



## Savannah - Chatham County Historic Site & Monument Commission

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Virtual Meeting  
May 6, 2021 4:00 PM  
MINUTES

### May 6, 2021 Historic Savannah - Chatham County Site and Monument Commission Meeting

Members Present: Kristopher Monroe, Chairman  
Thomas Gensheimer, Vice - Chairman  
Lisa Watson, Secretary  
Eileen Baker  
Sean Mannion  
Ashley Rainge

Members Absent:

Staff Present: Leah Michalak, Director of Historic Preservation  
Kiakala Ntemo, Development Services Planner  
Bri Morgan, Administrative Assistant  
Pam Everett, Assistant Executive Director  
Asia Hernton, Advance Planning Assistant Planner  
Aislinn Droski, Historic Preservation Assistant Planner

Staff Absent:

#### I. Call to Order and Welcome

##### [1. Introduction of Staff Members](#)

#### II. Approval of Meeting Minutes

##### [2. Approve the April 1, 2021 Meeting Minutes](#)

[📎 04.01.21 MEETING MINUTES.pdf](#)

#### **Motion**

Approve meeting minutes.

#### **Vote Results ( Approved )**

Motion: Sean Mannion

Second: Thomas Gensheimer

Thomas Gensheimer

- Aye

|                   |           |
|-------------------|-----------|
| Kristopher Monroe | - Abstain |
| Sean Mannion      | - Aye     |
| Lisa D. Watson    | - Aye     |
| Eileen Baker      | - Aye     |
| Ashley Rainge     | - Aye     |

### III. Regular Agenda

#### [3. Petition of The City of Savannah Sustainability Department & The West Savannah Community Organization | 21-001986-PA | 1495 Augusta Avenue | Mural](#)

📎 [Staff Report.pdf](#)

📎 [Augusta Avenue Mural Application Packet.pdf](#)

📎 [Augusta Ave visuals.pdf](#)

**Mr. Kiakala Ntemo** presented the applicant's request for approval for the installation of a mural at 1495 Augusta Avenue, the location of a City of Savannah plant nursery.

The proposed mural is inspired by the handmade quilt work of Ms. Emma Williams, a West Savannah Centenarian who recently passed away at the age 102. The purpose of the mural is to serve as a backdrop to the plant nursery, beautify the community, and to honor the work of Ms. Emma Williams and the culture of quilt making. The mural is proposed to be 6 feet in height, 60 feet in length, and elevated two feet above the ground for ease of landscape maintenance, and the height of most wooden fences. The mural will be primed with an oil-based primer on 15 panels of 6x4 exterior plywood, ¾ inch thick, and will be painted in exterior acrylic based house paint. Information on weatherproof and vandal-resistant coating has not been provided. Each panel will be erected on 4x4 treated posts and supported by a 2x4 inner frame. All the mural's design, pattern, and colors will be inspired by Ms. William's quilt work.

The theme of the mural is the commemoration of an iconic West Savannah native and her contribution to the cultural art form of quilt making. The theme is respectful to the context of the community because it is honoring one of its own members and bringing awareness to the historical and cultural art form of quilt making. The mural complies with the Georgia obscenity laws and does not contain or advertise any lewd imagery or messages. The mural does not advertise any illegal activities under the laws of Georgia or the United States. Serving as a backdrop for the plant nursery towards the rear of the property, the mural will complement the nursery while also beautifying Augusta Avenue, a commonly driven roadway. The mural will complement and enhance the character of the community. The proposed location for the mural is not likely to serve as a distraction or safety hazard to drivers.

The mural is to be located on the residential stretch of Augusta Avenue where commercial uses are permitted nearby. One of the petitioners of the request is a community organization for the neighborhood. Also, notification for the mural request has been mailed to residents within 200 feet and to the relative neighborhood association of the community. In addition, a sign notification of request was posted 15 days prior to the meeting. To Staff's knowledge, there are no other murals in the immediate vicinity and the mural will not be placed or painted on historic materials.

