



S A V A N N A H - C H A T H A M C O U N T Y
HISTORIC SITE & MONUMENT COMMISSION

Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room
June 27, 2013 4:00 P.M.
Meeting Minutes

June 27, 2013 Historic Site & Monument Commission Regular Meeting

I. Call to Order and Welcome

1. [Order](#)

Mr. Eli Karatassos, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. and welcomed everyone in attendance.

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes

2. [April 4, 2013 Meeting Minutes](#)

Attachment: [April 4, 2013 Minutes.pdf](#)

Board Action:

Approve Meeting Minutes of April 4, 2013. - PASS

Vote Results

Motion: Walt Harper

Second: Ryan Madson

Thomas Gensheimer - Aye

Walt Harper - Aye

Eli Karatassos - Aye

Ryan Madson - Aye

III. Regular Agenda

3. [Cultivating a Healthy Savannah Mural | 1821 East Victory Drive | Whole Foods Market | 13-002216-PA](#)

Attachment: [Submittal Packet.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Staff report.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Zoning Administrator Interpretation.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Technical Advisory Committee Comments.pdf](#)

Mr. Matthew Bird was present on behalf of the petition.

Ms. Ellen Harris gave the staff report. The petitioner is requesting approval of a permanent mural on the east facade of 1821 East Victory Drive. The proposed mural will be approximately 75 feet wide by 20 feet tall and will showcase iconic images of Savannah and smiling people. The theme of the mural is to create a happy and healthy environment. The mural depicts the community spreading seeds to cultivate a healthy and organic lifestyle. The artwork depicts iconic Savannah landmarks such as the bridge, architecture, fountains and sculptures. To deepen the connection to the community, the artwork was done as a collaboration with SCAD to give local students real life design experience. It is anticipated that the project will be completed by the first week of August, 2013.

Ms. Harris stated that when the staff report was initially written, the petitioner was debating whether or not to use exterior grade paint or do another type of application digital printing on exterior gray vinyl and then apply it to the building. Therefore, staff's recommendation at that time was conditional upon that decision being submitted to staff for approval and more information on the vinyl gray application. However, the petitioner has confirmed that they will use the exterior grade paint. She explained that the second condition of staff's approval involved the artist. When the design was selected, they had not chosen who was going to do the application. Staff asked that this information be provided to them for approval.

Ms. Harris said, however, subsequently a muralist has been chosen. His name is **Jeff Mangum**. Mr. Mangum is a professional muralist and has done work in the past and has more than sixteen (16) years of experience. Ms. Harris said the website information has been provided to her regarding this information. Therefore, it appears that Mr. Mangum meets the criteria based on having done murals of similar size and experience.

Ms. Harris reported that with receiving this information, staff's recommendation no longer includes the conditions. She said staff recommends approval of the mural because it meets the standards in the Master Plan and Guidelines for Markers, Monuments, and Public Art.

Ms. Harris informed the Commission that the Zoning Administrator reviewed this request and made the determination that the requested mural is not considered a sign. She said that the newly adopted posting requirements were followed. To this end, property owners within 200 feet and area neighborhood associations were notified.

PETITIONER COMMENTS

Mr. Bird came forward and stated that he is the store designer for the "Whole Foods Market." He explained that through community partnership, they got SCAD involved in this project. They asked SCAD to come up with a creative approach not only what Whole Foods is to the community, but also about Savannah and bring all these cultural elements together into a mural to be put on the façade of the building. He said that he was not aware of newspaper articles being printed. SCAD invited the newspaper to the event.

Mr. Harper asked Mr. Bird what is the concept.

Mr. Bird stated that they went to SCAD and explained who they are, their mission and what their quality standards mean. They then asked the students to combine this with what Savannah meant to them. Consequently, the mural is a representation of these two worlds merged together.

Mr. Harper asked, "what is your mission?"

Mr. Bird explained that their mission is to supply healthy ingredients and provide good food.

Mr. Gensheimer asked if the mural will be permanent.

Mr. Bird answered yes. He believes that in the future, they may have another participation with SCAD to refresh the mural, but nothing has been discussed presently regarding refreshing it in a certain timeline.

Mr. Harper said this is an east façade and will get a lot of sun, especially during the summer. He said his concern is the grade of paint that will be used on the mural and whether it will be a good quality. Mr. Harper said he does not want the mural to look run-down. Two years from now, it will look very weathered. It must be maintained.

Mr. Bird said they have discussed this with the muralist. The muralist informed them that he only works with extremely high durability paints. Mr. Bird said they also assume the responsibility of maintaining the mural.

Mr. Madson asked Mr. Bird if they have murals at other stores and locations.

Mr. Bird replied yes. They do not have a prototype. Each mural is catered to the particular community and its unique surroundings. It depends on what architectural is going on and whether there is a decent space for the mural. They also look to see if it is a city that embraces the arts and wants to be a part of it.

Mr. Harper asked what is the anticipated store opening date for the Whole Foods.

Mr. Bird said August 13, 2013 is scheduled to be their opening date.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

Board Action:

Approval for a permanent mural on the east façade of 1821 East Victory Drive because the mural meets the standards in the Master Plan and - PASS
Guidelines for Markers, Monuments, and Public

Art.

Vote Results

Motion: Walt Harper

Second: Ryan Madson

Thomas Gensheimer - Aye

Walt Harper - Aye

Eli Karatassos - Aye

Ryan Madson - Aye

4. [Edgewater Trace Landscape Mural | 10714 Abercorn Street | Edgewater Trace Apartments | 13-001773-PA](#)

Attachment: [Submittal Packet.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Staff report.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Zoning Administrator Interpretation.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Technical Advisory Committee Comments.pdf](#)

Mr. Scott Winslow was present on behalf of the petition.

