



HISTORIC SITE AND MONUMENT COMMISSION (HSMC)

Application for Historical Markers, Monuments, and Public Art **2025**

HSMC reviews all historical markers, monuments, and public art on public property; markers, monuments, and public art visible from the public right-of-way on private property within all local historic districts; murals visible from the public right-of-way.

Applications that do not provide documentation or required materials will be noted as incomplete and may result in delays in the Commission or Staff's review of the application and/or denial of the request. Revisions made to the applications after the submittal deadline

and prior to the Commission hearing may be continued to the following month's hearing. The Commission reserves the right to require additional information if it believes that the submission of such information is necessary to understand the nature of the intended activity.

Submissions will only be accepted when emailed to historic@thempc.org. Ensure the file size does not exceed 10 MB.

For questions, email preservationquestions@thempc.org or call 912-651-1440.

Do not email questions to historic@thempc.org. If email is not available, contact the office for alternate arrangements.

File No.: _____ (staff only)

Applicant Contact Information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail Address _____

Property Owner Contact Information and Consent (Complete only if the marker will be on private property):

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail Address _____

Official Correspondence: ☐ Applicant ☐ Owner ☐ Other _____ (Check all that apply)

Property Information: (PIN information can be found at www.sagis.org.)

☐ Public Property ☐ Private Property PIN (Property Identification Number): _____

Address: _____

Scope of Work: (Check all that apply.)

HISTORICAL MARKER:	MONUMENT:
<input type="checkbox"/> Freestanding	<input type="checkbox"/> Person
<input type="checkbox"/> Wall-Mounted	<input type="checkbox"/> Place
<input type="checkbox"/> Ground-Embedded	<input type="checkbox"/> Event
<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:
PUBLIC ART / MURAL (Commissioned or Existing Work):	NAMING AND RENAMING:
<input type="checkbox"/> Mural	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Property
<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Facilities
<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Streets

Project Description: Describe the proposed project and scope of work in detail. Additional pages may be attached. Submit all supplemental documentation as required in the separate "Instructions: Submittal Criteria Checklist."

Contact staff to schedule a pre-meeting: preservationquestions@thempc.org or call 912-651-1440.

Pre-meetings must be held a minimum of ONE WEEK before a deadline.

2025 Savannah-Chatham County Historic Site and Monument Commission Meeting Schedule:

Application Deadline, by 3:00 P.M.	Meeting Date 4:00 P.M.
<input type="checkbox"/> Thursday, December 5, 2024	Thursday, January 9, 2025 **rescheduled due to holiday
<input type="checkbox"/> January 2	February 6
<input type="checkbox"/> February 6	March 6
<input type="checkbox"/> March 6	April 3
<input type="checkbox"/> April 3	May 1
<input type="checkbox"/> May 1	June 5
<input type="checkbox"/> June 5	July 10 **rescheduled due to holiday
<input type="checkbox"/> July 3	August 7
<input type="checkbox"/> August 7	September 4
<input type="checkbox"/> September 4	October 2
<input type="checkbox"/> October 2	November 6
<input type="checkbox"/> November 6 (December 4)	December 4 (January 8, 2026)

Estimated Cost of the Proposed Work: \$ _____

Filing Fee Schedule:

No filing fee is required for HSMC review.

Public Notice for Historic Site and Monument Commission Meetings:

The applicant is responsible for posting the Board Meeting signs provided by the MPC fifteen (15) days prior to the HSMC Meeting. Refer to *Chapter 9 of the Markers, Monuments, and Public Art Master Plan and Guidelines for the City of Savannah* for additional posting requirements.

Signature of Legal Owner or Authorized Agent:

I have read and understand all the information enclosed in this application form. I understand that an Escrow Payment is required for any historical marker erected on public property. I hereby certify that I am the legal owner or authorized agent for the legal owner of the subject property.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

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A complete application submission consists of:

1. Complete, signed application
2. Complete, signed checklist(s) for each request
3. Checklist documentation
4. Payment receipt

Applications that do not provide documentation or required materials will be noted as incomplete and may result in delays in the Commission or Staff's review of the application and/or denial of the request.

