



Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room  
August 5, 2010 4:00 PM  
Meeting Minutes

### HSMC Meeting August 5, 2010

#### I. Call to Order and Welcome

##### 1. [Order](#)

The meeting was called to order at 4:10 p.m. by the Vice-Chair, Mr. Williams.

#### II. Approval of Meeting Minutes

##### 2. [HSMC February 4, 2010 Minutes](#)

Attachment: [HSMC February 4, 2010 Minutes.pdf](#)

#### **Board Action:**

Approval. - PASS

#### **Vote Results**

Motion: Walt Harper

Second: Adrienn Mendonca

Walt Harper - Aye

Eli Karatassos - Aye

Adrienn Mendonca - Aye

Gordon B. Smith - Not Present

Phillip Williams - Aye

#### III. Regular Agenda

##### 3. [C-100630-87276-2 Jonathan Bryan Marker](#)

Attachment: [Staff Recommendation.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Historical information.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Marker location map and photographs.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Marker text and style.pdf](#)

**Ms. Harris** gave the staff report. She reported that the petitioner is requesting approval for the Jonathan Bryan marker in Ellis Square near Bryan Street. The petitioner left the exact location up to the discretion of the Historic Site and Monument Commission and staff. Ms. Harris went to the site and it appears to her that the best location would be along the sidewalk in the raised garden area. There are some utilities in this area; therefore, she contacted the City of Savannah to make sure that a marker could be put in the raised garden area. She said that David White of Park & Tree expressed a concern that Jonathan Bryan did not have a connection to Ellis Square. Ms. Harris said Mr. White suggested that the marker be placed in a tree lawn along Bryan Street. She stated that in checking Bryan Street, there is really no appropriate tree lawn along Bryan Street.

**Mr. Karatassos** stated that Bryan Street is a long street. Four squares are already located on Bryan Street. He asked why was Ellis Square suggested as the location for this marker and asked if there is a comprehensive plan for Ellis Square.

**Ms. Harris** answered yes. She believes this, too, is Mr. White's concern and he wanted to know what is the connection. She asked the petitioner if there was a specific connection and he told her no; this was just at the request of the organization for the marker to be located in Ellis Square. Ms. Harris explained that the master plan completed by the City for Ellis Square did not site any markers in the square, not because they did not want markers there, but simply that there are so many different options and possibilities that could be appropriate. All they did was locate monuments and works of art.

**Ms. Mendonca** asked if placing a marker here might take up some of the space that could go to public art installations.

**Ms. Harris** explained that what when choosing this particular site, it was important that it did not intrude on any active space nor any other space that a public art or monument could go on. It is really on a raised bed. Therefore, it is unlikely that anything would be located here.

**Mr. Karatassos** asked if Ellis Square is among the places where monuments and public art could be placed.

**Ms. Harris** answered yes. The City submitted a master plan for Ellis Square approximately two years ago which was adopted by this Commission as well as City Council. They proposed two locations for monuments and works of art. One location was chosen for monument which is the Johnny Mercer statute and one location for work of art which is a flat type sculpture embedded in the ground. Ms. Harris said as she recalls, markers were asked about specifically. During that time, Chris Morrill stated that markers were so site specific and there are so many different possibilities for markers in this site that it would be premature for them to set locations.

**Mr. Harper** stated that he believes that there are three markers in Reynolds Square plus a monument. He said Crawford Square has a number of markers in it. What is the maximum number that is the limit to putting markers into a square?

**Ms. Harris** said the guidelines states that each individual object will be far enough away and sited appropriately as to allow individual appreciation for each. The squares are different sizes. She believes that the number of markers that could be placed in a square would depend on the size.

**Mr. Harper** asked in reference to Ellis Square, would it be a first come, first served approach or will it be planned.

**Mr. Smith** believes it would be based on a first come, first served basis.

**Mr. Karatassos** believes that Ellis Square is a virgin square and before this Commission agrees to populate it with markers, they need some direction from the City. He did not want to put this on City Council to tell the petitioner no. He rather that this Commission tells them no. He does not have a problem with the Jonathan Bryan marker; but will this be the first marker and the only one. Will this Commission be the group to decide this as probably no one else has thought about this?

