12<sup>th</sup> Street South.
2. South Clark Street conforms to the Arlington street naming system.
3. South Clark Street conforms to the existing Crystal City wayfinding signage system.

The Long Bridge Park Design Advisory Committee was given a presentation at its June 21, 2011 and July 19, 2011 meetings. The LBPDAC ranked **Long Bridge Park Drive** as the naming alternative with the highest support and South Clark Street with the lowest support. The reasons for the committee's preference include:

1. The name would help establish a unique sense of place for the area.
2. Directly associating the road with the new park's name would significantly help wayfinding to the park.
3. The name would help to establish the park as a unique resource for the whole county, not just Crystal City.

4. The name would be consistent with some of the early history of the area reflected in the park's name.

The Historic Affairs and Landmark Review Board (HALRB) heard this issue at its August 17, 2011 meeting. The HALRB recommended that the road name remain as **Old Jefferson Davis Highway**. HALRB did not feel that there was sufficient justification for a name change and that none of the proposed names matched the historical significance of Old Jefferson Davis Highway and its association with the original Washington-Alexandria Parkway (which ultimately became U.S. Route 1 and Jefferson Davis Highway) connecting Long Bridge to Alexandria.

Members of the Transportation Commission heard this issue on September 1, 2011. A quorum was not present and a vote was not taken. Three members expressed support for renaming the road to **South Clark Street**; and two members expressed support for Long Bridge Park Drive.

Staff received one letter from a citizen recommending that it is not appropriate to change the name of the road.

Staff also discussed the renaming of the road with the president of the Crystal City BID. The BID has expressed its support for renaming the roadway to **South Clark Street** to help to clarify some of the wayfinding issues the BID is actively working to address in the Crystal City area.

Impacts on Surrounding Sites: The name change would have limited impact on surrounding businesses since there is only one active business addressed on Old Jefferson Davis Highway. That business is the Public Storage facility at 399 Old Jefferson Davis Highway. The County also plans address Long Bridge Park on the renamed road. In addition, the proposed Monument View site plan (SP #400) may have an address with the new road name.

A new street name would trigger a street name change implementation process. The Department of Environmental Services and DPRCR have been working together throughout the renaming process to minimize the impact the renaming could have to the opening of Long Bridge Park.

Implementation: If the County Board renames OJDH, staff in DES will implement a six (6) month transition period to familiarize users of the roadway affected, as well as provide property owners and businesses fronting on OJDH time to process the necessary address changes to their signage, stationary, business cards, websites, and also inform their clients and customers of the address/street name change. Also, during the transition period, the roadway would be posted with street name signs bearing both the new name and existing names. At the end of the six months, only the new street name will appear on street signs along the affected roadway.

The six-month timeframe will also allow staff to notify County agencies that provide public services, the Post Office, utility companies, emergency response providers, the Police Department, mapping agencies, and the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) of the name change. VDOT will also need to change or add new directional signs on Route 1 and on Interstate 395, to reflect the removal of OJDH from their signs and to add the new street name.

