Z&P Meeting: May 9, 2016
City Council Meeting: June 6, 2016

STAFF PLANNING REPORT
Street Re-naming

CASE 016-16	A request to re-name the existing public right-of-way from "Hearnes Boulevard" to "Main Street"
LOCATION	Beginning at 33rd St. and extending south to the current City of Joplin boundary
APPLICANT	City of Joplin

CLASSIFICATION OF STREET
Arterial – MoDOT

HAVE ALL PROPERTY OWNERS ALONG THE STREET AGREED TO THE NAME CHANGE?
Yes.

DISCUSSION
The City of Joplin is requesting the name change of Hearnes Boulevard to South Main Street. Currently, South Main Street ends at 33rd street, while Hearnes Boulevard continues south from 33rd Street south to the City limits of Joplin. Local citizens do not often know about or acknowledge the street name change at 33rd Street, and the change can be confusing for those who are traveling.

A name change from Hearnes Boulevard back to South Main Street would allow the Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) to mark the I-44 exit as 'MAIN STREET EXIT'. Because Main Street does not touch this interchange, Federal Highway Administration regulations prohibit the exit being named for Main Street. If visitors try to access Main Street or downtown, this can be confusing. This is especially important for those visiting the new Mercy Hospital situated at the interchange of I-44 and Hearnes Boulevard.

Currently, there is an effort to rename the portion of the 249 bypass east of Joplin in honor of Governor Warren E. Hearnes.

Staff recommends approval of Case 016-16.

Honorable Betty C. Hearnes
Post Office Box 509
Charleston, Missouri 63834

May 26, 2015

ATTENTION: Missouri Department of Transportation Memorial Highway Naming

It is with great honor that I give my permission to the City of Joplin and Missouri Southern State University, in their pursuit to seek MoDOT approval, to name the portion of the 249 Bypass east of Joplin in honor of my husband, the late Warren E. Hearnes, Governor of Missouri.

Sincerely,

Betty C. Hearnes

Betty C. Hearnes

JOPLIN
CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

602 S. Main, Joplin, Missouri 64801 | 417. 625.4789 | Fax: 417. 624.7948 | www.visitjoplinmo.com

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The City of Joplin is weighing the idea of changing the name of Hearnes Boulevard back to South Main Street throughout this entire corridor. As you may know, from a 1965 City Council resolution, South Main Street stops at 33rd Street. From there, south to the "City Limits" the roadway is known as Hearnes Boulevard. Many local citizens may not realize that this corridor has two different names, however it becomes cumbersome to those traveling and those providing directions to travelers to this area.

This name change would provide several benefits:

- Allows Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) to mark the I-44 Exit 6 as "Main Street" exit. Currently, in accordance with Federal Highway Standards, MoDOT cannot do so because Joplin's Main Street does not touch this interchange. This creates confusion for travelers exiting Interstate 44 who are trying reach destinations along Main Street or adjacent to it, or are visiting Downtown.
- Offers a more precise method of communicating directions to those traveling to the southern portion of Main Street. This will be of great importance for patients and visitors to the new Mercy Hospital opening soon at the I-44/Hearnes Boulevard interchange.

We would like your input as to how such an address name change would impact your life or business. From discussion with the Joplin Postmaster the transition would not impact any mail service to your address. Both the U.S. Postal Service and E-911 management already recognize the areas as both South Main Street and Hearnes Blvd.

Please respond to Patrick Tuttle at 417-624-0820, ext. 271 with your concerns/comments.

We would appreciate your response by _____.

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YOUR RESPONSE:

I support this change ✓.

