



Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room
January 5, 2012 4:00 PM
Meeting Minutes

January 5, 2012 HSMC Regular Meeting

I. Call to Order and Welcome

1. Called to Order

Ms. Soule called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone in attendance to the meeting.

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes

2. November 3, 2011 Meeting Minutes

Attachment: [November 3, 2011 Minutes.pdf](#)

Board Action:

Approval. - PASS

Vote Results

Motion: Walt Harper
Second: Ryan Madson
Thomas Gensheimer
Walt Harper
Eli Karatassos
Ryan Madson
Mary Soule

- Aye
- Aye
- Aye
- Aye
- Aye

III. Regular Agenda

3. Certificates of Appreciation: Gordon Smith and Phillip Williams

Certificates of Appreciation were given to **Mr. Gordon Smith** and **Mr. Phillip Williams** in recognition of their many years of service on the Historic Site and Monument

Commission.

Mr. Smith served on the HSMC from 2006 to 2011. He served as vice-chair from 2006 to 2009 and as chair from 2009 to 2011.

Mr. Williams served on the HSMC from 2006 to 2011. He served as vice-chair from 2009 to 2010.

4. [C-111202-41521-2 Afghanistan Marker](#)

Attachment: [Staff Report.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Proposed Text.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Photographs and Location Map.pdf](#)

Mr. Charles L. Davis, Jr. LTC (Retired) was present on behalf of the petition.

Ms. Ellen Harris gave the staff report. The petitioner is requesting to add a 30" x 56" engraved granite ground slab to the existing Chatham Artillery Monument in Emmett Park and to update the engraving on an existing slab. The theme of the marker is Military History and commemorates the Chatham Artillery's service in Afghanistan. There is a direct local focus. Two existing slabs commemorate service in Iraq and list the prior Commanders/Presidents. Ms. Harris said the slab will be located within the fence enclosing the Chatham Artillery Monument in Emmet Park. The existing granite slabs are located to the north and south of the monument. The new slab will be located to the west of the monument.

The estimated cost for the granite slab is \$1,000.00, The funds have been fully secured. Because maintenance of the granite will be minimal, the petitioner has requested that the Escrow Payment be waived.

Ms. Harris reported that staff recommends approval of the Afghanistan Marker as submitted. The petitioner should coordinate with City Engineering to ensure no utilities are damaged during installation.

Mr. Harper stated that this request is only to add the commander's name on the plaque. He asked staff if there is a reason why this has to come to the HSMC every time to do so.

Ms. Harris answered no. Since the design of the monument is not changing, they are only viewing this as a courtesy notice. The petitioner, however, would need to coordinate with the Park & Tree Commission and the other necessary City departments, but it would not need to come to the HSMC as the design is not changing.

Mr. Karatassos said he saw in the staff's recommendation that the petitioner should coordinate with City Engineering. He asked if this has already been through this process.

Ms. Harris explained that the markers are not required to go through the site plan review process. She sent the information to the Park & Tree department to ensure the preliminary process by the staff that there were no issues associated with this. However, it did not go through a formal review process.

Mr. Madson asked what is the waived escrow amount.

Ms. Harris explained that Park & Tree has a formula that they use to develop the escrow payments. She does not know the exact amount; the formula is dependent on the materials used, size of the monument, and so forth. The amount varies from monument to monument. However, for this marker, she believes it would be a minimal amount.

Mr. Madson asked if these are meant to be in perpetuity.

Ms. Harris said it is a one-time payment and the interest earned is used for the on-going maintenance.

PETITIONER COMMENTS

LTC (Retired) Davis stated that their monument was erected on their 200th Anniversary in 1986. They take care of all the expenses associated with their monuments. They have a committee that inspects the monuments at least every six months. They have the two Washington Guns located on Bay Street in front of City Hall which they refurbished in May, 2011. As a unit is deployed and returned, they constantly try to keep the monument current. They have close ties with the 118 Field Artillery in Savannah which is the Chatham Artillery Unit. Therefore, they are trying to keep themselves in the spotlight and in the public's view. Their goal is to keep the monument current instead of just letting it die; they have an on-going history.

