



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

Petitioner: Travis Stringer
File No.: 26-003499-PA
Address: 2213 Bull Street
PIN: 20065 29002
Staff Reviewer: Alexander Merced
Date: August 6, 2026

NATURE OF REQUEST:

The applicant would like to install a mural on the Bull Street façade of the new Starland Village apartment building at 2213 Bull Street.

FINDINGS:

The following standards from the Historic Site and Monument Commission Guidelines for Markers, Monuments and Public Art apply:

Evaluating Sites for Markers, Monuments, or Public Art. Certain factors should be taken into consideration when evaluating whether a site is the appropriate location for a marker, monument or public art [hereto referred to as “object” to indicate the inclusion of all three types]. These factors include:

The installation of an object should not cause overcrowding of the site, if there are existing objects. Objects should be sited far enough away from other objects as to allow the visitor proper appreciation of each individually.

The proposed object should not damage or disturb existing established vegetation on the site including low tree limbs, or significant tree roots.

The proposed object should not require the removal or alteration of existing above or below ground utilities.

The proposed site should be large enough to accommodate an object, and should not encroach on other existing object sites, buildings, or designated green space.

The proposed site should not be utilized for special events (such as sports, festivals, ceremonies, etc) on a regular basis which an object would disrupt.

The proposed site should not be prone to frequent automobile accidents which could damage the proposed object.

The proposed site should be easily accessible to pedestrians and the physically challenged (excluding marker sites).

The proposed site should be visible and accessible from a public right of way.

The proposed site should have adequate parking nearby (excluding marker sites).

The proposed site should not have a high probability of significant archaeology unless an archaeological study is part of the proposal.

The proposed site should be easy to maintain.

The installation of the object should enhance the space and character of the surrounding neighborhood.

The installation of the object should not require the alteration or removal of existing signage (traffic, street, etc).

The installation of the object should not significantly affect automobile traffic sight lines.

The installation of the object should enhance the design of the overall site.

The installation of the object should not require the removal or alteration of existing sidewalks, unless it is part of a comprehensive redesign for the entire site (which is generally discouraged).

If periodic memorial services are likely, the site should be able to accommodate them without causing undue disruption to the neighborhood, plantings, etc.

The mural will be placed around the front door of a new apartment and artists' studios building in the Starland area. It will not conflict with any other existing monuments or work of art, nor will it interfere with any traffic or city infrastructure. The above standards are met.

Site in Relation to Theme for Markers or Monuments. *The relationship between site and theme for a marker or monument is critical in determining the appropriate site for a particular theme.*

Public Art. *While public art by definition does not commemorate historical people, places, or events, its location is therefore less limited by relevance to the site. The theme of public art is considered Arts and Humanities and therefore the site should be appropriate for that theme.*

The location of public art in the Landmark District should respect the Oglethorpe Plan, particularly in terms of historic viewsheds and sight lines.

The mural will not be located in the Landmark district, but the Starland area has an existing reputation for art and creativity, making the site appropriate and meeting the standard.

Design. *The design of a marker, monument, or public work of art should be of the highest quality and caliber, and enhance public space. In order to promote the high standards the City of Savannah has historically enjoyed in its markers, monuments, and public art, the following guidelines should be observed.*

Monuments and Public Art. *Monuments may take on many forms including works of art, benches, statues, sculptures, obelisks, sundials, etc. Monuments are typically commissioned, site-specific pieces.*

Public art may consist of a variety of media including, but not limited to, sculpture, mosaic, fountains or other water elements, or murals. Public art may be existing artwork or commissioned artwork.

The applicant may choose to commission a work of art or monument. The artwork or monument must be of the highest quality and should adhere to the guidelines.

Public art should generally be considered permanent and be designed accordingly, except in special situations which will be evaluated on an individual basis.

Monuments and public art should be designed and constructed of materials suitable for outdoor display. All proposed materials should have performed satisfactorily in the local climate for a period of time long enough to assure permanence. Future maintenance and conservation requirements should be considered.

Monuments and public art should be designed to be reasonably resistant to vandalism.

Monuments and public art should be designed so as not to pose a danger to the curious public, such as the use of sharp objects or loose parts.

Monument and public art design should include landscaping, paving, seating, drainage, lighting, fencing, or other protective measures which may be considered necessary.

Monuments and public art should be of superior quality and craftsmanship.

The proposed mural will be hand-painted onto the existing brick façade using professional grade exterior commercial paint specifically formulated for long-term architectural applications. Upon completion, the mural will be protected with a clear coat to enhance the permanence and make long-term maintenance easier. The above standards are met.

A monument should be of original design, and public art should be an original work of art (one of a kind) or reproduced in editions of less than 200.

Monuments and public art should not replicate an original monument or work of art.

Monuments and public art should be designed to complement and enhance the site in which it is located. It should not compete with, dominate or encroach upon existing monuments, public art, or buildings.

Monuments and public art should be respectful of the architectural, historical, geographical, and social/cultural context of the site.

Monuments and public art should be compatible in scale, materials, and form with its context. Context includes the buildings, monuments, public art, landscaping and open space to which the monument or public art is visually related.

The proposed mural will be an original piece of art that does not replicate another existing work and is designed to complement the new building and the surrounding area without overwhelming or competing with it. Contextually it maintains a reasonable proportion to the front façade of the building and incorporates the front door and window openings as intentional voids within the artwork. The above standards are met.

The designer and/or fabricator (for a monument) and the artist (for public art) should have completed projects of similar size and scale in the public arena and be able to provide appropriate documentation.

