

EMERGENCY

City of Cincinnati

JRS

EEW

An Ordinance No. _____

- 2023

DECLARING that Avondale Avenue at Reading Road in the North Avondale neighborhood shall hereby receive the honorary, secondary name of “Shirley A. Merrick Way” in honor of Shirley Merrick and in recognition of her contributions and public service to the City of Cincinnati.

WHEREAS, Shirley Ann (Moss) Merrick was born April 2, 1933 and moved to Cincinnati in 1959 settling and raising six children in the North Avondale neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, in 1977, Shirley A. Merrick established G & Shirley’s Health Vitamin and Herb Shop in the North Avondale neighborhood, sponsored by her beloved husband Henry P. Merrick, and Mrs. Merrick said, “the G stands for God because he is my partner”; and

WHEREAS, in 1977, health foods were still unknown to mainstream America, as well as unfamiliar in the black community where professional healthcare was minimally effectual. Mrs. Merrick brought the message of “food is medicine” to the people; teaching them how to use food and natural supplements to manage and address the symptoms of ailments, for example, hypertension, diabetes, cancer, asthma, and HIV; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Merrick studied under and was certified by Nobel Prize winning scientist Linus Pauling, the pioneer of the Vitamin C revolution; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Merrick regularly spoke at recreation centers, nursing homes, schools, churches, and civic centers and she wrote for NIP Magazine and the Cincinnati Herald; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Merrick was a member of Zion Baptist Church and shared her knowledge with her beloved fellow believers, designing plans for their respective health conditions; and

WHEREAS, Shirley A. Merrick conducted a weekly radio program about health on WCIN and she stayed aware of cutting-edge knowledge, acquiring the latest products for her store, and always providing the highest quality for her customers; and

WHEREAS, Shirley A. Merrick was the recipient of the Applause Magazine “Most Influential 100 Black Cincinnatians” award and local and national dignitaries have been beneficiaries of her health wisdom, including former U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services, U.S. Congresswoman and Ambassador to Ireland, Margaret Hecker; and

WHEREAS, Shirley A. Merrick’s extraordinary fitness routine inspired her son, Henry E.T. Merrick, to master fitness personally and as a trainer and, in 2003, he established LeanStyles Fitness Center, which has produced national champions, moreover, radically improved the health of Cincinnatians and clients throughout the United States; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Merrick's daughter, Valdasia Shirley Merrick, was the recipient of the LEAH Institute 2023 Spirit of Deborah Ministerial Leadership Award, and was inspired by her mother to establish in Cincinnati a church that offers training in farming and Sunday morning faith-based homeopathic education; and

WHEREAS, Vaneese Merrick, Mrs. Merrick's eldest daughter, established a health food store in Northern Kentucky; and

WHEREAS, G & Shirley's store turned 46 years old in October 2023, presently located in College Hill and owned and operated by Shirley's 4th daughter, Valynda Ann Mitchell, with customers nationwide and it is the oldest black-owned health food store in the United States; and

WHEREAS, Shirley Merrick has made a lasting impact to the Cincinnati community and to the City of Cincinnati's citizens, and her contributions and service in healthy living and advocacy for "food is medicine" will long be remembered; now, therefore,

BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the City of Cincinnati, State of Ohio:

Section 1. That Avondale Avenue at Reading Road in the North Avondale neighborhood shall hereby receive the honorary, secondary name of "Shirley A. Merrick Way" in honor of Shirley Merrick's public service and in recognition of her contributions and dedication to the City of Cincinnati.

Section 2. That the appropriate City officials are hereby authorized to do all things necessary and proper to implement the provisions of Section 1 herein, including the generation and installation of appropriate secondary street signage, which shall designate Avondale Avenue at Reading Road in the North Avondale neighborhood as "Shirley A. Merrick Way" in accordance with the Department of Transportation and Engineering's procedures relating to street designation and related signage.

Section 3. That a copy of this ordinance be sent to Valdasia Shirley Merrick via the office of Vice Mayor Jan-Michele Lemon Kearney.

Section 4. That this ordinance shall be an emergency measure necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health, safety, and general welfare and shall, subject to the terms

of Article II, Section 6 of the Charter, be effective immediately. The reason for the emergency is the immediate need to allow the Department of Transportation and Engineering to move forward with the administrative requirements related to the honorary naming of streets to provide for the ceremony and dedication of the honorary street name at the earliest possible time.

Passed: _____, 2023

Aftab Pureval, Mayor

Attest: _____
Clerk