

RES 16-049

Wilmington, Delaware
June 2, 2016

#4225

Sponsor:

**Council
Member
Shabazz**

WHEREAS, Wilmington City Council (the “Council”) has enacted the provision of Section 2-3 of the Wilmington City Code regarding the authorization and procedures for naming City streets, parks, playgrounds, plazas, buildings, facilities, statues, monuments, and other lands reserved for public use in order to commemorate a particular person and his/her social significance to the city; and

Co-Sponsor:

**Council
Member
Chukwuocha**

WHEREAS, Elbert Park, located at 621 Townsend Street, was named after Samuel G. Elbert (1865 – 1939), a doctor, businessman, civic and community leader well known for serving the African American community within South Wilmington as a devoted public servant; and

WHEREAS, Council deems it necessary to name the playground and basketball court facilities within this park for the purpose of honoring two individuals who have made considerable contributions to the South Wilmington community and to the City of Wilmington as a whole, namely Joseph Perkins and Norman “Stormin” Oliver; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Joseph Nathan Perkins was born in Wilmington, Delaware on October 27, 1954 to Hattie (Zudy) Perkins and Randolph Curley Jr., and attended Bancroft, Elbert, and Howard High Schools; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Perkins met his wife of 38 years, Deborah Perkins, in 1975, and they were married in 1977 and had seven children, 3 god-children and 17 grandchildren together; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Perkins grew up in, and maintained a lifelong relationship with, the Southbridge Community, and later moved to and became a strong community member of Wilmington's Hilltop neighborhood for twenty years; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Perkins worked as a Youth Advocate and Counselor for Project Stay Free through the Kingswood Community Center, and helped to manage and support community activities at the Martin Luther Center in Southbridge and the Southbridge Community; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Perkins served as secretary to the Stallion's Social Club, which he joined as a teenager and remained a member until his death; became a member of the Monday Club; and was co-creator of the Midnight Basketball League and originator of Overnight Youth Camping ; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Joseph Perkins passed away on May 16, 2015 and is remembered for his strong community involvement and many natural talents including art, photography, basketball and carpentry; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Norman Oliver has been an innovative leader in Wilmington and the State of Delaware, and after graduating from Delaware State University in 1985, served in a staff role with former Mayor Daniel Frawley, then as political advisor to former County Executives Dennis Greenhouse and Thomas P. Gordon, and former Attorney General Charles Oberly; and

WHEREAS, in 1992, Mr. Oliver was elected to Wilmington City Council to represent the Fourth Council District until 2004, where he chaired the Community and Economic Development Committee; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Oliver was elected as Chair of Wilmington's Democratic Party and was a part of Delaware's delegation to the Democratic National Convention in 2000, further developing the leadership skills which allowed him to run national, statewide and local political campaigns; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Oliver became well known throughout the State as the founder of "Stormin's Classic Basketball Summer League" (1980 to 2000), which provided an opportunity for young men to learn the many important lessons of sportsmanship and team play while also emphasizing the value of education and community service; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Oliver is also an entrepreneur and businessman founded organizations serving at-risk youth and teen populations, including Nor Enterprises Inc., and Our Youth, Inc.; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Oliver co-hosted the televised show, "Community Cross Fire" along with the late Delaware State Representative Hazel D. Plant; and

WHEREAS, in 2002 Mr. Oliver was appointed to the Board of Directors of the Delaware State University, serving until 2008, and is active in the Wilmington Rotary Club, Monday Club and Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc.; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Oliver received the National Jefferson Award for Volunteerism in February 2016; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Oliver, who currently resides in Middletown, was married to his wife Margret for 23 years prior to her passing in 2015, and is the father of two children; and

WHEREAS, Council deems that Mr. Joseph Perkins and Mr. Norman Oliver have both made significant contributions to the wellbeing of the Southbridge community and the city as a whole, and are to be recognized through the commemorative naming of the playground and basketball court facilities, respectively.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WILMINGTON, that the Council hereby approves the change to the current name of the Elbert Park located at 621 Townsend Street, to “The Joseph Perkins Playground and Norman Oliver Courts at Elbert Park”.

Passed by Council

June 2, 2016

ATTEST: Maribel Seijo
City Clerk

Approved as to form this 1st

day of June 2016

[Signature]
Assistant City Solicitor

SYNOPSIS: This Resolution authorizes changes to the current name of the Elbert Park located at 621 Townsend Street, to “The Joseph Perkins Playground and Norman Oliver Courts at Elbert Park”.