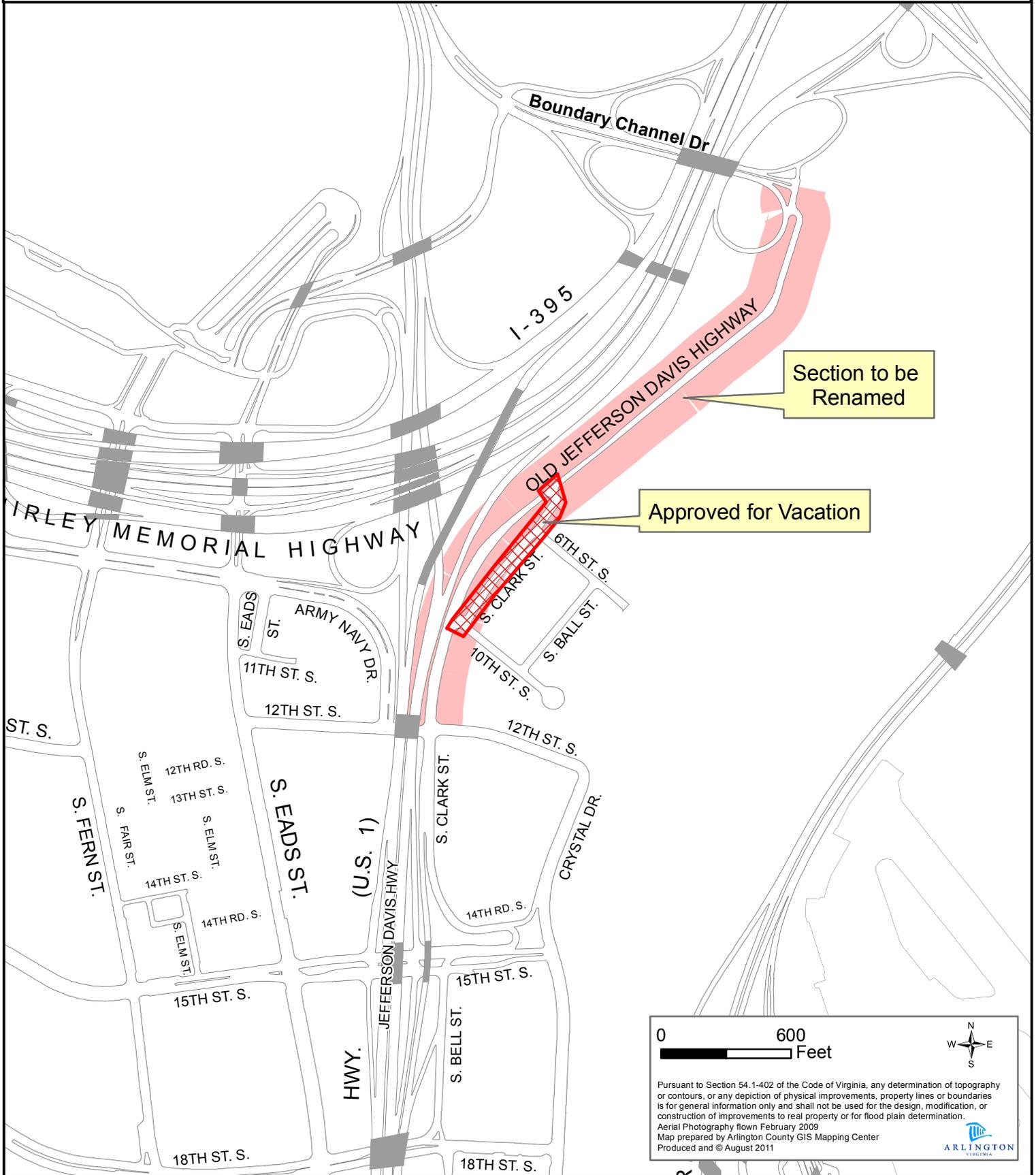
**FISCAL IMPACT:** The FY 2012 adopted budget includes funds for the changing and replacement of street signage. The costs associated with the renaming of the road are projected to be minimal. No additional funding is required.

**CONCLUSION:** Renaming OJDH to South Clark Street would improve wayfinding in the Crystal City area and eliminate any confusion with Jefferson Davis Highway (U.S. Route 1). The choice of South Clarks Street for the new name has the broadest community support, including the support of the Crystal City BID, the Economic Development Commission and a majority of the Transportation Commission members that heard the issue. By taking action now, the renaming would be coordinated with the opening of Long Bridge Park and the reconstruction of the roadbed. Renaming the roadway with a six (6) month transition period would have limited fiscal impacts and limited impacts on adjacent business. The transition period would provide time for the County and adjacent businesses to address any issues and implement the name change. Therefore staff recommends the renaming of Old Jefferson Davis Highway between Boundary Channel Drive and 12<sup>th</sup> Street South to “**South Clark Street,**” effective April 1, 2012.

