



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

Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room
March 7, 2013, 4:00 PM
Meeting Minutes

March 7, 2013 HSMC Regular Meeting

I. Call to Order and Welcome

1. [Call to Order](#)

Ms. Soule called the meeting to order at 4:10 p.m. and welcomed everyone in attendance.

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes

2. [January 3, 2013 Meeting Minutes](#)

Attachment: [January 3, 2013 Minutes revised.pdf](#)

Board Action:

The minutes of the meeting of January 3, 2013
were approved. - PASS

Vote Results

Motion: Walt Harper
Second: Thomas Gensheimer
Thomas Gensheimer - Aye
Walt Harper - Aye
Eli Karatassos - Aye
Ryan Madson - Not Present
Robert Pirro - Aye
Mary Soule - Aye

III. Regular Agenda

3. [12-002159-PA Savannah Gardens Public Art Project](#)

Attachment: [Application Materials Savannah Gardens Public Art Project 12-002159-PA.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Technical Advisory Committee Comments.pdf](#)

Attachment: [12-002159-PA Staff Report 030713.pdf](#)

Mr. Jerome Meadows was present on behalf of the petition.

Ms. Harris gave the staff report. The petitioner is proposing to install a public art piece consisting of three vertical components each measuring approximately 9' tall by 2' tall at the widest point, and 5" thick and made primarily from reclaimed materials. The property is owned by the City of Savannah. The City solicited proposals for the public art piece to be located within a pedestrian plaza in the newly constructed Savannah Gardens earlier this year. The petitioner, Jerome Meadows, was selected by the City to complete the public art piece.

Ms. Harris reported that as required in the Master Plan and Guidelines, written notice was sent to all property owners within 200 feet of the subject property. A sign was posted on the property fifteen days prior to the meeting. A certified letter was sent to the East Savannah Neighborhood Association. No comments were received from the public.

Ms. Harris reported that the Historic Site and Monument Commission Technical Advisory Committee provided comments on the proposal which were sent to the HMSC in their packet. Their comments are:

"I support approval. (Esthetically, the brick color does not seem pleasing to area/stands out, it would have seemed more pleasing to the eye if the same color of bricks as the ground bricks, thereby placing more emphasis on the public art shapes. I did notice the same bricks are used in the background for steps or wall). The free form shapes look familiar or similar to other public art shapes I have seen, but I approve. I have no concerns."

Dr. Peggy Blood, Savannah State University.

"I have no comments and support the recommendation of the staff." **Stan Deaton, Georgia Historical Society.**

"After reading through the documents, I think this piece would make a strong addition to the neighborhood. The piece is well suited to the space, and the artist has taken seriously the guidelines of utilizing repurposed materials from the site. The materials appear to be appropriate for outdoor use. I agree with your staff recommendations for an inset plaque providing contextual information -- the City should be acknowledged here, but also hopefully at least the title of the artwork if not a bit more information would help children and others make sense of what is a largely abstract project. The design itself is striking and very bold. My main concern would be community involvement in a design of this type. The report says that extensive community involvement was solicited, but I'm not sure exactly what that means. If the community's residents support this design, then I think it seems like a fine piece." **Dr. Ella Howard, Armstrong Atlantic State University.**

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

Comments: Member agrees with staff: The standard is not met. Lighting has been budgeted for the project, but the lighting plan has not been provided. Member recommends amending plan to include a site plan with specific lighting locations, mounting connections

and hardware sections, electrical and mechanical drawings, illumination plan and scope of work including night time shadow survey for public security enhancement. Member recommends use of existing common street lighting standards located nearest site as possible locations for enhanced lighting plan.

Rational: Member applies the following reference and standard in support of recommendations.

Comments: The standard is not met. Member also recommends lighting plan include new construction drawings and a re-designed creative design element. This is a missed opportunity by the artist and needs to be explored further. Current plan is devoid of the following:

Unique eye catching presence from afar (at night)
An illuminated space in which to enter, linger and walk through (at night)
Sculptural components enhancing one's personal experience by way of a playful vibrancy radiating experience (at night).

The work is designed to convey an uplifting, engaging and growing community through the use of multiple imaginative vertical components. This grouping provides a unique and eye catching presence from afar as well as an intimate space in which to enter, linger and walk through. A brightly colored, circular ceramic plaza encompassing these three sculptural components enhances one's personal experience by a way of playful vibrancy radiating from below.

