



Brewerytown Sharswood Community Civic Association
3000 "D" W. Master Street, Philadelphia, PA 19121
Office#: 267-585-4246 / Fax#: 267-858-4153

March 2, 2022

Re: Caroline LeCount St

CM Clarke,

*Brewerytown Sharswood Community Civic Association (BSCCA) is honored to have been invited by our friends at Rename Taney Coalition, to lend our **support** for renaming Taney St to Caroline LeCount St.*

We applaud the thorough and thoughtful outreach by volunteers from multiple registered community organizations. Volunteers went door-to-door three times - listening, understanding, and finding common ground with residents on or near Taney St. Multiple events (in-person and virtual town halls), a telephone hotline, email updates, social media, and numerous earned media provided multiple methods to reach everyone that was interested in participating in the engagement process.

In the end, the community of North Philadelphia has spoken. The overwhelming majority of residents of Taney St support the renaming, and LeCount received the highest number of responses.

Renaming a street for Caroline LeCount, a legendary civil rights activist, educator, and school principal who fought for equal educational opportunities for all would be a fitting honor for such an accomplished Philadelphian.

Sincerely,

Darnetta Arce

Darnetta Arce
Executive Director

cc: file



Fairmount Community Development Corporation

January 27, 2022

Honorable Darrell L. Clarke
City Council President
City Hall, Room 494
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Dear Council President Clarke:

I am writing on behalf of the Fairmount Community Development Corporation, in support of the Rename Taney Coalition's campaign to change the name of the city street currently named for U.S. Supreme Court Justice Roger Taney and instead honor Philadelphia's Caroline LeCount.

The currently-named Taney Street crosses many city neighborhoods including Fairmount and Brewerytown in your district. The portion between Aspen Street and Girard Avenue in Fairmount was originally called Minor Street, until it was renamed in 1858 after Justice Taney whose Dred Scott decision the prior year denied the citizenship of Black Americans. This change was later reflected city-wide. Justice Taney has no connection to Philadelphia and does not represent our community's values.

Caroline LeCount dedicated her life to Philadelphia as an educator and civil rights advocate. For nearly fifty years, LeCount worked as teacher and principal at the Ohio Street School, later named for Octavius V. Catto, on Lombard Street between 20th and 21st Street. LeCount participated in the campaign that resulted in the 1867 law integrating public transit in Pennsylvania. Hers was a life lived with a vital purpose, that created opportunities for generations of Philadelphians and advanced the cause of equity and equality.

As Villanova University Professor Judith Giesberg wrote in a December 6, 2021 *Philadelphia Inquirer* editorial, "Renaming Taney Street in honor of Caroline LeCount would be a small way for the city to honor her work. And it would align Philadelphia with its aspiration to become a city that recognizes the potential in and respects the humanity of all its residents."

The chance to see our neighborhoods and public spaces recognize Caroline LeCount, instead of Roger Taney, is an opportunity to seize. Fairmount Community Development Corporation enthusiastically supports this change and encourages city leaders to take the action.

Sincerely,

Patrick Sherlock
Executive Director
Fairmount Community Development Corporation

January 24, 2022

Darrell C. Clark, Council President
City Hall Rm 494
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Dear Council President Clark:

RE: Center City Residents' Association Support for the Renaming of Taney Street

We are aware that *Rename Taney*, a group of concerned Philadelphia residents is petitioning to change the name of Taney Street. *Rename Taney* wants to permanently change the name to "LeCount Street" to honor Philadelphia native Caroline LeCount. CCRA wholeheartedly supports the decision to rename Taney Street "LeCount Street."

CCRA has heard many voices and perspectives from *Rename Taney* on why renaming Taney Street is important. Roger B. Taney, a Southern slave owner, has no connection to Philadelphia. He was also notorious as the author of the infamous *Dred Scott* decision from the US Supreme Court holding that black people were inferior and could never have the same rights as white people. It is widely agreed that this is the worst opinion ever to be issued by the Supreme Court.

