To: Savannah-Chatham County Historic Site and Monument Commission  
From: Zoe Rinker, Executive Director, Savannah Tree Foundation  
Date: November 6, 2019  
Re: 19-002716-HM

Dear Members of the Historic and Monument Commission,

I write in regards to petition 19-002716-HM to move the Waving Girl statue from Morrell Park. It has come to our attention that, in discussions on how to proceed, the option of removing or topping the crepe myrtles surrounding the statue’s current location has been proposed as an alternative. Savannah Tree Foundation does not support the removal or improper pruning of these trees or any others as a first response to aesthetic concerns.

The four crepe myrtles surrounding the Waving Girl statue are healthy, thriving specimens. Removing them would eliminate the benefits these trees currently provide to Morrell Park, including shade and wildlife habitat.

Furthermore, topping, or pruning back large portions of the trees, to provide more visibility for the statue would be improper tree care and would have the opposite effect in the long term. Topping crepe myrtles creates a greater number of resprouted branches, and therefore a denser, lower canopy that would further impede sight lines of the statue.

In short, the unnecessary removal of trees, in a time when Chatham County is experiencing significant tree canopy loss, would be a disservice to our local community.

Respectfully,

Zoe Rinker  
Executive Director