Comments: In conclusion, member recommends to the artist that he should revisit the site location and proceed with a redesigned submission in support of an enhanced lighting solution with maquette and new drawings for further review." **Patrick Mohr, Savannah College of Art and Design.**

"In my review of the RFP, it appears that the proposed design and materials could better reflect the historic development of the neighborhood that was demolished and the nearby ship building industry as required. The design does not show a clear connection and I could not find a connection in the written description provided." **Sarah Ward, City Preservation Officer.**

Ms. Harris reported that staff recommends approval of the public artwork because it meets the standards in the Master Plan and Guidelines for Markers, Monuments, and Public Art on the condition that the lighting plan is submitted to staff for approval and with the following considerations for the City:

1. Consider incorporating a bronze plaque into the seating wall which includes the name of the artwork, the name of the artist, the date of installation, commissioned by the City of Savannah and a brief explanation that the reclaimed materials reference the original structures.
2. Consider establishing an escrow fund for the artwork. This is typically required for any organization seeking to erect a monument or artwork on City property.

Mr. Karatassos asked what is the size of the sculpture.

Ms. Harris said the sculpture is 9' tall by 2' and the base is 7 feet - 8 inches.

Mr. Karatassos said that when a monument petition is received that as a part of the larger community, they need to go outside of the development for the public notification. If you were to do an area map of the 200 feet, he guesses that 90 percent of the people within that 200 feet live in Savannah Gardens. He believes that it would have been nice to notify the people outside of this area. Mr. Karatassos said he was not suggesting that anything was done wrong, but was saying that since City Council was concerned about the notification process, that maybe instead of doing it from a point in the ground since this does reflect a larger area, maybe they might need to consider notifying outside the area.

Mr. Karatassos stated that he noticed on the drawings that steel dowels will be used through each of the elements into the base. He asked if the material that the three components are made out of is some sort of metal.

Mr. Meadows said they are made out of fiberglass.

Mr. Karatassos said it is hard to believe, but the Julie Backus Smith statue which is one of the sturdiest monuments you would ever see, was broken by vandals. A huge thick piece of metal was broken. He cautioned the artist that if someone can damage it, they will try to damage it. Therefore, whatever material is used here needs to be highly durable.

Ms. Harris clarified that the public notice within the 200 feet is not from the point of the artwork, but from the parcel. Approximately 90 notices were sent to the surrounding property owners.

Mr. Gensheimer said he was not clear how the maintenance and escrow works on a property such as this. He knows that it required and staff has recommended it, but who would maintain this if there is no escrow account. Would it be maintained by the City because it is the City's property? If this is the case, why would they need an escrow account?

Ms. Harris explained that a couple meetings ago, they talked about the Yamacraw Public Art Park. It is an example of a City-owned property where an escrow fund had not been established. Therefore, when vandalism took place and damages were done, the City did not have the funding to restore the damaged pieces of plaque. They were simply removed and placed in storage. She said with some of the other monuments as well, they have seen similar situations when an escrow payment has not been established, funding can be found for it eventually, but it has to be programmed into the regular capital improvement budget. Therefore, by establishing an escrow fund for a particular project for monuments insures availability of funds that might not otherwise be there in a timely manner.

PETITIONER COMMENTS

Mr. Meadows of Meadowlark Studio stated that he was delighted to have the opportunity to present this project to the HSMC. Ms. Harris has done an outstanding job of giving the HSMC the fundamental points. He said that from an artistic point of view, it has been a rewarding opportunity to work with the Savannah Garden community members. They held several meetings with the community where they were able to express

their thoughts regarding their community. This input was important with respect to establishing a relationship with the community so that the resulting artwork would be something that they would have a sense of ownership.

Mr. Meadows said they are scheduling an open house for the community to come by the studio to observe the piece in progress. As they well know, the average person does not have the opportunity to watch art being made; particularly, for their community. Therefore, they thought it would be good to create and foster this relationship between the community, the artwork, and the artist. Mr. Meadows entertained questions from the HSMC.

Ms. Soule asked if there are any present plans for the lighting.

Mr. Meadows answered that he believes the lighting has been funded through a grant from Gulfstream. The idea is that there will be three lighting units set into the paving that would up-light the three vertical forms so that they are visible at night and also for security purposes.

Mr. Harper said his main concern is the same as Mr. Karatassos's concern which is if someone can damage it, they will do so. He, too, wanted to caution the artist to use materials that will resist this. You will not be totally able to stop it, but he believes the artist can use the recyclable materials and discourage vandalism.

