

# TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR DIVERSITY COUNCIL

Joseph Blackwood  
Robert Leach  
Richard LeBoriorous

Mary Mellom  
Ana Maria Rivera  
Jonathan Wyse

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## SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA MONDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2020

### 1. TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING

Monday, October 26, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom

Join Zoom Meeting; <https://zoom.us/j/3326833563>

Meeting ID: 332 683 3563

One tap mobile

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13126266799,,3326833563# US (Chicago)

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+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

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+1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)

+1 253 215 8782 US

Meeting ID: 332 683 3563

### 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

### 3. ATTENDANCE

### 4. INTRODUCTION

### 5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

### 6. NEW BUSINESS

A. Comments and Introductions

B. Election of a Chairperson

C. Establishment of Meeting Schedule

D. Diversity Council Mission and Resolution Discussion

E. Discussion of Plantation Road Renaming

### 7. CORRESPONDENCE

### 8. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

### 9. ADJOURNMENT

#### Distribution

Joseph Blackwood  
Robert Leach  
Richard LeBoriorous  
Mary Mellom

Ana Maria Rivera  
Jonathan Wyse  
Jason Bowsza, First Selectman  
Town Clerk

## DIVERSITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Whereas the Town of East Windsor seeks to foster of climate of inclusion for people of all races, religions, gender identity or expressions, ages, or sexual orientations; and

Whereas civil unrest around the nation has shown a clear and present need for governments to foster policies of inclusion; and

Whereas bias, whether inherent or intentional, exists in communities across the nation; and

Whereas the Town of East Windsor will not tolerate or encourage bias within our Town government or in the administration of services to the public.

Now Therefore, The Town of East Windsor hereby establishes a Diversity Council, which shall be charged with collaborating with other boards and commissions to identify areas where minorities may be experiencing inequality in our current or future policies and practices, bring awareness to racial sensitivities, promote diversity throughout the town throughout the year, and provide guidance and input for future Town ordinances and policies in order to create and foster a more inclusive community where all people feel welcomed, included and represented.

The Diversity Council shall consist of not less than five (5) and not more than nine (9) members who shall serve for a term of four (4) years. The Council shall be appointed by the Board of Selectmen in accordance with the East Windsor Town Charter, as amended from time to time. The Council shall report its activities to the Board of Selectman not less than annually but may report more regularly as deemed necessary and appropriate.

6E

## Jason Bowsza

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**From:** Natasha Holmes <nholmes1922@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 10:35 AM  
**To:** Jason Bowsza  
**Subject:** Re: [East Windsor CT] Guidance on Street Rename Request (Sent by Natasha Holmes, nholmes1922@gmail.com)

Thank you!

On Wed, Jul 22, 2020, 9:59 AM Jason Bowsza <[jbowsza@eastwindsorct.com](mailto:jbowsza@eastwindsorct.com)> wrote:

Good morning Mrs. Holmes,

Let me circulate this to a few people and get back to you on what the process would need to be.

Best to you and your family,

~ Jay

Jason E. Bowsza  
First Selectman  
Town of East Windsor  
11 Rye Street  
Broad Brook, CT 06016

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-----Original Message-----

**From:** [cmsmailer@civicplus.com](mailto:cmsmailer@civicplus.com) <[cmsmailer@civicplus.com](mailto:cmsmailer@civicplus.com)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 8:24 AM  
**To:** Jason Bowsza <[jbowsza@eastwindsorct.com](mailto:jbowsza@eastwindsorct.com)>  
**Subject:** [East Windsor CT] Guidance on Street Rename Request (Sent by Natasha Holmes, [nholmes1922@gmail.com](mailto:nholmes1922@gmail.com))

Hello jbowsza,

Natasha Holmes ([nholmes1922@gmail.com](mailto:nholmes1922@gmail.com)) has sent you a message via your contact form (<https://www.eastwindsor-ct.gov/user/50/contact>) at East Windsor CT.

If you don't want to receive such e-mails, you can change your settings at <https://www.eastwindsor-ct.gov/user/50/edit>.

Message:

Good Day First Selectman Bowsza,  
My family and I had the pleasure of meeting you briefly during your campaign for re-election and loved hearing your positions on where you stood on ensuring that East Windsor was a town that embraced strong family values. I wanted to write you for some guidance on the process to request the renaming of a road within the town. Please see my attached letter, I look forward from hearing from you.

## Jason Bowsza

---

**From:** Natasha Holmes <ncholmes1922@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 30, 2020 5:57 PM  
**To:** Jason Bowsza  
**Subject:** Re: [East Windsor CT] Guidance on Street Rename Request (Sent by Natasha Holmes, ncholmes1922@gmail.com)

Hey Jason,

The proposed name would be Broadleaf Road playing off the Tobacco industry and given we have a lot of farms around us that are still producers of tobacco. I have only approached two of my neighbors at this time as I was waiting to hear what the official process would be. Once you find out more, let me know. I wasn't sure if a letter to each resident was part of the process or if I would need to set up a petition as I had seen done in other towns. I didn't socialize it further because I wanted to make sure I was in compliance.

