



Savannah - Chatham County Historic Site & Monument Commission

Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room, 112 East State Street
September 7, 2023, 4:00 p.m.
MINUTES

September 7, 2023 Savannah Chatham County Historic Site and Monument Commission

MEMBERS PRESENT: Kristopher Monroe, Chair
Lisa Watson, Vice Chair
Eileen Baker
Nicholas Henry
Sean Mannion

MEMBER ABSENT: Catherine Kostilnik

STAFF PRESENT: Pamela Everett, Assistant Director
Leah G. Michalak, Director of Historic Preservation
Caitlin Chamberlain, Senior Planner
Bri Morgan, Administrative Assistant
Hind Patel, IT Assistant

I. Call to Order and Welcome

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes

[1. Approve the August 3, 2023 HSMC Meeting Minutes](#)

[📎 08.03.23 MEETING MINUTES.pdf](#)

Motion

The Historic Site & Monument Commission motioned to approve the August 3, 2023 HSMC Meeting Minutes as presented.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Nicolas Henry

Second: Eileen Baker

Kristopher Monroe - Abstain

Sean Mannion - Not Present

Lisa D. Watson - Aye

Eileen Baker - Aye

Catherine D. Kostilnik, PhD - Not Present

Nicolas Henry - Aye

III. Regular Agenda

[2. Petition of James A. Gatling, Jr. | 23-004042-HM | 613 Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard | Historical Marker Sign](#)

[☞ Submittal Packet - St. Philip AME Historical Marker.pdf](#)

[☞ Staff Report- 23-004042-HM 613 MLK.pdf](#)

[☞ Staff Research - 613 MLK Blvd.pdf](#)

Ms. Caitlin Chamberlain presented the applicant's request of approval for a National Register of Historic Places sign for St. Philip AME Church, located at 613 Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard. The sign is already manufactured and was provided to the congregation by the William G. Pomeroy Foundation. The applicant seeks approval to be able to install the freestanding sign on the church property in an area that will be visible to pedestrians on Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard.

The marker text is as follows:

Saint Philip A.M.E. Church has been placed on the National Register of Historic Places in
1984 by the United States Department of the Interior
William G. Pomeroy Foundation 2023

The sign was funded and manufactured through the William G. Pomeroy Foundation's National Register Signage Grant Program. The National Register of Historic Places Designation does not include funding for signage, so the Pomeroy Foundation seeks to fill that gap by providing grants for either a plaque or a marker for recognition of designated sites. At the time the sign was manufactured, the applicant was not yet aware of the process for installation and approval, hence the reason it already exists.

Staff recommends approval of the installation of the National Register of Historic Places sign on the property of St. Philip A.M.E. Church, 613 Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard with the following condition because otherwise the project meets the standards in the Master Plan and Guidelines for Markers, Monuments, and Public Art.

1. Ensure that there are no below ground utilities present at the proposed sign installation location.

PETITIONER COMMENTS:

Mr. James Gatling stated the utilities have been checked and there are none in the area.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

There were no public comments.

COMMISSION COMMENTS:

There were no Commissioner comments.

Motion

The Historic Site and Monument Commission does hereby approve the installation of the National Register of Historic Places sign on the property of St. Philip A.M.E. Church, 613 Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard with the following condition because otherwise the project meets the standards in the Master Plan and Guidelines for Markers, Monuments, and Public Art.

1. Ensure that there are no below ground utilities present at the proposed sign installation location.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Sean Mannion

Second: Lisa D. Watson

Kristopher Monroe - Abstain

Sean Mannion - Aye

Lisa D. Watson - Aye

Eileen Baker - Aye

Catherine D. Kostilnik, PhD - Not Present

Nicolas Henry - Aye

[3. Petition of Maxine Jones | 23-004130-HM | Hartridge Street between Price and Blair Streets | Honorary Street Naming](#)

[☞ Staff Report- Matthew S. Brown, Sr. Honorary Street Designation 23-004130-HM.pdf](#)

[☞ Submittal Packet - Matthew Southall Brown Sr. Honorary Street Naming.pdf](#)

[☞ Public Comment - Jessie Jordan.pdf](#)

Ms. Caitlin Chamberlain presented the applicant's request for approval of an honorary street designation on Hartridge Street, between Blair and Price Streets, for an honorary name of "Reverend Matthew Southall Brown, Sr. Street."

PETITIONER COMMENTS:

Ms. Maxine Jones and **Mr. Leonard Brown** gave a history of Mr. Brown. **Ms. Watson** expressed appreciation of the research of the original street name and Mr. Brown.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Ms. Ruthie Thompson expressed her appreciation for the honorary naming.

