



**MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING BOARD**  
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

**MCPB No. 22-019**

**RESOLUTION**

WHEREAS, The Montgomery County Planning Board of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, by virtue of the authority vested upon it in Sections 17-212 and 20-202 of the Land Use Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, is the exclusive street naming and re-naming authority within that portion of the Regional District lying situate within Montgomery County; and

WHEREAS, The Montgomery County Planning Board has delegated said authority to the Montgomery County Planning Department; and

WHEREAS, on January 5, 2022, Montgomery County Councilmember Hans Riemer made the following request of Gwen Wright, Director of the Montgomery County Planning Department:

To properly recognize Reverend Josiah Henson, I am pleased to join community leaders such as Catherine Leggett (Chair of the Josiah Henson Museum Project Capital Campaign), the Josiah Henson Museum & Park Advisory Committee, Warren Fleming (who has worked for years to bring proper recognition to Rev. Josiah Henson), and many other luminaries, in requesting that M-NCPPC rename Montrose Parkway in his honor...

Although less than two miles long, Montrose Parkway today runs through the northern part of the farm property where Rev. Josiah Henson was enslaved for 30 years.

WHEREAS, The Montgomery County Planning Department timely conducted an analysis of Councilmember Riemer's request and determined, that 1) a portion of Montrose Parkway does indeed run through the northern part of the property where Rev. Josiah Henson was enslaved; 2) there are only two properties that currently have addresses on Montrose Parkway; 3) one of the owners of property on Montrose Parkway – Peerless Rockville – has submitted a letter in enthusiastic support of the renaming; and 4) this renaming is an appropriate way to commemorate Rev. Josiah Henson, a historic figure of local, national and international significance.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that The Montgomery County Planning Board of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission does hereby direct the Montgomery County Planning Department to immediately initiate the process of renaming Montrose Parkway to Josiah Henson Parkway.

Approved as to  
Legal Sufficiency:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Matty Hill".

MNCPPC Legal Department

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This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of Resolution No. 22-019, adopted by The Montgomery County Planning Board of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission at its regular meeting held on Thursday, February 24, 2022 in Wheaton, Maryland on motion of Commissioner \_\_\_\_, seconded by Commissioner \_\_\_\_, with a vote of \_\_ to \_\_, Commissioners \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_, voting in favor of the motion.

Casey Anderson, Chair  
Montgomery County Planning Board



HANS RIEMER  
COUNCILMEMBER AT-LARGE

COMMITTEES  
CHAIR  
PLANNING, HOUSING, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PHED)  
  
MEMBER  
TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENT (T&E)

## MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

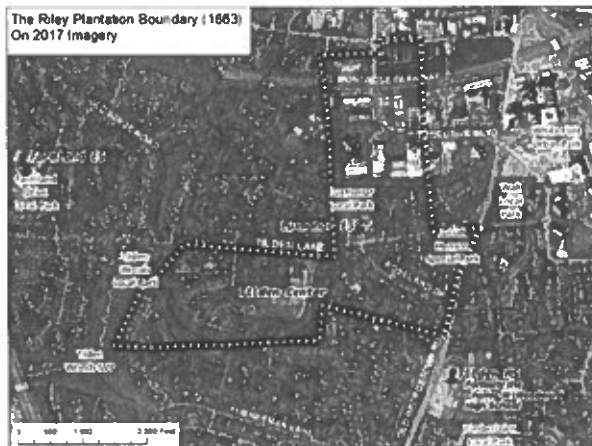
January 5, 2022

Gwen Wright  
Planning Director  
Montgomery County Planning Department  
2425 Reddie Drive, Floor 14  
Wheaton, MD 20902  
*via e-mail*

Dear Gwen,

As you know, Reverend Josiah Henson (1789-1883) is renowned as an abolitionist activist who helped foment the Civil War and end slavery. He was enslaved on the former Riley plantation on Old Georgetown Road, now the site of the new Henson Museum. To properly recognize Josiah Henson, I am pleased to join community leaders such as Catherine Leggett (Chair of the Henson Museum Advisory Board), Warren Fleming (who has worked for years to bring proper recognition to Josiah Henson), and many other luminaries, in requesting that M-NCPPC rename Montrose Parkway in his honor.

Although less than two miles long, Montrose Parkway today runs through the northern part of the farm property where Josiah Henson lived and labored. Following is a present-day area map with the property boundaries marked from 1863.



