



Savannah - Chatham County Historic Site & Monument Commission

Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room
March 7, 2019 4:00 p.m.
Meeting Minutes

MARCH 7, 2019 SAVANNAH - CHATHAM COUNTY HISTORIC SITE & MONUMENT COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

Members Present: Dr. Nicholas Henry, Chair
Kristopher Monroe, Vice-Chair
Alicia Blakely
Thomas Gensheimer
Eli Karatassos
Sean Mannion

MPC Staff Present: Ellen Harris, Director of Urban Planning and Historic Preservation
Leah Michalak, Senior Historic Preservation Planner
Alyson Smith, Historic Preservation Planner
Mary E. Mitchell, Administrative Assistant

I. Call to Order and Welcome

[1. Call to Order and Welcome](#)

Dr. Henry 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.

Upon a motion of **Mr. Karatassos**, seconded by **Ms. Blakely**, and carried unanimously Petition #19-00890-HM was approved to be heard first by the Commission.

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes

[2. February 7, 2019 Historic Site and Monument Commission Meeting Minutes](#)

[02.07.19 HSMC MINUTES.pdf](#)

Motion

The Savannah-Chatham County Historic Site and Monument Commission does hereby approve February 7, 2019 Meeting Minutes.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Eli Karatassos

Second: Kristopher Monroe	
Thomas Gensheimer	- Aye
Dr. Nicholas Henry	- Abstain
Eli Karatassos	- Aye
Kristopher Monroe	- Aye
Alicia Blakely	- Aye
Sean Mannion	- Aye

III. Regular Agenda

[3. Petition of Paradise Park Oakhurst Neighborhood Association | 19-000879-COA | 9 Sheridan Circle | Naming Request to Sunrise Park](#)

📎 [19-000879-HM Staff Recommendation.pdf](#)

📎 [AERIAL MAP 1-000879-HM.pdf](#)

📎 [Sunrise Park Memo 021219.pdf](#)

Mr. Alan Boulton, President of Paradise Park Oakhurst Neighborhood, was present on behalf of the petition.

Ms. Ellen Harris gave the staff presentation. The petitioner is requesting approval to name the unnamed park located at 9 Sheridan Circle, "Sunrise Park." Ms. Harris explained that the parcel originally held a single-family residence within the Paradise Park neighborhood, but was subject to frequent flooding. It was eventually purchased by the City of Savannah with FEMA funding. The neighborhood petitioned the City to turn it into a pocket park to provide a recreational area for the neighborhood and this lot in particular provides a beautiful vista of the Vernon River marsh. The neighborhood association held several meetings to discuss potential names for the park and "Sunrise Park" was the favorite.

Ms. Harris explained that, as required written, notice was sent to all property owners and the neighborhood association, within 200 feet of the subject property. A public sign was posted on the property fifteen days prior to the meeting. No comments were received from the public.

Ms. Harris reported that staff recommends approval to City Council to name the unnamed pocket park at 9 Sheridan Circle "Sunrise Park" because the name meets the standards.

PETITIONER COMMENTS

Mr. Boulton came forward and thanked the staff and Commission for hearing the Paradise Park Neighborhood petition. They have never had a park in their neighborhood.

Mr. Mannion asked Mr. Boulton if the Neighborhood Association has plans to do any additional improvements to the park.

Mr. Boulton answered no.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

Motion

The Savannah-Chatham County Historic Site & Monument Commission recommends approval to City Council

to name the unnamed pocket park at 9 Sheridan Circle "Sunrise Park" because the name meets the standards.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Eli Karatassos

Second: Sean Mannion

Thomas Gensheimer	- Aye
Dr. Nicholas Henry	- Abstain
Eli Karatassos	- Aye
Kristopher Monroe	- Aye
Alicia Blakely	- Aye
Sean Mannion	- Aye

[4. Petition of Tony Thomas | 19-000881-HM | 14915 Coffee Bluff Road \(Coffee Bluff Marina\) | Naming Request to Falligant Pavilion](#)

📎 [19-000881-HM Staff Recommendation.pdf](#)

📎 [Falligant Pavilion Memo.pdf](#)

📎 [AERIAL MAP 19-000881-HM.pdf](#)

Alderman Tony Thomas was present on behalf of the petition.

