



SAVANNAH-CHATHAM COUNTY HISTORIC SITE AND MONUMENT COMMISSION

MONUMENT PLAQUE RECOMMENDATION

PETITIONER: Charles Brazil

FILE No.: 22-005078-MON

LOCATION: Franklin Square

DATE: December 1, 2022

NATURE OF REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting the addition of a 10"x4" bronze name plaque for James R Mastin, the sculptor who created the Haitian Monument, *Les Chasseurs Volontaires ("Siege of Savannah")* in Franklin Square.

CONTEXT:

The Haitian American Historical Society and the City of Savannah commissioned James R. Mastin to design the monument that commemorates Les Chasseurs Volontaires de Saint Domingue, the largest unit of soldiers of African descent who fought in the American Revolution. The monument was dedicated on October 8, 2007.

FINDINGS:

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

Evaluating Themes for Markers and Monuments. New markers and monuments commemorate and honor people, places, and/or events.

Proposed themes should fall into one or more of the following categories.

Arts and Humanities. Includes art, architecture, music, theater, literature, education, etc.

Science and Engineering. Includes technology, inventions, medical, communications, etc.

Civil and Institutional.

Social and Humanitarian.

Industry and Commerce. Includes economics, agriculture, transportation, etc.

Politics and Government.

Military History. Includes people, places, or events.

Religious History. Includes people, places, or events.

Maritime History.

Colonial History.

Local History. Includes folklore and/or local heroes.

Cultural and Ethnic History.

Board Recommendation – Haitian Monument
File No. 22-005078-MON
December 1, 2022

Education.

The standard is met. The theme of the existing Haitian Monument includes military history, colonial history, cultural and ethnic history and local history. The addition of the name plaque for the monument's sculptor also fits with these themes.

The level of significance should be high enough to warrant a public presence.

The person, place or event commemorated should not have been sufficiently commemorated elsewhere in the County. The theme should be distinct and original, and not be duplicated in other existing markers or monuments.

The theme should reflect a larger connection to the community as a whole, and not only to one distinct group.

Commemorated events should have enduring historical significance and have occurred over fifty years ago.

Commemorated persons should have enduring historical significance and have been dead at least twenty-five years. Living persons should not be commemorated.

There should be significant documented evidence (written or oral) of the commemorated event, person, or place.

The standards are met. James Mastin was a prominent sculptor and painter whose other works include public monuments such as the Bahamian National Monument, "Loyalist Memorial Sculpture Garden" in Green Turtle Cay, The Bahamas, and the "Key West Historical Memorial Sculpture Garden" in Key West, FL. Mastin is not recognized elsewhere in Savannah. His work with the Haitian Monument commemorates a significant historical event in Savannah's Revolutionary War era history. 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 standards are met. The name plaque addition to the Haitian Monument will not change the existing site conditions.

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.

Board Recommendation – Haitian Monument
File No. 22-005078-MON
December 1, 2022

The proposed site should have adequate parking nearby (excluding marker sites).
The standards are met. The Haitian Monument is in Franklin Square and is ADA accessible as well as visible and accessible from a public right-of-way. There is nearby street parking as well as parking garages.

The proposed site should not have a high probability of significant archaeology unless an archaeological study is part of the proposal.
There are no ground disturbances associated with the proposed project. The standard is met.

The proposed site should be easy to maintain.
The standard is met. The 10"x4" bronze name plaque will be easy to maintain.

The installation of the object should enhance the space and character of the surrounding neighborhood.
The standard is met. The installation of the name plaque will provide visitors with information about who sculpted the figures on the top portion of the monument and the year it was created.

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 standards are met. The installation of the name plaque will not result in the alteration or removal of existing signage or affect automobile traffic.

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.*
Marker. *A marker should be erected in as close proximity to the site to which it is related as possible and be clearly visible from a public right-of-way.*
Markers commemorating an event should be sited within 100 feet of the event site or adjacent to the nearest public right-of-way.
Markers commemorating a person should be sited where that person was born, lived, died, or performed some act of enduring significance or adjacent to the nearest public right-of-way.
The standards are met. The proposed name plaque will be added to the existing Haitian Monument and commemorate James Mastin, who was the sculptor.

Monument. *Monuments should be erected on sites to which the theme has relevance.*
The proposed site should not disrupt an established theme pattern.
If the proposed theme falls into an existing theme pattern, the proposed site should also follow the corresponding site pattern.
The proposed site should be the most relevant location available to the monument theme, as demonstrated through the documentation regarding the direct local relevance of the proposed theme.
The context of the proposed site should be a major consideration in the mass and scale of the proposed object.
The location of monuments in the Landmark District should respect the Oglethorpe Plan, particularly in terms of historic viewsheds and sight lines.

Board Recommendation – Haitian Monument
File No. 22-005078-MON
December 1, 2022

These standards are preexisting conditions within the Haitian Monument that was installed in 2007. The addition of the name plaque for James Mastin still fits within these standards.

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.*

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.

The proposed name plaque would be made of bronze, which is suitable for outdoor display.

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.

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

Monuments should not resemble gravestones.

The standards are met. The bronze plaque is reasonably durable and resistant to vandalism; has no dangerous or sharp elements or loose parts; and the use of bronze is a quality material for this addition to the monument. It will not resemble a gravestone.

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 use of bronze for the name plaque is compatible with the context of the monument, as Mastin used bronze for the statues on the monument.

The artist's name may be incorporated into the design but should be in a discreet location on the work of art.

Staff recommends that the plaque be located on the rear of the monument as a more discreet location.

Text. *The text for a marker, monument or work of art is considered part of the overall design concept. Placement of the text, font type and size, etc. should be included with the final design drawings.*

Text should be well-researched and based on historically accurate, documented facts.

The text should accurately and effectively convey to the reader the desired message.

Quotations should be noted accordingly and permission from the appropriate authority received.

Text should avoid offensive, obscene, or inflammatory language.

The proposed text is Georgia regular font and will read:

Board Recommendation – Haitian Monument
File No. 22-005078-MON
December 1, 2022

James R. Mastin
Sculptor, 2007

Although it can be seen that the font of the top line is larger than the second line, staff recommends that the applicant provides the letter height for the two rows.

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 cost of the name plaque marker is estimated to be \$1,000. The applicant is responsible for the cost.

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

The applicant must provide an escrow payment.

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 standard is met. No public comment was received at the time of this review.

Board Recommendation – Haitian Monument
File No. 22-005078-MON
December 1, 2022

RECOMMENDATION TO CITY COUNCIL:

The Historic Site and Monument Commission recommend approval to the Savannah City Council for of the addition of a name plaque for James Mastin, the sculptor of the Haitian Monument in Franklin Square with the following conditions because otherwise the project meets the standards in the Master Plan and Guidelines for Markers, Monuments and Public Art:

1. Relocate the plaque to the rear of the monument; provide the new location to staff.
2. Ensure that the font height of the top line is a minimum of 1” and that the text of the bottom line is not less than ½” in height; provide the dimensioned mock-up to staff.
3. Provide an escrow payment as required by the City.

DocuSigned by:

Kristopher Monroe

85421AE58DA0499...

December 1, 2022

Mr. Kristopher Monroe, Chairman
Historic Site and Monument Commission

Date

DocuSigned by:

Melanie Wilson

A1B98DC12DFE42A...

December 1, 2022

Melanie Wilson, Executive Director
Chatham County-Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission

Date

DocuSigned by:

Leah G. Michalak

DD74DE38FDE649C...

December 1, 2022

Leah G. Michalak, Director of Historic Preservation
Chatham County-Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission

Date

MW: LGM: cc