Thanks so much and I will await further direction,

Natasha

On Wed, Jul 29, 2020 at 8:30 PM Jason Bowsza <[jbowsza@eastwindsorct.com](mailto:jbowsza@eastwindsorct.com)> wrote:

Hi Natasha,

I'm working with the Town Attorney to determine process, then will need to take the concept and the process to the full board of selectmen for their feedback and approval. Couple things: what is the proposed new name? and are all of the property owners on the road in agreement with the name change?

~ Jay

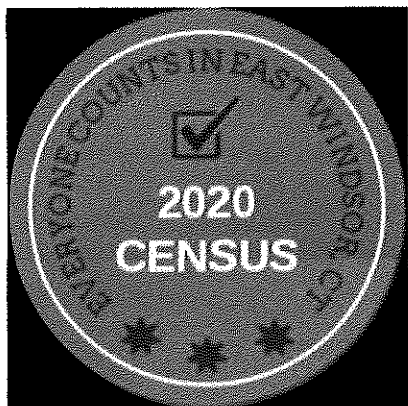
Jason E. Bowsza

First Selectman

Town of East Windsor

11 Rye Street

Broad Brook, CT 06016



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**From:** Natasha Holmes <ncholmes1922@gmail.com>

**Sent:** Wednesday, July 29, 2020 2:39 PM

**To:** Jason Bowsza <jbowsza@eastwindsorct.com>

**Subject:** Re: [East Windsor CT] Guidance on Street Rename Request (Sent by Natasha Holmes, ncholmes1922@gmail.com)

Hello Jay, I hope this email finds you and your family well. First let me thank you for taking the time to research this for me. I'm really excited about the opportunity we have here. This past week, I have spoken to a couple of my neighbors and they are in support and we think we have a really good street name for a replacement that will preserve the culture of the farming industry here in our backyards. Just wanted to check in to see if you were able to uncover anything with regards to the official process used here in East Windsor. No pressure, appreciate you looking into this.

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Mrs. Holmes

## Jason Bowsza

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**From:** ncholmes1922 <ncholmes1922@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 18, 2020 2:01 PM  
**To:** Jason Bowsza  
**Subject:** Re: [East Windsor CT] Guidance on Street Rename Request (Sent by Natasha Holmes, ncholmes1922@gmail.com)

Hi Jason, seems like further action being taken in Hartford, just forwarding a good read. Thanks for looking into this for me..

<https://www.courant.com/community/hartford/hc-news-hartford-columbus-name-20200818-dwiwrjmngvb6bn4idrkb2zwqa-story.html?outputType=amp>

Natasha

Sent from my Sprint Samsung Galaxy Note9.

----- Original message -----

**From:** Natasha Holmes <ncholmes1922@gmail.com>  
**Date:** 7/30/20 5:56 PM (GMT-05:00)  
**To:** Jason Bowsza <jbowsza@eastwindsorct.com>  
**Subject:** Re: [East Windsor CT] Guidance on Street Rename Request (Sent by Natasha Holmes, ncholmes1922@gmail.com)

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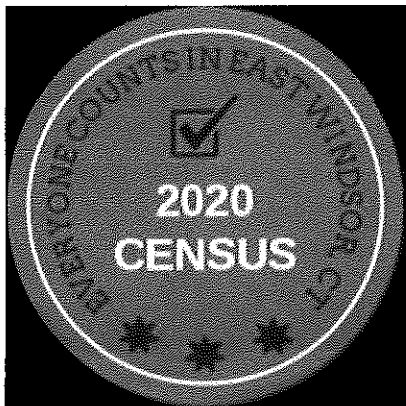
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[Take the 2020 Census!](#)

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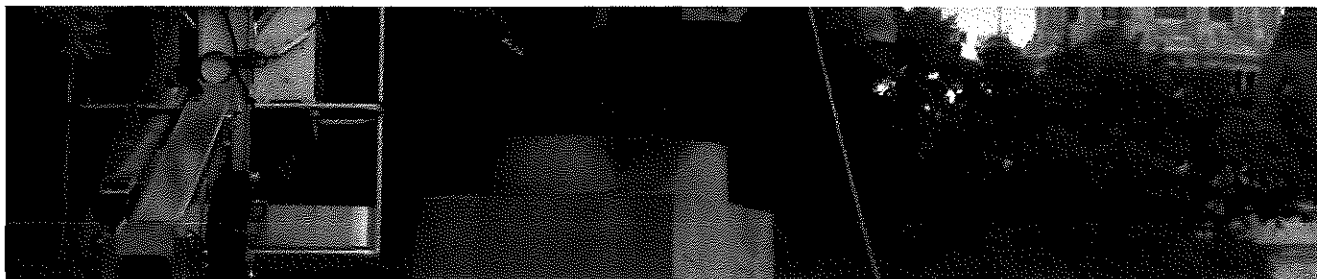
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HARTFORD COMMUNITY

# Hartford planning to rename Columbus Boulevard, possibly for local civil rights leader Frank T. Simpson

By REBECCA LURYE  
HARTFORD COURANT | AUG 18, 2020





A crew removed a statue of Christopher Columbus from Columbus Green in Hartford early one morning in late June. (Brad Horrigan/The Hartford Courant)

**HARTFORD —** A month and a half after the city of Hartford removed a statue of Christopher Columbus near the Capitol, city councilors are looking to rename Columbus Boulevard downtown and take stock of other local monuments dedicated to the disgraced explorer.

