

TO:	CHAIR AND MEMBERS COMMUNITY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING ON DECEMBER 3, 2019
FROM:	CATHY SAUNDERS CITY CLERK
SUBJECT:	REQUEST FOR RENAMING A PORTION OF A MULTI-USE PATHWAY TO JANE BIGELOW PATHWAY (WELLINGTON STREET TO ADELAIDE STREET)

RECOMMENDATION

That, on the recommendation of the Civic Administration, the request to name a portion of the south branch of the Thames Valley Parkway (the pathway) that runs from Wellington Street to Adelaide Street the “Jane Bigelow Pathway, BE APPROVED.

PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER

None.

BACKGROUND

Ann Bigelow and David Bigelow, the children of Jane Bigelow have submitted the attached (Appendix “A) letter in support of the request to “consider naming the south branch of the bike pathway along the Thames Valley Parkway that runs from Wellington Street to Adelaide Street” after their mother, Jane Bigelow, the first female Mayor of the City of London. The above-noted letter indicates that Jane Bigelow, during her tenure as Mayor and appointment to the Public Utilities Commission, was instrumental in the introduction of bicycle paths in the city. They indicate that their mother “truly believed that cities should be places that people could get around by foot or bike, as they preferred” and therefore the development of a bike pathway would provide greater accessibility for residents.

Review of Council’s Policy entitled “Naming/Re-naming or Dedicating of Municipal Property, Buildings and Park Elements Policy”

The Council Policy entitled “Naming/Re-naming or Dedicating of Municipal Property, Buildings and Park Elements Policy” states the following:

- 4.3 a) Priority (in order of preference) shall be given to continuing the current naming/re-naming practice of City of London property and buildings after:
 - i) the area or planning district in which the property or building is located to provide a geographical association to help the public to locate to a park, bridge or building more easily;
 - ii) the most dominant “constant feature either within or nearby” the selected site such as an associated significant ecological or natural resource feature;
 - iii) an historical name related to London’s heritage and/or historical folklore;
 - iv) an event or person of international, national or provincial significance; or
 - v) an organization (or individual, with the exception of election officials currently in office) to recognize:

- particular activities and significant contributions to the London community and/or society; and/or
 - outstanding contributions and/or sponsorships made toward the development and/or enhancement of a property or building.
- b) Preference shall be given to naming City of London Elements (within parks or buildings) after an organization or an individual.

When a name of an organization (or an individual) is being considered, the Policy indicates the contribution they have made to the public life and the well-being of London should be considered and approval shall be obtained from the individual (their family) or the organization for such naming. Documentation in support of these requirements is attached as Appendix “A” and Appendix “B” to this report.

The Policy indicates that names shall be unique and name duplication and similar sounding names shall be avoided.

Applicants are to assume responsibility for securing consensus with the community with respect to the application. Opposition to the application must be addressed by the applicant.

The Policy further indicates that the applicant is to consult with external stakeholders in the community and identify possible objections and/or positive responses to determine the level of support for the requested civic naming.

Councillor Josh Morgan has submitted the attached email (Appendix “B”) in support of the Application.

Application Review

The Application is to name a portion of the south branch of the Thames Valley Parkway (the pathway) that runs from Wellington Street to Adelaide Street the “Jane Bigelow Pathway”. Other portions of the Thames Valley Parkway have been named as follows:

Terry Fox Parkway in Greenway Park
 Wolf Parkway in Harris/Gibbons Park
 Maurice Chapman Parkway in Springbank Park

The Municipal Addressing Advisory Group has indicated no concerns with the Application.

Parks & Recreation has indicated no concerns with the Application, noting that other similar requests for the Thames Valley Parkway have been approved.

Financial Implications

The Civic Administration has advised that the cost to place signage is minimal and can be absorbed within Parks Planning & Operations’ annual budget.

PREPARED BY:
CATHY SAUNDERS CITY CLERK

APPENDIX "A"

August 7, 2018

City of London
300 Dufferin
Avenue, London,
ON
N6A 4L9

Attention: Ms. Cathy Saunders, City Clerk

We are writing to request that Council consider naming the south branch of the bicycle pathway that runs from Wellington Street to Adelaide Street after our mother, Jane Bigelow. Our mother was the first woman mayor of London, elected in 1972, and continuing until 1978. She was born in 1928 in Toronto, the daughter of Margaret and Edward Dillon, and grew up in Toronto. Prior to and after her election to the Mayor's office, Jane was a member of Board of Control for multiple terms.

The following are our memories of growing up as her children:

Ann Bigelow:

I was talking to my Mom about this earlier this summer, and she told me that back when she was mayor, the PUC looked after recreation services, and because of her position, she was on the PUC. My Mom was an avid user of her bike. She wasn't an athlete by any means, but she truly believed that cities should be places that people could get around by foot or bike, as they preferred. She did not support roads, although realized they were necessary. She thought the City should be more accessible. So, as an avid user of her bike, she spent time in the park system and noticed that there were trails that people were using to get around. She thought these trails could be improved and that a system of trails could be developed, and she was able to convince the PUC to take some action by paving some trails.

She used to ride around the City with our dogs, Figgy and later Teddy, in the wicker basket of her bike. Even though we only lived a block and a half away from City Hall, she rode her bike there whenever she could. My brother and I never got rides anywhere, we rode our bikes, walked or took the bus when we needed to go anywhere.

