

INTRODUCED: May 8, 2017

AN ORDINANCE No. 2017-094

To designate West Duval Street and East Duval Street in honor of the Reverend John Jasper.

Patron – Ms. Gray

Approved as to form and legality
by the City Attorney

PUBLIC HEARING: MAY 22 2017 AT 6 P.M.

WHEREAS, in 1867, the Reverend John Jasper became the founding pastor of the historic Sixth Mount Zion Baptist Church located on Duval Street in Jackson Ward and preached there until his death in 1901 at the age of 88; and

WHEREAS, born into slavery in Fluvanna County, John Jasper was sent as a young man to the city of Richmond to work in a tobacco factory; and

WHEREAS, a fellow slave helped John Jasper to learn to read and write, leading to his study of the Bible and becoming a Baptist minister who devoted his life to the service of God; and

WHEREAS, the Reverend John Jasper became widely popular for his compelling speaking ability and vivid imagery, preaching powerful sermons to both black and white congregants,

AYES: 9 NOES: 0 ABSTAIN: _____

ADOPTED: MAY 22 2017 REJECTED: _____ STRICKEN: _____

including wounded Confederate soldiers in the hospitals of Richmond during the Civil War and, later, to enthusiastic listeners in cities throughout the eastern United States; and

WHEREAS, the Reverend John Jasper is most famous for his sermon entitled, “De Sun Do Move,” delivered in 1878 at the Sixth Mount Zion Baptist Church, in which he expounded on his belief in the fundamental truth of the Bible and the power of God using the biblical imagery of Joshua and the Battle of Jericho; and

WHEREAS, the Reverend John Jasper, through his speaking ability and dynamic leadership, attracted thousands of members to the Sixth Mount Zion Baptist Church, which became the center of religious life in Jackson Ward, providing religious education and social services to the young, old, indigent, and infirm; and

WHEREAS, in 2017, the Sixth Mount Zion Baptist Church, still a vibrant faith community located on Duval Street in Jackson Ward, celebrates the one hundred fiftieth year of its founding by the Reverend John Jasper; and

WHEREAS, in appreciation for the Reverend John Jasper’s exemplary life of service, the City of Richmond desires to memorialize the Reverend John Jasper’s contributions to the civic well-being and history of the city of Richmond as a leader in the efforts to educate spiritually, feed the hungry, and care for the old and infirm in the city of Richmond by designating the street blocks within which he lived and served in his honor; and

WHEREAS, because this designation is honorary only, the provisions of sections 8-7 through 8-10 of the Code of the City of Richmond (2015), as amended, do not apply to the designation made hereby or to any signs erected pursuant to this ordinance;

NOW, THEREFORE,

THE CITY OF RICHMOND HEREBY ORDAINS:

§ 1. **Designation of Street Blocks for Honorary Name.** West Duval Street, between Brook Road and St. James Street, and East Duval Street, between St. James Street and North 2nd Street, shall be designated in honor of the Reverend John Jasper pursuant to this ordinance.

§ 2. **Effect of Designation.** The designation of streets made pursuant to this ordinance shall be honorary only, shall not replace the existing name of the streets, and shall have no effect on the address of any property with an address on the designated streets. The sole effect of designation pursuant to this ordinance shall be to authorize the placement of commemorative signs in accordance with this ordinance memorializing the designation in honor of the named person.

§ 3. **Administration of Ordinance.** The Department of Public Works shall implement this ordinance by installing, as soon as practicable after the adoption of this ordinance, and maintaining commemorative signs in accordance with this section. The commemorative signs shall be clearly distinct from the street signs used to identify the street in question such that a reasonable person could not conclude that the commemorative signs reflect the actual name of the street. The commemorative signs shall be affixed to the street signs for the streets designated in section 1 of this ordinance and shall bear the name of the person set forth in section 1 of this ordinance.

§ 4. **Effective Date.** This ordinance shall be in force and effect upon adoption.



Richmond City Council

The Voice of the People

Richmond, Virginia

Office of the Council Chief of Staff

Ordinance/Resolution Request

TO Allen Jackson, City Attorney

THROUGH Lou Ali, Council Chief of Staff *la*

FROM Steven Taylor, Council Policy Analyst *ST*

COPY Kim Gray, 2nd District Council Member
 Craig Bieber, 2nd District Liaison
 Haskell Brown, Deputy City Attorney
 Meghan Brown, Council Interim Deputy Chief of Staff *MWB*

DATE April 21, 2017

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TITLE Honorary Designation of Duval Street in honor of the Rev. John Jasper

RECEIVED

APR 21 2017

OFFICE OF CITY ATTORNEY

This is a request for the drafting of an **Ordinance** **Resolution**

REQUESTING COUNCILMEMBER/PATRON

K. Gray

SUGGESTED STANDING COMMITTEE

Land Use, Housing & Transportation

ORDINANCE/RESOLUTION SUMMARY

The patron requests that legislation be drafted for Council's consideration that designates Duval Street as "John Jasper Way" in honor of the late Reverend John Jasper. Mr. Jasper served as the pastor of Sixth Mt. Zion Baptist Church, which is located on this street and celebrates its 150th anniversary this year. Reverend Jasper became known nationally for his sermon "De Sun Do Move."

BACKGROUND

The City has occasionally made designations of City blocks in honor of persons who have contributed to Richmond's civic well-being and history. John Jasper is such a person.

Mr. Jasper was born, legendarily, on the 4th of July, a slave near Williamsburg, Virginia, in 1812. He lived in Jackson Ward. Mr. Jasper devoted his life to the service of God when "moved by the Spirit" at Capitol Square in 1839. He was taught to read by another slave and became a Baptist minister. Known for his compelling speaking ability and vivid imagery, he gained wide popularity, and spoke to both white and black congregants, including the wounded soldiers of the Confederacy, in Richmond hospitals during the Civil War.

He is credited with being the founder of the Sixth Mt. Zion Baptist Church with nine members which grew to more than 2,500 after the reconstruction era. The Church is located on Duval Street and celebrates the 150th year of its founding this year. Known for his energetic efforts to save souls he is said to have baptized 300 people in the James River in a single day. Mr. Jasper was best known for his famous sermon – “De Sun Do Move” regarding Joshua and the Battle of Jericho.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Fiscal Impact Yes No

Budget Amendment Required Yes No

Estimated Cost or Revenue Impact \$ N/A

Note: Costs of signage and erecting these honors are absorbed in the regular operations of the Department of Public Works.

Attachment/s Yes No