Residents had a chance to speak at public hearing Monday night on a resolution to rename Columbus Boulevard for Frank T. Simpson, a local civil rights champion who led one of the first state civil rights commissions in the country.

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However, city council also voted unanimously last week to create an ad hoc task force to develop an inventory of all other local memorials to Columbus that are now deemed “unfit,” and to recommend a process to recognize other local heroes.

“This is not a negation of what the Italian American community means to us and what they have done to influence our community,” councilman Nick Talamo said.

galvanize as one community and one city across Italians, Latinos and the African American community to really come together and unpack the narratives around Columbus and really start to counter the narratives around Columbus.”

[Related] [More Hartford police officers leaving early in careers, union cites low pay and ‘anti-police climate’ »](#)

Once hailed as an Italian hero and the first European to colonize North America, critics now see Columbus as a brutal tyrant, murderer and slave trader.





On June 29, a crew removed a statue of Christopher Columbus from Columbus Green in Hartford. The city is now considering renaming Columbus Boulevard, a commuter thoroughfare downtown. (Brad Horrigan/The Hartford Courant)

Councilwoman Wildaliz Bermudez has also introduced a resolution around Columbus Day, requesting that on the second Monday of October, the city support events that encourage understanding and appreciation of Indigenous peoples.

The street named for Columbus runs the route of the original Front Street, which was renamed as part of the construction of the I-84/I-91 interchange and Constitution Plaza, which began in 1958.

About 50 years earlier, Italian Americans represented more than 60% of the residents of the Front Street neighborhood, according to the Connecticut Historical Society. The flood-prone area later became a predominately Black slum.

The city council tied the recent, national denouncement of Columbus to the racial unrest that took hold in the United States this spring following the deaths of several unarmed Black people at the hands of white supremacists and police.

[Related] To prevent more shootings, Hartford's anti-violence community doing 'anything and everything' »

The council heard strong support last week from a number of Greater Hartford residents pushing for Columbus Boulevard to be renamed for Frank T. Simpson, a social worker who lived in Hartford from 1929 until his death in 1974.

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Simpson was the namesake of the former Simpson-Waverly Elementary School in Hartford's North End, which closed in 2018.

The resolution was introduced by council Majority Leader Thomas "TJ" Clarke II

residents of North Hartford.

Before the Aug. 10 meeting, council members also heard from members of the local alumni chapter of the historically Black Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, of which Simpson was an early member. An online petition requesting the street name change, supported by chapter member Brandon McGee Jr., a state representative in Hartford, has more than 280 signatures.

Originally from Alabama, Simpson arrived in Hartford in 1929. He was a social worker for a North Hartford community agency and became the first paid employee of the new Connecticut Inter-Racial Commission, the precursor to the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities.

[Related] New Hartford dance company aims to 'push the boundaries of ballet' and make it healthy and accessible for all »

In his role with the commission, Simpson saw the creation of a large construction union for Black workers and the hiring of the first Black saleswomen by department stores in Downtown Hartford.

With the creation of a temporary task force, city council appears to be taking a

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Councilman James “Jimmy” Sanchez Jr. said he would like to see Italian Americans included in the conversation about renaming the boulevard and potentially placing a new statue in the grassy area still known as Columbus Green, where an 8-foot-tall, bronze statue of Columbus stood for nearly 100 years before it was removed in late June.

The removal cost the city \$15,000.

Statues of Columbus were also removed in Bridgeport, New Haven, Norwalk and around the country, including in Columbus, Ohio.

[Related] Open Studio Hartford going online, seeking artists to participate »

“I still stand that these streets and statues that were erected, we can still honor the Italian American community, to identify the proper people or heroes from that community,” Sanchez said.



Like several council members, Lebron said that the erasure of the Columbus name from public monuments was a necessary step, but more must be done to correct the narrative around the historical figure.

He said the city must also look at how Columbus and colonization are being taught in schools.

“At these points in time, we understand the negative tragedies that Columbus bestowed on everyone he touched, including the complete genocide of the Taíno population in Puerto Rico and massacres that happened in the Caribbean,” Lebron said. “As a result of that, we need to change history.”

*Rebecca Lurye can be reached at [rlurye@courant.com](mailto:rlurye@courant.com).*

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Rebecca Lurye

Hartford Courant



10/22/2020

Hartford planning to rename Columbus Boulevard, possibly for local civil rights leader Frank T. Simpson - Hartford Courant  
urban gun violence. She joined the Courant in 2017, first covering breaking news, then  
business, after spending three years reporting in the South Carolina Lowcountry.

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