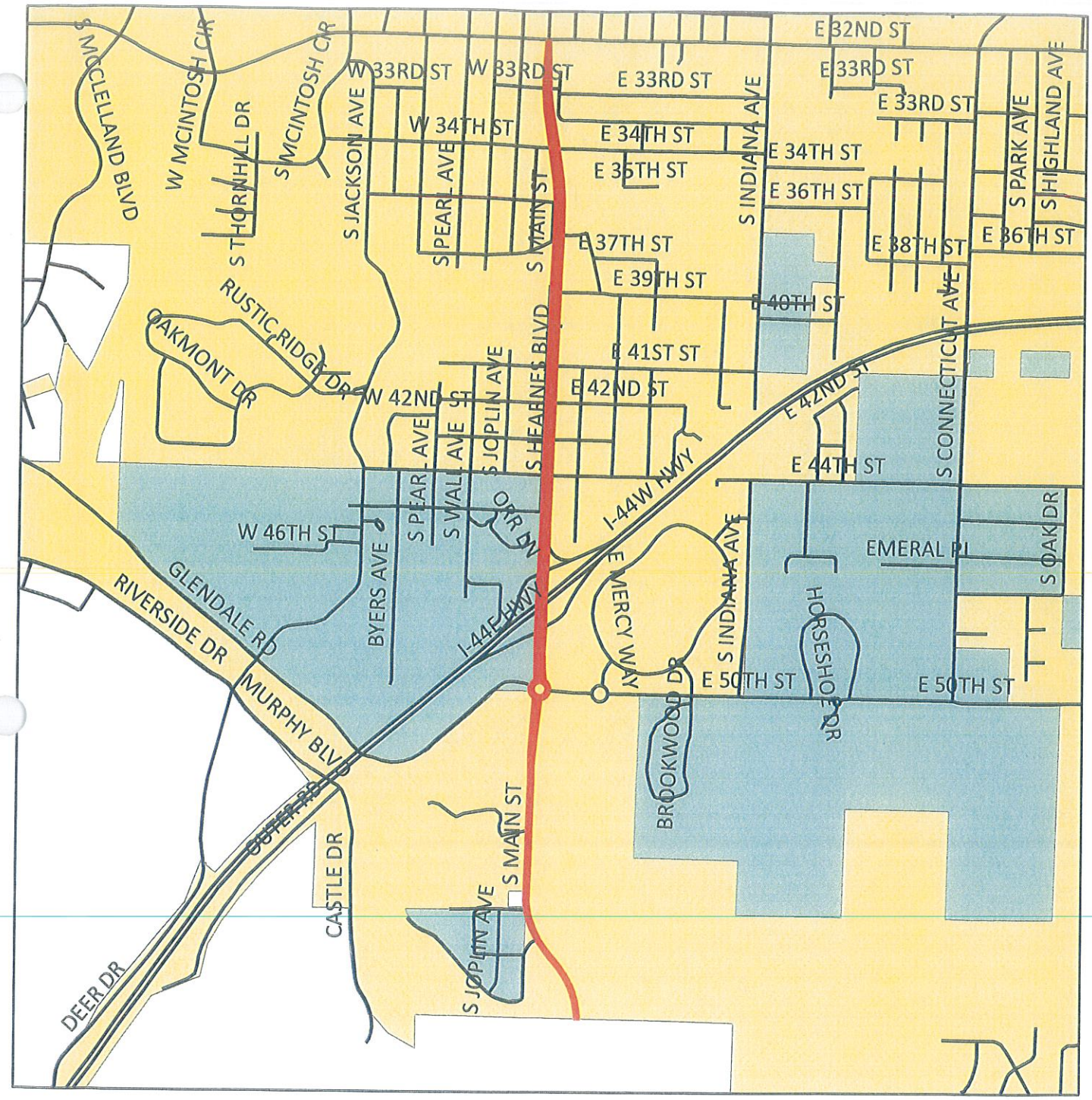
My concerns with the change are: _____

_____

_____

Name: [signature] Address: 4130 S. MAIN ST

VOLK Insurance Agency



Case 016-16: Beginning at 33rd St. and extending south to the current City of Joplin boundary – A request to re-name the existing public right-of-way from "Hearnes Boulevard" to "Main Street" – City of Joplin.

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Case 016-16: Beginning at 33rd St. and extending south to the current City of Joplin boundary – A request to rename the existing public right-of-way from "Hearnes Boulevard" to "Main Street" – City of Joplin.

Mr. Eastman opened the public hearing for Case 016-16.

Mr. Patrick Tuttle, Convention & Visitors Bureau Director for the City of Joplin, brought this request to this commission and the City Council a year ago, with the City Council not approving the request at that time. With the increased traffic due to Mercy Hospital being open, it is time to bring the request back to this commission and the City Council for consideration.