My Mom turned 90 on June 9, 2018, and she can't ride a bike anymore. I would say, that among her regrets about her loss of abilities as she has aged, this is one of the most profound. When she sees someone on a bike she says she is jealous. Almost every time I see her, she says she wishes she could ride a bike.

I asked her about what part of the bike trails she might want to have named after her, and she said her favorites are the one from downtown to around Greenway, or the one that begins at the bridge on Wellington Road South and goes east along the river. But, really, she would feel honored by any portion being named for her. It's been my silly personal dream that someday the bike trails in London would be known as the "Bigelows".

David Bigelow:

Last weekend when I spoke to my 90 year old mother by telephone she had just returned to her apartment from a half hour ride on a stationary bike. As she always does, she mentioned how she wished she could still ride a real bicycle. My mother has always been a believer in cities being more than collections of people and buildings. Rather, they are communities where people live, work, play, raise families and make lasting friendships. They are also places that require active participation by those who live there. My mother's vision for London included a clean and well maintained community with a variety of parks, including both large and small green spaces, accessible to all. She also imagined a city with a system of bike paths that could be used both recreationally and as a means of transportation. Bike paths were a bit of a novelty back in the 1970's but now communities the world over, including my home town of Nanaimo, are working to establish them as central to the city.

Growing up in the 1970s, bicycles were both a source of transportation and also a source of recreation. From a fairly early age, straight through high school, I made spending money by delivering newspapers. I vividly remember my first paper route. I struggled so much to lift a bundle of 30 copies of the Saturday Globe and Mail that I would deliver half of them and then return for the second batch. After a while it became no problem to lift the entire lot into the carrier of my rickety old one speed bike with the banana seat and monkey handle bars. With money saved from paper routes I bought my first ten speed bike. It cost over \$100, a lot of money for a young teenager in the 1970s. Only once, a particularly snowy Christmas morning, in all those years did my mother ever drive me to deliver papers – every other day it was just me and my bike.

When I was ten or eleven I had my sights set on becoming a professional hockey player and told my mother I wanted to join a team. She replied that if I was serious about this I would have to get myself out of bed and find my way to the 5:00am practices. It turns out I wasn't really that serious about making the NHL after all. However, in high school I took up competitive rowing.

This required me to attend early morning practice sessions on Fanshawe Lake. I remember many fall mornings cycling from downtown London to the lake for practice and then cycling back home for morning classes at Central Secondary, a feat my 57 year old body can no longer fathom. Such was the life of a teenage Bigelow!

Our family time often included summer bike rides along the river. During one such ride my mother pointed out that with one exception, all of the parks in London were named after men. The exception, of course, being Victoria Park. I don't know if this is still the case but it was an observation that has stayed with me all these years. My mother was once invited to a local elementary school. Expecting the Mayor to arrive by limousine, they rolled out a red carpet.

Much to their surprise, the limousine turned out to be a bicycle, powered by the Mayor herself!

Dave only makes it back to London once or twice a year, but Ann lives in London. When Dave is in London, and weekly for Ann, when we are doing shopping in London, our last name is regularly recognized by people. It is always an amazing experience to have complete strangers tell us how much our mother inspired them. Although this has nothing to do with her bike riding, we are regularly reminded about the national controversy our mother caused by refusing to wear a hat when she met Queen Elizabeth in 1973. These are all fond memories of our Mother's impact on the City, and they are a fine tribute to her legacy. It is a combination of her personal integrity, her unwavering defense for the fair treatment of women, and a passionate vision of a healthy city where all can truly live their best lives, that has left a mark in the hearts of so many people.

Our mother would be deeply honoured should the city choose to name a portion of the bike path after her. I hope you agree that such an honour is appropriate and well deserved. We hope that we have provided enough information to make this an easy decision, but if anything else would be helpful, please let us know.

Sincerely,



Ann Bigelow
940 Silversmith Street
London, ON
N6H 5T5



David Bigelow
3083 Robin Hood Drive
Nanaimo, BC
V9T 1N9

APPENDIX 'B'

November 1, 2019

Cathy,

I am writing to express my support for the naming the South Branch of the cycling path that runs from Wellington Street to Adelaide street (or another appropriate section based on staff's advice), in honour of former Mayor Jane Bigelow.

In 1972, Jane Bigelow was the first woman to be elected Mayor of London, Ontario. She was an avid cyclist and often rode her bike to City Hall. At that time she believed that a system of connected cycling trails could be built to provide a safe and environmentally friendly alternative to driving. As Mayor, she was a member of the Public Utilities Commission and convinced her fellow commissioners that there was merit in paving some of the trails. This was an important beginning to what would become a more accessible trail system in the City of London.

Jane was also an unwavering advocate the fair and equal treatment of women and a trailblazer for many Londoners. This year she will turn 91, and it would be suiting tribute to her legacy to name a portion of trail system in her honour.

In support of this application, her daughter Ann and son David have drafted some documentation and will provide any details necessary in support of this request. I will note, however, that her advocacy for women's rights and her legacy in building a vibrant and healthy city are well known amongst Londoners so I hope this will be an easy decision.

Josh Morgan
Councillor, Ward 7
London, Ontario