



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
October 18, 2016 4:00 P.M. (Rescheduled from 10/6/16)
Meeting Minutes

OCTOBER 18, 2016 HISTORIC SITE AND MONUMENT COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

HSMC Members Present: Eli Karatassos, Chair
Thomas Gensheimer, Vice Chair
Dolores Engle
Dr. Nicholas Henry
Ryan Madson
Kristopher Monroe

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

City of Savannah Staff Present: Denise Cooper, Assistant City Attorney
Shane Corbin, Zoning Administrator

I. Call to Order and Welcome

1. [Order and Welcome](#)

Mr. Karatassos called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone in attendance. He outlined the role of the Historic Site and Monument Commission.

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes

2. [Approval of September 1, 2016 Meeting Minutes](#)

Attachment: [09-01-16 Minutes.pdf](#)

Board Action:

The Savannah Historic Site and Monument
Commission does hereby approve the meeting - PASS

minutes of September 1, 2016.

Vote Results

Motion: Dolores Engle

Second: Kristopher Monroe

Dolores Engle - Aye

Thomas Gensheimer - Aye

Dr. Nicholas Henry - Aye

Eli Karatassos - Aye

Ryan Madson - Aye

Kristopher Monroe - Aye

III. Regular Agenda

3. [Petition of Beverlee Trotter for Walls of Hope | 16-003895-PA | Various Locations | Murals](#)

Attachment: [Mural Locations.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Mural Examples.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Staff Recommendation.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Public Comment.pdf](#)

Ms. Beverly Trotter, Ms. Eric Hardnet, Mr. Scott Stanton, and Ms. Elizabeth Buchea were present on behalf of the petition.

Ms. Sara Farr gave the staff report. The petitioners, representing the Walls of Hope, are requesting after-the-fact approval for murals located throughout the city. The murals are all painted by local artist PanHandle Slim and attached to the walls of buildings throughout the city. Each mural includes the portrait of a person with a quote by that person. She stated that the following properties are included in this approval: 2505 Bull Street, 1308 Montgomery Street, 2006 Waters Avenue, 24 East Broughton Street, 410 East 37th Street, 804 Wheaton Street, 1899 Skidaway Road, 1820 Montgomery Street, 2015 Florance Street, 3619 Bull Street, 2601 Bull Street, 902 Pennsylvania Avenue, 2215 MLK Jr. Blvd, 1005 Louisville Road, 2102 Waters Avenue, 2116 Waters Avenue, 1318 Augusta Avenue, 922 Pennsylvania Avenue, 701 West 37th Street, and 1313 Habersham Street.

Ms. Farr explained that the Walls of Hope's mission is to spread positive messages across the City of Savannah using artwork created by local artists. The overall theme of the murals is honoring people important to the community. Each building owner works with Walls of Hope to select a person and quote for their location. The locations are often selected based on recent events. The goal is to provide hope and inspiration to members of the community.

Ms. Farr reported that staff recommends approval of the murals with the following conditions:

1. All murals on historic materials comply with the relevant Preservation Briefs as published by the National Park Service Technical Preservation Services;
2. Exterior paint and a waterproof coating are used on all murals;

3. All future murals receive approval through the Historic Site and Monument Commission;

because otherwise they meet the standards in the Master Plan and Guidelines for Markers, Monuments, and Public Art.

Additionally, due to the time sensitive nature of the murals, and their repeating theme and design concept, staff recommends that the Board allow staff to review future submittals that are part of this project.

PETITIONERS COMMENTS

Mr. Stanton explained that he was not aware that they needed to come before the Historic Site and Monument Commission to get approval to post the murals . They have 30 murals in different sections of the city and nobody has complained about them. However, he does understand now about coming to this Commission. He read in the newspaper that they needed to come to the Historic Site and Monument Commission and ask for forgiveness to keep the murals up. They do not see what they have done as a mural.

Ms. Hardnet said they were not trying to circumvent the Historic Site and Monument Commission. However, their murals have been up more than a year and nobody said anything to them until approximately 10 months into the project. They did not know they were to come to this Commission and nobody contacted them. They met with the Metropolitan Planning Commission and talked about their need to ensure that they would not encounter or cause any problems. She said the murals are up because as a community they chose to put something positive in the community because of all the violence that was happening in the city. They believe that the murals assisted in decreasing the violence in the community. The murals are not permanent; they have taken some of them down, and they do not damage property. The murals are on personal property. Perhaps, an amendment needs to be done to the policy as what they do, does not fit into any of the shown categories.