LTC. Davis said they appreciate the HSMC's consideration.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

Board Action:

Approval as submitted. - PASS

Vote Results

Motion: Eli Karatassos

Second: Walt Harper

Thomas Gensheimer - Aye

Walt Harper - Aye

Eli Karatassos - Aye

Ryan Madson - Aye

Mary Soule - Aye

5. [C-111220-58622 Nuclear Ship Savannah Marker](#)

Attachment: [Staff Report.pdf](#)
Attachment: [Marker Text.pdf](#)
Attachment: [Photographs and location.pdf](#)
Attachment: [Background Historical Information.pdf](#)
Attachment: [Revised marker text.pdf](#)

Mr. Will Hanley, Program Coordinator for the Georgia Historical Society was present on behalf of the petition.

Ms. Ellen Harris gave the staff report. The Georgia Historical Society is requesting approval to erect a GHS marker on Hutchinson Island, to the west of the International Trade and Convention Center. The marker commemorates the N.S. Savannah, a nuclear-powered merchant ship, which was part of President Eisenhower's "Atoms for Peace" initiative. The theme of the marker falls under Science and Engineering, Military History and Maritime History. The N.S. Savannah was named for the S.S. Savannah which was the first steam-powered ship to cross the Atlantic. The N.S. Savannah called at the Port of Savannah in 1962 and was later purchased by the City of Savannah. Currently located in Baltimore, the N.S. Savannah has been designated a National Historic Landmark.

Ms. Harris said the proposed location is on Hutchinson Island, near Tomochichi Square, west of the International Trade and Convention Center on property owned by Chatham County. Chatham County has agreed to this location. The text of the marker has been upgraded since she initially sent the staff report to the HSMC. A PDF copy of the revised text was sent to the HSMC on yesterday and was posted on the website. The marker will be the standard GHS marker design. The estimated cost for the marker is \$3,000.00. The funds have been fully secured. As GHS, which administers the Georgia Historical Marker Program, assumes responsibility for the repair and replacement of all markers, the petitioner has requested that the Escrow Payment be waived.

Ms. Harris said the exact location for the marker has not been designated. She will accompany all the relevant parties and an exact site will be pinpointed. She feels very comfortable that they will be able to determine an appropriate site within the limited green area.

Ms. Harris reported that staff recommends approval with the recommendation that the marker be moved closer to the sidewalk near the International Trade and Convention Center to provide easier access to the marker. The petitioner should coordinate with City Engineering to ensure no utilities are damaged during installation.

Mr. Harper asked if the HSMC could make a recommendation regarding the location of the marker. He did not believe that putting the marker in the middle would be proper. He believes the marker should be along the sidewalk where it is easily accessible and may be up close to the river.

Mr. Monahan, Assistant County Manager agrees that the marker should be closer to the pedestrian area. The riverwalk is under construction now and will be extended. The marker can be moved closer to the pedestrian accessway.

Mr. Gensheimer asked Mr. Monahan if there are drawings showing how the park is laid out.

Mr. Monahan explained that Mr. Christian Sottile has developed a master plan, but it is not in a formal stage. The park is identified under a map plan and each block has been identified within parcel 7. This is the 20 acres immediately west of the Convention Center.

Mr. Harper suggested that the marker be placed up towards the river at the point where the sidewalk begins to curb into the riverwalk area. He believes this would give more meaning to the fact that it was a ship and this is the area.

Mr. Karatassos asked Mr. Monahan if the park is to be done as a part of the riverwalk or is it a separate project.

Mr. Monahan answered that it is a separate project.

Mr. Karatassos said the HSMC has heard a number of suggestions pertaining to where the marker should be located, he recommended that the HSMC approves the staff recommendation with the understanding that Ms. Harris attend the marker location meeting and express the HMC's desire as to where the marker should be located.

