



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  
August 6, 2015 4:00 P.M.  
Meeting Minutes

**AUGUST 6, 2015 HISTORIC SITE AND MONUMENT COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING**

**HSMC Members Present:** Eli Karatassos, Chair  
Walt Harper, Secretary  
Ryan Madson  
Kristopher Monroe

**HSMC Member Not Present:** Thomas Gensheimer

**MPC Staff Present:** Ellen Harris, Director of Urban Planning and Historic Preservation  
Sara Farr, Historic Preservation Planner  
Mary E. Mitchell, Administrative Assistant

**I. Call to Order and Welcome**

1. [Order and Welcome](#)

**Mr. Karatassos** called the HSMC meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. and welcomed everyone in attendance. He outlined the role of the Historic Site and Monument Commission.

**II. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

2. [Approve Meeting Minutes of June 4, 2015](#)

Attachment: [June 4, 2015 Meeting Minutes.pdf](#)

**Board Action:**

The Savannah Historic Site and Monument Commission does hereby approve the meeting minutes of June 4, 2015. - PASS

**Vote Results**

Motion: Walt Harper  
Second: Kristopher Monroe  
Walt Harper  
Eli Karatassos  
Ryan Madson  
Kristopher Monroe

- Aye  
- Aye  
- Aye  
- Aye

**III. Regular Agenda**

3. [Petition of Nephew King Clark, Jr. | 15-002565-HM | 330 Bonaventure Road | Marker](#)

Attachment: [Staff Recommendation.pdf](#)  
Attachment: [Submittal Packet.pdf](#)  
Attachment: [Application.pdf](#)  
Attachment: [AERIAL\\_MAP.pdf](#)

**Mr. Nephew King Clark, Jr.** was present on behalf of the petition.

**Ms. Sara Farr** gave the staff report. The petitioner is requesting approval to erect a marker on Lot A322 in Bonaventure Cemetery. The marker will commemorate Captain Reuben G. Clark and includes a quotation from the book "*Valley of the Shadow*."

**Ms. Farr** reported that staff recommends denial of the petition for a marker at 330 Bonaventure Road, Lot A322, because it does not meet the standards.

**Mr. Karatassos** explained that HSMC has purview over murals in and markers in public areas. Bonaventure is owned by the City of Savannah, although individuals own their plots within the cemetery. The individuals are permitted to erect markers that are consistent with whatever the cemetery allows. Mr. Karatassos asked if this marker request has been submitted to the cemetery administrator.

**Ms. Harris** stated that the request has been submitted to the Bonaventure Cemetery.

**Mr. Karatassos** asked what was the conclusion of the cemetery staff.

**Ms. Harris** explained that the cemetery staff has some concerns about the request. They wanted to know what is the process for markers on private property. She said that her understanding of the cemetery under rights versus ownership is that the City owns all the land, but the individuals buy interment rights. Ms. Harris stated that she explained to the cemetery director that following the HSMC's standard procedures, what should happen is that the HSMC should review the marker as it is on public property and make a recommendation to City Council.

**Mr. Karatassos** asked staff if other markers such as the one being requested is there.

**Ms. Harris** explained that there are some historical markers in the cemetery, but they tend to commemorate groups and larger events. She is not aware of any individual markers there.

**PETITIONER COMMENTS**

**Mr. Clark** explained that the request was made with the Bonaventure Cemetery Administrator. In the past, when Mr. Jerry Fleming was the cemetery administrator, he would make the ruling. But, a new administration is here now.

**Mr. Clark** explained that this is a large plot with very little in it. It will not be crowded in the future because the family members have decided that they will be cremated. He is the oldest patriot descendant of Captain Reuben Clark. He gave an elaborate history of his family achievements in Savannah. Mr. Clark stated that many tourists come to Savannah and go to tour Bonaventure Cemetery, but there is very little here for them to read about.

**Mr. Clark** said he believes the reason the staff did not approve the marker is because Captain Clark was not buried in this plot, but the message he leaves and his descendants is far more important than his bones and ashes.