Ms. Ellen Harris explained that petitions 19-000881 and 19-000882 are related to each other. Therefore, her presentation will cover both petitions here at the same time. However, she asked that the Commission make two separate motions as there are two separate namings.

Ms. Harris stated that the petitioner, under Petition 19-000881, is requesting to name the unnamed pavilion located at Coffee Bluff Marina, "Falligant Pavilion." The area now known as the Coffee Bluff Marina was originally a part of Dr. L.A. Falligant's subdivision known as the Town of Rosedew (also known as Rose Dhu). An 1887 map shows "Rosedew Park" in the location of what is now Coffee Bluff Road (originally named Rosedew Avenue).

Ms. Harris said there are two different spellings for Rosedew. One spelling is **Rose Dhu** and the other is **Rosedew**. Within the marina property, there exists the Herbert R. "Herbie" Battise Fishing Pier, a pavilion and a playground. The property was acquired by the City of Savannah in 2008.

Ms. Harris explained that Dr. Louis A. Falligant was a significant local leader in both the field of medicine and politics. He served as the City Health Officer from 1862-1863, and as a Savannah City Alderman from 1889-1897. He was a large land owner and was also considered a hero for his work during the Yellow Fever Epidemic.

Ms. Harris explained that, as required, written notice was sent to all property owners and the neighborhood association, within 200 feet of the subject property. A public sign was posted on the property fifteen days prior to the meeting. No comments were received from the public.

Ms. Harris reported that staff recommends approval of the request to name the pavilion at Coffee Bluff Marina the "Falligant Pavilion."

Ms. Harris explained that the petitioner [**Petition 19-000882**] is requesting to name the unnamed park located at Coffee Bluff Marina, "Rosedew Park." The area now known as the Coffee Bluff Marina was originally part of Dr. L.A. Falligant's subdivision known as the Town of Rosedew (also known as Rose Dhu). An 1887 map shows "Rosedew Park" in the location of what is now Coffee Bluff Road (originally

named Rosedew Avenue). The property was acquired by the City of Savannah in 2008.

Ms. Harris explained that as, required written, notice was sent to all property owners and the neighborhood association, within 200 feet of the subject property. A public sign was posted on the property fifteen days prior to the meeting. No comments were received from the public.

Ms. Harris reported that staff recommends approval of the request to name the previously unnamed park at the Coffee Bluff Marina, "Rosedew Park."

PETITIONER COMMENTS

Alderman Thomas came forward and showed the HSMC a plat from 1887. The plat shows Front Street, which no longer exists. He gave a brief history on the Coffee Bluff Marina. Little Ogeechee is in this area, but the bigger Ogeechee is near Richmond Hill, Georgia. Because of the erosion and tide, you can now travel from the Coffee Bluff Marina all the way to Fishtails Restaurant in Richmond Hill. Alderman Thomas said he spent 12 years fighting for access and control to create the Coffee Bluff Marina. At one time, the marina was privately owned. The property was acquired at a tax sale. The owner wanted to build condos, 40 plus on the property, which would block off access to the water. The Marine Rescue Quadrant had a fight with the property owner, which went all the way to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court ruled that the Rescue Quadrant had a right to be there. He said, added to the problem, the roadway that went down the middle of the property went all the way to the river. Also, on each side of the roadway, there were 30 foot segments dedicated in 1887 by Dr. Falligant to be public parks and private ownership.

Alderman Thomas explained that with all the things that were going on here, the problem was compounded. The City of Savannah purchased the property for \$1.5 million. Today, an asset sits there as the Coffee Bluff Marina, which has full access to the river and you can sail from anywhere in the world here. This property is very fascinating.

Alderman Thomas said that when they were doing the research to submit the request to the Historic Site and Monument Commission for the historical signs that were before them a month ago, they found that they had a lost city among them. He believed that this was pointed out by Mr. Karatassos. Alderman Thomas said he was not aware that there is a **Rose Dhu** verses a **Rosedew**. They are still researching the **Dhu** verses the **dew**. However, naming this the Rosedew Park preserves the original name by Dr. Louis Fallignat who dedicated the land for that purpose; and naming the pavilion at Coffee Bluff Marina the "Falligant Pavilion" is appropriate as Dr. Falligant did so much for this community approximately 150 years ago.

