



SAVANNAH-CHATHAM COUNTY HISTORIC SITE AND MONUMENT COMMISSION

HISTORICAL MARKER RECOMMENDATION

PETITIONER: City of Savannah
FILE No.: 23-003803-HM
LOCATION: Abercorn & Wayne Streets, Public Square
DATE: August 3, 2023

NATURE OF REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting approval of a granite ground marker in a landscaped bed within the public square located at Abercorn and Wayne Streets. The purpose is to identify and commemorate the history of this public square, including its establishment, former name of Calhoun Square, and the new name. The proposed marker will provide a brief history of the establishment and naming of the square.

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.

HSMC Recommendation - Petition of City of Savannah

File No 23-003803-HM

Date August 3, 2023

Page 2

Local History. Includes folklore and/or local heroes.

Cultural and Ethnic History.

Education.

The standard is met. The themes include Civic and Institutional, and Local History. The marker provides a record of the City of Savannah's actions regarding this public space and commemorates its 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 level of significance should be high enough to warrant a public presence.

The standard is met. The significance of the history of the square warrants 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 above standards are met. The proposed marker will signify the original name of the square to provide a public history of the name. The marker is highly specific to this square and thus is not sufficiently commemorated elsewhere in the County. Events and persons associated with the marker have all occurred over fifty years ago. Living persons are not proposed to be commemorated with this marker.

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.

HSMC Recommendation - Petition of City of Savannah

File No 23-003803-HM

Date August 3, 2023

Page 3

The size of the marker is small enough that it will not cause overcrowding of the square. It would be sited far enough away from other objects in a landscaped bed on the west center, adjacent to the western North-South sidewalk through the square.

The proposed object should not damage or disturb existing established vegetation on the site including low tree limbs, or significant tree roots.

The standard is met. There is a clear area within an established, landscaped bed in which the proposed marker will not damage or disturb existing vegetation.

The proposed object should not require the removal or alteration of existing above or below ground utilities.

This information was not provided, however, the City is making this request and will ensure that there are no below ground utilities present that would be disrupted by the installation. There are no above ground utilities in the proposed location.

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 site is large enough to accommodate the small proposed marker, which will not encroach on other existing 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 public square is not used for large scale events such as sports or festivals.

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

The site is not prone to automobile accidents and is within a public square.

The proposed site should be visible and accessible from a public right of way.

The standard is met.

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

The proposed marker would be in an established, landscaped bed that has already been subject to ground disturbances. However, if archaeological data was discovered in the process, since this is on City property, the City's Archaeology Ordinance would apply.

The proposed site should be easy to maintain.

The site is in an established landscaped bed already maintained by the City.

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

The standard is met. The installation of the marker will enhance the space by providing information to visitors about the square.

HSMC Recommendation - Petition of City of Savannah

File No 23-003803-HM

Date August 3, 2023

Page 4

The installation of the object should not require the alteration or removal of existing signage (traffic, street, etc).

There is currently no existing signage in the proposed location.

The installation of the object should not significantly affect automobile traffic sight lines.

The proposed marker is small and on the ground within a square, and thus, it will not 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).

The above standards are met. The marker will enhance the square with informational signage and will not require the removal of existing sidewalks.

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

In the event of occasional memorial services, the addition of the small marker would not disrupt the ability to do so.

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.*

A marker commemorating a place, such as a significant piece of architecture, should be located within 100 feet of the place or adjacent to the nearest public right-of-way.

The standard is met. The place commemorated is the square itself, and it is located within the square.

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.*

Markers. *Markers may be mounted on a freestanding pole, wall-mounted, or embedded in the ground. As the primary purpose is to inform the public about an event, place or person, the aesthetic significance of a marker is generally minimal.*

The proposed marker is ground embedded and is of a clean, minimal aesthetic.

Except the marker title, the marker text should be not more than 1" in height, and not less than 1/2".

HSMC Recommendation - Petition of City of Savannah

File No 23-003803-HM

Date August 3, 2023

Page 5

The title/first line is proposed to be 1.8” in height and the body of the rest of the text is proposed to be 0.8” in height.

Marker text should be created in a manner that, to the extent possible, prevents fading and erosion.

The lettering will be engraved, which will prevent fading and erosion to the extent possible.

Markers should be made of an enduring, non-corroding material.

Granite is durable and a non-corroding material.

Markers should be considered permanent and designed accordingly. Temporary markers may be considered provided they serve an educational function, are made of a material designed to last for the proposed life of the marker, and a plan for removal or replacement of the marker at the end of the temporary period is submitted.

The marker is intended to be a permanent addition to the square.

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.*

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 City is making the request and has secured funding in the City’s approved 2023 budget. Funding is also secured for the 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. A sign was posted on the property fifteen days prior to the meeting. As of the writing of this report no comments were received from the public.

HSMC Recommendation - Petition of City of Savannah

File No 23-003803-HM

Date August 3, 2023

Page 6

RECOMMENDATION TO CITY COUNCIL:

The Historic Site and Monument Commission recommend approval to Savannah City Council for the application to install a granite ground marker in the public square located at Abercorn and Wayne Streets as requested because the project meets the standards in the Master Plan and Guidelines for Markers, Monuments, and Public Art.

DocuSigned by:
Kristopher Monroe August 3, 2023
85421AE58DA6439

Mr. Kristopher Monroe, Chairman Date
Historic Site and Monument Commission

Melanie Wilson / ps August 3, 2023

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

DocuSigned by:
Leah G. Michalak August 3, 2023
DC74DC38FDE949C

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

MW: LGM: CC