



Savannah - Chatham County Historic Site & Monument Commission

Arthur Mendonsa Hearing Room
May 2, 2019 4:00 P.M.
Meeting Minutes

MAY 2, 2019 SAVANNAH-CHATHAM COUNTY SITE & MONUMENT COMMISSION

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

Member Absent: Alicia Blakely

MPC Staff Present: Leah Michalak, Director of Historic Preservation
Ryan Jarles, Cultural Affairs 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.

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes

2. April 4, 2019 Historic Site and Monument Commission Meeting Minutes

📎 [April 4, 2019 Minutes.pdf](#)

Motion

The Savannah-Chatham County Historic Site and Monument Commission does hereby approve April 4, 2019 Meeting Minutes.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Eli Karatassos

Second: Sean Mannion

Thomas Gensheimer - Aye

Dr. Nicholas Henry - Abstain

Eli Karatassos - Aye

Kristopher Monroe - Aye

Sean Mannion - Aye

III. Regular Agenda

[3. Petition of Chad Brock | 19-001977-PA | 1601 Abercorn Street | Mural](#)

- 📎 [19-001977-PA Pictures.pdf](#)
- 📎 [Application - 1601 Abercorn Street 19-001977-PA.pdf](#)
- 📎 [Opposition Email.pdf](#)
- 📎 [19-001977-PA Recommendation.pdf](#)

Mrs. Amy Brock was present on behalf of the petition.

Mr. Ryan Jarles gave the staff report. The applicant is requesting approval of a mural to be installed at 1601 Abercorn Street. The mural is entitled "Biker Girl" and will be acrylic paint on a 6-foot by 5-foot canvas affixed to an existing wooden fence located at the south side of the applicant's medical office. The mural is of a girl drinking out of a to-go cup and will be located behind a bike rack shaped like a bicycle and will be painted in a way that will look like a girl is riding the bicycle. The neighborhood in which the applicant is proposing the mural is one that in recent years, due in large part to the increasing number of students in the area, has become an eclectic and artistic neighborhood. The patients of the medical practice in turn are also students, many of whom rely on bicycles as their mode of transportation to and from the medical practice. The structure that the mural will be adjacent to is a non-historic and non-contributing structure within the Mid-City Local Historic District. A mural was previously approved to be located on a fence September 3, 2015 [15-004279-PA]. The funding of the mural will be supplied by the owner.

Mr. Jarles stated that as required in the Master Plan and Guidelines, written notice was sent to all property owners, and neighborhood association, within 200 feet of the subject property. A sign was posted on the property fifteen days prior to the meeting. One email of opposition was received.

Mr. Jarles reported that staff recommends approval of the mural at 1601 Abercorn Street with the conditions that:

1. Ensure that the proposed paint type is of superior quality and is intended for exterior use.
2. Ensure that mural has a weatherproof or vandalism resistant coating.

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

PETITIONER COMMENTS

Mrs. Brock came forward and stated that her husband, Chad, and she own the medical practice. A lot of SCAD students are their clients. Chad came up with the mural idea of bicycling. There are many bicyclists in the Thomas Square neighborhood area. Therefore, they believe the mural image fits very well here. Chad and the artist got together and came up with the design of the mural. Their address is 1601 Abercorn Street; on the corner of 32nd Street. They have purchased the house next door.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

BOARD DISCUSSION:

During the HSMC meeting, the board suggested the applicant apply the same weatherproof or vandalism resistant coating on the existing bicycle rack as is to be applied to the proposed mural. The petitioner agreed.

Motion

The Savannah-Chatham County Historic Site and Monument Commission does hereby approve the mural at 1601 Abercorn Street with the conditions that:

1. Ensure that the proposed paint type is of superior quality and is intended for exterior use.
2. Ensure that the mural has a weatherproof or vandalism resistant coating.

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

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Eli Karatassos

Second: Sean Mannion

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

IV. Other Business

[4. Next Regular Meeting - Thursday, June 6, 2019 at 4:00 p.m. \(Location to be Determined\)](#)

[5. Commissioner's Items](#)

[6. Staff Items](#)

[7. Discussion of Approved Murals List](#)

[2019 Approved Murals List.pdf](#)

Mr. Mannion said that the city ordinance covers "renaming" a park. There is nothing for "naming."