Ms. Trotter said based on what they received from the HSMC, this policy has only been in effect 11 or 12 months ago. She said they want to get permission from the HSMC so they can continue with the Walls of Hope project. They hear the HSMC saying they violated something, but they were not aware that they were doing so. They were not aware that they needed to come before the HSMC prior to putting up the murals. Ms. Trotter said since the murals are already up and they share positive enrichment in the community, they are asking that they be allowed to keep them up. They have given the HSMC a list of where these murals are posted. They received permission from the private property owners before they were painted. They want to continue pushing positive aspects into the community.

Ms. Buchea asked if it was said that any future murals would be given staff approval.

Mr. Karatassos explained that if Walls of Hope received approval for the 30 murals today, that is it asking for an unlimited number "cart blanc" going forward is directly contrary to the HSMC's policy. The HSMC present policy only allows rotating murals to have that kind of situation.

Ms. Pridget said she is pursuing a documentary on the Walls of Hope project as her senior project. She is a student at SCAD. She asked if the HSMC was making reference to the murals on the historical buildings or just the ones included with the residents on the outer edge of the Historic District.

Mr. Karatassos answered that the petitioner would need to seek approval for all of the murals.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION

The Commission discussed the size of the murals and asked if they are permanent murals. Ms. Farr said the murals are not permanent as they will be removed, but the removal time is not specified. The Commission informed the petitioners that they are not the Metropolitan Planning Commission. It was explained that the HSMC meets in the MPC's hearing room and the MPC provides staff to assist them; the HSMC is a commission sponsored by the City of Savannah. Mr. Karatassos explained that if it is not art and not a sign, then it is graffiti. Graffiti is removed by the City of Savannah's Maintenance Department. The Maintenance Department chose not to remove it because he believes they did not see it as graffiti. Ultimately, it was directed to the attention of the HSMC. Before murals are put up, the public must be made aware of what is being proposed in their area.

Mr. Madson said not everyone in the community is aware of the Historic Site and Monument Commission's policy. He does not agree with a policy where one size fits all regardless of the historic context, regardless of the land use and zoning. He said he would like to see the HSMC move away from that to something that is more nuanced with understanding the conditions of each district and neighborhood, recognizing that there are some areas that are more appropriate for art interventions on a modest scale. Let the neighborhood associations, residents who live within the area, make decisions and be stewards of public art in their neighborhood. He believes what is before them today, falls into that category.

Mr. Gensheimer said what is before the HSMC today is not a rotating mural. He takes an exception with what Mr. Madson said. This will defeat the purpose of this Commission as defined by their policy.

Mr. Karatassos explained that there are two items before the Commission today. The staff recommends approval of the existing murals. He takes exception with the last paragraph of the staff's recommendation that due to the time sensitive nature of the murals, and their repeating theme and design concept that the Board allow staff to review future submittals that are part of this project. However, the Commission can vote it up or down. He entertained two motions.

Mr. Gensheimer said he hears that there are 30 murals, but he only sees 20 murals shown on the list that was given to them. Where are the others?

Ms. Hardnet answered that threatening letters were sent to the property owners. The police came by and some of the murals are not posted any longer as the owners were threatened with the possibility of being incarcerated. Consequently, the owners took them down.

Mr. Karatassos stated that he could not believe that threatening letters were sent to the property owners.

Ms. Harris explained that when the property addresses were identified, letters were sent to the property owners asking them to either remove the murals (public art) or submit an application by the specific deadline. There was no police involvement.

Board Action:

The Savannah Historic Site and Monument Commission does hereby approve the after-the-fact murals with the following conditions:

1. All murals on historic materials comply with the relevant Preservation Briefs as published by the National Park Service Technical Preservation Services;

- PASS

2. Exterior paint and a waterproof coating are used on all murals;

because otherwise they meet the standards in the Master Plan and Guidelines for Markers, Monuments, and Public Art

Vote Results

Motion: Dr. Nicholas Henry

Second: Dolores Engle

Dolores Engle

- Aye

Thomas Gensheimer

- Aye

Dr. Nicholas Henry

- Aye

Eli Karatassos

- Aye

Ryan Madson

- Aye

Kristopher Monroe

- Aye

Board Action:

The Savannah Historic Site and Monument Commission does hereby approve that the staff

review the future submittals that are part of this project due to the time sensitive nature of the murals, and their repeating theme and design concept. - PASS

Vote Results

Motion: Ryan Madson

Second: Dolores Engle

Dolores Engle - Aye

Thomas Gensheimer - Nay

Dr. Nicholas Henry - Aye

Eli Karatassos - Nay

Ryan Madson - Aye

Kristopher Monroe - Aye

4. [Petition of Erin Wessling | 16-005143-PA | 347 Abercorn Street | Projection Art](#)

Attachment: [Staff Recommendation.pdf](#)

Attachment: [AERIAL MAP.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Description.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Location of Art.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Artist Examples of Work.pdf](#)

Ms. Katie Hurley was present on behalf of the petition.

