



Report to: Development Services Committee

Report Date: April 12, 2011

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**SUBJECT:** Request for Street Name Change (Lali Vij Drive)  
**PREPARED BY:** Robert Tadmire, Coordinator of Geomatics/GIS Advocate

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

- 1) That the Town of Markham not approve the request to rename Highgate Drive to Lali Vij Drive; and,
- 2) That Development Services Committee consider other commemorative options as outlined in the report; and further,
- 3) That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

Not applicable.

**PURPOSE:**

The report outlines considerations and provides a staff recommendation with respect to a request to rename Highgate Drive to Lali Vij Drive.

**BACKGROUND:**

On January 25, 2011 Council referred to staff a communication from Mr. Sameer Thaver requesting the Town to proclaim May 28, 2011 as Lali Vij Day in the Town of Markham and that Highgate Drive be renamed as Lali Vij Drive. The request for proclamation will be addressed through the consideration of a proclamation policy, to be considered through a report from the Clerk to the General Committee.

Mr. Lali Vij was a Markham resident and popular host of the Sounds of Asia television program and Voice of India radio program. Lali Vij died May 28, 1991 at the age of 49. Recently, a memorial statement was read in the Ontario Legislature on the anniversary of Mr. Vij's death, noting his contributions to the South Asian community. Further information about Mr. Vij is attached in Appendix "A" (correspondence from Mr. Sameer Thaver, January 28, 2011).

**OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:**

Currently, Highgate Drive includes 120 residential properties, 1 elementary school, 1 place of worship, 1 Town-owned park and 1 Town-owned walkway parcel.

In order to accommodate the request to change the name of Highgate Drive to Lali Vij Drive, the following would be required:

1. Council would need to consent to the proposed street name change, subject to approval of the name by the Fire Department and Region of York;
2. The proposed street name is circulated to the Fire Department and Region of York for their review and approval;
3. If approved, all property owners on Highgate Drive would need to agree to the street name change in writing;

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4. If approved, all affected property owners would have to be compensated in the amount of \$200.00 per address to cover address change costs and typically this expense is borne by the proponent; and,
  5. If the above conditions were met Council could pass a by-law to reflect the new street name.

Given the extent of the impact on existing residents and having regard for potential concerns with emergency services response resulting from a street name change, staff recommend that the request for a street name change not be approved.

Should Development Services Committee wish to consider adding Lali Vij Drive to the Town's street name reserve list for a future development, the following would be required:

1. The proposed street name is circulated to the Fire Department and Region of York for their review and approval.
2. The name would be adopted by Council in the next quarterly street name approval report submitted to the Development Services Committee; and,
3. The Director of Planning and Urban Design would then be in a position to approve the assignment of the street name to a street on a draft plan of subdivision.

Planning Staff requested approval from the Fire Department and Region of York to use Lali Vij as a street name. Region of York Staff approved the name. The Fire Department expressed concern with adding Lali Vij to the Town's street name reserve list, as they had concerns with the pronunciation, which may cause confusion when someone calls 911. They feel the interpretation of the pronunciation by those less familiar with the street could cause a delay in emergency services response to an incident on the street. However, we are advised that the Fire and Emergency Services Department and the Community and Fire Services Commission respects Council's objective in acknowledging the diversity of the Town's residents and cultures and will support Council direction in this matter through ensuring solutions are put into place to mitigate any outcomes that could delay response times.

Development Services Committee is asked to provide direction with respect to adding Lali Vij Drive to the Town's street name reserve list.

Development Services Committee may consider the following options, and provide direction to staff:

- a) Add to the street name reserve list
- b) Rename a park in the area requested
- c) Placement of a commemorative plaque at an appropriate location on Town lands in vicinity

#### **FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND TEMPLATE: (external link)**

Not applicable.

#### **HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS**

Not applicable.

**ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:**

Not applicable.

**BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:**

The Fire Department and Region of York were consulted regarding street name approval.

**RECOMMENDED BY:**

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Biju Karumanchery, M.C.I.P., R.P.P.  
Senior Development Manager

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Jim Baird, M.C.I.P., R.P.P.  
Commissioner of Development Services

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Appendix 'A' – Correspondence from Mr. Sameer Thaver, January 28, 2011