

February 25, 2015

City Manager's Office
City of Coral Gables

Re: Naming of Alhambra Circle Park in Honor of Betsy Adams and the Coral Gables Garden Club

This letter is submitted to support and request that the new park located at Alhambra Circle and Mendavia Avenue be named in honor of "Betsy Adams and the Coral Gables Garden Club."

The idea of naming this park for Betsy Adams originated with others. Betsy was and is extremely touched and very grateful that people would nominate her for such a great honor. Those who know her also know that she is a very humble and selfless person, so it is not surprising that she has asked that the Coral Gables Garden Club be included in this naming. Almost all of Betsy's accomplishments relating to this naming occurred in connection with her leadership of this extraordinary organization and with the help of so many of its members, so having the Garden Club included in this honor is most appropriate.

The City's park naming policy requires background and biographical information detailing the accomplishments of the honoree and supporting the name designation. This information is provided with this letter so that the wishes, kindness and efforts of others on behalf of Betsy and the Coral Gables Garden Club may be fulfilled.

Betsy was born in Lenoir, North Carolina, the sixth of eleven children born to William and Bessie Gregg. While working for the FBI in Washington, D.C, Betsy vacationed in Miami, where an FPL lineman named Larry Adams observed her sunbathing at the beach from his perch on a power pole, climbed down and somehow convinced her to go out with him. Seven months later they were married and Betsy began her now 63 year residency in South Florida, 56 of them as a resident of Coral Gables.

Betsy's artistic talents and love of flowers, horticulture, nature and community service led her to join the Coral Gables Garden Club after moving to Coral Gables in 1958. In the ensuing 56 years, her leadership of that organization and other community service have produced enormous enhancements to the historical, cultural, educational, recreational, beautification and national and international reputation of our City Beautiful. Coral Gables residents, businesses, government and visitors are beneficiaries of her vision and leadership.

As President of the Garden Club, Betsy conceived, planned and led the Garden Club to approve and commit their talent, time, resources and efforts to "The Coral Gables Adopt-An-Entrance Project." The project's objectives were to construct and donate to the Coral Gables community certain street entrances which George Merrick was unable to complete because of the Great Depression, key features of which included decorative walls, fountains, lighted columns and tropical landscaping. As President of the Garden Club, Betsy sought and received approval from the City Commission to create a unique Garden Club/City partnership to undertake this

challenging mission, which was successfully completed with the construction and donation of beautiful new entrances at Coral Way and Red Road, Miracle Mile and Douglas Road, and Ponce de Leon Boulevard and S.W 8th Street.

Betsy and the Garden Club planned, constructed and donated other major contributions to the City's quality of life, well-being and historical and cultural preservation. These include the George Merrick statue at City Hall (which fulfilled a long standing commitment to erect a monument of Merrick on property he donated to the City for a city hall and park, as discovered by Betsy from a 1927 document), and the statue of Althea Merrick (George's mother) at the historic Gables Merrick House on Coral Way. Betsy conceived and either chaired or co-chaired these remarkable and significant Garden Club projects.

The public/private partnership process developed and implemented by Betsy and the Garden Club for these projects generated in excess of \$1.4 million of cash and in-kind contributions which satisfied 100% of the project resource requirements, truly remarkable community achievements for a garden club, and is a proven template for others to replicate.

Betsy has consistently and appropriately credited the success of these and other achievements to the Garden Club's remarkable members who have shown immeasurable love and commitment to their community and tirelessly given their talents and resources to the fullest extent possible.

Betsy's extensive community service and contributions go far beyond the Garden Club projects described above. In addition to numerous other Garden Club projects enhancing the beauty, quality of life and well-being of Coral Gables, she has also served as an active member of the City of Coral Gables' Beautification Committee, Recreation and Youth Advisory Boards, been active with the Coral Gables Women's Club and the Museum of Science, been an extremely active member of Coral Gables-based Christ Journey Church (formerly known as University Baptist Church), and has promoted the interests of Coral Gables and South Florida throughout her worldwide travels to over 32 countries.

For this incredible lifetime of community service, Betsy has received numerous awards and recognitions, only some of which are summarized in the attached list of "Betsy Adams Awards and Recognition" (those which are most relevant to the criteria/guidelines in the City's park naming policy).