Mr. Meadows said he likes the word discourage. He goes back to the relationship with the community. The antithesis of public art is something that shows up one night and nobody has an idea where it comes from or what it has to do with them. To the extent that this is a very cohesive community, the relationship really becomes vital in respect to imagining each resident as a caretaker of the artwork. Mr. Meadows reported that Thomas and Hutton have generously donated their services to design the engineering of this piece so that the optimum care is taken through the use of the materials. For example, the original design called for a concrete cylinder that the pieces would be coming out of. However, there were concerns that the flat surface would enable people to stand on it and may start doing some things that could be harmful. Therefore, they decided to make it a more conical shape. This eliminated the standing surface. The fiberglass fan blades will be filled with concrete. Consequently, the steel support will actually be reinforced within the body of the fiberglass. Mr. Meadows said he does not know how long the cycle of usages at Gulfstream [this is where they come from] but, they have been under duress. Therefore, he believes they are durable materials that will withstand a reasonable amount of weathering and interaction.

Mr. Pirro said there are letters A, E, H, and L on one of the pieces. He asked if letters will be on the other two pieces.

Mr. Meadows answered that letters will be on all three on the inside facing surface. He randomly put the letters on the model. Someone looked at them and said it spelled "HEAL." He did not want to spell specific words because the idea is "engagement" and to the extent that you spell it out, the magic is gone. Mr. Meadows said he likes the fact that you can take these letters and turn them into words. He brought with him today a few samples for the HSMC review.

Mr. Pirro asked if the letters would be permanently affixed and not moveable.

Mr. Meadows said the letters would be permanently affixed.

Mr. Pirro asked Mr. Meadows if he gave any thought to the fact that since letters would be on the monument, that this might invite people to put graffiti on them.

Mr. Meadows said he had not thought about this. They will be using sealers that would enable them to remove the graffiti. The idea is to be sure that they are protecting the surfaces. As has been said, they can not guarantee that these things will not happen, but they can do the best they can to mitigate the damage.

Mr. Gensheimer said in light of the fact that they could be vandalized and more likely than other monuments to be vandalized, the important thing is to have an escrow account to ensure that if it is vandalized, it would be repaired. If they have to wait for City funds to come through to repair it, it would make it not look attractive if not done in a timely manner. He believes an escrow account is highly important. Mr. Gensheimer said he is happy that the artist has engaged the community in the context of the design.

Mr. Meadows said this hits at the core of public art that you want to place it where the public can identify with and it stands out. If damage happens, this negates the purpose; therefore, you want to be able to respond and restore it. Also, the longer a piece is left damaged, the more psychological damage it does to that sense of the community.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Daniel Carey of Historic Savannah Foundation (HSF) stated that he just wanted to follow up on the comment of Ms. Sarah Ward regarding the historical development connection. If there is to be some sort of historical connection, not with the installation itself, but maybe on an adjacent plaque in the area that tries to make some connection. Should this be addressed and if so, how?

Ms. Ardis Wood, resident, said this place just demands a piece of art and she believes it looks terrific. Ms. Wood said the letters seem to confuse and distract her from the overall design. She believes she would enjoy it more without letters or letters that did not engage her and make her scratch her head. This takes away from the overall design.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Mr. Karatassos said he likes the letters.

Mr. Gensheimer asked if the question regarding the historical connection was asking the HSMC to consider what the historical connection is, asking the staff or the artist.

Ms. Harris explained that Mr. Carey referenced a comment made by one of the technical advisory committee members. She believes Mr. Carey's concern was had this comment been addressed and if not, should it be addressed. Ms. Harris believes this is a question that should be addressed by the HSMC. She believes that if the inclusion of the plaque referenced the historic development pattern a little more about where the materials came

from could address it. However, she believes this needs to be determined by the HSMC.

Mr. Karatassos said the staff does not like to require that the City do anything, but the Commission can.

Ms. Soule said the Commission is making a recommendation to the City. They are not telling them what they have to do. The staff's recommendation does not make mention of the historical significance of the materials.

Board Action:

Approval of the public artwork because it meets the standards in the Master Plan and Guidelines for Markers, Monuments, and Public Art on the following conditions:

1. That the lighting plan is submitted to MPC staff for approval;
2. That the project incorporates a bronze plaque into the seating wall which includes the name of the artwork, the name of the artist, the date of installation, commissioned by the City of Savannah, a brief explanation that the reclaimed materials reference the original structures, and a brief historical context; and - PASS
3. That the City establish an escrow fund for the artwork.

Vote Results

Motion: Eli Karatassos
Second: Walt Harper
Thomas Gensheimer - Aye
Walt Harper - Aye
Eli Karatassos - Aye
Ryan Madson - Not Present
Robert Pirro - Aye
Mary Soule - Aye

4. [13-000754-HM S.S. James Oglethorpe and the Battle of the Atlantic Historical Marker](#)

Attachment: [S.S. James Oglethorpe and the Battle of the Atlantic Historical Marker Application Materials 13-000754-HM.pdf](#)
Attachment: [13-000754-HM Staff Report.pdf](#)

Mr. Howard Morrison was present on behalf of the petition.

