

# Sully District Council of Citizens Associations



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## **Concerns Regarding the Naming of the Newly Constructed Bridge across Difficult Run between the Gerry Connolly Cross County Trail and Gabrielson Gardens Park**

Approved on 15 February 2021

It was recently brought to the attention of the members of the Sully District Council of Citizens Associations (“SDCCA”) and West Fairfax County Citizens Association (“WFCCA”) Joint Sully District Land Use and Transportation Committee (the “Joint Committee”) that the Fairfax County Park Authority (the “Authority”), at its 10 February 2021 Board Meeting, took a formal action to designate the newly constructed bridge that reinstates all-weather public access across Difficult Run between the Gerry Connolly Cross County Trail and Gabrielson Gardens Park as “The Burnet Bridge” (*sic*). The SDCCA member who brought this recent action to the attention of the Joint Committee expressed concern that this action by the Authority Board had not been taken in accordance with the Board’s currently adopted operational policies.

Specifically, it was noted that the Authority may not have followed the process and procedures associated with such an action as clearly defined in its ***Policy 304, Naming of Parks and Facilities***. This long-established policy indicates that any such asset naming activity be one which has followed the adopted park master plan process, adheres to specific park-related criteria and must include appropriate community input. It is the current understanding of the Joint Committee that none of these required reviews/activities were undertaken by the Authority Board prior to taking the cited action.

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While the members of the Joint Committee are not opposed to the naming of specific park units or individual assets per se, we feel very strongly that the adopted policies and procedures associated with such actions must be followed each time that an asset naming has been requested by any individual or community group. We would thus like to formally request that the Authority carefully and openly review the process that was followed prior to this action taken on 10 February 2021 to ensure that all stated requirements of the adopted ***Policy 304, Naming of Parks and Facilities*** were met and the public process properly followed. Considering the need for public process, the Joint Committee regrets that the SDCCA was not informed of this pending naming/renaming action during the 28 January 2021 presentation by Authority Board's Sully Representative to the SDCCA as part of her scheduled 'Gabrielson Bridge Update'.

We would also respectfully request that the Authority:

- Stop any procurement process associated with a dedication plaque;
- Cease any further public reference to the new bridge as "The Burnet Bridge" (*sic*);
- Temporarily delay the currently scheduled action on 20 March 2021 for the formal rededication / reopening of the commonly referenced Gabrielson Bridge and the designation of this structure as "The Burnet Bridge"(*sic*).

We do not believe that there is any immediate need to advance this action now when it is still uncertain as to whether the Authority took the structure renaming action in accordance with its own adopted policy.

Members of the Joint Committee are available to meet with members of the Authority Board and the associated Fairfax County staff to discuss this situation as soon as possible and work towards a mutually agreeable resolution.

Thank you in advance for your prompt attention to this request.

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This letter was approved by the Joint Committee at its 15 February 2021 meeting:

Sincerely,

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[http://www.sullydistrict.org/resolutions/20210215\\_JSDFLU&TCNamingNewlyConstructedBridgeAcrossDifficultRun.pdf](http://www.sullydistrict.org/resolutions/20210215_JSDFLU&TCNamingNewlyConstructedBridgeAcrossDifficultRun.pdf)