



City of Cambridge

3.

IN CITY COUNCIL

April 27, 1998

COUNCILLOR TRIANTAFILLOU
 COUNCILLOR BORN
 COUNCILLOR DAVIS
 MAYOR DUEHAY
 VICE MAYOR GALLUCCIO
 COUNCILLOR REEVES
 COUNCILLOR RUSSELL
 COUNCILLOR SULLIVAN

- WHEREAS: Richard B. Modica was born in Mexico City, Mexico on September 20, 1951 and was educated in the Wakefield Public Schools and graduated from Wakefield High School in 1969; and
- WHEREAS: Richard B. Modica attended Northeastern University in Boston and graduated in only three years graduating with a Bachelors of Arts in Analytic Philosophy in 1972; and
- WHEREAS: Richard B. Modica graduated from New England School of Law in 1976 and was admitted to the Massachusetts Bar in 1977, to the Federal Bar in 1979 and to the United States Supreme Court in 1982; and
- WHEREAS: Richard B. Modica married Sharon Stentiford in May of 1983 and from this union had three sons, Jared, Jason and Jamal; and
- WHEREAS: Richard B. Modica moved to Cambridge in 1987 and set up a small law practice in the heart of our city, serving mostly immigrant populations from Central and South America, as well as some from many other corners of the world; and
- WHEREAS: Richard B. Modica would work hard for clients preparing taxes and providing much legal and humanitarian counsel at little or not cost to them; and
- WHEREAS: Richard B. Modica often went far above and beyond his initial legal work for clients, helping immigrants find jobs and housing, start businesses and gain social skills for living in a new country; and
- WHEREAS: Richard B. Modica was loved by clients like a brother and a father because his efforts toward them were – by the clients' own accounts -- responsible for saving businesses, marriages, and even lives; and
- WHEREAS: Richard B. Modica would become legendary among those he has known and helped as an extremely loving father, a generous and remarkable man of high intelligence and unique presence, who has been a major force and left a profound impact in the lives of numerous individuals who count him as literally the best friend they have ever had; and

- WHEREAS: Richard B. Modica was an avid chess enthusiast who was well liked and well known at the Harvard Square chess tables in front of Au Bon Pan and served as philosopher/consultant to many individuals who had the pleasure of sharing time with him at the chess tables; and
- WHEREAS: Richard B. Modica co-founded the children's "Friday Knights" Chess League which was held at the Kennedy School and later at the Area 4 Youth Center to share some of his remarkable talent as a chess player by instructing grammar school children; and
- WHEREAS: Richard B. Modica cared not only about his own children but about other people's children as well, and could be seen driving children to the beach, roller skating, school field trips and other recreational activities; and
- WHEREAS: Richard B. Modica was a faithful supporter of the Children's Haven Program at Pentecostal Tabernacle Church in Area 4, contributing food and preparing food for the children attending; and
- WHEREAS: Richard B. Modica was a skilled gourmet cook who – described by one observer as wanting to "feed the world" – was known for generosity in treating family, clients, friends, neighbors and others to extraordinarily savory home-cooked gourmet meals; and
- WHEREAS: Those people in the Cambridge community whose lives Richard B. Modica touched – including those who have known him through the schools, his legal work with immigrants, the Children's Haven Program, the Friday Knights Chess League, in the neighborhood or at the Harvard Square chess tables – do profoundly miss him and wish to honor him; and
- WHEREAS: We as friends, clients, neighbors and family of Richard B. Modica wish to dedicate a sign in his name to be placed at the head of the newly-renovated alleyway in Central Square which has a black and white mural and connects Massachusetts Avenue with parking lot number five, located between where he lived and where he worked, such a sign could often be viewed by "Rico's" three sons and wife who survive him, and by others who loved and want to honor him; now therefore be it
- RESOLVED: That the Cambridge City Council name the alleyway RICHARD B. "RICO" MODICA WAY and to place such sign above the Massachusetts Avenue entrance of the way in honor of Richard B. Modica and the difference he has made in our city; and be it further
- RESOLVED: That the City Clerk be and hereby is requested to forward a suitably engrossed copy of this resolution to the family of Richard B. Modica on behalf of the entire City Council.

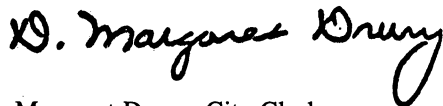
In City Council April 27, 1998.

Adopted by the affirmative vote of nine members.