Ms. Ellen Harris gave the staff report. The Georgia Historical Society in collaboration with the Georgia International and Maritime Trade Center Authority is requesting approval of a historical marker commemorating the S. S. James Oglethorpe and the Battle of the Atlantic.

Ms. Harris reported that as required in the Master Plan and Guidelines, written notice was sent to all property owners within 200 feet of the subject property. A sign was posted on the property fifteen days prior to the meeting. No neighborhood association was identified. No comments were received from the public. The estimated cost for the marker is \$3,000.00. The funds have been fully secured. No escrow payment is required as the proposed site is not owned by the City of Savannah. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the property owner.

Ms. Harris reported that staff recommends approval of the historical marker as submitted. While the proposed location does not meet the location standard, "A marker should be erected in as close proximity to the site to which it is related....Markers commemorating an event or place should be sited within 100 feet of the event or place, or adjacent to the nearest public right-of-way," staff feels that the benefits of the alternative location justify a variance from this standard. The petitioner should coordinate with City Engineering during installation to ensure no utilities are damaged.

Mr. Pirro said he noticed that the historical supporting document say 30 of 74 survived. But the marker says 30 of 70 survived. Did anybody else notice that?

Mr. Karatassos said the marker will be placed very close to the tree. He hopes the tree does not grow into it.

PETITIONER COMMENTS

Mr. Morrison said this is a project that he has been involved in for several years in terms of putting up markers to reflect our maritime history on an annual basis. He explained that this marker is really about the Battle of the Atlantic. The turning point of the Second World War was May/June of 1943. This represents the 70th anniversary of that date. Mr. Morrison said we should think of this as a marker that represents the maritime invasions that resulted from the Second World War; particularly, the maritime history.

Mr. Morrison said they are putting together a permanent exhibit of models and things that represent the maritime history. This marker will be a part of a continuing project to reflect our maritime history. He entertained questions from the Commission.

Mr. Pirro asked if it is 30 of 70 or 30 of 74 survival.

Mr. Morrison answered that he is not sure.

Mr. Karatassos said he was looking at this location and Mr. Morrison said it is not in the City. He said it is either state owned property, County or CAT owned. Some public agency owns this property and the reason he brings this up is because they should have escrow funding. Mr. Morrison is here now, but further down the road someone else may

not have the same interest. It is probably not the City, it is probably owned by the Trade Center.

Mr. Morrison said it is within the City limits, but it is on County property. The property is leased to the Georgia International Maritime Trade Center Authority. There are a lot of state and county entities here that are saying they want the marker and will take care of it.

Mr. Karatassos said this could also be the opposite. There could be so many people that they might say it is somebody else's problem. He wants to see the marker erected, but he worries that somewhere down the road that it will come a deal of being somebody else's problem. If the property is leased by the Georgia International Maritime Trade Center Authority, then they should be asked to set up an escrow account. He does not believe they are talking about a lot of money.

Mr. Morrison explained that Assistant County Manager Pat Monahan a year ago put up the money through the County of the Nuclear Ship Savannah marker and for this marker, the Battle of the Atlantic.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Daniel Carey of the Historic Savannah Foundation (HSF) stated that he supports the petitioner's request. He said providing the critical information about Savannah's history and particularly about our maritime history, on the other side of the river on Hutchinson Island is really important. Many people go through the Trade Center and have an opportunity to pause, linger on the riverfront, and look back at enjoy the views of historic downtown Savannah. He believes, therefore, this all will be enhanced by these markers. Mr. Carey said he was at the Trade Center the other day with the National Trust for Historic Preservation officials who will be hosting the National Preservation Conference here in 2014.

Mr. Carey said as they were standing there and looking back knowing that all these preservationists and historians are going to be on the other side of the river looking back, he believes it is great to have these markers. Mr. Carey said he read the marker that has already been placed there, the Nuclear Ship Savannah. He believes this is good and does not believe that the area will be littered with them. With them being sited appropriately, he believes will enhance everyone's experience from that side.

Ms. Soule asked Mr. Morrison if he had an issue with there being 70 or 74 on the plaque.

Mr. Morrison said he had not done his homework; if they can help towards this, they will. However, they just need to get the number right.

Board Action:

Approval as submitted. While the proposed location does not meet the location standard, "A marker should be

erected in as close proximity to the site to which it is related... Markers commemorating an event or place should be sited within 100 feet of the event site or place, or adjacent to the nearest public right-of-way," the benefits of the alternative location justify a variance from this standard. The petitioner should coordinate with City Engineering during installation to ensure no utilities are damaged.

