

III. Regular Agenda

[3. Petition of Georgia Historical Society | 17-002062-HM | Guckenheimer Park | Historical Marker](#)

📎 [Staff Recommendation.pdf](#)

📎 [Submittal Package.pdf](#)

📎 [AERIAL MAP.pdf](#)

Ms. Elyse Butler was present on behalf of the petition.

Ms. Sara Farr gave the staff report. The petitioner is requesting approval for a marker in Guckenheimer Park. The marker will be freestanding and will commemorate Mayor Malcolm Maclean. The proposed marker will be placed near Mayor Maclean's residence on 45th Street.

Ms. Farr stated that the marker will read as follows:

:

Malcom R. Maclean (1919-2001)

Malcom R. Maclean served in the U.S. Navy during World War II and the Korean War, rising to the rank of commander. After Harvard Law, Maclean entered Savannah politics. His fellow aldermen selected Maclean as mayor in 1960 to fill an unexpired term. Elected with bi-racial support in 1962, Maclean sought to avoid the violence surrounding the Civil Rights movement that occurred elsewhere and responded with moderation to protests and a boycott of segregated businesses. Maclean negotiated with business and civil rights leaders, including W.W. Law and Eugene Gadsen, to accomplish the largely peaceful desegregation of Savannah before the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Voters rejected Maclean's reelection bid in 1966. Maclean also helped establish Memorial Health hospital and recruit Gulfstream Aerospace. Maclean lived nearby on E. 45th Street and is buried in Bonaventure Cemetery.

Erected by the Georgia Historical Society, Waters Foundation, and Hunter Maclean

Ms. Farr reported that staff recommends approval to City Council with the following conditions:

1. Park and Tree approves the location;
2. The marker text is revised;

because otherwise the marker meets the standards and is visually compatible.

Mr. Karatassos asked staff if a sidewalk is there where the marker is recommended to be located.

Ms. Farr answered that she does not believe a sidewalk is there.

Mr. Karatassos said, therefore, there is no way for pedestrians to view the sign. He asked staff if the City Departments have given their approval for the marker's proposed location.

Ms. Farr answered yes. Park and Tree has no problem with where the marker will be placed.

PETITIONER COMMENTS

Ms. Butler said there are no sidewalks in this immediate area. This location was presented for the marker because it is the least obstructive. This is a residential area, therefore, there

is an opportunity for the pedestrians to view the marker even though no sidewalk is there.

Mr. Karatassos said the citizens/pedestrians will not be able to read it or stand by and see it. If someone is passing by in a car, they will have to stop the car in traffic.

Ms. Butler said there is pedestrian travel in the area as it is a residential neighborhood. Outdoor parks are here, therefore, people are walking and/or riding bicycles. But, there is no access where people can view the marker from a sidewalk.

Mr. Monroe asked if an intersection is there where the marker will be placed.

Ms. Butler explained that 45th Street comes in straight at that angle. Therefore, at the stop sign on 45th Street, a person would be able to read the marker.

Mr. Monroe said it appears to him that this would cause a little obstruction, but he understood that Park & Tree has approved this location.

Dr. Henry asked if the marker is one-sided.

Ms. Butler said the marker is two-sided.

Mr. Karatassos explained that Mayor Maclean was a wonderful man who did a lot for Savannah. He wished the marker was being proposed for an area where people could walk up and read it.

Ms. Butler explained that if the historical marker was placed at the house, it would be at a private residence. The location that is being proposed is the best location that they could come up with to be as close to the residence as possible.

Mr. Stan Deaton stated that the Georgia Historical Society erected a marker at Savannah High School on Washington Avenue. This is the only other marker in Ardsley Park. They have done a lot of thinking about where the marker should go commemorating Mayor Malcom Maclean. Some persons wanted the marker to be located near City Hall as Mayor Maclean spent a lot of time there, but they did not believe it would be a good idea to put the marker there. Other persons wanted the marker to be located at Hunter-Maclean office, but Mayor Maclean never practiced law at this building. Mayor Maclean was instrumental in bringing Gulfstream to Savannah as well as getting Memorial Hospital established here, but those areas did not appear to be appropriate. The 45th Street location seemed to be the best location for the marker. It is obvious that Mayor Maclean did an awful lot for the City of Savannah.

Mr. Nick Palumbo, President of Ardsley Park and Chatham Crescent Neighborhood Association stated that they are honored to be selected as the location to get the historical marker. Unfortunately, though, due to the timing requirements of the notification, they did not find out about the application until late in April. Their neighborhood meetings are the second Wednesday of each month. Mr. Palumbo asked that the petition be continued to the next meeting date so they would have the opportunity to bring this request to their board and the neighborhood association members. He said he talked with the petitioners and they are amenable to their request.

Mr. Palumbo said their neighborhood is mindful of any changes, signages, etc. that are proposed for their neighborhood. He said there may be some confusion with the exact location due to proximity to both the one-way sign and the Guckenheimer Park sign. He does not know if there is a more appropriate place within the park to erect the marker. But,

the initial reaction he has gotten from some of the neighbors in the area and their board members is they do have a little apprehension about the placement of the sign in one of their parks. This will set a precedent because they were talking about many other people they thought who should be honored as well while honoring Mayor Maclean.

Mr. Karatassos asked Mr. Palumbo if he was saying that this petition should be delayed because the neighborhood association has not gotten together to agree on the marker. He believed this was asking a lot. Also, he was not sure that the entire neighborhood association has given its approval for every marker that was approved.

Mr. Palumbo said he was aware of this, but in speaking with the board members they wanted some time to review the petition. This is why they are asking that this be continued. As he has stated, the petitioners are amenable to this.

Ms. Engle said Mr. Palumbo is only asking that the petition be continued so that the neighborhood association could review the request.

Mr. Karatassos stated that if the Commission approve that this petition be continued, at the next meeting the neighborhood association needs to come with a recommendation. At that time, they do not want to have ten different people present with ten different ideas. However, he believes what Mr. Palumbo is asking is unreasonable, but if the Commission is in agreement to continue the petition, they can.

Ms. Butler said the Georgia Historical Society is amenable to the continuance, but they want to know if there are other considerations the Commission wants them to keep in mind.

Mr. Karatassos, in an answer to Ms. Butler's question, suggested that a meeting be held with the neighborhood association so they will be able to come up with a definitive recommendation.

Mr. Karatassos entertained a motion.

Motion

The Savannah - Chatham County Historic Site and Monument Commission does hereby continue the petition to the meeting of June 1, 2017 as requested.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Ryan Madson

Second: Dolores Engle

Dolores Engle - Aye

Thomas Gensheimer - Aye

Dr. Nicholas Henry - Aye

Eli Karatassos - Nay

Ryan Madson - Aye

Kristopher Monroe - Aye

IV. Other Business

[4. Commissioner Items](#)

[5. Next Meeting - Thursday, June 1, 2017 at 4:00 pm in the Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room, MPC, 112 E State Street](#)

V. Adjournment

[6. Adjourned](#)

Will Jones, a student and a member of Boy Scout Troop 16 at Blessed Sacrament School was present at today's meeting. Will attended the meeting today as he is enrolled in a communication class at school. The Commission welcomed him and invited him to come to the meetings again.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Mr. Karatassos adjourned the meeting at 4:40 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 minutes which are adopted by the respective Board. Verbatim transcripts of minutes are the responsibility of the interested party.