**Mr. Karatassos** moved that this matter be tabled until they get a specific recommendation from the City as to whether or not markers are acceptable. This was seconded by **Mr. Williams**. **Mr. Smith** called for the discussion on the motion.

**Mr. Williams** believes that the other squares originally were planned out and what would go in the center was obvious. If this is what they want to continue within the other squares, should they not do the same thing? Just as Mr. Karatassos said, Ellis Square is a virgin square. They have an intentional progress to move forward and not just randomly say here comes a marker and let's put it in.

**Ms. Harris** explained that typically this has not been the case with the squares. They have been done at different times. As petitioners come forward and request a monument, it has been evaluated on a case-by-case basis. The squares have been desirable sites and monuments since 1733. The Bull Street corridor was built by 1865. The master plan and guidelines that were adopted in 2007 were created not to be so reactive, but be more proactive. She explained that shown on the screen is the master plan that the City created for Ellis Square - this was created for monuments and public art, but not for markers.

**Mr. Karatassos** explained that the purpose of his motion is not to deny the petition, but to simply get clarification from the City. He said what this Commission does has to be approved by City Council. Therefore, in consideration of Council's political situation, why would this Commission put this on them if this is really something that the City does not want? He believes that the City needs to decide rather they want markers. If they do, where do they want them? Then this Commission could judge the validity of the marker and vote on it.

**Ms. Mendonca** believes this started in 1950. But, they are talking about a period that precedes this. She wanted to know how they were decided on during that period.

**Ms. Harris** answered that City Council decided this.

**Board Action:**

Approval that the request be tabled until the Commission gets clarification from the City as to how they want to

handle markers in Ellis Square.

- PASS

**Vote Results**

Motion: Eli Karatassos

Second: Phillip Williams

Walt Harper - Aye

Eli Karatassos - Aye

Adrienn Mendonca - Aye

Gordon B. Smith - Aye

Phillip Williams - Aye

4. [C-100722-36838-2 Revisions to the Master Plan and Guidelines](#)

Attachment: [Staff report and recommendation.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Master Plan with Revisions.pdf](#)

**Ms. Harris** gave the staff report. The Markers, Monuments, and Public Art Master Plan and Guidelines for the City of Savannah were adopted by City Council March 1, 2007. This was the first comprehensive document outlining both the process for marker and monument approval as well as establishing guidelines to evaluate new proposals. This has been generally effective and comprehensive as a tool, but it has become apparent that there are some guidelines that need improvement and some processes should be modified. Additionally, the inventory maps and spreadsheets need to be updated. She believes that it is a good idea that the Commission revisit this item on a regular basis to look at what is working and what's not working. This would ensure that the master plan and guidelines are relevant to the proposals that the Commission are reviewing.

**Ms. Harris** explained that upon the Commission members looking through the document, they will see color coded in red the changes that are proposed. There are a number of inventory updates. Nine new markers were added; four existing markers were previously overlooked and are now added to the inventory list; seven new monuments were added and one existing monument was added and three new available sites were evaluated and added to the list.

**Ms. Harris** reported that revisions were made to the guidelines on theme, site, design, text and funding. These revisions provide clarification or strengthen the guidelines. The Commission has already reviewed all the proposed revisions. They held a joint technical meeting with the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). With regards to the process, the current application process involves a two-part submittal for monuments. They are Part 1: Theme and Location and Part 2: Design and Funding. This process is being revised to provide a preliminary review of the design before final submission. The process will continue to be in two parts, but will be Part 1: Theme, Location and Preliminary Design and Part 2: Final Design and Funding. This was redesigned due to finding that it was problematic for petitioners not to get feedback until they had already hired an architect, engineer and so forth.

**Ms. Harris** explained that another proposed change includes adding Site Plan Review to the review process. This is the review that is done by the City departments - Water and Sewer, Engineering, Park and Tree and other departments to provide a more technical review of the monuments. These

departments will flag and identify anything that might have a change and effect on the design. This will provide a more formal review.

She said the next steps are that this Commission would make revisions and/or make recommendations to City Council to adopt the revisions. Ms. Harris reported that the staff recommends approval of the inventory updates, revisions to the guidelines, and modifications to the review process.