- PASS

Vote Results

Motion: Eli Karatassos

Second: Robert Pirro

Thomas Gensheimer - Aye

Walt Harper - Aye

Eli Karatassos - Aye

Ryan Madson - Not Present

Robert Pirro - Aye

Mary Soule - Aye

5. [13-000756-PA Ridin' Mural](#)

Attachment: [Ridin Mural Application 13-000756-PA.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Context Photographs.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Technical Advisory Committee Comments.pdf](#)

Attachment: [13-000756-PA Staff Report.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Petition.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Public comments.pdf](#)

Attachment: [SHPO Opinion 030713.pdf](#)

Mr. Matt Hebermehl was present on behalf of the petition.

Ms. Harris gave the staff report. The petitioner is requesting approval of a mural entitled "Ridin" on the west façade of 228 West Broughton Street. The petitioner provided the following information regarding funding. The mural is sponsored by Converse Sneakers and Juxtapoz Magazine for their joint project, "Wall to Wall," which is an international mural initiative. Mr. Hebermehl states that he was selected to create this mural by Converse and Juxtapoz. They have identified Savannah and its creative community as relevant player on the international stage along with New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Toronto, and Barcelona.

Ms. Harris stated as required in the Master Plan and Guidelines, written notice was sent to all property owners within 200 feet of the subject property. A sign was posted on the property fifteen days prior to the meeting. A certified letter was sent to the Downtown Neighborhood Association. Additional notification was sent to the Downtown Business Association and the Historic Savannah Foundation.

Ms. Harris stated that written comments were received from the Historic Site and Monument Commission Technical Advisory Committee. The comments are:

"No comments. I support the mural." **Dr. Peggy Blood, Savannah State University.**

"I like Atwell's as a business and what it brings to Broughton Street in terms of artistic presence and exhibitions. I also like Matt Hebermehl's work as an artist in general and have been supportive of other projects by him in the community. He is certainly one of Savannah's most important mural artists. My only concern is that the design doesn't seem as site appropriate as it might be - it feels as if it could be somewhere elsewhere.

Broughton Street is a prime location with high visibility to both tourists and locals. While some part of the City really cry out for a mural to enliven the visual environment, one could argue that Broughton Street doesn't need it so much.

The fact that Atwell's is a gallery with a large featureless exterior wall does, however, make it a good location for a mural.

I like Matt's citing of examples of advertising painting and murals. The design submitted, while charming, seems more appropriate to a bike shop, or a site adjacent to a neighborhood or park than a business district. I wish the design either reflected the identity of the building/function of the business as would any of the advertising murals cited (a motif related to art, framing for example). Or another example would be a mural that incorporated motifs from other iconic downtown businesses or advertising art. These are just examples of course, but it would be nice to see the design relate more specifically to this location." **Harry Delorme, Telfair Museums**

"This property is located within the Savannah Historic District and as such, the exterior painting will require a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) prior to installation. The applicant has submitted an application for a COA which is scheduled to be heard by the Savannah Historic District Board of Review (HDBR) on March 13, 2013 at 2:00 p.m. I would like to reserve my comments for that review so I am not causing any confusion between the two boards which have different criteria and standards. The staff report for the HDBR meeting will be available no later than March 8, 2013. Please let me know if you have any questions." **Sarah Ward, City Preservation Officer.**

Ms. Harris reported that in accordance with the guidelines, staff sent the proposal to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for comments as this is a contributing building within the Landmark District. At the time of publication of the staff report, no comments were received from SHPO. However, SHPO's comments were received today. Ms. Leigh Burns, Outreach Program Manager wrote that, in accordance with the Georgia Historic Preservation Act of 1980, their comments are advisory in nature. Their review was based on the provisions of our ordinance and the Georgia Historic Preservation Act, and of their knowledge of the historic resources in our community. After reviewing the application, other staff review and MPC staff recommendations, they concur with our assessment and denial of this application. Ms. Burns also stated that in reviewing the application, their main concern is the scale of the project. They particularly stress the two following areas and highlight the importance of these in a future approval with changes. The scale of the mural should "be appropriate to the building and the site" and the scale needs to be more appropriately assessed. The mural should also more positively enhance the character and the feeling of the surrounding area.

Ms. Harris reported that staff recommends denial of the mural because it does not meet the following standards in the Master Plan and Guidelines for Markers, Monuments, and Public Art:

1. The installation of a mural should complement and enhance the building and be incorporated architecturally into the façade.
2. Murals should enhance and complement the character of the surrounding neighborhood.
3. The scale of the mural should be appropriate to the building and the site.
4. The mural should be appropriate within the context of the surrounding neighborhood.
5. If intended to be permanent, the mural should have a weatherproof and vandalism-resistant coating.