One of the most appropriate reasons for naming the new Alhambra Circle park for Betsy Adams is that for 16 years she lived and raised her family at 1461 Mendavia Avenue, less than 150 feet from this park. The house was situated in the middle of three adjoining lots, and the two outside lots were open grass areas, some of the largest in the neighborhood, with swings, tree forts, a zip line and a basketball court. The Adams home quickly became the neighborhood playground for the three Adams boys (who played multiple sports with great achievement at the Coral Gables Youth Center and Coral Gables High School) and the numerous other children in the

neighborhood, who would play basketball, football, baseball (complete with mowed base paths), volleyball, soccer, tag, and every other game imaginable.

For all of the foregoing reasons, it would be extremely appropriate, and we would be eternally grateful, if the Alhambra Circle park were to be named for Betsy Adams and the Coral Gables Garden Club.

Sincerely,

Lawrence H. Adams, Sr., Ron Adams, Thad Adams

Lawrence H. Adams, Sr., Ron Adams, Thad Adams

BETSY ADAMS AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

1991 * Coral Gables City Commission Awarded Betsy Adams their "Certificate of Appreciation" in recognition for her leadership that led the Coral Gables Garden Clubs' achievements that provided significant beautification and historical enhancements to the community.

1992 * The Council of Garden Clubs Presidents of Dade County, presented Betsy the "Garden Clubber of the Year Award."

1993 * South Florida recipient of the National Federation of Garden Club's Civic Development Award". *Received the "Deep South Region Civic Development Award" from the National Council of State Garden Clubs.

2002 * Elected to, "Florida Federation of Garden Club's Hall of Fame".

2006 * Inaugural recipient of the "Coral Gables Citizen of the Year Award" by the Coral Gables Rotary Club. *Betsy was inducted as a member of the, " Julia S. Tuttle, Women's History Coalition of Miami-Dade County". The organization recognizes women who have made Miami-Dade County a better place to live. *Elected to a "Life Member and Honoree status of the Coral Cables Garden Club". Betsy is a current and Past President of the Coral Garden Club.

2008 *The Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce named Betsy the recipient of their Allen Morris, "George E. Merrick Award" in recognition for her fifty three years of community leadership that led the Garden Club to initiate, plan, fund \$1.3 million resource requirements and dedicate to the City three Coral Gables entranceways and bronze monuments of George and Althea Merrick , his mother. * March 2008, the City Commission proclaimed Betsy a "Coral Gables Golden Resident of Distinction," in recognition of her community achievements. Her story is featured on the, "Golden Gables," program series on the City of Coral Gables television network.* The Feb/March Coral Gables Trolley Publication Guide" selected Betsy as their initial "Page Ten Personality". Her community service story is posted in the trolley cars.

2009 *The Florida State Federation honored Betsy as recipient of the, " Blanche Covington Award for Leadership". The award represents the highest honor given to an individual Florida Garden Club member and is not presented every year, but reserved for significant individual performance. * The Coral Gables Garden Club won "Florida Federation of Garden Clubs Best Garden Club Award" in 2008.y6668

The above noted awards and recognition were presented to Betsy based on her collective body of vision and leadership that inspired fellow Garden Club members to continue their rich tradition of commitment to unselfishly dedicate their talents, energy, community spirit, perseverance, personal assets, effective team work and demonstrate the highest level of respect and love for each other.

February 23, 2015

City of Coral Gables

Re: Naming of Alhambra Circle Park

It has come to our attention that the City of Coral Gables is considering having a City park, located at Alhambra Circle and Mendavia Avenue, named for Betsy Adams and the Coral Gables Garden Club. This letter requests and supports such naming, which is highly deserved and most appropriate under the City's criteria/guidelines for the naming of City parks.

The Garden Club has contributed to the beautification and many civic, historical and cultural improvements in the City of Coral Gables since its inception in 1925. A brief description of some of our Club's community service achievements is attached.