Renaming Montrose Parkway will indelibly honor Josiah Henson and his life of perseverance and determination, providing him the public recognition he justifiably deserves, while reminding our community of our unique history and the role of African American leaders in our County since its earliest days. It will give our residents and children a localized sense of ownership of the fight for freedom that Josiah Henson embodies. This recognition of his work would also provide cause for celebration of the work for all our County's civil rights heroes.

Additionally, the renaming of Montrose Parkway will also have minimal impact on the two properties that currently use the street as their address, help distinguish between Montrose Road and Montrose Parkway, and ensure that more residents and visitors recognize the impact that Rev. Henson continues to have on Montgomery County.

If you have any questions please contact me at [councilmember.riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:councilmember.riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov) or 301-938-6899. Thank you!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hans Riemer', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Hans Riemer



January 26, 2022

Dear Director Wright,

Peerless Rockville contacts you in response to Councilmember Reimer's proposal to rename Montrose Parkway after Reverend Josiah Henson. Rev. Henson was a long-time Montgomery County resident now internationally famous for his own struggle for freedom, his abolitionist activities freeing others, and his autobiography serving as the inspiration for the influential novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. As an organization dedicated to celebrating and sharing Rockville's history, as well as owners of Montrose Schoolhouse on this street, we enthusiastically support naming a street after Rev. Henson.

Peerless Rockville regularly highlights and promotes Josiah Henson's life story, which include a time in Rockville, and celebrates his global importance to the end of slavery in the United States. We recognize his importance to Harriet Beecher's international best-selling novel but have made a point of focusing on his own amazing story beyond the character of Uncle Tom.

We have partnered with staff from Montgomery Parks to bring information about Josiah Henson's life and the development of the new Josiah Henson museum to broader audiences. We emphatically agree that Henson warrants the spotlight as much as other Maryland African-American leaders of his time, such as Frederick Douglass and Harriet Tubman.

Montrose Parkway is located on what was the northern part of the Riley Farm, where Josiah Henson lived and labored while enslaved in Maryland. This makes it a very appropriate place to bear his name. There will be minimal impact on the only two properties that currently use the street as an address: our property, the historic Montrose School, and a WMATA property used as an emergency exit for the Red line. Maryland State Highway Administration is in the process of selling the schoolhouse land to Peerless Rockville.

As owners of the Montrose School at this location, a new street name will help clarify the difference between Montrose Road and Montrose Parkway. We also believe this is the time to make a change, before new townhomes and retail are built on what is currently Montrose Parkway

Peerless Rockville is happy to work with any party to assist with this wonderful idea. Please contact us with any further information about the process.

Sincerely,

Nancy Pickard  
Executive Director

## Wright, Gwen

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**From:** Eileen McGuckian <phileen3@verizon.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, January 28, 2022 10:13 AM  
**To:** Wright, Gwen  
**Cc:** councilmember.riemer  
**Subject:** MPI support of renaming of street for Josiah Henson

**[EXTERNAL EMAIL]** Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Dear Ms. Wright,

Montgomery Preservation, Inc. (MPI) here joins a host of individuals and organizations in favor of re-naming Montrose Parkway in honor of Josiah Henson.

Particularly during the past decade, Montgomery Countians have been proud to learn about the life and legacy of this outstanding individual who spent much of his life enslaved on the Riley farm near Rockville. Rev. Henson was an important personage, a Marylander who became renown nationally and internationally as a successful escapee from bondage who not only rescued others but dedicated his life to educating and supporting those who were able to find freedom. For Montgomery County to have purchased property and created a world-class museum at the location of his experience as a slave is a feather in our collective cap.

It is especially appropriate to name a street near the farm where Josiah Henson and his mother lived and about which he wrote in his autobiographies. It is also appropriate that re-naming Montrose Parkway leaves in place Montrose Road, a solid reminder of the 19th and 20th century rural settlement that no longer exists; MPI believes it is important to retain historic place names as well as historic properties and personalities. And perhaps re-naming will draw attention to protecting historic Montrose Schoolhouse, the sole remaining structure of that small community.

MPI is an enthusiastic support of this name change, and thanks you for considering it.

Sincerely,

Eileen McGuckian, president  
Montgomery Preservation, Inc.



February 7, 2022

Gwen Wright, Planning Director  
Montgomery County Planning Department  
2425 Reedie Drive, 14th Floor  
Wheaton, MD 20902

Dear Director Wright,

I am writing in support of the proposed renaming of Montrose Parkway to honor Rev. Josiah Henson. As you well know, Henson was an enormously influential figure in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and though far too few county residents are familiar with his story, his legacy continues to be felt today.

