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WINTER 2002

QUARTERLY

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FIGHTING

DOWNTOWN

GRIDLOCK

■ **In recent years, Downtown traffic congestion has grown steadily worse.**

While contributing to Washington's economic vitality, the exploding growth in the city's east end including the MCI Arena and the nearly completed Convention Center mean more people and more cars. The 1995 closure of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House has significantly slowed cross-town traffic, and post 9/11 security measures have shut, for at least the time being, key thoroughfares such as E Street on the south side of the White House. Getting around town even during non-rush hour periods has become frustrating.

In coordination with its planning partners, the Commission is working on several transportation initiatives to ease Downtown congestion and offer alternatives to residents, commuters, and visitors. Two of the proposals are included in NCPC's recent recommendations concerning the design of security installations and the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House. In preparing those recommendations, NCPC commissioned a detailed traffic study examining ways to speed east-west movement. The study found that 13 bus routes were rerouted and some 30,000 vehicles were forced onto adjacent streets when Pennsylvania Avenue was closed in 1995. The Commission recommended the immediate implementation of a variety of transportation system management (TSM) measures such as traffic signal synchronization, intersection improvements, and better enforcement of parking regulations. These simple steps have helped other American cities significantly improve their traffic flow. The President's Fiscal Year 2003 budget request includes \$1 million for these TSM measures that are to be implemented by the District's Division of Transportation.

Another transportation initiative included in the Commission's security design recommendations was originally proposed in NCPC's 1997 Legacy vision plan. Conceived as a supplementary surface transportation system, the "Circulator" is designed to connect the Mall and other visitor attractions to Downtown Washington and serve the daytime travel needs of Washington workers. The Circulator is envisioned as a convenient, low-cost, hop on/hop off mode of transportation. While the vehicles themselves have not yet been selected, planners expect to propose distinctive buses that will serve the Capitol, Union Station, the White House, Downtown, and Mall attractions.



ROUTES FOR THE CIRCULATOR TRANSIT SYSTEM HAVE NOT BEEN SPECIFIED, BUT WILL CONNECT DOWNTOWN WASHINGTON AND THE MALL.



In recognizing that Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House will remain closed to normal city traffic for the foreseeable future, the Commission saw the Circulator as a way to keep the street at least partially open. Traveling along Pennsylvania Avenue between 15th and 17th Streets, the Circulator would offer to both visitors and residents the experience of riding in front of the White House without undue security risks and help restore an important cross-town transportation link. The Circulator is being championed by a partnership of NCPC, the District's Division of Transportation, the Downtown Business Improvement District, and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority. This fall, the group expects to release a Circulator implementation plan that will include operations, capital, and financing plans, as well as a proposed fare structure. In its preliminary cost estimates, the Commission anticipates Circulator capital costs at \$15 million and annual operating costs of \$11 million and is working with the Administration and Congress to secure funding.

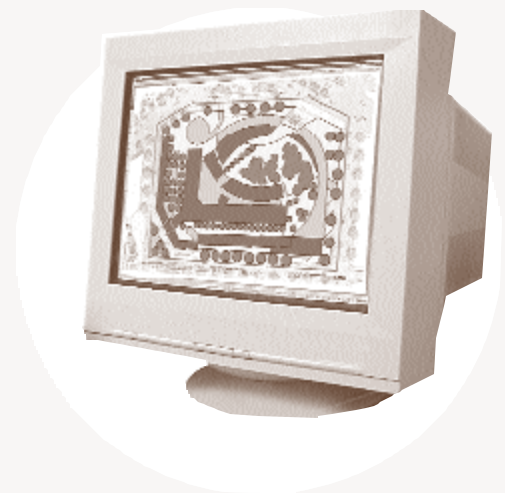
13 BUS ROUTES WERE REROUTED AND SOME 30,000 VEHICLES WERE FORCED ONTO ADJACENT STREETS WHEN PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE WAS CLOSED IN 1995

Another transportation effort that the Commission is leading focuses on the fleets of tour buses that descend on Washington every day. These buses are a critical component of the city's tourism industry and they need better facilities so that they can continue to bring visitors to the Nation's Capital without snarling traffic or polluting the air. In cooperation with D.C. Council Member Sharon Ambrose, NCPC has launched a Tour Bus Management Initiative with the city's Division of Transportation, the Downtown Business Improvement District, and the Washington Convention and Tourism Corporation. The study will provide a good understanding of current tour bus activity in the city—the number of buses and passengers, seasonal variations, length of stay, etc. It will identify potential bus parking lots and access between them and tourist attractions. The goal is to develop a system that both improves the efficiency and convenience of these bus tours and reduces their adverse effects on the city's quality of life. The Commission expects to have a strategic action plan ready late this year that offers practical solutions and that can be implemented without delay.