During her 56 year tenure as a City resident and Garden Club member, Betsy Adams has accomplished many great things on behalf of the Club and the City. She has brought others into, and bettered the entire community, with her love for flowers, horticulture and nature with energy and creativity. As Garden Club President, she conceived and led the Garden Club and the City in numerous civic projects, including the "Adopt An Entrance" project, in which her vision and determination brought together partnerships of the City, business leaders and the Garden Club to design and construct three distinctive City entrances at Coral Way and Red Road, Miracle Mile and Douglas Road, and Ponce de Leon Boulevard and S.W. 8th Street. In addition, under her capable and unflagging leadership, Betsy helped establish lasting monuments to the historical connection with our City's founding family, with the dedication of bronze statues of George Merrick (at City Hall) and Althea Merrick (at the historic Merrick home on Coral Way). These five projects alone provided over \$1.4 million in cash and in-kind contributions to the City of Coral Gables and its residents.

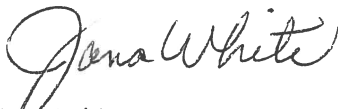
Though humble to a fault, Betsy has been widely recognized for her decades long service and civic contributions to her beloved City and Garden Club, including the Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce's prestigious 2008 "George E. Merrick Award," for community leadership; the City Commission's 2008 proclamation of Betsy as a "Coral Gables Golden Resident of Distinction," for community achievements; the inaugural "Coral Gables Citizen of the Year Award" by the Coral Gables Rotary Club in 2006; her 2006 induction as a member of the "Julia S. Tuttle Women's History Coalition of Miami-Dade County," recognizing women who have made Miami-Dade County a better place to live; the City Commission's 1991 "Certificate of Appreciation" recognizing Betsy's leadership of Garden Club achievements providing significant beautification and historical enhancements to Coral Gables; the 1992 Council of Garden Clubs' "Garden Clubber of the Year Award" for all of Miami-Dade County; the 1993 South Florida recipient of the National Federation of Garden Club's "Civic Development Award;" the 1993 "Deep South Region Civic Development Award" from the National Council of State Garden Clubs; her 2002 election to the "Florida Federation of Garden Club's Hall of Fame;" the 2009 recipient of the Florida State Federation's "Blanche Covington Award for Leadership," representing the highest honor given to an individual Florida Garden Club member; and many other awards and recognitions.

These awards were presented to Betsy based upon her collective body of vision and leadership which inspired fellow Coral Gables Garden Club members to continue their rich tradition of commitment to unselfishly dedicate their talents, energy, community spirit, perseverance, personal assets and effective team work, to the betterment of their City and community. As a result, and due to the extraordinary efforts of Betsy and the many other hard working members of the Coral Gables Garden Club, our Club won the "Florida Federation of Garden Clubs Best Garden Club Award" in 2008, bringing widespread attention and recognition to the City Beautiful as a wonderful place to live and work.

These accomplishments and recognitions amply demonstrate that naming this park for Betsy Adams and the Coral Gables Garden Club meets and exceeds the City's criteria/guidelines for park names honoring individuals and groups, including the significant contribution to the quality of life and well-being of the City; exemplary and meritorious contributions to the City; significant historical and/or cultural connections to the City; major contributions to the historical and/or cultural preservation of the City; major contributions toward the environmental preservation, conservation and/or enhancement of the City; and a direct relationship or association between the place or former place of residence of the person and the park to be named (Betsy and her family resided at 1461 Mendavia Avenue for over 16 years, which is a stone's throw from the park site at Mendavia Avenue and Alhambra Circle). Additionally, should this park be named for Betsy Adams and the Coral Gables Garden Club, the Garden Club would consider contributing toward the betterment of the park in her honor, in appreciation for her leadership and dedication to our Garden Club and to our entire community.

Betsy Adams' mark on Coral Gables is unique and it is most appropriate that her enduring legacy be remembered by naming this park for her and the Garden Club she so dearly loves. The Coral Gables Garden Club would be honored by such naming, and urges the City to approve it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jana White". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Jana White

President, Coral Gables Garden Club

June, 2014

Subject: The Coral Gables Garden Club's Community Service Achievements.

> THE Coral Gables Garden Club was founded in 1925 by Eunice Peacock Merrick, George Merrick's wife. ALTHEA Merrick, Merrick's mother, was one of the thirty founding members. The current number of Garden Club members is 175.

