



SAVANNAH-CHATHAM COUNTY HISTORIC SITE AND MONUMENT
COMMISSION
MONUMENT DECISION

PETITIONER: Christian Sottile
10 West Taylor Street
Savannah, GA 31401

FILE No.: 18-001991-MON

LOCATION: 400 West River Street

DATE: May 3, 2018

NATURE OF REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting approval for a new monument at 400 West River Street. The monument will honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and will be located in the park that is part of the new Plant Riverside Development.

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.

Civic 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.

Education.

Board Decision - Petition of Christian Sottile for Sottile & Sottile
400 West River Street
File No. 18-001991-MON
May 3, 2018
Page 2

The standards are met. The proposed monument honors Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (MLK, Jr.) and falls into multiple themes including Cultural and Ethnic Heritage, Politics and Government, Social and Humanitarian, and Local History.

The proposed theme should have documented significant, clear and direct local relevance to the history and development of Chatham County. The local focus should be the predominant theme of the monument.

The standard is met. The monument's text focuses on local as well as national history related to Dr. MLK, Jr., including quotes from his Emancipation Day Address in Savannah.

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 standards are met. Dr. King is a nationally known figure in the Civil Rights Movement. He also spent time in Savannah. While West Broad Street was renamed to honor him in the 1990s, no monuments exist to him in Savannah or Chatham County.

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

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. Dr. King is honored by the entire community with a parade every year and holds significance for Savannah as a whole. He died in 1968 and there is significant documented evidence of his life as well as the short time he spent in Savannah.

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 site is proposed to be in a park (Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Riverfront Park) located at the northern terminus of MLK, Jr. Blvd. The bust on the monument is proposed to face north toward the river, which is also the direction of Washington, D.C., and serve as the center

piece of the park. The landscaping is designed to draw people in from the south toward the front of the monument and green space of the park.

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 standard is met. No other monuments will exist in the new park.

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 standards are met.

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 standard is met. The monument is proposed to be located in a new park, which is designed to accommodate the monument.

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 standard is met. The new park may have special events, but the location of the monument will not disrupt them as it does not encroach on the proposed green space.

The proposed site should not be prone to frequent automobile accidents which could damage the proposed object.

The standard is met.

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.

The standards are met. While the monument is located within the new park, it will be visible and accessible. The marker was designed to be accessible to everyone and integrates this into the proposed hardscape surrounding the monument, which includes seating.

Board Decision - Petition of Christian Sottile for Sottile & Sottile
400 West River Street
File No. 18-001991-MON
May 3, 2018
Page 4

The proposed site should have adequate parking nearby (excluding marker sites).

The proposed site should not have a high probability of significant archaeology unless an archaeological study is part of the proposal.

The standards are met.

The proposed site should be easy to maintain.

The standard is met. The monument is part of a larger development, Plant Riverside, that will be maintained on a regular basis.

The installation of the object should enhance the space and character of the surrounding neighborhood.

The standard is met. The monument is located at the terminus of MLK, Jr. Blvd and creates a central point of focus for the park.

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 installation of the object should enhance the design of the overall site.

The installation of the object should not require the removal or alteration of existing sidewalks, unless it is part of a comprehensive redesign for the entire site (which is generally discouraged).

If periodic memorial services are likely, the site should be able to accommodate them without causing undue disruption to the neighborhood, plantings, etc.

The standards are met. The monument is integrated into the design of the park.

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.

Monument. Monuments should be erected on sites to which the theme has relevance.

The proposed site should not disrupt an established theme pattern.

The standard is met. While there is an established pattern on River Street, the placement of this monument will not interrupt it.

If the proposed theme falls into an existing theme pattern, the proposed site should also follow the corresponding site pattern.

The standard does not apply. The Maritime theme only encompasses River Street and Morrel Park on Bay Street, so this monument does not fall into a theme 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.

The standards are met. The marker location is specifically designed to accommodate the marker and its scale. Its location along the axis of the MLK Jr. Blvd is an appropriate location.

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.*

The monument is proposed to consist of a granite pedestal with a 1 ½ times life size bust of Dr. King made of bronze on top. The total height of the monument will be 8 feet. The pedestal will have engravings on all four sides and the bust will face toward the river. The site for the monument will also incorporate a box hedge, a brick seat with a granite cap, and hardscape surrounding the pedestal.

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.*

Public art may consist of a variety of media including, but not limited to, sculpture, mosaic, fountains or other water elements, or murals. Public art may be existing artwork or commissioned artwork.

The applicant may choose to commission a work of art or monument. The artwork or monument must be of the highest quality and should adhere to the guidelines.

The standards are met. The bust was commissioned from the artist, Franco Castelluccio.

Monuments should not be fabricated prior to approval.