Technology and the Green City

The Commission's Office of Technology Development and Applications is using its Geographic Information System (GIS) capabilities to analyze the impact of federal development on the urban forest cover. The analysis will examine stormwater runoff, air quality, tree coverage, and energy consumption. Office Director Michael Sherman provided testimony to the D.C. City Council in December on the Urban Forest Preservation Act of 2001. The Act supports the current efforts of the Washington GIS Consortium to develop a detailed tree inventory for the District of Columbia.

In a related effort, the Office of Technology is working with the National Park Service and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments to develop a region-wide urban forest map and to explore the feasibility of a regional open space plan.

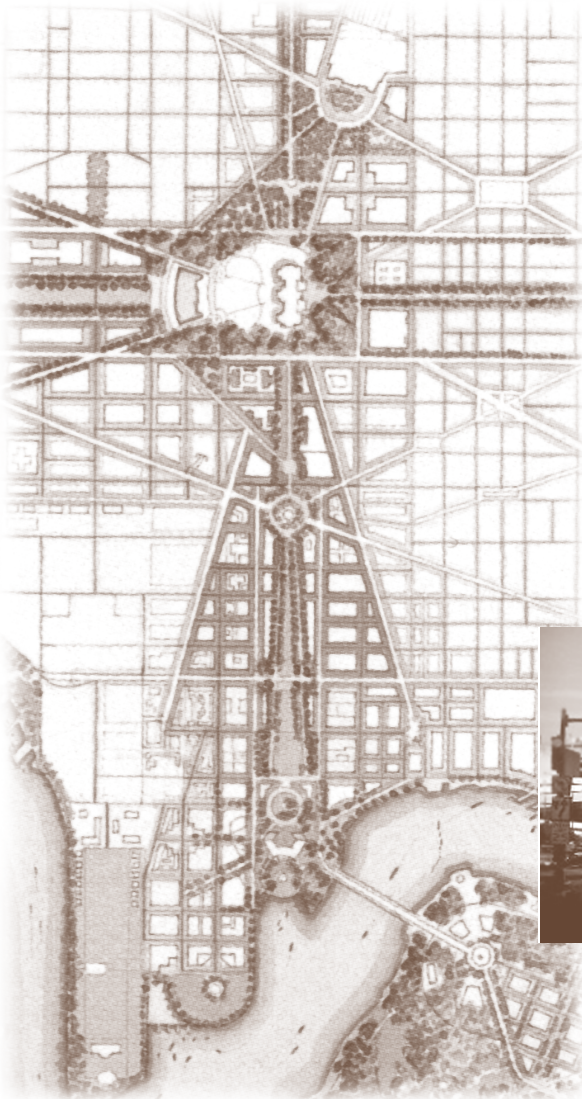


South Capitol Street Corridor Initiative

Chairman John V. Cogbill, III offered NCPC's full support to congressional, federal, and city officials during a kick-off event for the redevelopment of the South Capitol Street corridor. Chairman Cogbill joined dignitaries including Congressman Hoyer, Congresswoman Norton, Mayor Williams, and others on March 13, in announcing a feasibility study for the South Capitol Street Gateway. Congress appropriated \$500,000 in the U.S. Department of Transportation budget for the study. NCPC is one of four consulting parties named to the project, joining the District Division of Transportation, the District Office of Planning, and the Maryland Department of Transportation.

THE AREA WOULD BE A VIBRANT ATTRACTIVE COMMUNITY FOR WORKERS, RESIDENTS, & TOURISTS

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NCPC has had a long-standing interest in the South Capitol Street area and recognized its potential for national significance in the agency's 1997 plan for the Nation's Capital, *Extending the Legacy*. With its dramatic views towards the U.S. Capitol, *Legacy* envisioned a future South Capitol Street that could serve as the location for a major national memorial or other civic establishment, in addition to serving as a significant gateway to the city that is worthy of the Nation's Capital. As envisioned in *Legacy*, the area would be a vibrant attractive community for workers, residents, and tourists, linking the city to the river as visualized in the L'Enfant Plan.

The South Capitol Street corridor initiative exemplifies the National Capital Planning Commission's commitment to provide overall planning guidance for the National Capital Region. The project is expected to be completed within one year.