Ms. Farr gave the staff report. The applicant is requesting approval of a light show at 347 Abercorn Street. The projection will be installed through the month of December, 2016 and will focus on the corner of the building. The content will shift and change between 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. every evening, but it will remain in the same area.

Ms. Farr reported that staff recommends approval of the public art at 347 Abercorn Street, because it meets the standards in the Master Plan and Guidelines for Markers, Monuments, and Public Art.

PETITIONER COMMENTS

Ms. Hurley thanked the HSMC for hearing their petition. She entertained questions from the Commission.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION

The Commission discussed if the public art would be displayed 24 hours. Staff explained that the display will be projected through the month of December, 2016. The content will shift and change between 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. every evening and will remain in the same

area.

Board Action:

The Savannah Historic Site and Monument Commission does hereby approve the public art at 347 Abercorn Street because it meets the standards - PASS in the Master Plan and Guidelines for Markers, Monuments, and Public Art.

Vote Results

Motion: Kristopher Monroe

Second: Dolores Engle

Dolores Engle	- Aye
Thomas Gensheimer	- Aye
Dr. Nicholas Henry	- Aye
Eli Karatassos	- Aye
Ryan Madson	- Aye
Kristopher Monroe	- Aye

IV. Other Business

5. [Discussion of Holidays on Broughton Project](#)

Attachment: [Application Holidays on Broughton.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Holidays on Broughton Presentation - reduced size.pdf](#)

NOTE: Mr. Karatassos and Mr. Madson left the meeting at 4:50 p.m. Mr. Gensheimer, Vice Chair, chaired this discussion.

Ms. Mary Reynolds and Mr. Will Arnsdorff were present to represent the petition.

Ms. Sara Farr explained that today is just a discussion of the Holidays on Broughton Project. She said at the HSMC meeting on November 3, 2016, a request will be received from Ms. Reynolds seeking approval for two light projections on Broughton Street at 2 East Broughton Street and 2 West Broughton Street. They will be titled "Holidays on Broughton" and will run from November 25, 2016 to December 24, 2016.

Ms. Reynolds came forward and thanked the HSMC for letting them present information to them prior to being on the November 3, 2016 agenda. She explained that everyone is familiar with Broughton Street. A \$90 million renovation project has been completed on Broughton Street of the historical buildings. They felt, therefore, that this would be the appropriate time to have a celebration. The concept of having "Holidays on Broughton" has come about with wanting to bring the community together and bringing the community back to downtown. The celebration will start with a 50 feet Christmas tree that will be on the corner of Broughton and Bull Streets. They have been working closely with the City of Savannah. Ms. Reynolds said they have submitted all the necessary

applications for this celebration.

Ms. Reynolds explained that the event will have a stage and many different community groups will sing. The military forces will also perform as well as children groups and choirs. The lighting ceremony for the tree will be on Friday, November 25, 2016. Thereafter, on each following Saturday, Santa will be at the tree. During the evenings, they would like to project holiday art and art images on two of the buildings on Broughton Street that will bank each side of the tree. The two buildings are the Levy's Jewelers building and the SunTrust Bank building. Stagefront, a local company here in Savannah, will supply the lighting.

Mr. Arnsdorff of Stagefront came forward and stated that he will be the project manager handling the technology integration portion of the Holidays on Broughton project. He explained that the basic idea is a holiday light show to bring the community together. Mr. Arnsdorff explained that from the standpoint of projection, the idea is to cover Levy's from end-to-end like a giant white canvas. Their main concern today is to figure out where they need to be with the Commission in order to be in compliance. He said from the technology side, the projection will be located on the rooftop of the Panera Bread building. It will be completely outdoor rated and enclosed. It will not be visible from the street level because they will be inset onto the building by four feet. Mr. Arnsdorff said they are working with the architects and designers of the buildings to verify square footage as per pound per square foot. They will verify that they do not have issues with weight loads, etc. so as not to cause any damage to the buildings.

Mr. Arnsdorff explained that the location for the projection that will be shooting onto the SunTrust Bank building will be on the overhang of Levy's. He is aware that in the past that they have had projectors up there with sound systems. However, this is something that they are working out with the architects of the buildings and engineering to verify that they do not have issues with the placement. The main technology and integration portion will take place the week prior to their opening night. Then, it will remain in place through December 17, 2016 with this being their last show. The show will run Friday and Saturday between 7:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. This will be a somewhat mixed-use art installation that will have a series of different video clips and images of all holiday themes that will cycle through as the two hours progress.