Attest:- D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk.

A true copy;

ATTEST:-


D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk

April 27, 1998

COUNCILLOR TRIANTAFILLOU

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RESOLVED: That the Cambridge City Council ~~meeting in assembly hereby votes to~~ name the alleyway **RICHARD B. "RICO" MODICA WAY** and to place such sign above the Massachusetts Avenue entrance of the way in honor of Richard B. Modica and the difference he has made in our city; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the City Clerk be and hereby is requested to forward a suitably engrossed copy of this resolution to the family of Richard B. Modica on behalf of the entire City Council.

DRAFT - Correct with edits.
- Sharon Stentiford
April 20, 1998.

3.

April 27, 1998

COUNCILLOR TRIANTAFILLOU

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WHEREAS: Richard B. Modica often went far above and beyond his initial legal work for clients, helping immigrants find jobs and housing, start businesses and gain social skills for living in a new country; and

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RESOLVED: That the Cambridge City Council meeting in assembly hereby votes to name the alleyway **RICHARD B. "RICO" MODICA WAY** and to place such sign above the Massachusetts Avenue entrance of the way in honor of Richard B. Modica and the difference he has made in our city; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the City Clerk be and hereby is requested to forward a suitably engrossed copy of this resolution to the family of Richard B. Modica on behalf of the entire City Council.

KT
3
4-10-98
SUBJECT

Honoring RICHARD B. "RICO" MODICA with a Memorial Sign in Central Square

WHEREAS: Richard B. Modica was born in Mexico City, Mexico on September 20, 1951 and was educated in the Wakefield Public Schools and graduated from Wakefield High School in 1969; and

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WHEREAS: Richard B. Modica would work hard for clients preparing taxes and providing much legal and humanitarian council at little or no cost to them;

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WHEREAS: We as friends, clients, neighbors and family of Richard B. Modica wish to dedicate a sign in his name to be placed at the head of the newly-renovated alleyway in Central Square which has a black-and-white mural and connects Mass. Ave. with parking lot #5. Located between where he lived and where he worked, such a sign could often be viewed by "Rico's" three sons and wife who survive him, and by others who loved and want to honor him.

RESOLVED: That the Cambridge City Council meeting in assembly hereby votes to name the alleyway RICHARD B. "RICO" MODICA WAY and to place such sign above the Mass. Ave. entrance of the way in honor of Richard B. Modica and the difference he has made in our city.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the City Clerk is hereby requested to forward a copy of this resolution to the family of Richard B. Modica.

Jim Coughlin
State House
PO Box 178
Boston, Ma 02133

5 June 1997

Dear Jim,

I am writing to wholeheartedly endorse the naming of a square after Richard (Rico) Modica.

In my eyes, he reaches almost to the stature of a Saint. He had such a care and concern for the downtrodden, the poor, and especially, the immigrants, for whom he usually did free legal work.

I remember going into Nick's Beef & Ale house one hot Summer day with Rico and sitting down to order dinner. Before we could decide what to order, the waitress came over and gave us all complimentary large Greek salads with bread.

Rico looked over and waved humbly to about six immigrant food preparer's behind the counter, who waved back enthusiastically with smiles of gratitude for the work he had done for them for free, just because he was such a nice guy, and he hated to see anyone suffer from injustice.

I remember Rico's kind efforts in teaching chess to grade school youngsters after school. Rico had the touch! He would inspire all the kids to work hard and learn advanced chess concepts without rancor when some failed to understand. At the end, all the kids were happy and had learned something well. Some more then others...but all were loved equally and warmly inspired equally and their differences and shortcomings were ignored. He had the warmest and most sincere sense of humor I have ever known.

He was legendary as a kind lawyer. Friends of friends sought him out for advice, and he would listen and help them; either with

practical advice to avoid a legal action and the complications that might arise (and how many do we know who do the opposite to drum up legal fees and human misery), or if appropriate, take the case himself or refer it to a specialist in that law.

Oh, the misery he alleviated and prevented by sage advice is enough by itself for several squares to be dedicated. He saved businesses as well as marriages. He spent his time helping others like most of us watch TV, with dedication to recreation; he was dedicated to the helping hand.

He was a beloved lawyer (and we know how common that is) and a rare friend. When he came to a party or to play chess at Harvard Square, even those with grudges against each other found they were both friends of Rico. The chess players there are thinking of a chess match with his name to honor it.