The standard is met. The model for the bust is completed, but the remaining elements of the monument have not been completed including the bronze casting.

Monuments should be considered permanent and designed accordingly. Public art should generally be considered permanent and be designed accordingly, except in special situations which will be evaluated on an individual basis.

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 standards are met. The materials proposed include granite and bronze, which are permanent and suitable for outdoor display.

Monuments and public art should be designed to be reasonably resistant to vandalism.

Staff requests additional information. The bronze will be finished appropriately to protect it from vandalism and the outdoors, but options such as polymer coatings should be explored to protect the granite portion of the monument from 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.

The standard is met.

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

The standard is met. Extensive landscaping and hardscaping is proposed around the monument.

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

The standard is met.

Monuments should not resemble gravestones.

The standard is met.

A monument should be of original design, and public art should be an original work of art (one of a kind) or reproduced in editions of less than 200.

Monuments and public art should not replicate an original monument or work of art.

The standards are met. The bust is a one of a kind design by the artist. The pedestal and its engravings are also designed specifically for the monument.

Monuments and public art should be designed to complement and enhance the site in which it is located. It should not compete with, dominate or encroach upon existing monuments, public art, or buildings.

The standard is met.

Monuments and public art should be respectful of the architectural, historical, geographical, and social/cultural context of the site.

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 standard is met. The monument is an integral part of the park design and is located along Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd's axis.

The format of the monument should effectively convey the message of the monument to the public.

The standard is met.

Donor names and monument sponsors may be incorporated into the design (such as inscribed on bricks or on a separate plaque) but should be discreet and not detract from or dominate the monument or artwork.

The standard is met. No donor names or sponsors are proposed to be incorporated into the design.

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

Staff requests additional information. The artist will sign the bust in a discrete location, but the size and exact location were not specified.

The designer and/or fabricator (for a monument) and the artist (for public art) should have completed projects of similar size and scale in the public arena and be able to provide appropriate documentation.

The designer and/or fabricator (for a monument) and the artist (for public art) should have an excellent reputation and be able to provide verifiable references attesting to the quality of work.

The designer and/or fabricator (for a monument) and the artist (for public art) should be able to provide images or samples of existing similar monuments or works of art.

The standard is met. The artist, Franco Castelluccio, has experience creating a wide variety of bronze sculptures. Previous work includes "Hannibal | Victory at Cannae" and "9/11 Pieta". Images of the work were provided. A stone fabricator in Elberton, GA who has experience on similar projects will be making the granite base.

The designer and/or fabricator (for a monument) and the artist (for public art) should be able to demonstrate the ability to meet the proposed timeframe.

The standard is met. The monument is proposed to be completed and installed by May 2019.

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.

The following Text is proposed:

FRONT:

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
January 15, 1929 – April 4, 1968

Martin Luther King, Jr. was born on January 15, 1929, in Atlanta, Georgia. King, a Baptist minister and civil-rights activist, had a seismic impact on race relations in the United States, beginning in the mid-1950s. Among his many efforts, King headed the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Through his activism and inspirational speeches, he played a pivotal role in ending the legal segregation of African-American citizens in the United States, as well as

the creation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. King received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964, among several other honors. He was assassinated in April of 1968, and he continues to be remembered as one of the most influential and inspirational African-American leaders in the history of the United States.

REAR:

“So let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire. Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York. Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania! Let freedom ring from the snowcapped Rockies of Colorado! Let freedom ring from the curvaceous slopes of California! But not only that; let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia! Let freedom ring from Lookout Mountain of Tennessee! Let freedom ring from every hill and every molehill of Mississippi, from every mountainside, let freedom ring. And when this happens, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God’s children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, “Free at last! Free at last! Great God a-mighty, we are free at last!”

-Martin Luther King, Jr. –
Excerpt from “I Have A Dream” speech, August 28th, 1963.

The Liberty Bell at Independence Hall, Philadelphia is rung as a symbol of freedom and justice every year on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, since 1986.

LEFT SIDE:

Emancipation Day Address
Savannah, Georgia | January 2, 1961

“Now I urge you today in Savannah, I urge our fellow voters of Georgia all over the South, all over the United States to go out with a determined effort to achieve the ballot.”

“...we must go out now and remind America that, that we want to be free. We are not making excessive demands, we just want to be free. This must be our message for the new year and the years ahead, we simply want to be free. We are not seeking structure of the nation, we simply want to be free. We are not seeking to dominate the nation politically, we just want to be free.”

“...in order to gain freedom there must be a willingness to suffer and sacrifice. And I think there are too many among us who want the fruits of integration, but who are not willing to go through the sacrifice necessary to challenge the roots of desegregation.”

“I am convinced my friends, that the problem we face down here in the South is not only tension between black men and white men. That isn’t it. It is the tension between justice and injustice.”