Mr. Arnsdorff said their presence at today's meeting is for them to find out the concerns and requirements of the HSMC. Then, they will take the HSMC feedback to the committee so they will be ready for the meeting of November 3, 2016. Mr. Arnsdorff entertained questions from the HSMC.

Mr. Gensheimer asked Mr. Arnsdorff if they have already gotten permission from SunTrust and Levy's Jewelers.

Mr. Arnsdorff answered yes.

Mr. Gensheimer asked if the tree will be on Bull and Broughton Streets. Will it be located in the middle of the street? He believes at the meeting on November 3, 2016, the images will be shown to the HSMC.

Mr. Arnsdorff stated he believes that the paperwork they handed out shows the images and

what they will look like on the buildings. They will have additional images to present at the meeting.

Mr. Gensheimer asked if advertisement will be presented.

Mr. Arnsdorff answered there will not be any advertisement. They are trying very hard for this event not to be commercial. They want to bring the community in and want it to be pretty.

Ms. Reynolds said this is really a celebration of the preservation of all the historic buildings on Broughton Street. A part of the walking map that they will give out talks about the history of the street and also about the history of some of the specific buildings.

Mr. Monroe asked if a sound component will be here.

Mr. Arnsdorff answered that a sound component will be here, pending approval. If there is a sound component it will comply with all ordinances regarding decibel levels, at street levels as well as inside the businesses and close proximity. On Friday and Saturday they will have a portable stage that will be setup with a small sound system that will be used for community involvement. He said because certain portions of the projection and artwork will be sound related, they will need to work with the HSMC specifically on the monument portion of the sound. They will meet with the Zoning Department regarding the sound systems.

Ms. Engle pointed out that on page 27 of the petitioners' handout, says that the windows to remain part of the historic tour. What does this mean?

Mr. Arnsdorff explained that in one of the original proposals they were doing storefront displays with an artistic and Christmas theme. However, he believes that this has been removed. They will update this before the meeting of November 3, 2016.

Ms. Engle asked if all the merchants are in agreement with the event.

Ms. Reynolds answered yes. They made an application and actually have 100% participation from every tenant on the street. The merchants are eagerly looking forward to having the street completely open. The construction is over and the renovations are over.

Ms. Engle said she believes this is inappropriate. She believes this has nothing to do with Broughton Street nor the history of Savannah. There are many more things they could use to celebrate. To her, this looks like Las Vegas or Disney World.

Mr. Arnsdorff said besides the Christmas aspect, there is a historical aspect. A part of the artwork will be pictures of Broughton Street from early century to late. They want to give the historical element to the street. He sees Ms. Engle's point with the street being so bright, but anything that they do will be in line with the historical side of the city. They will try to maintain that traditional feel.

Mr. Anderson of Ben Carter Enterprises stated that the genesis of this entire thing was at the completion of the renovations of these buildings, the million dollars that were spent

renovating these historical buildings back whether they were in the 1920s, 1930s or 1960s, the purpose is to highlight these buildings because when people walk down Broughton Street, they are at eye level and are not really focusing upward on the buildings. They want to attract everyone to look up at the buildings and admire not only what they have done, but what all their neighbors have done over the years. The architectural elements of each building is different; the eras when these buildings were created or renovated are different also. This wanted to highlight more buildings, but it became a cost issue. Mr. Anderson said they wanted the community to come to Broughton Street, so they said what a better way to give to the community than to do it at Christmastime. Historically speaking, Broughton Street was the gathering place for all of Savannah.

Ms. Engle said she is aware of what Broughton Street was. She believes that the people look up at the buildings when going by. She was not sure the bright flashing Christmas lights, bows, and everything else on the buildings will highlight the buildings rather than obscure them.

Mr. Anderson said they wanted to add something extra to the buildings.

Mr. Gensheimer said today the HSMC will not be voting on this issue; this was only for discussion. The petition is scheduled to come to the HSMC for approval on November 3, 2016 at 4:00 p.m..

6. [Commissioner Items](#)

7. [Next Meeting - Thursday, November 3, 2016 at 4:00 p.m. in the Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room, MPC, 112 E. State Street](#)

V. Adjournment

8. [Adjourned](#)

There being no further business to come before the Historic Site and Monument Commission, Mr. Gensheimer adjourned the meeting at 5:15 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.