



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  
October 1, 2015 4:00 P.M.  
Meeting Minutes

**OCTOBER 1, 2015 HISTORIC SITE AND MONUMENT COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING**

**HDRB Members Present:** Eli Karatassos, Chair  
Walt Harper, Secretary  
Thomas Gensheimer  
Ryan Madson

**HSMC Member Not Present:** Kristopher Monroe

**MPC Staff Present:** Ellen Harris, Director of Urban Planning and Historic Preservation  
Sara Farr, Historic Preservation Planner  
Mary E. Mitchell, Administrative Assistant

**I. Call to Order and Welcome**

1. [Order and Welcome](#)

**Mr. Eli Karatassos** called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. He welcomed everyone in attendance and outlined the purpose and role of the Savannah-Chatham County Historic Site and Monument Commission.

**II. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

2. [Approve September 3, 2015 Meeting Minutes](#)

Attachment: [September 3, 2015 Meeting Minutes.pdf](#)

**Board Action:**

The Savannah-Chatham County Historic Site and Monument Commission does hereby approve the - PASS Meeting Minutes of September 3, 2015.

**Vote Results**

Motion: Thomas Gensheimer	
Second: Ryan Madson	
Thomas Gensheimer	- Aye
Walt Harper	- Aye
Eli Karatassos	- Aye
Ryan Madson	- Aye

### III. Regular Agenda

#### 3. [Petition of Craig W. Clements for Sottile & Sottile LLC | 15-004988-HM | 207 Bull Street | Historical Marker](#)

Attachment: [Submittal Package.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Staff Recommendation.pdf](#)

**NOTE: Mr. Thomas Gensheimer abstained from participation in this petition. Mr. Christian Sottile, a partner in Sottile & Sottile, serves as his supervisor at his place of employment.**

**Mr. Ryan Madson disclosed that he has association with one of the partners of Sottile and Sottile, but did not believe the relationship constituted a conflict of interest.**

**Mr. Craig W. Clements of Sottile & Sottile, LLC** was present on behalf of the petition.

**Ms. Sara Farr** gave the staff report. The petitioner is requesting to relocate the historic steeple bell from its existing location within the church's private courtyard to an area south of the main (Bull Street) entrance on the Independent Presbyterian Church's parcel. The bell was constructed in the steeple in 1891 and is being moved as part of an overall lane improvement project. It was removed from the steeple in 1998 due to a crack and replaced with an identical bell. It was placed in its current location in 2006. In 2007, the preservation of the bell was recognized with a Historic Preservation Award from the Historic Savannah Foundation. The new location will include bluestone hardscape, trees, other plantings, and benches. The bench and other improvements were previously approved by the Historic District Board of Review.

**Ms. Farr** explained that as required in the Master Plan and Guidelines, written notice was sent to all property owners and the neighborhood associations within 200 feet of the subject property. A sign was posted on the property fifteen days prior to the meeting. No comments were received from the public.

**Ms. Farr** reported that staff recommends approval of the petition to relocate the bell at 207 Bull Street to Oglethorpe Lane, because it meets the Markers, Monuments, and Public Art Master Plan and Guidelines.

#### **PETITIONER COMMENTS**

**Mr. Clements** explained that Oglethorpe Lane is being renovated from Bull Street to Whitaker Street. The parking stalls are being installed in the hardscape along with the

overall paving of the lane. Oglethorpe Lane is the only 35 foot wide lane in the city. Therefore, it is almost more of a street than a lane.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

**COMMISSION DISCUSSION**

The Commission discussion centered around if additional lighting will be here. Unfortunately, when things are more public, it becomes more susceptible to graffiti. The area needs to be well protected and well-lit.

**Mr. Clements** explained that the church has a campus here. This will somewhat tie the campus together while also widening the space. It will be much more well lit and the security is good. It is very visible from Bull Street. A camera is here. In addition to the lane improvements, they are also during renovations to the courtyard as a separate project. The role of the courtyard is to make the entire campus more accessible so that the ADA ramps are connected to the buildings.

**Board Action:**

The Savannah-Chatham County Historic Site and Monument Commission does hereby approve the petition to relocate the bell at 207 Bull Street to Oglethorpe Lane, because it meets the Markers, Monuments, and Public Art Master Plan and Guidelines. - PASS

**Vote Results**

Motion: Walt Harper  
Second: Ryan Madson  
Thomas Gensheimer - Abstain  
Walt Harper - Aye  
Eli Karatassos - Aye  
Ryan Madson - Aye

**IV. Other Business**

4. [Commissioner Items](#)

**Mr. Harper** informed the Commission that one of the members of the Order of Hibernian was having some personal issues and wanted to go to the Celtic Cross to sit there

and think things over. He went there only to discover that no benches were there. The only benches that are in Emmett Park are at the far east end. Mr. Harper stated that this was at the time that Jerry Fleming was here and he talked with him about this. They spoke about putting regular park benches here. But after Jerry got into it, he said the benches did not look right. He asked how would they feel about paying to put some actual limestone benches here.

**Mr. Harper** explained that the Order of Hibernians along with the other Irish organizations in Savannah are getting the money to procure the benches. The benches are not a part of the monument, but they will be placed on the outer edges of the monument so that people will have a place to sit. He brought this to the Commission as information only.

**Mr. Karatassos** stated that the staff needs to ensure that it is known that Park & Tree did not put the benches here. Someone else later might approach Park & Tree with a similar request believing that they put the benches here.

**Mr. Harper** explained that Park & Tree puts up benches all the time. They repair and replace benches.

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**Mr. Madson** asked regarding public art such as short term installation with storefronts on Broughton Street in their windows, is this a part of the purview of the HSMC?

**Mr. Karatassos** explained that if the art is placed on the inside of the storefront windows, it is not a part of the HSMC's purview. But if the art is on the outside of the window, then it is a part of the HSMC's purview.

**Mr. Madson** stated that the art is on the surface.

**Mr. Gensheimer** asked if the art is on the exterior of the window. He believes this would be a part of the HSMC's purview.

**Mr. Karatassos** explained that the people have a right to put on the inside of their stores what they want. It would be the same as the light shows that were put on the inside, but was projected on the outside of the building.

[5. Next Meeting - Thursday, November 5, 2015 at 4:00 p.m. in the Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room, MPC, 112 E. State Street](#)

## V. Adjournment

6. [Adjourned](#)

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Mr. Karatassos adjourned the meeting at 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ellen Harris  
Director of Urban Planning and Historic Preservation

EIH: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.*