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AUG 26 2025

## City of Charlottesville Request for Honorary Street Name Designation

Applicant Name: CHARLES "Alex-ZAN" ALEXANDER

NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Applicant Address: 509 ROGEMONT AVE. - CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA. 22901Applicant Telephone: (Daytime) SAME (Evening) (434) 202-0223

1. Honorary Street names are restricted to: Individuals Organizations Entities Events Of local significance to Charlottesville

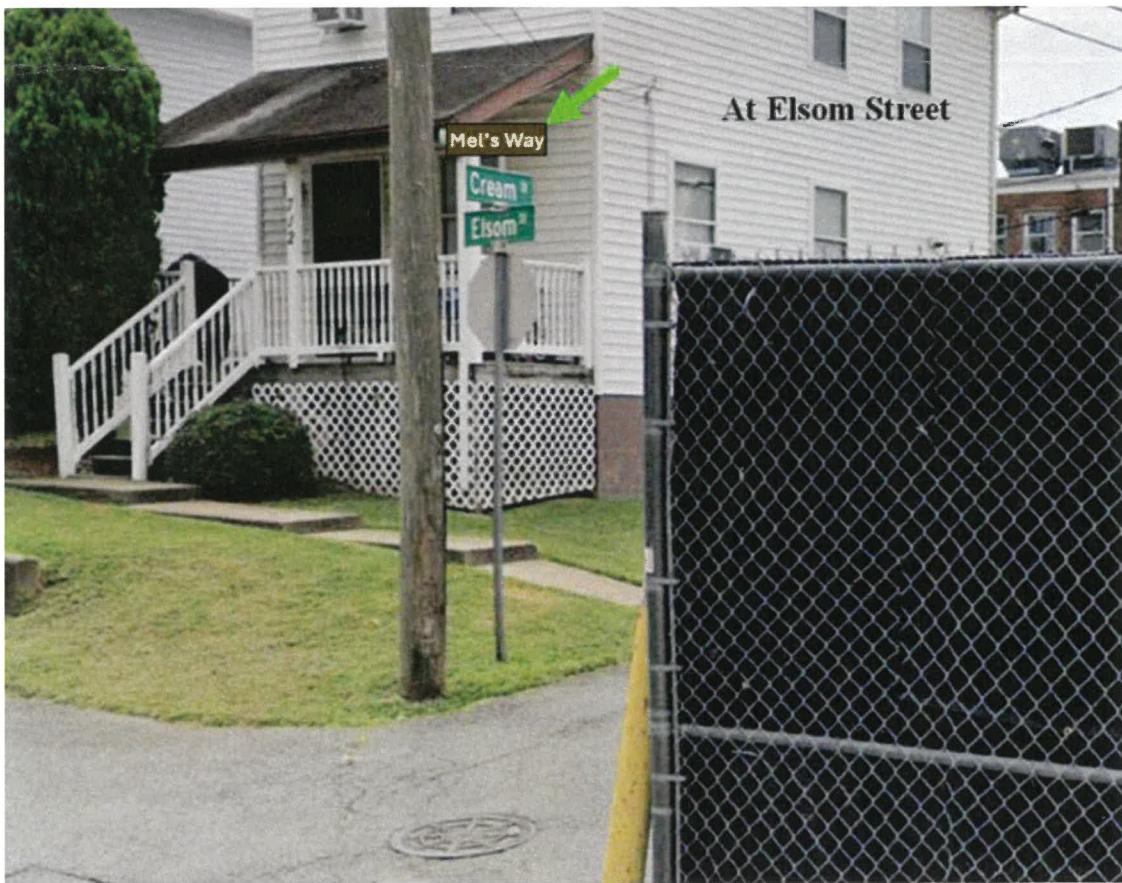
A. For whom/what are you recommending this designation? Melvin Walker

B. What is the reason for this recommendation? (Applicants should complete a short essay of approximately 500 words that provides justification for the proposed honorary designation. The completed essay should be attached to this application form).

2. Location of Proposed honorary street name designation: Cream Street: Approximately 220-ft Between Elsom Street and West Main. (See below.)

C. What is the proposed designation? Mel's Way.





Aug-18k

- 1) Sign = > 2) larger -- Honorary St.
- 2) plaque/photo - brass area?
- 3) Mother excited

2 or 4

Melvin Eugene Walker, a Charlottesville native and icon who touched countless lives before his transition on Tuesday, May 28, 2024. The reason and justification for a proposed honorary designation speaks to his memorable legacy with a far-reaching positive impact in Charlottesville and beyond the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Melvin was the Owner-Chef of Mel's Cafe on 811 W. Main St. for 39 years. He greeted, inspired and hosted political figures, professional individuals (Athletes), the homeless and any everyday citizen he encountered. Melvin was a genius at creating delicious dishes that delighted many hearts/souls and with unconditional love. His contribution to the Charlottesville was extended through an unlimited sense of community giving to the Westhaven citizens, University of Virginia, area Boys and Girls Clubs, City of Promise, Prolyfyck Running Crew and many other clubs, groups and organizations. Pat Edwards, past President of the Starr Hill Neighborhood Association, the historically Black neighborhood between downtown Charlottesville and UVA where Mel's sits. She pointed out the Mel's Cafe unofficially acted as a center of the Starr Hill Community, given it was the only black owned restaurant remaining on the street. He was a member of First Baptist Church, a block away. He was known for offering a free hot plate to people the church sent over or anyone in need who showed up at his doorstep. Hundreds took to social media sharing their memories following his transition. One in particular, a Facebook user recalled how Mel brought her favorite food to the hospital while she was battling cancer and others stressed how he wouldn't accept payment if he knew they were going through difficult times.

Melvin Walker spent much of his life nurturing and nourishing family, friends and the community with not only with homemade sweet potato pies and fried chicken but also what admires called his “Infectious love of life”. Charlottesville resident and University of Virginia history professor John Edwin Mason told area media outlets “It became my favorite in town”. Some restaurants you can get a better meal maybe, but you can’t get Mel. I truly believe the community would be well served in keeping Melvin Eugene Walker legacy alive by designating MEL’S WAY!

Written, Proposed and Presented by Mr. Alex-Zan (Charles E. Alexander)

August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025.....Thanks-Alex

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