> Objectives: Educating new members, our youth, and the public in gardening, horticulture, landscape design, conservation, civic development, garden therapy, world gardening, community beautification, and flower arranging.

> Successful Projects completed during the past 89 years:

Beautification: Landscaped all Elementary, Middle and High Schools several times, U. of Miami, Coral Gables Woman's Club, Alhambra Water Tower, decorated Merrick House every Christmas, created and landscaped the Coral Gables Butterfly Garden, City Hall, initiated and funded the annual program to plant a tree in Coral Gables on Arbor Day, created and maintained the Biltmore veterans' vegetable garden, provided garden therapy for veterans and created and placed floral arrangements every Sunday in two chapels and provided monthly birthday flowers at the Biltmore Veteran's Hospital. Garden Club members recently grew and planted over 300 mangrove pups at Matheson Hammock Park that will protect and enhance the endangered shore line. Many earlier projects were not recorded.

In 1990, the Coral Gables Garden Club's "Adopt Entrance Project" was created. That started a 22 year commitment and effort by Garden Club members to achieve their new goal. The objective was to identify, plan fund, construct and donate to the City significant gateway entrances to Coral Gables that George Merrick planned but was unable to build because of the great depression. They also wanted to generate additional honor and appreciation for Merricks' remarkable dream, vision and perseverance that created a city known worldwide as "The City Beautiful." They created a partnership with the City of Coral Gables to do infrastructure requirements. The Garden club raised 1.4 million dollars in cash and in-kind services and built and donated to the City the grand entrances located at Coral Way and Red Road, Miracle Mile and Douglas Road and Ponce de Leon Blvd. and SW Eight Street. They also initiated, planned, funded, constructed and donated a George Merrick 12 foot heroic size bronze monument placed on a Florida Key Stone base in front of City Hall - and a life size bronze monument of Althea Merrick, Merrick's mother, seated on a bronze bench in her garden located at the Coral Gables Merrick House.

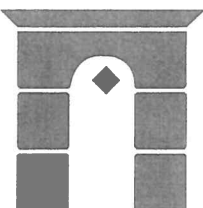
>Education and Contributions: Raised and contributed 36 thousand dollars for student scholarships that were Garden Club related, funded two annual scholarships to the Camp Wekiva summer program for Elementary and High School students. They contributed to SEEK, Crime Watch, Nature Conservancy, Everglades Foundation, World Gardening, Coral Gables Museum, Fairchild Botanical Gardens, Pine Ridge Cemetery and Arbor Day. Some earlier contributions were not recorded.

> Awards recorded: 32 National, 35 State and 123 Local awards. A significant number of other individual and Club awards were received but not recorded.

< The Garden Club is honored that the Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce selected the Miracle Mile and Douglas Road arched gateway entrance for their brand logo.

Note: The Garden Club members' latest contribution of their combined skills and talent created the beautiful and relevant floral table decorations that we enjoy tonight.

CORAL GABLES



CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
Developing Business • Building Community

February 25, 2015

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City of Coral Gables
405 Biltmore Way
Coral Gables, FL 33134

Subject: Naming of Alhambra Circle Park

Dear Mrs. Swanson-Rivenbark:

The mission of the Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce is to foster and enhance the economic interests and quality of life in the Coral Gables community. As president of our Chamber, it is my great privilege to submit this letter of support recommending the naming of the City's newest park at Alhambra Circle and Mendavia Avenue in honor of an individual and group who have made extraordinary contributions to this mission over many years. We would like to see this new park named for Betsy Adams and the Coral Gables Garden Club.

The Garden Club was founded in 1925, the same year as the City and the Chamber were established by George E. Merrick. Betsy Adams has resided in the City Beautiful for 57 years, 16 of them on Mendavia Avenue, right next to this new park. Together, they have enhanced the quality of life and well-being of our City Beautiful and its residents beyond what anyone might imagine from a garden club and one of its leaders.