Mr. Karatassos asked staff if the other mural applications that have come before the Commission from Mr. Hebermehl and the other artists have all been mostly temporary. Do we have many permanent murals?

Ms. Harris answered that the only ones she could think of that might be considered permanent is the rotating mural.

Mr. Gensheimer stated the empty lot that is here is owned by a private business. If the owner decides to build on the lot, they also need to think about what would happen to anything that would be approved to go here. He believes this would be an issue as it would be hidden. Do they have any guidelines for this kind of situation?

Ms. Harris explained that all their provisions really put the responsibility for maintenance and so forth on the property owner. Therefore, if another property owner wanted to build there, they certainly could do so without referencing the mural. This is somewhat the same thing that if this owner wanted to paint their wall blue, they could do so and if another property owner wanted build over that, then the blue wall would no longer be visible. This is just a risk that they would take.

Mr. Karatassos asked if all the properties on Broughton Street have common walls.

Ms. Harris answered yes.

Mr. Karatassos asked where does the common wall ends and the other begins.

Ms. Harris assumed that which ever side of the property line that is within an inch of.

PETITIONER COMMENTS

Mr. Hebermehl entertained questions from the Commission.

Mr. Pirro asked Mr. Hebermehl if he proposed this design to the organization and they have committed to supporting it. Is this correct?

Mr. Hebermehl explained that he received an email from Converse who explained to him what they were doing and wanted to include Savannah in their project. They already had an artist in mind, but he was physically unable to do the work. Consequently, they asked him

to send them examples of work of other artists. Mr. Hebermehl said he was fortunate enough to be selected as the artist.

Mr. Pirro asked Mr. Hebermehl if he was selected on the basis of that design.

Mr. Hebermehl answered no. He sent Converse a portfolio of approximately five or six different artworks. From his portfolio he was selected as the person to do the artwork. He then created an original design for the project and submitted it to Converse. In his view, he feels he was visually telling about where he lives and the city he relates to. He chose the design for this reason, but the color sourcing was from two blocks around and the design ties it to the bike culture.

Mr. Hebermehl said he respects everybody's opinion of this. But, he respectfully disagrees on some things. With regards to Mr. Delorme's suggestion that it is not a direct reflection of what is in the store, he said it is his understanding that would basically be a sign for that business. It is not a frame, but the fact that it is art on the side of an art frame shop, he thinks this relates to the business. If you are up and down Broughton Street, there are bike stands on every block. Therefore, he would say that Savannah invites and engages people to actually ride bikes and to ride them on Broughton Street. Therefore, he felt this meets the standard of being appropriate in this sense.

Mr. Karatassos said he saw a photograph where a different angle was chosen. It looks almost like a different mural. It shows the mural closer to the street. He likes it better there than the other place.

Mr. Hebermehl said it is a tough angle to get. He understood what Mr. Karatassos was saying.

Mr. Karatassos told Mr. Hebermehl that he has supported him on all of his proposals. But, he can not support him on this request as he believes this one misses on the requested location. He believes it is great, he loves it and was thinking about someplace else it could be.

Mr. Hebermehl said as far as the location, it would be untruthful to ignore the context of why this is being brought to the table. A part of what wall-to-wall is, is they come in and document the process and create an environment where it is being created. It is a celebration of the city and people where the art is being created. Mr. Hebermehl said he is of the opinion that historically Broughton Street in particular has always been or attempted to be the corridor of commerce culture for Savannah. A lot of what he has done, and he appreciates everybody's support; the last few years is to showcase the uniqueness and specialness of Savannah. He is on everyone's team that wants to do this and hold Savannah as a special place in their hearts as this is what he wants to do, too.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Harris reported that staff received some written public comments.

The Historic Savannah Foundation sent the request to their Architectural Review Committee for feedback. This was done via email because the whole committee was not

able to meet and form a universal position. Below are the responses that were received from individual members:

1. While I understand the established presence of mural throughout the Historic District, I don't agree that this should be a precedence of approval for any mural request. My objection to this mural is not so much content as it is coloration and the jarring impact the proposed coloration places on the adjacent historic properties. It is my position that it doesn't add to the character or historic significance of the building and adjacent structures. I cannot be enthusiastic about a mural which serves only to draw attention to business. I think they should rethink the mural and how it can better reflect the tradition of bike riding in Savannah so and come back with a new, more subtle proposal.

2. As to the proposed mural I vote "NO." The other examples of historic signs in the Landmark District were designed to be informative. The proposed mural is simply designed to make a statement and is inappropriate. If they want to do something, I would suggest something similar to the attached example at NY's seaport museum.