Excerpts | Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; Savannah Municipal Auditorium

(Courtesy of Georgia Historical Society)

RIGHT SIDE:

A National Legacy

“I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final say in reality. Right temporarily defeated is stronger than evil triumphant.”

Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech, Oslo Norway, December 10, 1964.

“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.”

“Letter from Birmingham Jail”, April 16, 1963.

“The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.”

King’s book, “Strength to Love”, published in 1963.

“We’ve got some difficult days ahead. But it doesn’t matter with me now. Because I’ve been to the mountaintop. And I don’t mind. Like anybody, I would like to live a long life. Longevity has its place. But I’m not concerned about that now. I just want to do God’s will. And He’s allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I’ve looked over. And I’ve seen the promised land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight, that we, as a people, will get to the promised land. So, I’m happy tonight. I’m not worried about anything. I’m not fearing any man. Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord.”

“I’ve Been to the Mountaintop Address”, April 1968, Memphis, Tennessee.

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

Staff requests additional information. The text on the front of the monument was obtained from the King Foundation, but it is unclear if it is copyrighted. The text on the rear, left, and right sides of the monument are quotations; however, there is no clear copyright information provided. Staff requests more concrete attribution and copyright information.

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

The standard is met. Staff does request the highlighted changes be made.

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

Staff requests additional information on the copyright to ensure the applicant has permission to use the quotes and biographical information proposed.

Text should avoid offensive, obscene, or inflammatory language.

The standard is met.

Donor names may be included provided the names are in an identical but smaller font than the rest of the text and that no slogans or corporate logos are included.

The standard is met. Donor names are not proposed to be included.

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 applicant must provide a realistic budget in Part II Final Design and Funding. *The budget should be based on cost estimates provided by the manufacturer, artist, installer and/or contractor, as appropriate. The budget should include funding goals and deadlines. Should funding goals and deadlines fail to be met, the HSMC may, at its sole discretion, reconsider the application. The applicant must be capable of raising the necessary funding. Construction of the monument or installation of the work of art will not begin until all of the funding has been secured.*

The standard is met. The applicant is asking for Part I and Part II to be approved, which staff finds appropriate. The applicant is funding the monument, which will cost a total of \$113,540.

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 intent of the standard is met. The Kessler Collection, which owns the Plant Riverside development, has an agreement with the City of Savannah to maintain all improvements in the MLK Jr. Blvd right of way in between River Street and the New River Walk. This will include the Dr. King monument.

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. A sign was posted on the property fifteen days prior to the meeting. No comments were received from the public.

BOARD DECISION:

Approval of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. monument at 400 West River Street with the following conditions to be provided for staff approval prior to installation:

1. A coating or other protective measure is put in place for the granite;
2. The size and location of the artist's signature is specified;
3. Additional information on the sources and copyright information is provided for the text;
4. The requested text changes are made;

Because otherwise the work meets the standards.



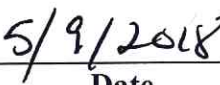
Dr. Nicholas Henry, Chairman
Historic Site and Monument Commission



Date



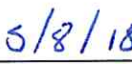
Melanie Wilson, Executive Director
Chatham County-Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission



Date



Ellen I. Harris, Director of Urban Planning and Historic Preservation
Chatham County-Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission



Date

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Historic District: Savannah Historic District

File #: 18-001991-MON Approval Date: 05/03/2018

Address: 400 West River Street

Work Approved:

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Monument

Note: This should be posted in a conspicuous location next to the building permit & visible to the public.



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NEXT STEPS

You have received a Certificate of Appropriateness for exterior work within an Historic District ...
what are the next steps?

You may need a building permit.

Contact the City of Savannah Development Services Department at 912-651-6530 to determine if a building permit is required. If a building permit is required, we will need to stamp your permit plans.

Please submit three sets of permit plans to the Historic Preservation Department of the MPC for a stamp. Two sets of plans will be returned to the applicant to include with the building permit application; the third set will be retained for MPC records.

You may need an encroachment permit.

If your project encroaches into the public right-of-way, you will also need an encroachment permit. Contact the City of Savannah Real Property Department at 912-651-6524 to determine if an encroachment permit is required.

You may need to build a Sample Panel.

Sample panels are required for some new construction projects. If your COA decision states that a sample panel is a condition of the approval, see the Sample Panel Policy for instructions. A copy of the policy is included with your decision and can be found on the MPC's website at: <http://www.thempc.org/Dept/Shd>

You will need a final inspection.

When your project is complete, you must schedule a final COA inspection with the Historic Preservation Department to ensure work was done per the approval. For questions, contact the Historic Preservation Department at 912.651.1440 or historic@thempc.org.