**Mr. Harper** said this could set a precedent if approved. He believes the cemetery administrator needs to provide some clarification on this. As it is now, he is leery of approving it because this could set a bad precedent.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

**HSMC DISCUSSION**

The HSMC's discussion centered on if this could set a precedent. The request should be a determination made by the City as to whether or not they would allow such a marker. The HSMC directed the staff to send the petition to the City to provide additional guidance and direction.

**Board Action:**

The Historic Site and Monument Commission does hereby table this petition to allow staff to send the - PASS petition to the City to make a ruling on this matter.

**Vote Results**

Motion: Ryan Madson

Second: Walt Harper

Walt Harper - Aye

Eli Karatassos - Aye

Ryan Madson - Aye

Kristopher Monroe - Aye

4. [Petition of Kim Chambless for the Hilton Savannah DeSoto | 15-003194-HM | 15 East Liberty Street | Marker](#)

Attachment: [Staff Recommendation.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Application.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Submittal Packet.pdf](#)

Attachment: [AERIAL\\_MAP.pdf](#)

**Ms. Kim Chambless** was present on behalf of the petition.

**Ms. Sara Farr** gave the staff report. The petitioner is requesting the reposting of refurbished Revolution War Barracks Marker located on Liberty Street in a planter on the sidewalk. The marker will be mounted on a 7 foot tall pole. The marker was originally installed on the site when the building was the Desoto Hotel. It was removed when the Desoto Hotel was demolished and installed in the portico of the new building. This building underwent an entrance configuration a few years ago and the marker was removed and never reinstalled. It is one of two markers; the other is now located in the building.

**Ms. Farr** reported that staff recommends approval of the petition for a marker at the Hilton Savannah Desoto, because it meets the standards.

**PETITIONER COMMENTS**

**Ms. Chambless** said they have a post ready to mount the marker on pending approval of the marker by the HSMC.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**None.**

**HSMC DISUSSION**

The Hilton Savannah Desoto is requesting to put the marker back in the same location where it was originally before the hotel was renovated.

**IV. Other Business**

5. [Petition of Ashley Helmholdt for City of Savannah | 15-004279-PA | 114 East 39th Street | Mural](#)

**Mr. Karatassos** explained that a mural application was received with a request that the HSMC hear the application today due to time issues. The HSMC will hear the petition today and if they believe that this is something they want to approve, then they will approve it on a temporary basis until all the necessary paperwork is submitted.

**Ms. Harris** explained that the petitioner is requesting approval for a mural at 114 East

39th Street. It will be located in a community garden. The mural was designed by students in the Savannah Youth Ambassadors Program in coordination with the City of Savannah's Community Planning and Development Department. The mural will be titled "Blue Sky garden Mural." It will be painted on plywood and mounted to wooden fence boards. The size will be 4 feet by 12 feet.

**PETITIONER COMMENTS**

**Ms. Helmholtz** stated that she works at the Neighborhood Services Coordinator with the Community Planning & Development Department. The students' aim is to increase positive youth identity in the community through community gardens. The students met with other community members and interviewed local staff including the Block by Block Program and worked with Christine Heffner at Cultural Affairs. Twelve students worked on this design. The garden is located behind the Community Planning and Development building, between Drayton and Abercorn Streets. The mural will be located in a somewhat unnoticeable place in the garden. The mural will be painted on plywood and mounted to a wooden fence boards.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

**Mr. Karatassos** said the HSMC has all the background data on the mural, but today they do not have a petition to approve. Therefore, the HSMC could approve the mural on a temporary basis until everything is in line.

**Board Action:**

The Savannah Historic Site and Monument Commission does hereby approve the mural on a temporary basis. - PASS

**Vote Results**

Motion: Kristopher Monroe

Second: Ryan Madson

Walt Harper - Aye

Eli Karatassos - Aye

Ryan Madson - Aye

Kristopher Monroe - Aye

**V. Adjournment**

6. [Adjourned](#)

There being no further business to come before the HSMC, Mr. Karatassos adjourned the meeting at 4:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ellen I. Harris  
Director of Urban Planning and Historic Preservation

EIH:mem

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