Board Action:

Approval with the recommendation that the marker be moved closer to the sidewalk. - PASS

Vote Results

Motion: Eli Karatassos

Second: Walt Harper

Thomas Gensheimer - Aye

Walt Harper - Aye

Eli Karatassos - Aye

Ryan Madson - Aye

Mary Soule - Aye

6. [C-111219-60584 John C. Fremont Marker](#)

Attachment: [Staff Report.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Proposed marker text.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Photographs and location.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Historical documentation.pdf](#)

Mr. Will Hanley, Program Coordinator of Georgia Historical Society was present on behalf of the petition.

Ms. Ellen Harris gave the staff report. The petitioner is requesting to install a GHS Marker commemorating John C. Fremont in Yamacraw Art Park off West Bay Street. The theme of the marker falls into three categories: Social and Humanitarian, Military History, and Local History. Mr. Fremont was born in Savannah in 1813. He went on to lead

multiple exploring expeditions in the west, ran for President of the United States in 1856, served as a General in the Civil War, and was an ardent opponent of slavery. His childhood home was located at 563-565 West Bay Street. The building is no longer in existence, but it would have been very close to the Yamacraw Art Park. The estimated cost for the marker is \$3,000.00. The funds have been fully secured. As GHS, which administers the Georgia Historical Marker Program, assumes responsibility for the repair and replacement of all markers, the petitioner has requested the Escrow Payment be waived.

Ms. Harris reported that staff recommends approval as submitted. The petitioner should coordinate with City Engineering to ensure no utilities are damaged during installation.

Mr. Harper said his question has nothing to do with this marker, but he believes that Ms. Harris said a lot of the plaques were missing. He asked if the plaques were just taken or never installed.

Ms. Harris answered that when she visited the site to take photographs she saw spaces where markers were apparently glued on, but were removed. Several markers are still here that have not been removed, but they did not look like they were made of appropriate material for the longevity that they would expect of a marker. They were not made of metal, but some sort of plastic material.

Mr. Harper asked who would have installed the markers?

Ms. Harris stated that she believes this was done when the entire design for the public art park was done, but she has not had the opportunity to do the research to see the approval process on this. It may have been the Park and Tree, Leisure Services, or Community Development. She knows that the Housing Authority was not responsible for this, but as she stated, she has not tracked down the responsible agency. Therefore, her goal is to get this restored in a much better and appropriate manner.

Mr. Harper recommended that a review on the installation of the past markers be given at their next meeting.

PETITIONER COMMENTS

Mr. Hanley noted that this marker is a part of the Civil War anniversary period. It is a part of the series of markers that they install around the state beginning in 2010. The markers tell the story of the Civil War that has not been told before. Mr. Hanley said they came across the story of Fremont that he was the first republican candidate for president in 1856. Mr. Fremont gain his fame by exploring the west in the 1840s. He was truly an incredible character. Mr. Hanley said, however, he believes that Mr. Fremont's opposition to slavery would define him for a Civil War legacy. They were happy to find out where Mr. Fremont was born as they have not erected a marker west of West Board Street with the exception of the marker right across from the Ships of Sea Museum. Consequently, this is a good way to tie-in with this project the subject of the opposition of slavery, especially from someone who came from the south. Mr. Hanley recommended that the document on Mr. Fremont be read. Mr. Fremont is well known in the west for the exploration he did there.

Mr. Gensheimer said he knew of Mr. Fremont from northern California. A city there is

named in his honor. Mr. Gensheimer said he was surprised to see Mr. Fremont being honored in Savannah, but when he read the facts, he understood why. He asked Mr. Hanley that if he found out that the location of Mr. Fremont's house is somewhere else, but in the general area would it change anything.

Mr. Hanley answered that generally, they try to stay away from saying at the exact spot unless it is in the case as the marker they erected last year at the Forty Acres and a Mule meeting at the Meldrim Green Mansion. They knew this took place in that exact house. They will usually say born near here or in this area. A lot of the older markers claim too much precise locations and people have torn them a part since they were erected.