**Mr. Karatassos** asked Ms. Harris about the application process.

**Ms. Harris** stated that the application has always been broken in parts for monument - Part I and Part II.

She explained that one application is submitted to MPC. Then the staff gives the application to the appropriate person at the City for site plan review.

**Mr. Karatassos** wanted to know if he was correct in saying that the City and MPC staff have to be a check off point before the application goes to TAC. After it goes to the TAC, then it comes to Site and Monument Commission.

**Ms. Harris** confirmed that Mr. Karatassos was correct. The TAC may find deficiencies.

**Mr. Karatassos** said this is his point. If the City and staff recommendations are for approval, then the TAC is for information to the Site and Monument Commission to consider. Therefore, he could not see the TAC trumping the City and Staff decision. He believes the TAC's input and recommendations are needed, but he did not know if all the analysis that have been going on should be trumped.

**Ms. Harris** explained that a part of their previous conversation about the role of the TAC has been whether or not they actually make recommendations or comments.

**Mr. Karatassos** said the TAC should make comments.

**Mr. Smith** said in looking at #17, this is his understanding. The TAC would make comments and recommendations.

**Mr. Harper** stated that hopefully by that time all the technical problems would have been solved and they are just getting their comments.

**Ms. Mendonca** asked if TAC still has its meeting the same day as the Site and Monument Commission. She asked if this can be changed.

**Ms. Harris** stated that the meeting can be changed; it is not written into the master plan how this is done. She would suggest that the two not meet on the same day.

**Mr. Karatassos** said the petitioner needs to be given time to receive the comments from the TAC. The recommendation from the staff will be inclusive of the City. Therefore, once they get the staff's recommendation, the staff has already gotten the check off from the City.

**Mr. Williams** explained that Mr. Karatassos was speaking of the worst case scenario. It has already

gone to the process; gone through the TAC; the TAC has made its comments. Then something comes up that nobody has thought about before. At this time, would the application go back into the process at the staff level to begin the process again?

**Mr. Smith** said he believes it depends on the comment.

**Mr. Williams** said he was only using the worst case scenario.

**Mr. Karatassos** stated that he believes that what Mr. Smith is saying is that if the City has already said the site is fine; it has drainage; it has power and everything else, but there is another issue to it. At this point he believes the Site and Monument Commission motion would have to be specific to where it gets sent. They should send it back to staff for their input.

**Mr. Harper** stated, therefore, the TAC comments would come to the Site and Monument Commission to decide whether or not to move forward with the petition or send it back.

**Mr. Smith** stated that #18 states that the Site and Monument Commission will review and approve or deny the application. He said, however, there is a third alternative which is that they will review, approve, deny or send the application back for further study. He did not want the Site and Monument Commission's hands to be tied. He wants the Commission to be given enough leeway to make whatever decisions they feel is appropriate.

**Board Action:**

The Site and Monument Commission made the following revisions to the master plan and guidelines 1) the technical committee will provide comments instead of recommendations, 2) "to continue" will add to the list what actions can be taken in addition to approval or denial. - PASS

**Vote Results**

Motion: Walt Harper  
Second: Eli Karatassos  
Walt Harper - Aye  
Eli Karatassos - Aye  
Adrienn Mendonca - Aye  
Gordon B. Smith - Aye  
Phillip Williams - Aye

**IV. Other Business**

5. [Forsyth Park](#)

**Mr. Karatassos** asked about the evaluation of the proposed Forsyth Park sculpture.

**Ms. Harris** explained that she has met with the architect several times and discussed whether he had any ideas or considerations about the design. The architect was very helpful. As they recall, two circular elements were being considering having a sculpture and both were designed specifically for some sort of work of art or a monument. The architect had no preference as to the theme.

**Mr. Williams** wanted to know if the construction of the WWII monument has started.

**Mr. Harper** explained that he was told that at the last Veteran's Council meeting that they are looking at a tentative date of November 9, 2010 as the dedication.

## V. Adjournment

### 6. [Adjourned](#)

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Mr. Smith adjourned the meeting at 4:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ellen Harris  
Preservation Planner

EH:mem

*The Chatham County - Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission provides meeting summary minutes which are adopted by the respective Board. Verbatim transcripts of minutes are the responsibility of the interested party.*