

Back to drawing board for King honor

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at large) "Frankly, I'm surprised it's taken this long. I didn't want to see it get defeated."

Timing was a factor in the board's decision, said council

member Pat Mumford, (R-at large).

Mitchell wanted a unanimous vote in time for the national King holiday Monday. That didn't give council much room to debate

options.

"The general consensus was this was a bit rushed, which is atypical of government," he said.

The city has the option of re-naming streets on its own,

but residential input is considered. Mitchell said Stonewall from Kenilworth Avenue from the I-277 ramp at Independence and Kenilworth west to Mint Street was the best site

because it had few residents who would be inconvenienced by a name change.

In addition to Stonewall, or Independence from the I-277 ramp at 7th Street south past Kings Boulevard to the I-277 ramp, Mumford said council could consider asking the state to name a section of Interstate 485 that rings the city after King.

"We have unnamed sections of 485 that'll be traveled by thousands of people," he said. "That'll be the easiest thing we can take to Raleigh."

Acknowledging that honoring King is "the right thing to do," Lassiter made a motion to study Mitchell's proposal rather than have it lose on a

split vote.

"He took the right steps in sending a memo to the council, but I don't know if he worked closely enough with us" in advance, Lassiter said.

Mumford

The study will likely be a matter of weeks. If city staff recommends Stonewall, council very well could vote for it, Lassiter said. The goal is to develop consensus.

"I think the sentiment around the table is we want to do this," Lassiter said. "It's just a matter of the right one."

Senator: Minorities crucial to success in Iraq

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main political groups had agreed in principle on a national unity coalition that would include the country's majority Shiites and minority Kurds and Sunni Arabs.

Obama said he was confident a new government could be formed but was skeptical of Talabani's time frame.

"My suspicion is it's going to take a little longer than that," he said. "Creating not just a majority government but a government that actually incorporates in a meaningful way Sunni interests may take a little longer."

British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw, who is also visiting Baghdad, said Saturday he believes Iraqis remain

optimistic about the future despite suffering through a particularly violent week.

A spasm of bloodshed has killed nearly 200 people in Iraq in two days, but Straw said after meeting Talabani that efforts were going ahead to form the new government.

Still, Straw acknowledged Iraq's security situation was tough.

"I was trying to avoid any kind of pretense about the situation here in Iraq," Straw told British Broadcasting Corp. radio. "It is very difficult. People are being killed by terrorism."

"At the same time ... I'm struck by the continued optimism I meet in most Iraqi

politicians with whom I have discussions," he said.

Obama, who last year called for a phased troop withdrawal from Iraq, said he is "constantly impressed and proud of the outstanding work" of American troops, but that he still questions the overall U.S. policy in Iraq.

"In my mind, at least, there's a difference between the discrete successes on the ground and whether the overarching policy will ultimately be successful," he said. "The fundamental policies that led to us being here were flawed and not well thought through, and the odds of our long-term success is hard to assess at this point."

He said, however, that he understood Iraq was too fragile for an immediate withdrawal.

Obama, a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, plans to travel to Jordan on Sunday. He is scheduled to arrive in Israel on Monday and will spend the rest of the week there and in the Palestinian territories.

The senator, who was elected last year, has criticized the Bush administration for questioning the patriotism of people who speak out against the war.

Associated Press reporter Anna Johnson contributed to this report from Chicago.

NASCAR finds friends at MLK parade



Fly on the Wall is purely mischief, mayhem and maybe a little malfeasance thrown in for parody's sake. Long-time fans already know this, but the legal eagles at Dewey Cheatham and Howe insist on a written disclaimer to insulate the bosses from any litigious types, know what we're saying?

Fly is always trying out new stuff, but the crew wasn't ready for the unlikely pairing of NASCAR and Charlotte's Martin Luther King parade. The stock-car racing folks have put their name, (and money) behind the uptown procession, no small feat considering the sport's past. But give 'em credit. If there's one way to score points with the home folks, get on the MLK bandwagon. Personally, Fly will be looking for free race tickets. Track grub can be described in four words: IN cred a bull!

• Wal-Mart caught some heat recently when its website linked movies on MLK and Dorothy Dandridge to its sale of the "Planet of the Apes" television series on DVD. After fielding a few



Charlotte native Joe Crosby (center) gave his alma mater, N.C. A&T State University, \$10,000 for the athletic department. A&T Athletics Director Dee Todd and Chancellor William Renick gladly accepted.

N.C. A&T STATE UNIVERSITY

complaints from irate e-shoppers, the retail behemoth decided to remove those pesky links. Maybe Wal-Mart should take those savings and invest it in a web patrol.

• If you thought you'd seen the last of former Charlotte Council member Patrick Cannon, pump your brakes. Since leaving office, Fly's spies say PC has expanded his parking business and is acting as a consultant (think city council). He also played a role in University Park Baptist Church's acquisition of the Merchandise Mart, which puts more mega in megachurch.

And he hasn't ruled out a return to the political ring at some point in the future. Maybe he'll pick up the mayoral campaign he dropped

last year.

• Eddie Long, who has a really, really, really big church in Atlanta, will be in Charlotte for the Kingdom Agenda 2006: Making the Connection at University Park Baptist. You knew it was just a matter of time before some Charlotte preacher would reach the big time. They'll need a big sanctuary to hold all that star power.

• Fly's spies are pleased to report that one of our favorite Charlotteans, Joe Crosby, is doing quite well, thank you.

Mr. Crosby, son of retired educator Kat Crosby and a right fine college football coach in a previous life, now owns a couple of T60 restaurants (yum!) in South Carolina. He also produces Coach's Low Country Boil, a food seasoning concoction that's added to seafood or meats.

With the retail success of Coach's Low Country Boil in



Cannon

Focus on Future Leaders application

Focus on Future Leaders Inc. is accepting applications for its next class.

The deadline for application is Friday and the cost of training is \$200, including non-refundable \$50 application processing fee.

Classes will be held twice a month on a Thursday and Saturday.

The goal of Focus is to develop leadership in the African American community through civic involvement. For information, call Beverly

Lawston at (704) 493-2415 or (704) 366-5167.

Herbert L. White

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