# Vicinity Map

## Renaming of Old Jefferson Davis Highway

### Between 12th Street South & Boundary Channel Drive





JERRY NORRIS  
CHAIRMAN

ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

1100 NORTH GLEBE ROAD, #1500  
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22201  
(703) 228-0808 • FAX (703) 228-0805



August 30, 2011

The Honorable Christopher Zimmerman  
Chairman, Arlington County Board  
2100 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 300  
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Chairman Zimmerman:

At its recent meeting in July, the Economic Development Commission (EDC) received a presentation concerning the renaming of Old Jefferson Davis Highway between 12<sup>th</sup> Street South and Boundary Channel Drive. It is our understanding that the County Board will be considering this matter at its September 2011 hearing.

The EDC would like to express its consensus support for the name "South Clark Street" for the following reasons:

1. This section of the roadway directly connects to an existing street with that name;
2. South Clark Street conforms to the County street naming convention; and
3. South Clark Street conforms to the existing Crystal City wayfinding convention.

In addition, the EDC is appreciative of the proposed 6-month transition period for the street name change so that affected businesses may have time to modify their address-related materials.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Sincerely,

Jerry Norris  
Chair, Economic Development Commission

cc: Members, Arlington County Board  
Barbara Donnellan, Arlington County Manager  
Members, Arlington Economic Development Commission  
Robert Gibson, DES



LONG BRIDGE DESIGN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

2100 Clarendon Blvd. Suite 414 Arlington, VA 22201  
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August 10, 2011

The Honorable Christopher Zimmerman, Chairman  
Arlington County Board  
2100 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 300  
Arlington, VA 22201

Re: Renaming of Old Jefferson Davis Highway

Dear Mr. Zimmerman,

I write on behalf of the Long Bridge Park Design Advisory Committee (LBDPAC) to comment on the potential renaming of Old Jefferson Davis Highway (OJD).

The LBDPAC received a presentation from Department of Environmental Services (DES) staff at our June 21, 2011 meeting. At that time the LBDPAC was asked for our feedback on two potential new names for OJD -- South Clark Street and Fort Runyon Drive. During the meeting, LBDPAC members raised the possibility of renaming OJD to Long Bridge Park Drive. The Advisory Committee had a broad discussion and determined to take up the matter at our July 19, 2011 meeting in order to give our members time to think through the issues and options.

At the July 19, 2011 meeting the LBDPAC received another presentation from DES staff. This presentation provided additional information on Fort Runyon, in response to a request from the LBDPAC at the previous meeting, and clarified the process for determining a name for Old Jefferson Davis Highway. After an in-depth discussion, the LBDPAC determined its order of preference for the three possible new names for OJD.

Overwhelmingly, the LBDPAC concluded that our first choice for a new name for Old Jefferson Davis Highway is Long Bridge Park Drive. The Advisory Committee feels strongly that this name would establish a unique sense of place for an area that is being transformed. Furthermore, directly associating the road with the new park's name would significantly help in wayfinding to the new park and reinforce its importance as a new County destination. The name is also strongly linked to the area's history, given the proximity of the Long Bridge to OJD and the pre-freeway role of the road as the route to the bridges. The park itself was named Long Bridge Park to celebrate this connection. Several of the LBDPAC representatives for the Crystal City area also emphasized that the name of Long Bridge Park Drive would establish the park as a unique resource for the whole of Arlington County, not just a neighborhood park connected with Crystal City.



LONG BRIDGE DESIGN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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The LBDAC determined that its second choice is Fort Runyon Drive. This name, like Long Bridge, has an historical connection to the immediate area. However, this name does not create the same sense of place and prospective interest because the resource it commemorates has disappeared. In contrast, the Long Bridge crossing of the Potomac, first built two centuries ago, continues in everyday use as a primary Arlington gateway and connection between Virginia and the nation's capital. Moreover, the name Fort Runyon Drive fails to connect or associate the road with the adjacent park and provides little if any help in wayfinding from other parts of Arlington to the new park.