Public Property Naming Request: “Bill Durrence Visual Arts Studio”

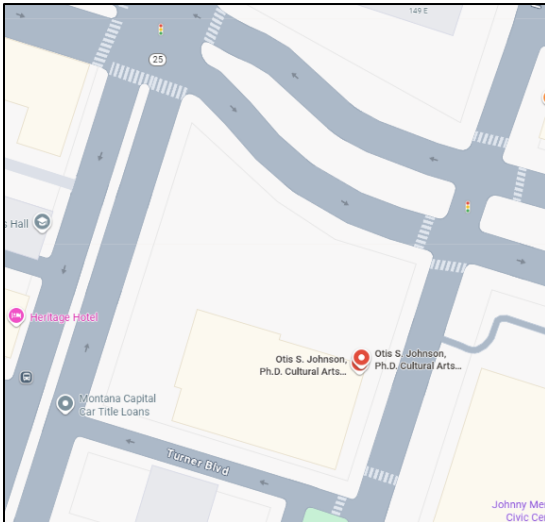
Current Name: Visual Arts Studio 1

Proposed Name: Bill Durrence Visual Arts Studio

Location: Inside Otis S. Johnson Cultural Arts Center, 201 Montgomery Street

Petitioner: Alderman Detric Leggett, District 2

Visual Arts Studio 1 (outlined in red box)



Bill Durrence (Wilbur Henry Durrence, Jr.)

Bill Durrence is a native Savannahian, a professional photographer with almost 60 years of experience shooting editorial, commercial and personal assignments, a photography teacher for more than 40 years, and a former City of Savannah alderman (2016-2019). His fine arts prints are included in a number of private collections, as well as the City of Savannah Municipal Archives. In 2025, he donated his extensive archive, representing the full breadth of his photography career to the City's Archives, where it will be accessible to the public.*

Bill Durrence was born at Candler Hospital in Savannah, Georgia, on September 9, 1947, while his family was living in Deptford Homes on the eastside. The following year, the Durrence family moved to Fort Myers, Florida, briefly before returning to Savannah by 1951. As a child, he attended Montgomery Elementary School, Isle of Hope School, Myers Junior High, and Jenkins High School (where he worked on the school paper, "Hi-Jenks" for three years and graduated in June 1965).

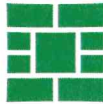
Durrence started his photography career working on the camera counter at K-mart, soon followed by a staff photographer position at the *Savannah Morning News/Evening Press* from Spring 1966 to September 1967. After briefly attending Armstrong Junior College, he enlisted in the US Army in 1967 as a Photo Lab Specialist. Durrence attended Photo Lab School at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey, before being assigned in 1968 to the Photo Lab in Washington, DC, that processed, preserved, and reproduced all photographs of the President's Official Photographer. He served during the end of the Johnson administration, and the beginning of the Nixon administration, including working on the Eisenhower state funeral and visits to the White House of foreign leaders.

After leaving the Army in September 1970, Durrence returned to Savannah. In 1971, he returned to *Savannah Morning News*, first as a Staff Photographer and then as Senior Photographer, before going back to college at the University of Georgia in 1973 on the GI Bill. After graduating with a Bachelor's Degree in Journalism (ABJ) and a minor in Art/Photographic Design in 1975, Durrence became the staff photographer at the *Gwinnett Daily News* in Lawrenceville, Georgia. In the mid to late-1970s, Durrence worked as a freelance photographer taking on commercial and journalism assignments in Savannah.

Throughout much of the 1980s, he worked at Worldwide Camera, leading the design, construction, and opening of 5 new stores, including in Savannah's McAlpin Square, two in Jacksonville, and two in Charleston. This led to a position with Nikon Professional Services (NPS) in the southeast US region in the areas of life sciences, medicine, nature and wildlife, during which Durrence was able to share information on new photography products and technology. After serving in that role from 1988-1992, he moved on to become an instructor at the Nikon School of Photography for the next 22 years, teaching about 10,000 people a year basic to intermediate photography classes. In 2002, he transitioned to Blue Pixel as a contractor to Nikon to teach digital photography. Durrence continued to teach until 2015 when he officially retired as a professional photographer.

Bill Durrence served on the Savannah City Council, representing the 2nd District, from January 2016 through December 2019.

**The City of Savannah Municipal Archives is currently working through the transfer and processing phase of this large donation and anticipates opening the first phase of the collection 2026.*



August 21, 2025

Savannah City Hall
2 East Bay Street
Savannah, Georgia 31401

Re: Naming Request Endorsement for Consideration – Bill Durrence Visual Arts Studio

To Whom It May Concern,

I, Alderman Detric Leggett, officially endorse the naming request for consideration to name Visual Arts Studio 1 located within the Otis S. Johnson Cultural Arts Center, 201 Montgomery Street, “Bill Durrence Visual Arts Studio” in accordance with City Ordinance and the process outlined within “Article E. Naming of Public Property, Facilities, and Streets.”

I look forward to this application advancing within the process as required by City Code.

Thank you,


Alderman Detric Leggett
City of Savannah, Georgia
District 2