Ms. Michalak stated that the ordinance was written by Joseph Shearouse, II.

Mr. Mannion said Mr. Shearouse is looking into updating the ordinance.

Ms. Michalak said if there are any suggestions on this subject, please let Mr. Shearouse know.

Mr. Jarles stated that the staff was asked that a list of all approved murals be created to assist with code compliance. Staff has compiled a list of all approved murals dating back to the adoption of the mural policy. Some of the murals that were approved, however, were designated to be temporary and are not included in this list due to the inclination that they would not currently exist anymore. He explained that the murals that are attributed to the artist known as Panhandle Slim are designated by an asterisk.

Mr. Karatassos stated that Code Compliance would need to establish whether it is a mural or graffiti. Is this correct?

Ms. Michalak explained that an unapproved mural is graffiti.

Dr. Henry asked how many approved murals are on the list?

Mr. Jarles answered that 44 approved murals are on the list.

Mr. Monroe asked what is the next step dealing with the list?

Mr. Jarles answered that he assumes that the list will be used to assist Code Compliance with evaluating

which murals are graffiti and which ones are truly murals.

Mr. Monroe said that if the murals are on private property, Code Compliance can not paint over it.

Ms. Michalak answered that if a mural is painted on private property and is not approved by the HSMC, the City can cite the property owner.

8. Update from Code Compliance on Consequences for Graffiti

Mr. Jarles said the staff was asked to find out what process Code Compliance uses when a determination is made that a mural is graffiti. He explained that he received a memo from Todd Desautels stating that the following measures are taken: [1] The property owner is notified and given an amount of time to correct the violation; [2.] If the violation is not corrected in the amount of time, the City deems it graffiti and a subpoena is issued for the person to attend court. Any fines, etc., are at the discretion of the judge.

Mr. Mannion said he asked specifically for someone from Code Compliance to make a presentation to the HSMC. In his neighborhood, they have gotten wonderful replies from Code Compliance, but nothing has been done. While it is great that there is a process, but what they have found is that if it is not easily fixed, Code Compliance will not waste their time citing it.

Mr. Monroe said when the persons are cited, he feels they should be given the opportunity to come through the HSMC's process.

Ms. Michalak stated she believes what Mr. Monroe suggested is being done as the last petition that came before the HSMC last month came through this process. A complaint was made to Code Compliance, the petitioner was cited and was given the information to file an application with HSMC. Staff will check with Code Compliance regarding someone from this department come to the HSMC meeting and make a presentation regarding their process in handling murals and graffiti.

Mr. Monroe stated that there are numerous murals throughout the city that are deteriorated. They need to be removed. Some are on abandoned buildings and he does not know whether they are on private or public property.

Ms. Michalak said that the Mural policy contains a standard on maintenance of murals which says that the murals must be properly maintained.

9. Update on African American Monument

Mr. Jarles said a lot of questions came up during the African American Monument petition hearing. There was a concern regarding how the letters on the monument are hard to read. He stated that Ms. Luciana Spracher and he visited the monument and saw that the letters need to be cleaned. He contacted Mr. Gordon Denny who will schedule a time for the monument to be cleaned prior to the dedication of the new plaque. Another concern that came up during this hearing was the accumulation of the public letters at this monument. Contact was made with the individual who operates the Visitor's Center as this person is presently collecting the letters. They are trying to find out exactly where the letters are. He said they discussed getting a collection box for the letters to be placed in. If needed, Ms. Spracher will maintain the letters in the city's archive.

10. Ships Of The Sea 200th Anniversary

Mr. Jarles reported that on May 22, 2019 from 5:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., the Ships of the Sea 200th Anniversary celebration will be held. This event is free and open to the public.

V. Adjournment

11. Adjourned

There being no further business to come before the HSMC, Dr. Henry adjourned the meeting at 4:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Leah Michalak
Director of Historic Preservation

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.