The Advisory Committee's third choice is South Clark Street. Several members believe it is important to emphasize that Long Bridge Park is not a Crystal City neighborhood park, but rather a community park for all of Arlington. Their feeling is that extending South Clark Street would connect the park too strongly with Crystal City and not create the same sense of place and distinction that Long Bridge Park Drive would provide.

The LBDAC greatly appreciates the opportunity to participate in the discussion of renaming Old Jefferson Davis Highway. If you or any of the other County Board members have any questions concerning the LBDAC's recommendations on this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tobin L. Smith".

Tobin L. Smith  
Chair  
Long Bridge Park Design Advisory Committee

cc: Barbara Donnellon, CMO  
Erik Beach, DPRCR  
Robert Gibson, DES  
Nancy Iacomini, HALRB  
William Gearhart, Transportation Commission



HISTORICAL AFFAIRS AND LANDMARK REVIEW BOARD

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August 23, 2011

Mr. Christopher Zimmerman, Chairman and  
Members of the County Board  
2100 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 300  
Arlington, Virginia 22201

Dear Mr. Zimmerman:

At our regular monthly public hearing on Wednesday, August 17, 2011, the Arlington County Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board (HALRB) discussed the proposal to rename Old Jefferson Davis Highway.

At the time of our meeting, the three new names under consideration were South Clark Street, Fort Runyon Drive, or Long Bridge Park Drive.

We received a presentation by DES staff, as well as a letter from the Long Bridge Park Design Advisory Committee, and testimony from one citizen. The HALRB discussed the proposed names and weighed the merits of each. HALRB also debated whether it made sense to rename the road at all.

The final HALRB consensus was there is no need for a new name. The HALRB members felt that the existing name, Old Jefferson Davis Highway, conveys an historical sense of place that none of the new names can match. Therefore, the HALRB voted 7-1 to keep the existing name and not to endorse any change of name.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nancy J. Iacomini".

Nancy Iacomini  
Chairman

cc: Members of HALRB  
Department of Environmental Services  
Long Bridge Park Advisory Committee

August 30, 2011



Mr. Christopher Zimmerman, Chairman and  
Members of the County Board  
2100 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 300  
Arlington, Virginia 22201

Re: Renaming of Old Jefferson Davis Highway

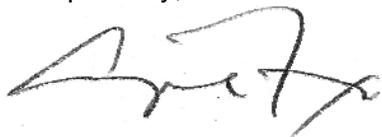
Dear Mr. Chairman and Members of the Arlington County Board:

In partnership with Arlington County and the Crystal City Business Community, the Crystal City Business Improvement District (BID) is charged with transforming how people see, perceive, and experience the Crystal City area. Highlighting and improving Crystal City's ACCESSIBLE characteristics is a key focus of the Crystal City BID's Work Plan and success. To that end, the Crystal City BID would like to share our many stakeholders' enthusiasm and support for the renaming of "Old Jefferson Davis Highway" between 12<sup>th</sup> Street and Boundary Channel Drive to "South Clark Street."

The similarity of the "Old Jefferson Davis Highway" street name to the conventional name for Route 1, "Jefferson Davis Highway," causes much confusion for area drivers and visitors. With the opening of Long Bridge Park and new and planned development in the area, a timely change in the street name to South Clark Street can further improve the user experience ensuring that streets have consistent names throughout the area. In this case, extending the South Clark Street name is also consistent with Arlington County's standard street naming convention, thereby helping to make the roadway network easy to understand and use in support of good way-finding practices.

Crystal City's accessibility remains one of its strongest competitive advantages within the Washington metropolitan area. Creative, cost effective solutions, such as the renaming of Old Jefferson Davis Highway to South Clark Street, that magnify and enhance this advantage, translate into an overall better user experience. That is good for business, residents, guests, and Arlington County as a whole.

Respectfully,



Angela Fox  
President / CEO  
Crystal City Business Improvement District

Cc: Dennis Leach  
Robert Gibson