

SNC-16-01

Street Name Change

Kissing Alley



Applicant Information:

Applicant:	Kevin Burke, Economic and Development Projects Coordinator City Manager's Office 630 E Hopkins Street San Marcos TX, 78666
Applicant's Request	Assign a street name to the alley colloquially known as "Kissing Alley".
Public Hearing Notice	Notification was published in the newspaper on January 13, 2016.

Comments from Other Departments:

Police Department: No opposition.
Fire Department: No opposition.
Planning and Development Services Department: No opposition.
Public Services Department: No opposition.
City Marshall: No opposition.
GIS Coordinator: No opposition.

Planning Department Analysis:

Staff has reviewed this request for a street name change for consistency with City ordinances and policies.

Staff does not have a record of this alley having been previously named. It is currently used by service vehicles and the public to access the interior of these two blocks. Additionally, a short stretch of this alley (approximately half of a block) is often used for special events. This particular section of the alley is also popular for photographs, particularly engagement and graduation photographs, due to the terminated vista of the Historic Courthouse and San Marcos themed mural.

The request supports the Main Street Program's vision to "foster a downtown that is a unique and culturally vibrant destination, where local businesses thrive and people of all ages can connect, create and celebrate." The Kissing Alley project began in 2013 and has been used for downtown activities such as Park(ing) Day, weddings, and live music events for several Main Street events. Kissing Alley is viewed as a placemaking opportunity for Downtown San Marcos.

In addition to activating the alley, public and private improvements have been made to create a unique, safe and more attractive downtown space including a mural and permanent over-the-road lighting. These improvements and official naming of the alley help accomplish goals set for 2017 including:

- Additional street and safety amenities
- Awareness of Kissing Alley
- Incorporating more music and art in public places.

Section 74.057 of the San Marcos City Code allows the name change of a public street to be initiated by the City. The request shall be considered initially by the Planning and Zoning Commission and shall be considered only if more than 50 percent of the owners of businesses addressed along the street and more than 50 percent of the owners of property addressed along the street in question have signed the petition in favor of the change. No businesses or property owners are addressed on this alley.

The Planning and Zoning Commission shall apply the following criteria in considering the proposed street name:

Criteria:

Staff Analysis:

1. Multiple names along the continuity of a single street or along two streets that are in substantial alignment shall be avoided.
2. Consideration shall be given to historical and geographical significance of a street or area or to the recognition of a significant personal achievement.
3. A new street name shall not duplicate or sound phonetically similar to the name of a street already in use in the city or the city's extraterritorial jurisdiction or designated as a future extension in the current thoroughfare plan.
4. A new street name shall not differ from an existing street name except by the addition of a different auxiliary designation including "avenue", "way", "boulevard", etc.
5. The Planning and Zoning Commission shall also review any other pertinent criteria in its consideration of a street name change.

Meets criteria. There is another alley that continues along this same alignment on the South side of the Historic Hays County Court House. Due to the inability of the two alleys to connect, Staff does not recommend that the alley on the southern side of the Court House Square be named Kissing Alley, as this has the potential to promote confusion.

Meets Criteria. The alley in question has been colloquially known as Kissing Alley for several years due to the prominence of engagement photographs that feature this romantic and picturesque setting.

Meets Criteria. One of San Marcos's newest subdivisions, Kissing Tree, does have a street named Kissing Tree Lane. While this is a partial duplication, Staff feels that the addition of the word "Tree", as well as the fact that this is an alley Downtown and not a street, creates a significant enough difference between the two.

Meets criteria. Kissing Tree Lane differs both in the addition of the word "Tree" and the auxiliary "Lane".

The Planning and Zoning Commission may hold discussions regarding any other pertinent information as part of their discretionary decision on the proposed street name change.

The Planning and Development Services Department seeks a recommendation from the Planning and Zoning Commission regarding this proposed street name change after all pertinent criteria have been discussed.

Planning Departments recommendation

The Main Street Advisory Board enacted a vision statement on July 13, to adopt the current vision statement and work goal plans. Staff has reviewed the request and recommends **approval** as submitted.

The Commission's Responsibility:

The Commission is required by law to hold a public hearing and receive public comment regarding the proposed street name change. After considering the public input, the Commission is charged with making an advisory recommendation to the City Council regarding the request. The City Council will ultimately decide whether to approve or deny this request, and will do so through the passage of an ordinance.

The Commission's advisory recommendation to the Council is a discretionary decision. Your recommendation should be based on the standards listed in section 74.057 of the San Marcos City Code.

Application
Prepared by:

William Parrish, Planning Technician

January 11, 2017

Title

Date