

Ordinance No. 859-2025

By Council Member Hairston

AN EMERGENCY ORDINANCE

Designating East 90th Street between St. Clair Avenue and East 91st Street with a secondary and honorary designation of “Ruby Mumford Way”.

WHEREAS, Ruby Mumford, along with her husband Jesse Munford Sr. and five children, moved to 797 East 90th Street and St. Clair Avenue, during the summer of 1958, as the first black family on the street; and

WHEREAS, as the years went on, Ruby Mumford became a big influence on East 90th Street, as part of the Neighborhood Street Club to help keep the neighborhood safe, clean and politically connected, and helping organize a fun-filled block party every year to encourage the neighborhood and Glenville community to come together; and

WHEREAS, having one of the largest families in the neighborhood, with seven children by 1962 meant that Mrs. Mumford was “neighborhood mom” to a lot more children than just her own; she chose not to work, but remain a homemaker until her youngest child was enrolled in school full-time; and

WHEREAS, a survey was taken of the families in the neighborhood, to see if there was a need for a new school to be built nearby, since the closest elementary school at the time was Miles Standish Elementary School which meant Mrs. Mumford’s children had to cross St. Clair Avenue to go to school; she felt she was one of the reasons that Charles H. Lake Elementary School was built, because she had so many children that would benefit from having a school closer to home; and

WHEREAS, Ruby Mumford also fulfilled her civic duties by voting, working the election polls, and serving as a juror on jury duty; she loved children and always advocated for their well-being; and

WHEREAS, in the 1960's Ruby participated in The March of Dimes Foundation, a nationwide, non-profit organization started by President Franklin D. Roosevelt that is still one of the largest foundations today; in addition to being a homemaker, and caring for seven children of her own, she still made time to walk the neighborhood, going door to door, asking for dime donations that would help fund research for a vaccine needed to combat polio; she took this opportunity to help bring awareness to child polio, birth defects, and infant mortality; and

WHEREAS, in the late '60s and '70s Ruby Mumford was part of the workforce, working at Stouffer's El Cantina, a popular downtown cafeteria; of course, she was a great cook and helped prepare foods for the cafeteria as well as the upscale restaurant, "Top of The Town", located in the same building on the 38th floor, and she was later promoted to work in Stouffer's Test Kitchen where she assisted in preparing and testing the recipes for Stouffer's famous foods; and

WHEREAS, Ruby raised more than one teenager at a time in her household and recognized the need for them to learn responsibility by having a summer job; through her great rapport with her place of employment, she was trusted to bring in summer help from her neighborhood, including her daughter and several of her daughter’s friends who were hired for the summer; these jobs provided financial help with their school's senior expenses, and some even received permanent job offers after graduation; this was another way Ruby looked out for her children, neighborhood, and community; and

WHEREAS, over the years, Mrs. Mumford’s children attended and were active in a storefront church, located between 91st and 92nd on St. Clair Avenue, Angelic Missionary Baptist Church, under Pastor Thomas Craig and she served as the church's Treasurer; around 1980 she started attending Greater Faith Missionary Baptist Church, located on 88th Street and St. Clair Avenue, where she served on the Mother's Board;

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after the death of her Pastor, Leon Lawrence, she moved her membership to True Vine Baptist Church in 2004 along with her daughter and family; under Pastor Edward McGhee, she continued to serve on the Mother's Ministry; and

WHEREAS, on Sundays, Ruby Mumford encouraged other children in the neighborhood to attend church as well; when their parents were invited to witness their children involved in plays, reciting poems, and singing in the choir, some of them even joined the church; and

WHEREAS, with the help of her daughter, Ruby made sure that the families on her street were fed by extending the OASIS Food Ministry from True Vine Baptist Church to 90th Street; produce was made available from her porch to families on the street who could not travel to the church for pick-up; and

WHEREAS, Ruby's family experienced good times and sad times; as a young mother, she lost a son in 1965, her husband was called home in 1992, and another son in 2004; her best friends were all deceased as well, but she believed in keeping God first in her life, and the power of prayer for comfort and strength; Ruby Mumford was a Gold Star Mother and a Strong Black Woman; and

WHEREAS, Ruby Mumford, the matriarch of her family, has lived on East 90th Street for 62 years and was the oldest homeowner residing from the 1950s; one of her favorite past times over the years was to sit on her porch, enjoy the summer weather, and speak or wave to neighbors walking by; neighborhood children from the past six decades came back to visit her and reminisce about their childhood and the good old days; some called her on Mother's Day remembering that her phone number had not changed since they were kids; and

WHEREAS, at the age of 92 years young she still looked out for the safety of the children playing on the street; the neighborhood children affectionately called her "Biggie," which is the name of endearment she answered to her 17 Grandchildren, 16 Great-grandchildren, and 5 Great-great Grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, the citizens of Cleveland want to honor Ruby Mumford with a secondary street sign designation of "Ruby Mumford Way" in recognition of the immeasurable amount of influence he has had on her community, especially East 90th Street; and

WHEREAS, this ordinance constitutes an emergency measure for the immediate preservation of public peace, property, health or safety; now, therefore,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CLEVELAND:

Section 1. That East 90th Street between St. Clair Avenue and East 91st Street is designated with a secondary and honorary designation of "Ruby Mumford Way".

Section 2. That this ordinance is hereby declared to be an emergency measure and, provided it receives the affirmative vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to Council, it shall take effect and be in force immediately upon its passage and approval by the Mayor; otherwise it shall take effect and be in force from and after the earliest period allowed by law.

JHO:jho
7-9-2025
FOR: Councilmember Hairston

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READ FIRST TIME on JULY 9, 2025
and referred to DIRECTORS of Public Works, City Planning Commission, Law;
COMMITTEE on Finance, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

REPORTS

CITY CLERK

READ SECOND TIME

CITY CLERK

READ THIRD TIME

PRESIDENT

CITY CLERK

APPROVED

MAYOR

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REPORT
after Second Reading

PASSAGE RECOMMENDED BY
COMMITTEE ON
FINANCE, DIVERSITY, EQUITY
and INCLUSION

FILED WITH COMMITTEE