Alderman Thomas thanked the staff and HSMC for hearing their petition. He wanted to especially thanked Mr. Joe Shearouse, Jr. for all the work he contributed to their petitions. He also thanked Ms. Luciana Spracher for her contributions to their petitions.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

Motion

The Savannah-Chatham County Historic Site & Monument Commission recommend approval to City Council to name the pavilion at Coffee Bluff Marina the "Falligant Pavilion" because the name meets the standards.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Alicia Blakely

Second: Thomas Gensheimer

Thomas Gensheimer

- Aye

Dr. Nicholas Henry

- Abstain

Eli Karatassos	- Aye
Kristopher Monroe	- Aye
Alicia Blakely	- Aye
Sean Mannion	- Aye

[5. Petition of Tony Thomas | 19-000882-HM | 14915 Coffee Bluff Road \(Coffee Bluff Marina\) | Naming Request to Rosedew Park](#)

📎 [19-000882-HM Staff Recommendation.pdf](#)

📎 [Rosedew Park Memo.pdf](#)

📎 [AERIAL MAP19-000882-HM.pdf](#)

Alderman Tony Thomas was present on behalf of the petition.

Ms. Ellen Harris explained that petitions 19-000881 and 19-000882 are related to each other. She asked the Commission to make two separate motions as there are two separate namings, but her presentation will cover both at the same time

Ms. Harris explained that the petitioner [Petition 19-000882] is requesting to name the unnamed park located at Coffee Bluff Marina, "Rosedew Park" The area now known as the Coffee Bluff Marina was originally park of Dr. L.A. Falligant's subdivision known as the Town of Rosedew (also known as Rose Dhu). An 1887 map shows "Rosedew Park" in the location of what is now Coffee Bluff Road (originally named Rosedew Avenue). The property was acquired by the City of Savannah in 2008. Within the marina property, there exists the Herbert R. "Herbie" Battise Fishing Pier, a pavilion and a playground.

Ms. Harris explained that, as required, written notice was sent to all property owners and the neighborhood association, within 200 feet of the subject property. A public sign was posted on the property fifteen days prior to the meeting. No comments were received from the public.

Ms. Harris reported that staff recommends approval of the request to name the previously unnamed park at the Coffee Bluff Marina, "Rosedew Park."

PETITIONER COMMENTS

Please see Alderman Thomas's comments under Petition 19-000881.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

Commission Discussion

The HSMC requested that they be notified when the naming ceremony will be held as they want to attend this great event. Alderman Thomas ensured the Commission that they will be notified.

Motion

The Savannah-Chatham County Historic Site & Monument Commission does hereby recommends approval to City Council to name the previously unnamed park at the Coffee Bluff Marina "Rosedew Park" because the name meets the standards.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Eli Karatassos

Second: Kristopher Monroe

Thomas Gensheimer	- Aye
Dr. Nicholas Henry	- Abstain
Eli Karatassos	- Aye
Kristopher Monroe	- Aye
Alicia Blakely	- Aye
Sean Mannion	- Aye

[6. Petition of Ann Levett | 19-000890-HM | Recreational Area within Cloverdale Park | Naming Request to Lucius "Bo" Levett Recreational Area](#)

[📎 19-000890-HM Recommendation.pdf](#)

[📎 Bo Levett Recreation Area-Memo Request.pdf](#)

[📎 AERIAL MAP 19-000890-HM.pdf](#)

NOTE: Upon a motion of **Mr. Karatassos**, seconded by **Ms. Blakely**, and carried unanimously, Petition #19-000890-HM was approved to be heard first by the Commission.

Dr. Ann Levett was present on behalf of the petition.

Ms. Harris gave the staff presentation. The petitioner is requesting approval to name the recreational area (including the basketball court, playground, and ball field) in Cloverdale Park, 'Lucius "Bo" Levett Recreational Area.' Ms. Harris stated that the naming policy, adopted by City Council in 2017, established criteria when a new name is proposed. Some times it is an honorary name designation or a new name designation and new criteria apply. This request is to name an unnamed recreational area. Therefore, this is not a temporary or an honorary designation, but will change the name of the park. She explained the criteria that are considered in this process.

Ms. Harris stated that Mr. Levett began his exemplary athletic career in Savannah, GA where he played football and basket at A.E. Beach High School and was a local standout. During and after graduating from Beach High in 1957, he also played for the Frank Callen Boys Club, the local Jets, and several other basketball teams. In 1963 Levett was hired by the Savannah Police Department and he founded the Policemen's Athletic Association of Savannah in October 1964 to expand recreational opportunities for the City's youth. This was the launching of his official coaching career. Mr. Levett coached several successful/winning Cloverdale neighborhood football and basketball teams in 1964-1968. The petition is endorsed by Alderman Van Johnson, 1st District Alderman of the City of Savannah.