Mr. Karatassos said given what is across the street, it would be a better suggestion for the marker to be located there, plus with it being in the art park a lot more people would see it. Particularly, some of the young people who live in the area would learn something and would appreciate it.

Mr. Hanley said this is their goal as education is a part of the Civil War anniversary project they are doing.

Board Action:

A report on the installation of the past markers be given at the HSMC meeting of March 1, 2012. - PASS

Vote Results

Motion: Walt Harper
Second: Eli Karatassos
Thomas Gensheimer - Aye
Walt Harper - Aye
Eli Karatassos - Aye
Ryan Madson - Aye
Mary Soule - Aye

Board Action:

Approval of the petition as submitted. - PASS

Vote Results

Motion: Eli Karatassos
Second: Thomas Gensheimer
Thomas Gensheimer - Aye
Walt Harper - Aye
Eli Karatassos - Aye
Ryan Madson - Aye
Mary Soule - Aye

7. [C-111221-48403-2 Sandoz Temporary Mural](#)

- Attachment: [Staff Report.pdf](#)
Attachment: [Proposed mural.pdf](#)
Attachment: [Location and photographs.pdf](#)
Attachment: [Artist Information.pdf](#)

Ms. Soule said there were no requests for a public hearing on this mural. Therefore, the mural is received as information only.

IV. Other Business

8. [Nominating Committee Report](#)

Mr. Harper reported that the recommendation from the Nominating Committee is as follows: **Chair: Ms. Mary Soule, Vice-Chair: Mr. Eli Karatassos, and Secretary: Mr. Walt Harper.**

9. [Officer Elections](#)

Board Action:

Approval of the Nominating Committee report. - PASS

Vote Results

Motion: Thomas Gensheimer

Second: Ryan Madson

Thomas Gensheimer - Aye

Walt Harper - Aye

Eli Karatassos - Aye

Ryan Madson - Aye

Mary Soule - Aye

10. [Schedule](#)

Mr. Harper asked if the Historic Site and Monument Commission would continue the same schedule of having their meetings every other month or would they go to a monthly meeting schedule for 2012.

Ms. Harris explained that staff has not received an increase in applications that she feel would warrant meeting every month.

Mr. Karatassos said a couple of years ago they only had two meetings. If the staff gets a

lot of applications submitted to them and feel the HSMC needs to meet, the staff could let the HSMC know and adjustments could be made to meet more regularly. But presently he feels the every other monthly meeting is fine.

Mr. Harper reported that the sundial on the Toomer Monument will be replaced next week. They are hopeful that the dial will not get broken again.

Mr. Karatassos said if the sundial is removed again, the next suggestion would be to put a glass box around the monument.

Mr. Karatassos asked staff about the status of the Mural legislation.

Ms. Harris explained that the City Manager wanted to wait until the new City Council is in office before going forward with the Mural legislation.

Mr. Karatassos asked staff if the HSMC's guidelines were adopted.

Ms. Harris explained that the guidelines were adopted and amended. The second amendment is being reviewed.

Mr. Karatassos asked what was the final outcome regarding the Technical Advisory Committee.

Ms. Harris explained that the Technical Advisory Committee provided comments to the HSMC rather than providing formal recommendations.

Mr. Karatassos said that there is a belief among some persons that the make-up of the Technical Advisory Committee has changed. But, he believes the make-up of this Committee has not changed and they do not meet the same day as the HSMC.

Ms. Harris said the Technical Advisory Committee met to discuss the Mural policy, but the Chair felt that if they needed to provide comments on any proposals that this could be done via email. Therefore, unless there is a compelling reason for the Technical Advisory Committee to meet, they will only provide written comments.

V. Adjournment

11. [Adjourned](#)

The HSMC welcomed their new members, **Mr. Thomas Gensheimer and Mr. Ryan Madson.**

There being no further business to come before the HSMC, Ms. Soule adjourned the meeting at 4:55 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting is March 1, 2012 at 4:00 p.m. in the Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ellen Harris
Cultural Resource and Urban Planning Manager

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.