"Hello, I'm a downtown business owner and I'd like to express my support for the proposed mural project at 228 West Broughton Street. I appreciate you taking my opinion into consideration." **Chad Warner of BlueLime Studio, Inc., 216 East Bay Street.**

"Dear Ms. Harris:

I'M unable to attend today's MPC hearing, but want to voice my support for the proposed mural at 228 West Broughton Street. This project would positively activate the side of this building. In addition, it would put Savannah on the map via the world-wide Wall to Wall project. Savannah has a vibrant art community, the prominent location of this proposed mural would be a perfect complement. Thank you for your time and the opportunity to voice my support." **Megan Luther.**

Ms. Sally McLeod asked Mr. Hebermehl if he has decided on a background color.

Mr. Hebermehl answered that unfortunately with digitalizing and trying to put it all together, the white he chose would not be as drastically bright.

Ms. McLeod asked him if he had any plans to do something on the wall on the other side.

Mr. Hebermehl answered no. He stated also that he failed during his comments to mention that he went door-to-door to the businesses in the area. He believes he sent Ms. Harris more than 30 businesses signatures within a two-block radius that support the project.

Mr. Richard McLeod stated that he lives in the Bryan Building on the corner. He is not opposed to murals. A lot of talk has been said about locations. Mr. McLeod said he does not believe that this particular mural enhances the neighborhood. There has been a lot of talk about Atwell's which was built in the early nineteen hundreds; their Bryan Building was built in the mid eighteen hundreds. His living room wall has a tobacco sign because when the building was built, his third floor loft was not there. It was added in the early nineteen hundreds. He has no problem with the murals, but this one just does not work here. He is a bike rider.

Ms. Ardis Wood stated that she loves bikes and she hopes everyone would ride them as this would solve our parking problem. Ms. Wood was hopeful that the Commission would support the staff's recommendation for denial. These are cartoon type colors and even the clouds remind you of the letters and words that are put into cartoon.

Ms. Ann Marie Smith said she thinks the spirit of this design is incredibly appropriate to the spirit of the Savannah community, especially on Broughton Street which is not just for the residents of Savannah, but is for all the people who visit. We want to present the best, the most vibrant, and the most exciting experience for them. She knows that a lot of focus is on downtown Savannah. She is pleased that Mr. Hebermehl has brought the cultural history that is not the shiny and consumerist, but is the community that says come ride on my handle bars. Someone said the mural might be more appropriate on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, but she believes bringing this idea and this focus to Broughton Street is powerful. It is not a sign for business and it is not another logo, but it is something that speaks to the artist community of Savannah, Ms. Smith believes it is a credible opportunity to get national and international attention.

Ms. Paige Rucker said she owns property on Congress Street. There she has had the liberty of living in this neighborhood and embracing the entire community. Ms. Rucker believes the mural is a beautiful piece and does an excellent job of communicating the vibrancy and the message of the neighborhood when the shops are closed. She has a deep appreciation for historic preservation as an owner of historic property. Ms. Rucker said she believes this shows that Savannah is progressive and does embrace art in looking forward as well and takes art to another level, not just preserving the past, but embracing the future.

Mr. Gensheimer asked Mr. Hebermehl if this mural is not approved, would Converse support another possible design. What would happen?

Mr. Hebermehl said Converse has a schedule of when they can or can not do things.

Mr. Harper made a motion to deny the petition. This was seconded by **Mr. Gensheimer**. **Ms. Soule** called for discussion on the motion.

Mr. Karatassos asked Ms. Harris procedurally if an item is not approved, could there be an amended submittal. How can a petition be readdressed and brought back to the Commission in a timely fashion?

Ms. Harris explained that she believes there are two options. If this petition is denied, it could be appealed to City Council. The second option would be to submit a revised proposal and if the chair was willing to call a Special Called Meeting to review it, would be another option. The next regularly scheduled meeting for the Commission is May 2.

Mr. Karatassos asked if it would be possible for the Commission to table this matter until such time that the petitioner could consider whether or not he wants to resubmit or do something else rather than denial and then starting a total new process. This would allow some time to rethink on the part of the petitioner.

Ms. Harris said the Commission could do this, but she cautioned them to be remindful of the notification process of fifteen days. This has to be met for any meeting.

Mr. Gensheimer stated that he believes the difficulty of this is the Commission, after the petitioner brings a proposal, could say no to this or no to that. He questions whether in this site they could get consensus on one design that everybody could rally around. He supports public art. He supports the staff recommendation. This does not fit the location.