Ms. Estella Shabazz expressed her appreciation for the honorary naming.

Ms. Jolleen Cunningham, area resident, stated she was happy to live on a historic street, and that she first lived on Blair St.

Mr. Matthew S. Brown, Jr., thanked the Commission for honoring his father.

Mr. George Lee, III, pastor of St. John Baptist church, does not support petition, as there was no discussion with the church about this petition.

Ms. Vanessa Powers, church member, feels it should be larger and included other pastors. Ms. Charlotte Perkins, another member of the church, agreed that prior pastors should be recognized as well.

COMMISSION COMMENTS:

Mr. Joe Shearouse stated an honorary street naming requires 51% support of adjacent property owners. The requirement has been met and encourages all to show as much support as possible.

Mr. Brown stated they did what was required of them as they understood.

Motion

The Historic Site and Monument Commission recommend approval to the Savannah City Council for an Honorary Street Designation at Hartridge Street between Blair and Price Streets in honor of Reverend Matthew Southall Brown, Sr., as requested because the proposed honorary street designation meets the standards within Article E- Naming and Renaming of Public Property, Facilities and Streets.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Nicolas Henry

Second: Lisa D. Watson

Kristopher Monroe - Abstain

Sean Mannion - Nay

Lisa D. Watson - Aye

Eileen Baker - Aye

Catherine D. Kostilnik, PhD - Not Present

Nicolas Henry - Aye

[4. Petition of Priscilla Swindell | 23-004145-HM | 3001-3116 Hopkins Street | Honorary Street Renaming](#)

[📎 Submittal Packet - 23-004145-HM 3001 Hopkins Coach Ronald Booker Way.pdf](#)

[📎 Staff Report- 23-004145 Coach Ronald Booker Honorary Street Designation.pdf](#)

Ms. Caitlin Chamberlain presented the applicant's request for approval of an honorary street designation on Hopkins Street, between West Victory Drive and West 48th Street, for an honorary name of "Coach Ronald Booker Way." This stretch of Hopkins Street is near Alfred Ely Beach High School, where Booker was an alumnus and also Head Coach of the "Lady Bulldogs" among other athletic accomplishments.

Staff recommends that the Historic Site and Monument Commission recommend approval to the Savannah City Council for an Honorary Street Designation at Hopkins Street between West Victory Drive and West 48th Street, in honor of Coach Ronald Booker with the following condition because the proposed honorary street designation otherwise meets the standards within *Article E- Naming and Renaming of Public Property, Facilities and Streets*.

1. Provide an endorsement letter from the Mayor or an Alderman.

Mr. Joe Sherouse stated the endorsement of elected officials is to monitor the number of street designations approved - two per year each. Additionally, the representative is to be aware so there is no dissent. Ms. Shabazz provided a letter stating her support.

PETITIONER COMMENTS:

Ms. Priscilla Swindell stated she felt Mr. Booker was worthy of the honor of the street designation.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

There were no public comments.

COMMISSION COMMENTS:

There was no commission discussion.

Motion

The Historic Site and Monument Commission recommend approval to the Savannah City Council for an Honorary Street Designation at Hopkins Street between West Victory Drive and West 48th Street, in honor of Coach Ronald Booker as requested because the proposed honorary street designation meets the standards within Article E- Naming and Renaming of Public Property, Facilities and Streets.

Vote Results (Approved)

Motion: Sean Mannion

Second: Nicolas Henry

Kristopher Monroe - Abstain

Sean Mannion - Aye

Lisa D. Watson - Aye

Eileen Baker - Aye

Catherine D. Kostilnik, PhD - Not Present

Nicolas Henry - Aye

IV. Other Business

[5. Civil War Memorial Recommendations](#)

[civilwarmemorialtaskforce_finalreport_2020-10-01.pdf](#)

[Confederate Memorial Final Report.pdf](#)

The Commission expressed displeasure with the current written description of the Confederate Memorial on the City website. It was to be changed to the 'Civil War Memorial' and would like to contact the City to have this changed on the website to accurately reflect the current name. Mr. Shearouse was present and stated this would be taken care of immediately. They requested they are changed to be respectful.

V. Adjournment

[6. Next Meeting: October 5, 2023 at 4 PM- 112 East State Street: Mendonsa Hearing Room](#)

[7. Adjourn](#)

There being no further business to present before the Commission, the September 7, 2023 Historic Site and Monument Commission adjourned at 5:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Leah G. Michalak
Director of Historic Preservation

/bm

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.