Under Betsy's leadership, the Coral Gables Garden Club galvanized and led City government and business leaders to create lasting, aesthetically pleasing monuments to the beauty, history and culture of our community. These include three of George Merrick's planned, but not built, entrances at Coral Way and Red Road, Ponce de Leon Boulevard and S.W. 8th Street, and Miracle Mile and Douglas Road, as well as bronze statues of George and Althea Merrick, all of which appear on virtually every photographic depiction of our great City, including our own Chamber logo. This was an enormous feat, with cash and in-kind contributions exceeding \$1.4 million in total, an amazing accomplishment for anyone, much less a garden club and one of its volunteer leaders.

I can testify from personal experience that these efforts have had profoundly positive impacts in portraying our City as a place where people and businesses wish to be. Indeed, for this and many other reasons, Betsy Adams received the Chamber's prestigious recognition for community leadership, the George E. Merrick Award of Excellence in 2009. She has also received many other city, county, state and national awards for her numerous community service contributions, including the City Commission's proclamation of Betsy as a "Coral Gables Golden Resident of Distinction" for community achievements and the inaugural "Coral Gables Citizen of the Year Award" by the Coral Gables Rotary Club.

Betsy Adams and the Coral Gables Garden Club unequivocally meet every requirement for this park naming under the City's park naming policy. Equally, if not more importantly, their character and integrity are impeccable, and the naming of this park in their honor will be a credit to the City of Coral Gables and our wonderful citizenry.

I can think of no other person or group more deserving of having this new park named in their honor than Betsy Adams and the Coral Gables Garden Club. Thus, I respectfully request that they receive this fitting acknowledgment and recognition for all they have done to enhance our City Beautiful.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Mark A Trowbridge
President & CEO

Arva Moore Parks

February 23, 2015

City of Coral Gables

Re: Naming of Alhambra Circle Park

I am writing today in support of naming the new park at Alhambra Circle and Mendavia Avenue in honor of Betsy Adams and the Coral Gables Garden Club. I have known Betsy for many years beginning with working with her and the Coral Gables Garden Club to save and restore the historic Merrick home and garden. Since then I have had the honor of working with her on both the George Merrick and Althea Merrick statues. She is a dedicated citizen of Coral Gables who has spent more than 55 years trying to make her beloved city even better.

Betsy is also known for her initiation and leadership in the Garden Club to complete the unbuilt entrances and plazas planned by George Merrick, including the ones at Coral Way and Red Road, the east end of Miracle Mile, and Ponce de Leon Boulevard near Southwest 8th Street. They stand today as testimony of her unselfish devotion to community betterment. Those of us who have had the good fortune of knowing and working with her know she is not someone out to collect honors. She simply sees the need to do something and then provides the leadership to make it happen. It is, therefore, particularly fitting that the community honor her for all her remarkable work in Coral Gables by naming a park after her.

I have reviewed the City's criteria/guidelines for naming City parks, and Betsy and the Garden Club meet every one with flying colors. For many decades (over 55 years for Betsy and even longer for the Garden Club), they have made significant contributions to the quality of life and well-being of the City, they have provided (and persuaded many others to provide) substantial gifts and donations and exemplary and meritorious contributions of their time and resources to the City, they have made major contributions to the historical and cultural preservation of the City (and they themselves have significant historical and cultural connections to the City), and they have provided major contributions toward the environmental preservation, conservation and enhancement of the City.

Also, this particular proposed park site is the perfect place to honor Betsy. She and her husband Larry raised their family just a short distance from the Alhambra site and many of the neighborhood children considered the Adams home like a second home. Thus, there is a close and direct relationship and association between Betsy's former residence (1461 Mendavia Avenue) and the park to be named.

Finally, it is my understanding that the Garden Club is considering contributions toward the development and betterment of the Alhambra park site should it be named for Betsy and the Garden Club.

