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CAVALIER JOHNSON
COMMON COUNCIL PRESIDENT
ALDERMAN, 2ND DISTRICT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 9, 2021

President Johnson

(414) 286-3272

Common Council approves renaming of MFD administration building for its architect

Building will be named in honor of city and state's first African American architect

The Common Council today voted unanimously to approve renaming the Milwaukee Fire Department administration headquarters after **Alonzo Robinson**, Milwaukee and Wisconsin's first African American architect.

Alonzo Robinson was a City of Milwaukee architect for a time early in his career, and he designed the building now named after him at 711 W. Wells St. – the **Alonzo Robinson Milwaukee Fire Department Administration Building**.

Common Council President Cavalier Johnson, the lead sponsor for the renaming legislation, said he is grateful for the unanimous support from his Council colleagues. “The legacy and accomplishments of Alonzo Robinson are worthy of recognition and praise, and just a few days ago he was honored as part of our 28 Days of Black History celebration on the city’s website and the City Channel,” he said.

“As the first African American registered architect in Milwaukee and Wisconsin, Mr. Robinson is a true inspiration and trailblazer in his field, someone who overcame adversity to open doors for future architects and engineers of color in the city and state,” President Johnson said. “He will now be honored appropriately in the city with his name emblazoned on an important building that he designed.”

Mr. Robinson designed many buildings in downtown Milwaukee including central-city churches, the former YMCA (now a Marquette University facility) at N. 10th and W. Wisconsin Ave., the Doyne Park shelter house, the former Vel Phillips YWCA (now a church at 3940 N. 21st St.) and a new sixth-floor courtroom in the Milwaukee County Courthouse.

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City Hall Room 205 • 200 East Wells Street • Milwaukee, WI 53202

PHONE (414) 286-3777

FAX (414) 286-3456

E-MAIL cavalier.johnson2@milwaukee.gov

WEBSITE www.milwaukee.gov/district2



Page 2

Mr. Robinson was a native of North Carolina, grew up in Delaware, served in World War II and graduated with a degree in architecture from Howard University. He moved to Milwaukee in the early 1950s and was hired by the City of Milwaukee, and later worked for Milwaukee County. He was a founding board member of Northcott Neighborhood House.

-30-