Ms. Ellen Harris gave the staff report. The petitioner is proposing to install a mural on an existing retaining wall along Abercorn Street. The mural will face the interior of the Edgewater Trace apartment complex and will not be visible from Abercorn Street. The proposed mural will consist of a landscape utilizing native plants to blend the concrete wall into the existing vegetation on site. The mural is proposed by Kole Management which owns and operates the Edgewater Trace apartments.

Ms. Harris noted that the mural is not visible from the public right-of-way. Therefore, in most circumstances the Commission would not be reviewing this. But, the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) currently owns the retaining wall and is anticipating handing this over for maintenance and ownership to the City of Savannah once the construction is completed. In order for them to approve it, they asked that basically the mural goes through the City's process for approval to ensure that there are no issues later on with the hand-off. She said, therefore, the proposal today would be a recommendation to City Council for approval.

Ms. Harris said the public notice was sent to two neighborhood associations as well as property owners within 200 feet of the proposed mural. The Zoning Administrator determined that the proposed mural is not a sign.

Ms. Harris reported that staff recommends approval of the mural because it meets the standards in the Master Plan and Guidelines for Markers, Monuments, and Public Art.

Mr. Karatassos asked if the City is going to own the mural, who will maintain it?

Ms. Harris said the City is responsible for maintaining the wall. Kole Management has assumed responsibility for maintaining the mural. Kole Management has provided this in writing.

Mr. Harper asked if the mural will extend the entire the length of the wall.

Ms. Harris answered that this is her understanding. She believes it is 225 feet.

PETITIONER COMMENTS

Mr. Winslow came forward and stated that he is the Director of Operations for Kole Management. He said that the Koles are a great family. In a sub-forty percent retention market for multi-family, they are above 60%. The Koles really take this seriously. When this was built, certainly it was welcomed by the City of Savannah as a means to get downtown a littler quicker from the south side. They knew that it would be an eyesore. They have wildlife in the pond, ducks, and geese visit certain times of the year. Mr. Winslow said the pond has been there along with a fountain. Because it does not blend well, the Koles decided to make it more aesthetically pleasing.

Mr. Karatassos said this sounds typical of the Kole family. It is nice that they have taken an extra step to make this more livable.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

Board Action:

Approved to recommend to City Council the approval of the Edgewater Trace Landscape Mural at 10714 Abercorn Street because it meets the standards in the Master Plan and Guidelines for Markers, Monuments, and Public Art. - PASS

Vote Results

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

IV. Other Business

5. [Nominating Committee](#)

Mr. Karatassos reported that since the Commission does not know whether they will have

a meeting as scheduled in September because they do not know if a petition will be submitted, rather than wait until September to form a nominating committee, Ms. Soule asked that a nominating committee be selected today. He explained that the nominating committee typically consists of three people.

Mr. Karatassos appointed Mr. Madson, Mr. Gensheimer and Mr. Harper as the nominating committee. They need nominations for chair, vice-chair and secretary.

6. Commissioner's Items

Mr. Harper reported that the new Embassy Suites being built on Oglethorpe Avenue at Turner Boulevard has taken up the entire area from Papy Street onward. A parking garage is being built also. A monument is located here in the right-of-way and the contractor did not want to damage it. They contacted the City of Savannah and wanted to find out what they could do to have the monument removed temporarily. The monument was erected in recognition of Bishop Turner. Mr. Harper said Mr. Jerry Flemming of Park & Tree was contacted. Ms. Harris is aware of this also. It was suggested that they come up with a plan for the removal of the monument, storage and reinstallation.

Mr. Harper said the monument is stored at DuPue Monument and will probably be reinstalled at its same site in August, 2013.

Ms. Harris said the monument was located on public right-of-way. The hotel is not encroaching on the public right-of-way, but they were coming close to the monument with their work on the sidewalk. The contractor was concerned about the base of the monument; the underground foundation. They were fearful that they might disturb the monument. She said that the contractor was of the opinion that the foundation's base was insufficient. They believed that foundation base should have been much larger and more substantial. Therefore, the contractor agreed to carefully remove the monument during construction and then put it back and incur the expense of the new foundation which will be much more substantial.

Mr. Harper said he was only reporting this to the Commission just in case someone asked them about the monument. The monument is secured and will be replaced.

Ms. Harris said staff requested that they have a professional monument company who make monuments do the removal, storage and reinstallation rather than the construction crew.

Mr. Karatassos asked who initiated this monument.

Ms. Harris explained that a church was associated with Bishop Turner and the congregants initiated this. Consequently, staff recommended that the congregation be contacted and let them know what was going on. The congregation had no problems with the removal assuming that the monument would be replaced at its proper site.

Mr. Karatassos reported that the etching that came off of the Yamacraw site that Mr. Flemming has in his possession at Park & Tree, he has talked with the persons who designed the public display in the Transit Center about putting the etching in the building. This will be good as the Transit Center is in the Yamacraw area.

7. [Next Meeting- September 5, 2013](#)

Mr. Karatassos said the Commission's next meeting is September 5, 2013 at 4:00 p.m. in the Arthur A. Mendonsa hearing room.

V. Adjournment

8. [Adjournment](#)

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Mr. Karatassos adjourned the meeting at 4:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ellen I. Harris
Director of Urban Planning and Historic Preservation

EIH: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.