At Montgomery History, we believe that not only will renaming the road be a fitting tribute to a notable figure in county history, it will bring greater public attention to the experience of all those who were enslaved in Montgomery County and Maryland prior to the Civil War. As an organization we share the County's commitment to "Racial Equity and Social Justice" and are actively working to confront and counter traditional histories which privileged whites and served, at times, to buttress a social order that devalued and dehumanized Blacks. While renaming the road will be entirely symbolic, it will nevertheless be meaningful. Small measures like this contribute to and reinforce more complete and nuanced historical narratives, such as those now offered by Montgomery Parks at the excellent Josiah Henson Museum.

In these circumstances, it is always important also to consider the name being replaced. Based upon our preliminary research, removing the name Montrose would not be problematic as it seems to simply identify a place. On the 1865 Martenet and Bond map, "Montrose Post Office" appears along with a small rural community associated with it. All the places subsequently named Montrose (the roads, the Montrose School, the Montrose Park subdivisions of the mid-20th-century) took the name from being geographically near that original post office/community. There is no Montrose family, no property or farm with that name (pre-1865), it is not even derived from an original patent name or an original patent holder.

Thank you for the opportunity to share Montgomery History's perspective on this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matt Logan". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Matthew Logan  
Executive Director



*The Menare Foundation, Inc.*  
*"Preserving the Legacy of the Underground Railroad"*

Gwen Wright  
Planning Director  
Montgomery County Planning Department  
2425 Reedie Drive, 14<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Wheaton, MD 20902

February 8, 2022

Dear Gwen,

Please accept my letter of support for the suggested renaming of Montrose Parkway to the Josiah Henson Parkway. As Director of The Menare Foundation, Inc.—a nonprofit preserving the legacy of the Underground Railroad—I am honored to support this timely and worthy effort to recognize Henson as a Montgomery County native and national treasure. Montgomery County serves as a national model in the interpretation of the Underground Railroad story through historic site preservation, interpretive programs, markers, heritage tours and trails. This important story has been conceived, maintained and operated through the efforts of multiple nonprofit and governmental entities including the Maryland National Park and Planning Commission through our county parks system.

I believe that the renaming of the Montrose Parkway—which passes through land where Henson once lived—would add a key interpretive and cultural resource to the landscape serving to deepen the knowledge of Henson's achievements and legacy within our community. Furthermore such a designation could create a new resource for heritage tourism efforts by drawing in visitors travelling the I-270 corridor—a key byway for tourist entering our nation's capital—to the Josiah Henson Museum and Park located just a few blocks away. A newly coined Josiah Henson Parkway would also make an excellent candidate to the National Parks Underground Railroad Network to Freedom following the lead of North Carolina's "Freedom Roads" designation which commemorates the story on transportation routes.

Thank you for considering this timely designation of the Josiah Henson Parkway and the efforts to commemorate Montgomery County's great American hero.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anthony Cohen". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a horizontal line.

Anthony Cohen  
President  
The Menare Foundation, Inc.



**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND BRANCH**



P.O. BOX 2165  
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20847-2165

February 10, 2022

Dear Director Wright:

The purpose of this letter is to express the Montgomery County NAACP's strong support for the proposal to rename Montrose Parkway in honor of Rev. Josiah Henson.

As you may know, the NAACP has been advocating for appropriate recognition of Rev. Henson for many years. Rev. Henson not only escaped the brutality and barbarism of American chattel slavery, but he also played a pivotal role as a "conductor" on the Underground Railroad: assisting in freeing over 200 enslaved African Americans. However, his work to free others did not end on the Underground Railroad efforts. After fleeing to Canada, he founded the Dawn Institute, which helped former enslaved people learn the basic kinds of skills and trades necessary for self-sufficiency.

But perhaps most relevant to this county's recognition of Rev. Henson is the book he wrote about the many years he spent enslaved in this county. His autobiographical account of slavery in this county served as the basis for the Harriet Beecher Stowe novel, "Uncle Tom's Cabin." His life story became the model for the lead character in her novel. Rev. Henson sadly never benefitted financially from this appropriation of his story.

It is fitting that the county has taken measures to honor his legacy by building a center to honor him on the land where he was once enslaved. As this county strives to acknowledge the wrongs of our history and remove the remaining vestiges of these past mistakes, it is also fitting that the county pay tribute to those people who have been marginalized in the formal accounts of our county's history.

To that end, the renaming of Montrose Parkway, a roadway that lies adjacent to the site of the former residence of Rev. Henson, should be renamed in his honor.

We appreciate your attention to this request and look forward to working with you to achieve this goal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Linda M. Plummer'.

Linda M. Plummer  
President

Cc: Montgomery County Council