Betsy's community leadership, contributions and achievements have been recognized over the years with numerous awards such as the Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce's prestigious 2008 "George E. Merrick Award," for community leadership; the City Commission's 2008 proclamation of Betsy as a "Coral Gables Golden Resident of Distinction," for community achievements; the inaugural "Coral Gables Citizen of the Year Award" by the Coral Gables Rotary Club in 2006; her 2006 induction as a member of the "Julia S. Tuttle Women's History Coalition of Miami-Dade County," recognizing women who have made Miami-Dade County a better place to live; the City Commission's 1991 "Certificate of Appreciation" recognizing Betsy's leadership of Garden Club achievements providing significant beautification and historical enhancements to Coral Gables; the 1992 Council of Garden Clubs' "Garden Clubber of the Year Award" for all of Miami-Dade County; the 1993 South Florida recipient of the National Federation of Garden Club's "Civic Development Award;" the 1993 "Deep South Region Civic Development Award" from the National Council of State Garden Clubs; her 2002 election to the "Florida Federation of Garden Club's Hall of Fame;" the 2009 recipient of the Florida State Federation's "Blanche Covington Award for Leadership," representing the highest honor given to an individual Florida Garden Club member; and many more.

I cannot think of a better and more deserving person for whom a Coral Gables park (and especially the proposed Alhambra park) should be named, than Betsy Adams and the Garden Club.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Arva Moore Parks". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Arva" being the most prominent.

Arva Moore Parks
Historian and author

Nita Norman
4419 University Drive
Coral Gables, Florida 33146

February 23, 2015

Re: Naming of the new park at Alhambra Circle and Mendavia Avenue in honor of Betsy Adams and the Coral Gables Garden Club, "The Betsy Adams, Coral Gables Garden Club Park" during the club's 90th Birthday of service to our City.

In 1989 when Betsy Adams became President of the Coral Gables Garden Club, Betsy was able to conceive, communicate and interest the garden Club in building beautiful Entranceways to the city of Coral Gables that our founder, George E. Merrick, envisioned in 1925. As Chairman of the committee for 20 years Betsy's gifted imagination and determination led the Garden Club to build Merrick's dream of entranceways at highly visible and important points into Coral Gables. The first and second entrances to the city built by the club are situated at Coral Way and Red Road (1991) then Miracle Mile and Douglas Road (1997). The next project Betsy spearheaded is the 12' bronze statue of our "Founding Father" George Merrick positioned in front of city hall, completed in early (2005) and installed on a coral rock foundation in (2006). A third entrance and fourth project constructed is the Chiming Clock Tower at SW 8th Street and Ponce de Leon Blvd (2009). The lifelike bronze statue of Althea Merrick, George Merrick's mother and a founder of the Coral Gables Club, sitting on a bench in the garden of the Merrick House is the fifth project completed by the club under Betsy's leadership (2011). These impressive, landmarks, historical in nature, represent over 20 years of personal and intensive focus with Betsy's leadership by our garden club during our 90 year history in Coral Gables magnifying our "City Beautiful".

In communicating her ideas with an unassuming, soft-spoken manner, Betsy masterly developed a plan that included the city government, community members, local architects and businessmen into a coalition to work with the sponsorship of the Coral Gables Garden Club to achieve these objectives. Inspired by Betsy and recognizing the importance of her vision, the garden club has been committed to her dream and worked tirelessly under her leadership in providing our community with these unparalleled creations.

Betsy, with her limitless resolve, has inspired others in creating and generating meaningful and significant benefits with the Garden Club for the community. Because of these lasting achievements to our community and her committed leadership, encouraging and unassuming manner, and goal orientation led the Coral Gables Garden Club to create the magical vision that our Founder conceived. This has been an outstanding accomplishment and the park will honor Betsy and the Coral Gables Garden Club.

The added significance of this park in Betsy's life is that she and husband Larry lived in the block with her family where this new park is located. Betsy's name is known in every gardening organization, not only locally, but Nationally and the State of Florida.

Sincerely,



Nita Norman, Director, Coral Gables Garden Club, President 1991-93, 2004-2005

Betsy Adams

**803 East Ridge Village Drive
Cutler Bay, Florida 33157**

305.252.6161

February 25, 2015

City of Coral Gables

Re: Naming of Alhambra Circle Park

To Whom It may Concern:

This will confirm that I approve of the use of my name, Betsy Adams, in the naming of the new City park located at Alhambra Circle and Mendavia Avenue, should I be so blessed and fortunate to receive such a great honor, and for which I would be eternally grateful.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Betsy Adams".

Betsy Adams