



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  
November 6, 2014 4:00 P.M.  
Meeting Minutes

**November 6, 2014 Regular HSMC Meeting**

**I. Call to Order and Welcome**

1. [Welcome](#)

**Mr. Karatassos** 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.

**Mr. Karatassos** explained that the HSMC does not have a quorum present today, but they wanted to go ahead and hear from the petitioner. If there is unanimous consent by the three members present, they will conditionally approve the petition subject to approval by the HSMC at their next meeting.

**II. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

2. [Approval of September 4, 2014 Meeting Minutes](#)

Attachment: [September 4, 2014 Meeting Minutes.pdf](#)

**Board Action:**

Conditionally approve September 4, 2014 Meeting Minutes subject to confirmation by a quorum of the Board at their next meeting. - PASS

**Vote Results**

Motion: Giselle Rahn

Second: Thomas Gensheimer

Thomas Gensheimer	- Aye
Eli Karatassos	- Aye
Giselle Rahn	- Aye

**III. Regular Agenda**

3. [Petition of SeeSAW, LLC | 14-005159-PA | 104 East 40th Street | Mural](#)

Attachment: [Staff Report.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Application and Submittal Packet.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Public Support Letters.pdf](#)

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

**Ms. Leah Michalak** gave the staff report. The proposed mural for "40 Space" (104 East 40th Street) represents the budding creative culture of the area just south of Forsyth Park. It depicts the relationship between the creative entrepreneurs and the ways in which they work within the charm of the city. The mural will be visible from both Drayton and East 40th Streets. The building is a non-contributing building within the Mid-City Local Historic District, constructed c. 1960.

**Ms. Michalak** explained that the petitioner provided the following description regarding the design:

*The imagery for the proposed mural is focused on a great live oak tree that stretches its branches out and across the length of the west wall facing Drayton Street. The trunk and limbs of the tree will be rendered in a way that represents them in a very true fashion, while the foliage of the tree will be rendered in a more abstract manner. The abstraction will be done with regard to form and contrast which will give it a full and 3-dimensional quality that will read naturally from afar and at a glance, while closer examination will reveal the abstract shapes. Upon the low hanging branch of the oak, there is a reclining young woman reading a book. She is engaged with the book and has a meditative expression. The overall content feels of a peaceful, warm summer evening in Savannah, which is the reason so many of us choose to reside here.*

*The mural will be created using high-quality exterior house paint, and will cover the entire length of the west wall, not including the shorter addition to the north [rear], which is hidden behind Atwell's if you are seeing the mural from Drayton Street. After the mural has been completed there will be a protective coating added to defend against the elements and defacing. There will be no inclusion of sponsor of business name. The proposed wall is forty feet in length and fourteen and a half feet in height.*

*The horizontal flow of the proposed wall is complimented by the east, left to right flow of the woman and the live oak tree. – Jose Ray, artist*

**Ms. Michalak** said the mural will be on private property and is fully-funded by the building owners. All local business, Atwell's and Love Lane Designs have given their verbal support of the project. Staff has also received two written letters of support that were attached to the HSMC submittal packets. She reported that staff recommends approval of the mural because it meets the standards in the Master Plan and Guidelines for Public Art.

#### **PETITIONER COMMENTS**

**Mr. Hebermehl** thanked the Commission for hearing their petition.

**Mr. Gensheimer** asked Mr. Hebermehl when the artist plans to start painting the mural.

**Mr. Hebermehl** answered that the artist will start painting the mural tomorrow.

**Mr. Karatassos** asked how long it will take to complete the mural.

**Mr. Hebermehl** stated approximately one week.

**Mr. Karatassos** said the three members present today are in unanimous agreement to approve the mural. One member who was unable to attend the meeting today is also in agreement with the approval. Therefore, he feels confident that the conditional approval today will be ratified by the Commission at their next meeting.

**Mr. Hebermehl** asked if they could get something in writing that they have been granted approval to paint the mural. He asked if the Commission has scheduled their first meeting in 2015.

**Mr. Katatassos** answered that presently, they are trying to get a meeting scheduled for December, 2014. They have not scheduled a meeting so far for 2015. He explained that they also contacted the City Attorney's office about the conditional mural approval, but did not receive a response. They have not heard anything positive or negative and he does not believe they will.

**Ms. Harris** answered that the schedule for 2015 has not been done yet. However, the meetings are scheduled the first Thursday, every other month.

**Mr. Hebermehl** said he remembers the Board said that during the summer months, it is hard to get a quorum and that they were looking possibly at scheduling the meeting in a lesser vacation month.

**Mr. Karatassos** said he remembers the Commission talking about this. However, the Commission will meet in December. He explained that the Commission is supposed to meet every month, but due to the scarcity of the petitions, the scheduled meetings were not held. However, since the murals have surfaced, they have more requests for the murals. Frankly, he has the first Thursday of every month circled on his calendar.

**Mr. Karatassos** asked staff to have a schedule together to present at the December, 2014 meeting of the HSMC for next year. They need this particularly if the Historic District Board of Review will be involved in the timing. He asked staff what date is the meeting scheduled for in December, 2014.

**Ms. Harris** explained that the December date shown on the schedule is incorrect. The correct date should be Thursday, December 4. If they moved the meeting to December 11, 2014, the Mendonsa Hearing Room will be available.

**Mr. Karatassos** said that Ms. Rahn will not be able to attend the meeting on December 11 and he believes that Mr. Madson will not be available in December.

**Ms. Harris** explained that the Mendonsa Hearing Room is not available on December 4, but it is available on December 5.

**Mr. Karatassos** asked staff to poll the members and see which date is available to the majority.

**Ms. Harris** stated that the HSMC talked about amending the by-laws to make a quorum 3 members versus 4 members. If they still want to do this, they will need to distribute the by-laws to the members 10 days in advance.

**Mr. Karatassos** asked staff to go ahead and distribute the by-laws to the members whether they vote on the amendment or not. At least, this will start the wheels turning. They have

six members on this Board. If they went to a quorum of three members, it would be half the number of members. He believes that staff has already mentioned the quorum change to the City Attorney.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

**Board Action:**

Conditionally approve the mural at 104 East 41st Street as requested because it meets the standards in the Master Plan and Guidelines for Markers, Monuments, and Public Art, subject to confirmation by a quorum of the Board. - PASS

**Vote Results**

Motion: Thomas Gensheimer

Second: Giselle Rahn

Thomas Gensheimer - Aye

Eli Karatassos - Aye

Giselle Rahn - Aye

**IV. Other Business**

4. [Commissioner's Items](#)

5. [Next Meeting - "To Be Determined" in the Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room, MPC, 112 E. State St.](#)

**V. Adjournment**

6. [Adjourned](#)

There being no further business to come before the Historic Site and Monument Commission, Mr. Karatassos adjourned the meeting at 4:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ellen Harris  
Director of Urban Planning and Historic Preservation

*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.*