Ms. Harris explained that as required, written notice was sent to all property owners and the neighborhood association, within 200 feet of the subject property. A sign was posted on the property fifteen days prior to the meeting. No comments were received from the public.

Ms. Harris reported that staff recommends approval to City Council to name the recreational area of Cloverdale Park the 'Lucius "Bo" Levett Recreational Area' because the name meets the standards.

PETITIONER COMMENTS

Dr. Levett, accompanied by her brother, came forward and thanked the Commission for hearing their petition requesting to name the recreational area (including the basketball court, playground, and ball field) in Cloverdale Park, 'Lucius "Bo" Levett Recreational Area.' Dr. Levett thanked Alderman Van Johnson and Mr. Shearouse for assisting in this recognition. This request is not only from their family, but

from many people in the community who have longed for an opportunity to have something named in honor of her father who worked with thousands of children during his lifetime. Mr. Levett retired from the Savannah Police Department in 1985 and began a career with the Harlem Globetrotters. In March 1996, Mr. Levett was inducted into the A.E. Beach High School's Athletic Hall of Fame. In January 2015, he was recognized for his career and impact on youth by the Georgia General Assembly. In May 2015, he was also inducted into the Greater Savannah Athletic Hall of Fame.

Dr. Levett respectfully asked the Commission to please approve their request.

Mr. Monroe asked if this park is only greenspace. Is a basketball court here?

Mr. Joseph Shearouse, Jr. explained that not only is a basketball court here, but a playground and a ball field are here also. The basketball court and playground were recently updated with SPLOST funds. The playground equipment was replaced late last year and the basketball court has been re-stripped. Therefore, this is a very timely occasion to rename this area.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION

Mr. Karatassos said when he saw this request on the HSMC's agenda, he was happy to see it. He is pleased that Dr. Levett and her brother are doing this. This recognition is very warranted. Lucius "Bo" was really a terrific guy. Mr. Karatassos said he is happy that he knew such a man as "Bo" in his lifetime. The Commission requested that when the dedication is scheduled, let the Commission know so they can attend.

Motion

The Savannah-Chatham County Historic Site and Monument Commission does hereby recommend approval to City Council of naming the recreational area of Cloverdale Park the "Lucius "Bo" Levett Recreational Area" because the name meets the standards.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Eli Karatassos

Second: Alicia Blakely

Thomas Gensheimer	- Aye
Dr. Nicholas Henry	- Abstain
Eli Karatassos	- Aye
Kristopher Monroe	- Aye
Alicia Blakely	- Aye
Sean Mannion	- Aye

IV. Other Business

[7. Commissioner's Items](#)

Mr. Monroe reported that after the HSMC's discussion about the Weeping Time monument on Augusta Avenue, he contacted the National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery, AL. He explained that this agency has a program that deals with memorials in each county. He explained that he contacted the agency for information seeking to find out how Chatham County could get involved. Mr. Monroe said the agency sent him some information. Shortly, thereafter, Ms. Shannon Browning-Mullis, Curator of History and Decorative Arts at the Telfair Museum, called him about the National Memorial for Peace and

Justice. Dr. Henry and he met with Ms. Browning-Mullis and Ms. Rachel Reese and discussed the possibility of how Chatham County could be involved in bringing this history to Savannah.

Mr. Mannion said that at the end of their last meeting, they discussed the possibility of getting name tags. He said he looked into getting name tags for the Park & Tree Commission and was given a price of \$13.00 for each tag.

Ms. Harris said she spoke with Ms. Wilson, MPC Executive Director, regarding the name tags. The MPC does not provide name tags for the other boards and commissions. Therefore, she declined to provide the name tags for the HSMC. However, Ms. Wilson said if the HSMC wanted to discuss this further with her, she would be happy to meet with them.

The Commission discussed that they wanted the name tags because when they go to the various events, etc., the name tags allow them to be easily identified.

Mr. Karatassos said Ms. Harris has spoken to Ms. Wilson as they asked her to do. Anything beyond this, is left to the Commission to handle.