In naming a square after him, it is we who do honor to ourselves by this humble act.

Please let me know if I can help in any way.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Anthony Kiefer Newman".

Anthony Kiefer Newman Ph.D Electrical Engineering
Semi Retired College Teacher
22 Spring Ct.
Woburn, Ma 01801-4424 617-935-2909

May 30, 1997

Dionisio Quintanilla
RR1 Box 128
Groveton, NH 03582

Cambridge City Councillors
City Hall
Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

Dear Cambridge City Councillors:

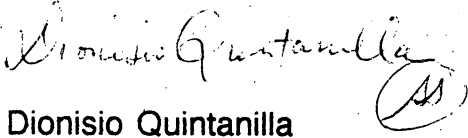
I am writing this letter to support Jim Coughlin in his effort to name a square in Cambridge after my friend Richard B. (Rico) Modica, who passed away last year, on October 9th, which is also my birthday.

Mr. Modica helped me in many ways after I immigrated to the United States from El Salvador. Since I met "Rico" 1990, he helped me get back on my feet after a very difficult period in my life. He gave me lodging, work authorization papers, a job, and I credit him with helping me to stop drinking. In this way he saved my life -- without his help I may never have lived to be the father of two beautiful girls and husband of my beautiful wife.

I know I was not the only person who came from far away who Rico helped -- others were from Guatemala and Brazil, and Israel -- to name a few.

This letter is to ask you to name a square in Rico's honor -- because lots of people in Cambridge will never forget him and how he helped them get along with their lives. Even though he is gone, we remember him and it also would be nice for his three sons, Jared (11 years old), Jason and Jamal (8 year old twins) to see their Dad remembered with a sign.

Thank you,


Dionisio Quintanilla

May 22, 1997

Muhammad Awan
54 Victoria Street
Revere, MA 02151

Cambridge City Councillors
City Hall
Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

Dear Cambridge City Councillors:

I am writing this letter to support Jim Coughlin in his effort to name a square in Cambridge after my friend Richard B. (Rico) Modica, who passed away on October 9, 1996.

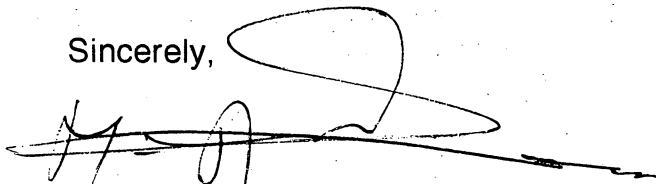
Mr. Modica helped me in many ways after I immigrated to the United States from Pakistan. Every year since 1982, he has prepared my taxes and charged very little for this compared to others.

He helped me file for permanent residency, and solve a difficult work-related matter, and much of the legal information he gave me over the years was for free.

Mr. Modica helped immigrants from many parts of the world who were new to the Cambridge area, treating them fairly and going beyond what many people would have done to help them achieve their goals.

Cambridge is a place that values diversity, and everyone who knew "Rico" knew he had a big heart for people in need of legal help and a listening ear. He offered friendship to me and many others as well as legal help, and I think it would be a wonderful addition to Cambridge to name a square in his honor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Muhammad Awan', with a large, stylized loop at the end.

Muhammad Awan

To Whom It May Concern,

I met Rico Modica at Au Bon Pain in Harvard Square. Rico was one of the most well-liked chess players ever to spend time there. I always knew that I liked Rico because of his magnetic personality- everyone liked Rico. It was not until the last few years of his life that I really got to know him and to love him.

As I spent more time with him at his house in Central Square, I realized what an exceptional person Rico was. He was bilingual and helped Spanish-speaking people fill out their tax forms and gave them legal advice; he rented an apartment in his house to friends of mine for much less than it was worth. Rico was both very intelligent and generous to everyone. Walking down the street with him, it seemed as though almost everyone said "hello".