By contrast, Caroline LeCount has a hyper-local connection to the city. She taught at a school located on Lombard St. between 20th and 21st, and later on became principal of the same school. Outside of the classroom, LeCount was a leader of the city's African American community. She was best known for her efforts against streetcar segregation in the city.

During the Civil War, streetcar transportation was becoming an important part of the daily lives of black Philadelphians. But the segregation of the streetcars influenced a new generation of African American men and women to push for equal rights. One tactic practiced by African American women across the country was to defiantly board streetcars, knowing that they would be forcibly removed by the conductors. These women then appealed to the courts, seeking redress in the courtroom and also in the court of public opinion. On March 22, 1867, Pennsylvania passed a law banning streetcar segregation. Three days later, LeCount and a friend eagerly sought to board a streetcar. When the conductor refused to stop, but "sneered at them as the car passed on," LeCount took a copy of the new law to the nearest police officer, who arrested and fined the conductor.

CCRA is currently building a coalition with neighboring RCOs to address systemic racism. Knowing the history of Taney and LeCount, it is time for a change. Therefore, again, CCRA wholeheartedly supports the decision to rename Taney Street, "LeCount Street."

Thank you for your consideration in this matter,

Sincerely,


Richard Gross,
President

cc: Ben Keys, Rename Taney

Board of Directors

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February 13, 2022

Honorable Darrell L. Clarke
City Council President
District 5
City Hall, Room 494
Philadelphia, PA 19107-3290

Dear Council President Clarke,

I am writing your office on behalf of The Athletic Club of Fairhill, Inc to lend our support to the Rename Taney Coalition's Campaign, in an effort to change the current street name from Taney Street to LeCount Street.

It seems clear that the community has spoken and are in alignment that the current street name does not reflect the values of the community.

We respectfully ask City Council to consider our request and take the necessary steps to formal change Taney Street to LeCount Street. We cannot think of a better way for the city to honor Ms. LeCount.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Sherman Washington

Co-Founder



December 3, 2021

Endorsement of Name Change from Taney Street to LeCount Street

The Fidler Square Neighborhood Association is delighted to formally endorse the proposal to honor the activist, educator, and lifelong Philadelphian Caroline LeCount by renaming Taney Street to LeCount Street. Our endorsement reflects the result of 18 months of active community involvement and engagement that culminated in a community-wide vote that chose LeCount out of five honorable candidates.

LeCount was an outspoken leader in Philadelphia's early civil rights movement. She worked tirelessly to integrate Philadelphia's streetcars in the 1860s, nearly 100 years before Rosa Parks took her famous stand in Alabama. She was also a renowned Philadelphia educator and school leader, devoting her fifty-year career to fighting for racial justice and equality of access to high-quality education for all of Philadelphia's children.

We commend the Rename Taney Coalition for their grassroots efforts to find common ground across disparate communities and build consensus around this change, and support the renaming of the street to LeCount Street and honor a great Philadelphian.

-Board of the Fidler Square Neighborhood Association

BELLA VISTA NEIGHBORS ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 63955
Philadelphia, PA 19147
(215) 627-0057
www.bellavistaneighbors.org

Bella Vista Neighbors Association (BVNA) is an independent, non-profit, registered community organization. Our goal is to improve the quality of life for all residents, businesses, and property owners in Bella Vista.

Dec 7, 2021

Hon. Kenyatta Johnson
City Council District 2
City Hall, Room
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Re: Caroline LeCount Street

CM Johnson,

BVNA is honored to have been invited by our friends at Fidler Square Neighbors, to lend our **support** for renaming Taney St to Caroline Le Count St -- and we offer it wholeheartedly.

We applaud the thorough & thoughtful outreach by the multiple community groups. In the end, the community of South Philadelphia has spoken. The overwhelming majority of residents of Taney St support the renaming, and LeCount received the highest number of responses.