CURRENTLY SEVERED BY A TANGLE OF FREEWAYS AND OVERPASSES, SOUTH CAPITOL STREET COULD BECOME A GATEWAY TO CENTRAL WASHINGTON.

This issue of the Quarterly summarizes actions taken at the Commission meetings on January 10, February 7, and March 7, 2002. Additional information on individual projects may be obtained by contacting the National Capital Planning Commission, 401 9th Street, NW, North Lobby, Suite 500, Washington, D.C. 20576 or by calling 202-482-7200. Visit www.ncpc.gov for more news about Commission activities.

RENDERING OF U.S. MARINE BARRACKS AND BAND BUILDINGS AS SEEN FROM 7TH AND L STREETS, SE



U.S. MARINE BARRACKS

Washington, D.C. January 10, 2002

The Commission has been working closely with the Department of the Navy, citizens, and city officials on the U.S. Marine Barracks project at 8th and I Streets, SE to find an acceptable balance between military security needs and public access to the project’s recreational facilities. Located in a redeveloping area near the Southeast waterfront, the project site is close to the refurbished Navy Yard and new commercial development along M Street, and is adjacent to the Hope VI residential area. The project is a prime example of how new federal development can be designed in a manner that supports local economic revitalization objectives.

When the Commission approved the master plan for the project in July 2001, it requested that the Department of the Navy consult with community representatives and local and federal agencies to find ways to avoid creating a military enclave in the neighborhood. Specifically, the Commission asked the design team to make the barracks facilities accessible to the community and find ways the ball fields and park space could become neighborhood amenities, helping foster positive relationships between the Marines and their neighbors.

The resulting subarea plan for the 6.4-acre site includes a Bachelors Enlisted Quarters (BEQ) and a Band Support Building, a 273-space parking garage, and outdoor ball fields. In approving the plan the Commission noted that the design of the BEQ breaks up the building’s mass along L Street and its articulation suggests a series of related structures rather than one large, dominating building. The siting of the building allows for broad views into the site and reduces the impression of a walled-off military compound. Both Marines and the local community will use the ball fields.

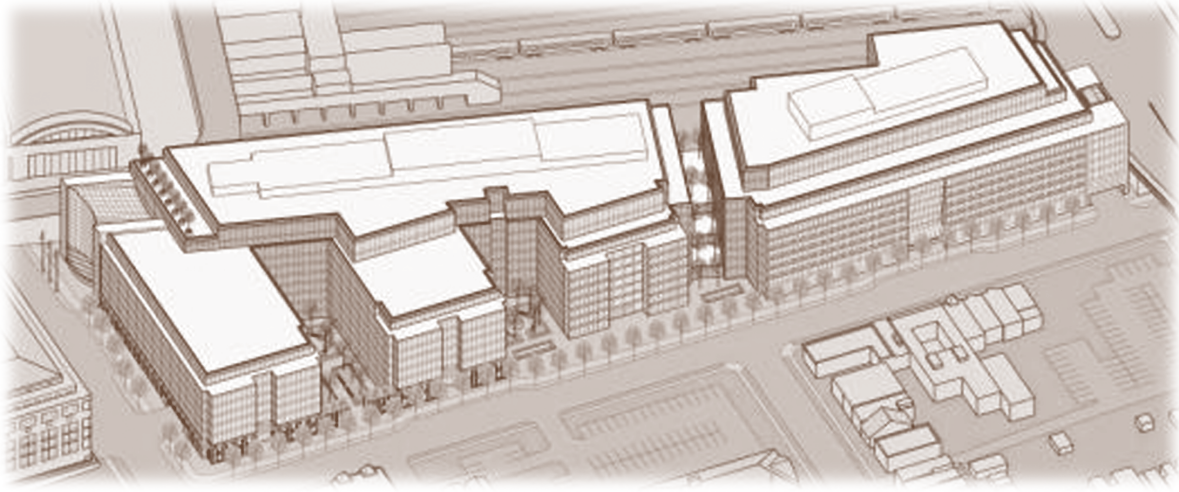
STATION PLACE

Washington, D.C. February 7, 2002

In its review of a major development project that has drawn both kudos and criticism from its future neighbors, NCPCC has supported plans for a new building which will include, among other future uses, headquarters of the Security and Exchange Commission. The project, known as Station Place and located on five and a half acres adjacent to Union Station and the Thurgood Marshall Judiciary Building along 2nd and F Streets, NE, is diagonally across the street from the Capitol Hill Historic District. The proposed building will reach a maximum height of ten stories with eight-story wings that abut the street frontage. The project will be built in three phases and will ultimately have 1.4 million square feet of office space, provide 922 parking spaces, and house up to 5,000 employees.