The designer and/or fabricator (for a monument) and the artist (for public art) should have an excellent reputation and be able to provide verifiable references attesting to the quality of work.

The designer and/or fabricator (for a monument) and the artist (for public art) should be able to provide images or samples of existing similar monuments or works of art.

The designer and/or fabricator (for a monument) and the artist (for public art) should be able to demonstrate the ability to meet the proposed timeframe.

The artist will be Sam Malpass, a contemporary muralist and painter who has submitted multiple examples of previous work.

Mural Policy. *Statement of Purpose: The purpose of regulating murals is to ensure the continued visual aesthetic of the community, by establishing a process for compatible artistic and creative expression through murals in appropriate locations and designs. The review criteria seek to establish guidance as to the compatibility and appropriateness of the theme, location and design of murals, with minimal intrusion into artistic expression and/or the substantive, personal or social/political expressive content of the artwork. Murals will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.*

Theme.

The theme of the mural should be respectful of the greater context of the community, including historic and socio-cultural contexts.

The content of a mural is protected under the laws of free speech.

The mural must comply with Georgia obscenity laws, as defined by O.C.G.A. § 16-12-80, and cannot depict sexual conduct or sexual explicit nudity, as defined on O.C.G.A. § 36-60-3, nor advertise any activity illegal under the laws of Georgia or the United States.

The proposed mural contains imagery inspired by Georgia's native landscape. The composition centers on the Sweetbay Magnolia, Georgia's new official state flower, along with the Brown Thrasher, Georgia's state bird, to create a visual that is respectful of the community and is relevant to the area.

Location.

The installation of a mural should complement and enhance the building and be incorporated architecturally into the façade.

The location of the mural on the building should not cover or detract from significant or character-defining architectural features.

Murals should enhance and complement the character of the surrounding neighborhood. Murals should not be located in an area which may cause undue distraction to drivers thereby creating a safety hazard.

Generally murals should be located in mixed use and commercial areas.

Neighborhood support or opposition should be taken into consideration.

Murals should be sited far enough away from other murals as to allow the visitor proper appreciation of each individually and not cause visual clutter to the block face.

As described previously, the proposed mural will be located on a new building and is designed to complement rather than obscure its architectural features. It will be located on Bull Street in the Starland District, which is a mixed-use corridor that features prominently in the art scene of Savannah but is not surrounded by other murals and will stand free of clutter. Notice has been

sent out to the surrounding neighborhood and as of yet there has been no public feedback. The above standards are met.

Design.

The scale of the mural should be appropriate to the building and the site.

The mural should be appropriate within the context of the surrounding neighborhood.

The mural should be an original design.

Sponsor and artist names may be incorporated but should be discreet and not exceed 5% of the design.

Paint utilized should be of superior quality and intended for exterior use. Generally reflective, neon, and fluorescent paints should not be used.

If intended to be permanent, the mural should have a weatherproof and vandalism-resistant coating.

As described previously, the mural will be an original design that is appropriate to the new building and the area as a whole. It will use paint that is specifically formulated for long-term architectural applications and will be coated with a clear commercial-grade protective coating upon completion. The above standards are met.

Artist Qualifications.

The artist should have completed projects of similar size and scale in the public arena and be able to provide appropriate documentation.

The artist should have an excellent reputation and be able to provide verifiable references attesting to the quality of work.

The artist should be able to provide images or samples of existing similar monuments or works of art.

The artist should be able to demonstrate the ability to meet the proposed timeframe.

The artist will be Sam Malpass, who has provided multiple examples of previous work.

Funding.

Budget. *The Mayor and Aldermen do not fund new markers, monuments, or works of art. The applicant is fully responsible for funding the design, construction, installation, and any necessary landscaping, paving, or lighting involved with a new marker, monument, or work of art.*

The applicant must provide a realistic budget in Part II Final Design and Funding. The budget should be based on cost estimates provided by the manufacturer, artist, installer and/or contractor, as appropriate. The budget should include funding goals and deadlines. Should funding goals and deadlines fail to be met, the HSMC may, at its sole discretion, reconsider the application. The applicant must be capable of raising the necessary funding. Construction of the monument or installation of the work of art will not begin until all of the funding has been secured.

The mural will be part of the construction of the new apartment building, funding is secured.

Escrow Payment. *All markers, monuments and public art erected on public property become the property of the Mayor and Aldermen. The Mayor and Aldermen assume responsibility for the future maintenance and upkeep of the marker, monument or artwork. Therefore, an initial Escrow Payment is required of the applicant subsequent to approval of the application. The Mayor and Aldermen, or their designee, will determine the appropriate Escrow Payment and will notify the applicant. The Escrow Payment must be paid prior to construction/installation of the*

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monument or public art. Any marker, monument or artwork erected on private property is the responsibility of the property owner.

The mural will not be on public property, so the above standard does not apply.

Public Notice. *As required in the Master Plan and Guidelines, written notice was sent to all property owners, and the neighborhood association, within 200 feet of the subject property. The MPC has received no public feedback.*

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STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the proposed mural at 2213 Bull Street as requested because it is consistent with the Marker, Monuments, and Public Art Master Plan and Guidelines for the City of Savannah.

MW: CC: APM

Note: This recommendation could change subject to new information provided at the Historic Site and Monument Commission meetings. Decisions or recommendations will be made by the Historic Site and Monument Commission at the public hearing based on information provided at the meeting, as well as information submitted for the staff recommendation.