Caroline LeCount was an important figure in the Old 7th Ward, part of which is now in present day Bella Vista. She studied at the ICY at 9th & Bainbridge, while also living in the area. At the age of 21, she sought enforcement of a recently passed state law finally allowing Blacks the right to ride street cars, by attempting to board one at 11th & Lombard. She had already been active in the movement to allow access to street cars, together with her fiancé O.V.Catto, so when she was refused entry -- she took her fight to court.

Harrisburg had only recently passed the law, but word traveled slowly; it was hollow without enforcement. When the judge did not believe her newspaper clipping at first, she produced a certified copy of the law from a local state office. The fine was \$100 - \$4,000 in today's terms- and street car companies took note.

While Catto was tragically assassinated steps from his home at 8th & South while helping register recently eligible Blacks to vote - Caroline LeCount, who herself was already principal at the Ohio Street School at the time, continued there for another 50 years. She never married.



January 18, 2022

Philadelphia City Council
City Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19107-3290

Dear City Councilpeople Johnson, Clarke, and Jones,

The South of South Neighborhood Association (SOSNA) is in complete support of the initiative to rename “Taney Street” to “LeCount Street.” We are committed to supporting initiatives that cultivate a diverse and inclusive neighborhood. The renaming of Minor Street and Barnell Street respectively to “Taney Street” reflects the racist strategy used to promote specific historical events which damaged this nation as a whole.

Now, in the wake of this national reckoning, the street’s name should reflect the transition of the community’s values and priorities. As such, changing the name honoring Philadelphian Caroline LeCount, whose actions, including desegregating the city’s streetcars and integrating the Commonwealth’s public transit system, exemplifies the aspirations we expect for this generation.

SOSNA has been a proponent of “Rename Taney” from its inception and has successfully engaged neighbors and neighborhood organizations, including Fidler Square Neighborhood Association, the Center City Residents Association, Residents Organized for Advocacy and Direction and the Young Chances Foundation. Community support has been widely documented and nearly 96% of Taney Street residents support this change. SOSNA’s position is aligned with our community.

We urge you to pass the necessary bill in the City Council to remove the name “Taney” and designate the new name as “LeCount Street”. The past is a living thing, ever present and repeatable based on the ideology we are willing to acknowledge and accept. As a neighborhood and a city, we have joined in the national reckoning of addressing the pre-existing condition of this country called racism. This reckoning spans the breadth of community interaction and pride.

Respectfully,

Nolan Tully
South of South Neighborhood Association, Chair

CC: Rename Taney

*Tasker Morris Neighborhood Association
1539 S. Patton Street
Philadelphia PA 19146*

January 20th, 2021



The Tasker Morris Neighborhood Association would like to extend its formal support for the renaming of Taney Street to LeCount Street as proposed by the Rename Taney Coalition.

The purpose of Tasker-Morris Neighbors Association is to identify, promote and participate in actions that will contribute to the general welfare of the community through its five core missions:

1. Providing a medium for identifying and developing community interests, and for disseminating information pertaining to those interests within and outside the community;
2. Working to secure needed improvements in public services and facilities;
3. Promoting general social welfare;
4. Cooperating with similar organizations in the City of Philadelphia;
5. Combating community deterioration.

After participating in a series of community meetings with robust turnout and thorough discussion, TMNA maintains the belief that the proposed renaming will make our neighborhood a more beautiful place. We look forward to seeing the plan come to life in coordination with City Council.



Charles Reeves
President, Tasker Morris Neighbor Association
267.234.3979





YOUNG CHANCES FOUNDATION

Tyrique Glasgow

Young Chances Foundation

2703 Tasker street

Y.C.F. Executive Director

youngchancesfoundation@gmail.com

Telephone:267-585-2923

City Council of Philadelphia,

Our Community based organization formally endorses the proposal to honor Philadelphian Caroline LeCount by renaming Taney Street to LeCount Street.

Young Chances Foundation

IT'S NOT WHAT YOU DO IT'S HOW YOU DO IT