The artist of the mural, Brian MacGregor, is experienced and has completed numerous

projects of similar size and scale. Evidence of his work has been submitted. According to the applicant, the estimated cost of the work is \$11,560.

**Ms. Lisa Watson**, Board Member, stated that she was an applicant for this project, but it was awarded to Mr. Brian McGregor. She stated she is looking at this through new eyes as it is new to her. There was no objection from Board or Staff of Ms. Watson voting on this petition.

**PETITIONER COMMENTS:**

**Mr. Nick Deffely**, City of Savannah Director of Sustainability, stated this is a part of a grant funded project for three urban tree nurseries. The funder required that contribution to the beautification efforts, incorporating requests from the area residents. This was guided by the neighborhood residents. The inspiration was based on the quilts done by Ms. Williams, with the final design decision was based on the neighborhood as a permanent fixture.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

There was no public comment.

**BOARD DISCUSSION:**

The Board was supportive of this petition. **Mr. Monroe** requested consideration for permanent protection of materials and paint, including priming on all sides and edges.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends **approval** of the mural at 1495 Augusta Avenue because it meets the standards in the Master Plan and Guidelines for Markers, Monuments, and Public Art.

**Motion**

The Historic Site and Monument Commission hereby recommends approval to City Council for the installation of the proposed mural at 1495 Augusta Avenue because it meets the standards in the Master Plan and Guidelines for Markers, Monuments, and Public Art.

**Vote Results ( Approved )**

Motion: Eileen Baker

Second: Sean Mannion

|                   |           |
|-------------------|-----------|
| Thomas Gensheimer | - Aye     |
| Kristopher Monroe | - Abstain |
| Sean Mannion      | - Aye     |
| Lisa D. Watson    | - Aye     |
| Eileen Baker      | - Aye     |
| Ashley Rainge     | - Aye     |

[4. Petition of Johnnie Mae Law | 21-002190-HM | 2828 Pate Street | Naming of Public Park](#)

[☞ Staff Report.pdf](#)

[☞ Application Packet.pdf](#)

[☞ 2828 Pate St Visual.pdf](#)

**Mr. Kiakala Ntemo** presented the petitioner's request to name the newly installed pavilion at Sarah Wade Playground to "Dorothy W. Law Pavilion" in honor of Ogeecheeton community leader, Ms. Dorothy W. Law.

Ms. Law has been instrumental in the community development of the Ogeechee Community for decades. Her advocacy for the community has brought improvements ranging from the installation of streetlights and individual mailboxes to the development of Sarah Wade Playground itself. By the continued community work of Ms. Law, her influence resulted in the City of Savannah erecting the new pavilion in the playground. Ms. Law passed away at her home in Ogeechee at age 93 in March 2020.

Naming the pavilion in commemoration of Dorothy Law will honor her legacy and encourage others in the community to be invested in the betterment and wellbeing of their neighborhood. The proper considerations were made and all required standards were met. According to the applicant; a dedication ceremony is desired to be held in conjunction with the community's Mother's Day celebration this year.

**PETITIONER COMMENTS:**

**Mr. Joe Shearhouse**, City of Savannah's City Manager's Office, stated this petition did go before City Council prior to before coming to HSMC. This was done to have the signage made prior to Mother's Day. City Council did a conditional approval, based on HSMC's approval, after which no additional approvals would be needed. Mr. Shearhouse added that the City goes to great lengths to learn and preserve local history.

**Ms. Johnnie Mae Law**, petitioning area resident, stated Ms. Dorothy Law assisted in getting lunches for the area children. Ms. Dorothy Law requested a pavilion, the one being petitioned at this meeting, for sheltered protection for the children during the rain. **Ms. Johnnie Mae Law** highlighted many contributions of Ms. Dorothy Law for the betterment of the community.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

There was no public comment.

**BOARD DISCUSSION:**

There was no Board discussion.