On April 13, 1965, the City Council named the newly developed roadway as Hearnes Boulevard. Former Governor Warren E. Hearnes is credited with giving Joplin its four-year university. The new part of Main Street extending from 33rd Street to the south city limits was dedicated to the governor's honor. At that time the city limits did not extend all the way south to Interstate 44.

Mr. Tuttle believes it is very fitting to honor Governor Hearnes and is working on a project to name the Route 249 Bypass in his honor as a memorial highway, creating a longer and better legacy for the governor.

Mr. Tuttle discussed several reasons for changing the name from Hearnes Boulevard to Main Street. He discussed the impact of Mercy Hospital being in the south part of Joplin, with that area changing to commercial with more medical influence.

People traveling between Freeman and Mercy hospitals must consider how to reach the facilities via another roadway that may not be familiar to them. This is not a positive part of the Joplin community when people are in timeless stress or dire need to find their loved ones.

Mr. Tuttle stated the name Main Street cannot be placed on signage on I-44. The federal highway standards do not allow that because Main Street does not touch I-44. Joplin's prosperous downtown businesses or historical districts cannot be promoted along I-44 since the roadway is named Hearnes Boulevard in that area. The signage for the exit advertises Joplin and Racine, but Joplin's downtown district or Main Street districts or anything historic is not promoted.

Access to the Joplin Regional Airport is now being directed from I-44 via Range Line Road and through Webb City. That piece has not been changed since the airport terminal was moved onto North Main Street.

Mr. Tuttle has visited with Mrs. Hearnes since this request was initially presented last year. She is very much appreciative that the City of Joplin is taking the time to consider naming Route 249 in Governor Hearnes' honor. She understands the growth along Main Street with Mercy Hospital, which she has personally seen in her travels throughout the state. She supports the name change to Main Street and has endorsed a letter to the City of Joplin stating such. The letter is to support the Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) application for naming Route 249 in the governor's honor, and she is also in agreement that the City staff took the honor to visit with her about renaming the street.

Mr. Tuttle asked the commissioners for their support and to forward recommendation to the City Council to change the part of South Main Street that is Hearnes Boulevard back to Main Street for the sake of tourism, for the sake of Mercy Hospital, and for the sake of the businesses in the area.

Mr. Ramsour asked if the roadway between 32nd and 33rd Streets is actually named Main Street, and Mr. Tuttle replied that block is South Main. The ordinance states the roadway is named Hearnes Boulevard from 33rd Street to the city limits, which has moved over several years' time. The current city limits lie south of Riviera Drive near the Silver Creek bridge.

Mr. Duncan asked why the commissioners are not looking at the application to move the name Hearnes to Route 249. Mr. Tuttle replied when he initially discussed the whole process with MoDOT, both the naming as well as the renaming, MoDOT suggested doing the renaming first and then follow up with the naming. The City Council wanted to do both simultaneously.

Mr. Tuttle stated the Missouri Southern State University (MSSU) Board of Governors thought this was a decisive issue amongst the City Council, even though the vote was split. The Board of Governors will not support this request without a letter from the Mayor. Mr. Tuttle will also present to the City Council a prepared letter to the president of the MSSU Board of Governors asking for their full support and endorsement of the application as well. The application has a 100-person signature with a $2,000 fee, and an application signed by all parties of interest, as well as the area legislators, who are all in favor of the request.

Mr. Smith asked if the entire roadway will be named Main Street, and Mr. Tuttle replied yes.

Mr. Eastman asked for comments from the commissioners and the audience, and none were received. He then closed the public hearing for Case 016-16.

MR. SMITH MOVED, SECONDED BY MR. RAMSOUR, THAT CASE 016-16 BE FORWARDED TO THE CITY COUNCIL WITH RECOMMENDATION FOR APPROVAL, BASED UPON THE COMMENTS RECEIVED IN THE PLANNING REPORT AND DURING THE PUBLIC HEARING. THE MOTION CARRIED, WITH MR. BROWN, MR. CORTEZ, MR. DERMOTT, MR. DUNCAN, MR. EASTMAN, MR. RAMSOUR, AND MR. SMITH VOTING "AYE" (7 IN FAVOR, 0 ABSENT).