Ms. Blakely asked if it would be possible for them to speak with Ms. Wilson now, or if there is a process that they would need to follow to meet with her.

Ms. Harris informed the Commission that Ms. Wilson told her that if the Commission wanted to talk with her after the meeting, she would be here.

It was the consensus of the Commission that they would meet with Ms. Wilson at the end of today's meeting regarding the name tags. Mr. Karatassos said he would not attend this meeting.

Ms. Harris said that staff has placed a copy of the 2019 historic calendars at each desk. She explained that every year, the Historic Preservation Department creates the calendars. This year calendar features the African-American History in Savannah. Ms. Harris said Ms. Leah Michalak served as the calendar's lead-person.

The Commission thanked the staff for the calendars.

Ms. Harris reported that she suggested to Dr. Henry a few weeks ago that the HSMC might want to consider having pre-meetings. A lot of the other boards have a pre-meeting. The meeting is open to the public. The reason for having the pre-meeting is for the staff to review items with them that might be contentious or require some background information that would be helpful. This gives the Commission the opportunity to ask staff questions. No votes are taken during the pre-meeting. While it is open to the public, no comments from the public is received. They have found that this helps the regular meeting to go faster. If the Commission finds that the pre-meeting would be helpful, Ms. Harris suggested that it be scheduled for 3:30 p.m. with the regular meeting still being held at 4:00 p.m.

The Commission discussed the pre-meeting. They agreed not to schedule a pre-meeting for every meeting, but if staff feels that a pre-meeting would be helpful, then they can advise the Commission of same. Ms. Harris suggested that the Chair make the decision whether or not to have a pre-meeting and the staff will coordinate him.

Ms. Harris said that the Commission will notice that there is an item on today's agenda called Alternative Site Meetings. The MPC is scheduled to have renovations done in the hearing room. However, she was informed that the renovations will not start before May. It was originally arranged that they would meet at the Chatham County Old Courthouse for the April meeting, but that has been cancelled as the

renovations will start in May. The staff will inform the Commission where the May meeting will be held.

Ms. Harris informed the Commission that Dr. Henry and she spoke about contentious items that may come before them from time to time. She said that when such items come before them and the public makes their comments, the members of the Commission might just want nod their heads and not engage in public dialogue. If an incorrect fact is made, this would need to be corrected, but no argument with the petitioner or public should be held. The Commission should wait until they enter into their discussion period and state their correction so that there is not so much one-on-one dialogue. Ms. Harris said she and Dr. Henry talked about this after the last meeting. Sometimes it is better to just say thank you.

Mr. Karatassos said when the staff encounters that there is hardly no one within 200 feet of the abutting property, the staff should be able to expand the notification process so that people in the area would get a notification.

Ms. Harris said Mr. Karatassos' suggestion was good. She believes the staff has that discretion and they will pay more attention to this in the future.

Mr. Mannion said he believes the 200 feet is a good flat line measure. If they start saying that only two people live in the 200 feet area and they start changing it to inform others could possibly open up a situation. He does believe they should do this as staff could be doing other things.

Ms. Harris said while she believes this was a good suggestion, they do not want to get into a situation in a remote area and say they are going to notify persons who live 400 feet. In the downtown area, we only notify people who live 200 feet. The people who live 300 feet will say you did it at 400 feet; therefore, you are treating us differently.

Mr. Gensheimer asked where did the 200 feet notification came from?

Ms. Harris answered that the State zoning laws for rezoning property requires 200 feet. They believed this was a good standard.

Ms. Harris informed the HSMC that today is her last Site and Monument Commission meeting with them as she terminates her employment with the MPC on Thursday, March 14, 2019. She explained that Ms. Leah Michalak will be the director and Ms. Alyson Smith will continue to support the department on this Commission. She said she enjoyed working with the HSMC.

The Commission thanked Ms. Harris for a job well done. She will be missed.

8. Staff Items

9. Next Regular Meeting - Thursday, April 4, 2019 at 4:00 p.m. in the Chatham County Commission Hearing Room (2nd Floor), Old Chatham County Courthouse, 124 Bull Street

10. Alternative Site Meeting Schedule

📎 [ALTERNATIVE SITE MEETING SCHEDULE 022219.pdf](#)

V. Adjournment

11. Adjournment

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Leah G. Michalak, Director
Historic Preservation

LGM: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.