**Staff Recommendation:**

Staff recommends **approval** to City Council for the request to name the pavilion in Sarah Wade Playground at 2828 Pate Street to "Dorothy W. Law Pavilion" because the proposal meets the guidelines set forth in the HSMC Masterplan and Guidelines.

**Motion**

The Historic Site and Monument Commission hereby recommends approval to City Council for the request to name the pavilion in Sarah Wade Playground at 2828 Pate Street to "Dorothy W. Law Pavilion" because the proposal meets the guidelines set forth in the HSMC Masterplan and Guidelines.

**Vote Results ( Approved )**

Motion: Thomas Gensheimer

Second: Lisa D. Watson

Thomas Gensheimer - Aye

Kristopher Monroe - Abstain

Sean Mannion - Aye

Lisa D. Watson - Aye

|               |       |
|---------------|-------|
| Eileen Baker  | - Aye |
| Ashley Rainge | - Aye |

#### IV. Other Business

##### [5. Yamacraw Public Art Park Presentation - Gordon Denney, Greenscapes Director](#)

**Mr. Gordon Denny** stated the park was built in 2006. Much vandalism was done, restoration was considered and requested from the general funding. It was approved last year. The restoration will restore the fountains, statues, and sidewalks, and more. The landscape will add a small amount of greenery. It is hoped to be completed by June 2021.

##### [6. Plan 2040 Presentation - Asia Hernton and Aislinn Droski](#)

**Ms. Asia Hernton** and **Ms. Aislinn Droski** presented the Plan 2040 Presentation.

#### **CONFEDERATE MONUMENT DISCUSSION**

Initiated by Mr. Kristopher Monroe, Chairman

**Mr. Monroe** asked if there were any new developments regarding the Confederate Monuments. **Ms. Michalak** stated not to her knowledge. **Mr. Monroe** state he would like to invite the City Attorney for Decatur for his presentation as to how they moved their Confederate Memorial. He spoke with a member of city council that seemed think it was a decent idea. He stated he invited the Mayor and City Council, and no one took him up on it. He stated the Decatur City Attorney has a presentation he has shown to other municipalities and consulted with other cities. He offered to come here and present. **Mr. Monroe** wanted to know if anyone has any objection to it. He wanted to keep it open as the Forsyth Park Planning is coming up.

**Mr. Mannion** stated a presentation needs to be presented at a City Council workshop, that way they are all there and it is on record. Then, something can be done.

**Mr. Monroe** stated this way it is not as pushy as a workshop.

**Ms. Watson** asked if it is a Zoom setup and invite Council.

**Ms. Michalak** stated she can set it up as preferred.

**Mr. Monroe** state the recommendations of the Task Force have been upheld but that's as far as it's gone. He stated he wants to keep the momentum. Doing nothing is doing nothing. He is hopeful to reach out to other council members to do something; he feels there is appetite to do something. He stated he will reach out the to the Decatur City Attorney and find out the presentation details and present to the Board for further discussion of action.

**Ms. Rainge** stated it is important to keep in public consciousness.

**Mr. Mannion** stated the Forsyth Master Plan does address any monuments or fountains.

**Mr. Monroe** stated they recommend a new monument, but not what type.

**Mr. Mannion** stated the only thing we can do at this point is to go before City Council themselves. The issue must be pushed. Have a 15-minute presentation, or less, for a workshop rather than send letters. The sooner the better; due to possibility of being pushed back several times before actually getting on the agenda.

**Mr. Monroe** agreed and stated he would speak with the Decatur City Attorney to get on the Council's workshop schedule.

**Ms. Watson** recommended asking the Decatur City Attorney for suggestions for how to construct and present presentation.

**Mr. Monroe** agreed. He will reach out to the Decatur City Attorney and present comments at next meeting.

#### V. Adjournment

[7. Next HSMC Regular Meeting - June 3, 2021 at 4pm](#)

[8. Adjourn](#)

***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.***