



City of Culver City

Mike Balkman Council
Chambers
9770 Culver Blvd.
Culver City, CA 90232

Staff Report

File #: 24-793, **Version:** 1

Item #: A-1.

CC - ACTION ITEM: (1) Consideration of a Request from the Asian World Film Festival to Rename Portion of “A Street” to Bruce Lee Alley Pursuant to City Council Policy 3403; and (2) Direction to the City Manager as Deemed Appropriate.

Meeting Date: March 18, 2024

Contact Person/Dept: Elaine Gerety Warner/ Office of Economic and Cultural Development

Phone Number: (310) 253-5777

Fiscal Impact: Yes ☐ No ☒

General Fund: Yes ☐ No ☒

Attachments: ☒

Public Notification: (E-Mail) Meetings and Agendas - City Council (03/13/2024)

Department Approval: Jesse Mays, Assistant City Manager (03/07/2024)

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends City Council discuss and provide direction regarding consideration of a request by the Asian World Film Festival to rename A Street in Town Plaza to Bruce Lee Alley pursuant to City Council Policy 3403.

BACKGROUND

Since 2014, the City has sponsored the Asian World Film Festival (AWFF) to support its mission of bringing Asian cinema to the greater Los Angeles area. The Festival’s cross-cultural collaboration has created the opportunity for the community to experience films from over 50 countries across Asia - with several ultimately being nominated for Golden Globe and/or Academy Awards. For the last two years, the AWFF has also featured a World Martial Arts Day in Town Plaza as part of the festival with the support of the Bruce Lee Foundation.

In February 2023, organizers for the AWFF requested information regarding the process to have a portion of A Street, the alley way between Town Plaza and Van Buren Street, renamed to Bruce Lee Alley given Mr. Lee’s residence in Culver City along the adjacent Van Buren Street during the filming of The Green Hornet (the proposed location is attached as Attachment 1). Staff directed the AWFF to City Council Policy 3403 (Attachment 2) which outlines the policies, responsibilities and procedures

associated with the commemorative, in memoriam, naming of City Property and Facilities and provided a map of the Higuera-Lucerne neighborhood with address ranges for reference.

The Policy is intended to 1) guide staff and the City Council in the commemorative naming of City property and facilities, including buildings, support facilities, park sites and recreation facilities; and 2) ensure that the commemorative naming of City property and facilities is accomplished in a manner that is objective, consistent and comports with City regulations.

The Policy outlines four commemorative naming levels of recognition and associated criteria. The Level Four recognition is for the naming of a City Property (including streets, plazas, facilities) after an honoree, which has the most stringent requirements relative to an individual's consistent and extraordinary contributions to the Culver City community.

These requirements include:

1. A signed petition of support by 75% of the Culver City residents within the immediate geographic neighborhood as outlined in the Policy;
2. Serving in a leadership position within the community or is a renowned regional, national, or historic figure;
3. Providing a minimum of 20 years of service to the Culver City community;
4. Fundamentally influencing City Policy;
5. Considered a well-known and respected pillar of the Culver City community demonstrated by his/her career and civic activities within Culver City.

Once received and reviewed by Staff for completeness, the City Council Ad Hoc Naming Policy Subcommittee (which would need to be created by the City Council to review a particular application) reviews the application, and at the required duly noticed public meeting, makes a recommendation to the full City Council for consideration. The public shall have a minimum 30-day review and comment period after which time the City Council shall consider the Subcommittee's recommendation consistent with the levels of recognition set forth in the Policy. The naming of a City Property or Facility requires a four-fifths vote of the City Council.

DISCUSSION

In May 2023, the AWFF submitted an application that is incomplete because it did not meet the Level Four requirements set forth in the Policy. Staff outlined the areas of the application that required additional information, including the number of signatures required on the petition.

In December 2023, the AWFF noted that it had been difficult to obtain signatures required (only 10% had been obtained to date) and in January 2024 requested assistance from the City Council to advance this effort.

On January 22nd, the City Council directed staff to meet with the AWFF to discuss the application requirements and provide suggestions to AWFF relative to community outreach strategies.

On February 6th, staff met with members of the AWFF and the Bruce Lee Foundation to discuss the status of the application and provide suggestions to increase petition participation given issues with

secured or inaccessible properties. These suggestions included:

- Preparing a mailer to all residents with a return post card.
- Developing a website to obtain digital signatures.
- Hosting a community event and/or participating in other community events.

While these methods may assist in obtaining the required signatures on the petition, it is important to note that other Level Four application criteria have not been demonstrated in the AWFF submittal as noted below:

Level Four Naming Requirement 1: 20 years of service to the Culver City Community

Demonstrated: No

Status: Application does not demonstrate how Mr. Lee provided 20 years of service to the Culver City community. Application states Mr. Lee lived in Culver City for one year.

Level Four Naming Requirement 2: Signed petition from 75% of the Culver City Residents within the immediate geographic area

Demonstrated: No

Status: 120 signatures submitted. 75% of neighborhood's 2,748 addresses would be 2,061 people (policy refers to "residents")

Level Four Naming Requirement 3: Through his/her volunteer service and civic engagement, served in a leadership position within the Culver City community

Demonstrated: No

Status: Application does not provide examples of how Mr. Lee served in a leadership position within Culver City community

Level Four Naming Requirement 4: Fundamentally influenced direction of City policy and/or development of the City

Demonstrated: No

Status: Application does not provide specific examples of how Mr. Lee influenced City Policy and/or development of the City

Level Four Naming Requirement 5: Well-known and respected pillar of the community, demonstrated by his/her career and civic activities within the City.

Demonstrated: No

Status: Although the application demonstrated that Mr. Lee is well known and respected globally, it did not demonstrate his career and civic activities within the City. The application stipulates that Mr. Lee lived in Culver City for one year during filming in the Culver Studios but did not provide specific examples of additional civic activities within the City or how he was a well-known and respected pillar of the Culver City community.

Level Four Naming Requirement 6: Letters of community support from a broad range of Culver City community

Demonstrated: No

Status: Two letters of support submitted. Fifty-One Kitchen and the Bruce Lee Foundation

Next Steps

In order to progress the application, the AWFF will either need to provide additional information to meet these requirements and/or request that the City Council consider waiving the current Council Policy requirements (one or more items) as outlined in Section V of the Policy. A waiver of any policy requirements could open the door to other requests for a street name change or other naming opportunities that do not satisfy the initially established requirements of the Policy. If there is interest in waiving Policy requirements, staff would return with proposed amendments to the Policy for City Council consideration at a future meeting, after first meeting with the Ad Hoc City Council Policies Subcommittee.

The AWFF acknowledges that their application may not meet all requirements stipulated, however, the AWFF believes Mr. Lee's global contribution to martial arts, which began while filming and residing in Culver City, is significant. (Attachment 3).

FISCAL ANALYSIS

There is no fiscal impact relative to discussion of this item or continued review of the application.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Proposed Street Renaming Location
2. City Council Policy 3403 - Commemorative, In Memoriam Naming of City Property and Facilities
3. Letter from AWFF and Bruce Lee Foundation

MOTION

That the City Council:

Consider the Asian World Film Festival's request to rename A Street, Adjacent to Town Plaza, to Bruce Lee Alley pursuant to City Council Policy 3403 and provide direction to the City Manager, as deemed appropriate.