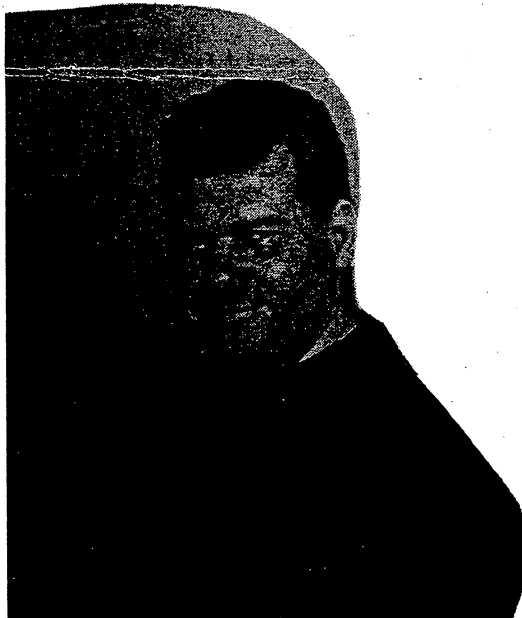
I spend much time in Harvard Square and there is a void that will always be felt where Rico once was. He should be memorialized in Cambridge because he was a man of the community. It would be inspiring for me if there was some place to remember him along with other friends that knew him.

Thank-You,

Joan M. Clifford

**CELEBRATION OF THE LIFE
OF
RICHARD BRYANT MODICA**

September 20, 1951 - October 9, 1996



**Friday, October 11, 1996
8:00 PM**

**PENTECOSTAL TABERNACLE
77 Columbia Street
Cambridge, Massachusetts**

Rev. Brian C. Greene, Officiating

OBITUARY

Richard Bryant Modica was born in Mexico City, Mexico on September 20, 1951 the son of John and Barbara Modica. He graduated from Wakefield High School in 1969; Northeastern University in 1972 with a BA in Analytic Philosophy. In 1976 he graduated from the New England School of Law. Mr. Modica was admitted to the Massachusetts Bar in 1977, to the Federal Bar in 1979 and to the Supreme Court in 1982.

In May 1983 he married Sharon Stentiford and from that union were born 3 sons: Jared 11 and Jamal and Jason 8.

Mr. Modica was most recently employed at the Central Square Law Offices of Corey R. Cutler. He was also known as an avid chess enthusiast.

"Rico" was a faithful supporter of the Children's Haven Program at Pentecostal Tabernacle and was responsible for a recent article in the Cambridge Chronicle.

He was a beloved husband and loving father who leaves to mourn his loss his loving wife Sharon; his sons Jared, Jamal and Jason; his mother Barbara Modica of Melrose; his father John Modica of Chicago; a brother, Glen David Modica of Chicago; a brother John Brian Modica of Ann Arbor, Michigan; a nephew, John Brian Modica III of Cambridge; other relatives and many friends.

Lovingly submitted,
The Family

Sharon Stentiford
305 Washington Street #6
Cambridge, MA 02139
(617) 547-8689

March 15, 1998

Jim Coughlin
Box 178
State House
Boston, MA 02133

Hello Jim,

Enclosed is a copy of your document with revisions.

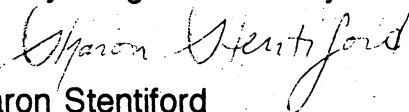
Thank you very much for all of your work on helping to get a memorial in Cambridge in honor of Rico. I think the alleyway having the black and white mural in Central Square connecting parking lot #5 with Mass Ave. near the Indian food restaurant is a great location as it is located between where Rico lived and worked, and because the boys and I and others who loved him could view it often.

The format I would suggest for the sign would be:

RICHARD B.

"RICO" MODICA WAY

Thank you again for all of your help,


Sharon Stentiford

P. O. Box 178
State House
Boston, MA
02133

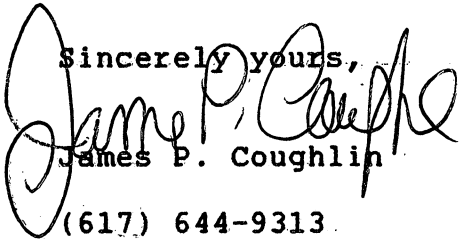
March 30, 1998

The Honorable Katherine Triantafillou
City Councillor, City of Cambridge
Cambridge City Hall
795 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

Dear Councillor Triantafillou:

Sharon Stentiford had asked me to forward these letters and the resolution draft regarding her late husband, Richard P. "Rico" Modica. I hope that you find them helpful.

Sincerely yours,



James P. Coughlin

(617) 644-9313



City of Cambridge

3.

IN CITY COUNCIL
April 27, 1998

COUNCILLOR TRIANTAFILLOU

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Consent Order #3

R-481

Councillor Triantafillou re: resolution
naming the alleyway connecting Massachusetts
Avenue with parking lot #5 as the
"Richard B. 'Rico' Modica Way."

In City Council April 27, 1998

ORDER ADOPTED