Mr. Karatassos said he is not an artist. There may be something that the petitioner can come up with that brings the scale back in. He does not know what it would be, but all he is saying is he does not want to cut the process off if there is an opportunity that is going to go away because of the funding mechanism. Mr. Karatassos said his guess is this that the staff recommendation has a good chance of being approved which would terminate this, but rather than doing this and to keep the option open for the petitioner, he would rather that the Commission postpone this matter.

Mr. Hebermehl asked if this happens, how does it affect his submittal to the Historic District Review Board.

Ms. Harris explained to him that he would still need to get approval from the Review Board as well.

Mr. Karatassos said Mr. Hebermehl would have to ask the Review for a continuance. He moved that the proposal be tabled. The motion failed due to lack of a second.

Ms. Soule told Mr. Hebermehl that she loves the artwork, but would vote to deny this as she believes this is not the appropriate place for it.

Mr. Harper stated that when they started the mural process, he was totally against it, but now he likes it. However, he does not believe that the location for this particular mural is appropriate. If some other place could be found to put it, he would say bring it back to the Commission.

Board Action:

Denial of the mural because it does not meet the following standards in the Master Plan and Guidelines for Markers, Monuments, and Public Art:

- The installation of a mural should complement and enhance the building and be incorporated architecturally into the façade.
- Murals should enhance and complement the - PASS character of the surrounding neighborhood.

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

Vote Results

Motion: Walt Harper

Second: Thomas Gensheimer

Thomas Gensheimer	- Aye
Walt Harper	- Aye
Eli Karatassos	- Nay
Ryan Madson	- Aye
Robert Pirro	- Aye
Mary Soule	- Aye

IV. Other Business

6. [Update from Jerry Flemming, Director of Park and Tree and Cemeteries](#)

Mr. Flemming stated that he had a few items he wanted to bring to the Commission's attention. They were dealing with the site line obstruction at Bull Street and Oglethorpe Avenue, partially vegetation, but also partially two historic markers. One for Juliette Gordon Low birthplace and the other for Judge James Wayne Moore. While they were dealing with this, they noticed that both the signs needed some repairs. One was actually a hazard. Therefore, they took both signs down today. However, they will not replace them if they are going to be a site line obstruction.

Mr. Flemming said it is his understanding that the signs were temporarily put there during the Bull Street improvement project in the 1990s. The original location was in front of the Juliette Gordon Low site. However, it was also brought to his attention that there may have been some problems at this site. These markers are maintained by the DNR. Therefore, they will turn them over to the DNR. If and when it comes time to restore them, since it will probably be a new site that has not been approved, it will probably come before this Commission at that time.

Mr. Flemming said another issue that has come up is the Bishop Turner Monument on Turner Street. This is the site of a parking garage and hotel development, west of Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. The developer has requested permission to move the monument temporarily while he is doing the work so that it will be protected. Mr. Flemming said his view on this is that it is maintenance as long as the monument goes back in the same site and in good condition. Therefore, they are working with the developer at this point. This probably would not need to come before the Commission, but he just

wanted to bring this to their attention.

Mr. Flemming said he has a maintenance issue with the Sgt. Jasper Scabbard which was replaced in 2007 was stolen; but, has been found. They have it in their possession and will have it reattached at some point. They are soliciting proposals for it now. This is maintenance and is not a change to the monument.

Mr. Flemming reported that the sidewalks in Reynolds Square have recently been upgraded to brick. It adds handicap accessibility to the John Wesley Monument base which was not there previously. It also eliminates a tripping hazard because the previous sidewalk was four inches lower than the platform that the monument sits on. Mr. Flemming said the improvement really looks very attractive. It does not change the monument at all, but improves the access to it.

Mr. Flemming entertained questions from the Commission.

Mr. Karatassos told Mr. Flemming that he has mentioned this on a number of occasions, but the lithographs that were at Yamacraw Village, if he has not gotten a call already, he will be getting a call from Angus Sawyer. They are putting an art display and a historical display for the Intermodal. He told Mr. Flemming that he asked Mr. Sawyer to get in touch with him to see the lithographs and try to incorporate it into the display.

Mr. Flemming said he had not heard from anyone yet.

Mr. Harper asked Mr. Karatassos if he has gotten any additional information on the Rousakis Monument.

Mr. Karatassos stated that he has talked with the new owners of the Georgia Power site and informed them of their interest.

7. [Commissioner's Items](#)

V. Adjournment

8. [Next Meeting- May 2, 2013](#)

9. [Adjournment](#)

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Ms. Soule adjourned the meeting at 5:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Ellen Harris

Cultural Resource and Urban Planning Manager

EH:mem

The Chatham County - Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission provides meeting summary minutes which are adopted by the respective Board. Verbatim transcripts of minutes are the responsibility of the interested party.