PROPOSED ELEVATION SHOWS SEC’S MAIN ENTRANCE ON F STREET, NE.



STATION PLACE
WILL PROVIDE
1.4 MILLION
SQARE FEET
OF OFFICE
SPACE.

Throughout the design and approval process, the building has been modified to make it more compatible with its setting. The building has been redesigned to break up the building mass and make each phase read as a slightly different building. The building has also been set back in certain locations along 2nd Street to create public spaces and to create a greater transition between the new building and the historic district diagonally across the street. A courtyard between the two building wings helps to further minimize the mass of this very large building.

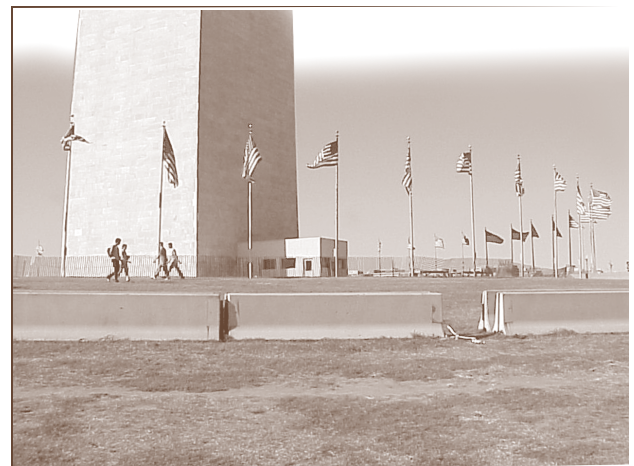
The project, referred to the Commission from the District's Zoning Commission, requires rezoning from industrial to commercial office use. Because a federal agency will lease rather than own the building, NCPC action on the project is limited to a federal interest review. As part of this review, the Commission looked at the project's impact on the Capitol Hill Historic District; Union Station; 2nd Street, which the Commission considers a special street; and the Thurgood Marshall Building. The Commission found that the proposal would not adversely affect these federal interests. Details of the project have been discussed at three public hearings before the Zoning Commission. Some community concerns included a desire for additional building set backs from the low-rise commercial and residential neighborhood to the east, construction management issues, environmental review, and the possible encroachment of future security installations in public space. A number of community representatives have welcomed the project and its contribution to a neglected area of the city. The SEC is expected to occupy the building completed in Phase 1 by mid 2004.

WASHINGTON MONUMENT GROUNDS

Washington, D.C. February 7, 2001

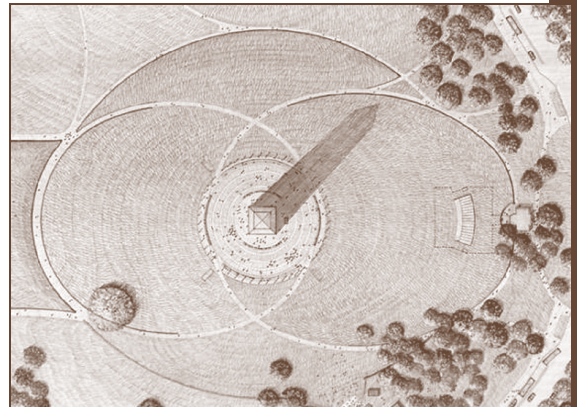
Temporary security measures in the form of jersey barriers and a screening facility have been in place at the Washington Monument as the National Park Service has been working towards a permanent solution. In July 2001, the Park Service submitted a security proposal that consisted of a ring of 370 bollards around the monument. Noting that bollards are normally associated with city streets and sidewalks and are inappropriate to the natural, undulating landscape of the Washington Monument Grounds, the Commission disapproved the proposal. The Commission instead called upon the Park Service to work with the Interagency Security Task Force, the Commission of Fine Arts, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to find a creative solution to a difficult design challenge.

JERSEY BARRIERS AND A MAKESHIFT SCREENING FACILITY SERVE AS TEMPORARY SECURITY SOLUTIONS FOR THE WASHINGTON MONUMENT.



The latest proposal involves many concepts that were first approved by the Commission as part of a Development Concept Plan for the Washington Monument and its grounds in 1993. That plan included the restoration of the Monument Lodge and its use as a portal to an underground visitor facility; the reconfiguration of the walkways around the monument; improvements to the monument plaza area; and removal of the 16th Street surface parking lot. The new plan would reconfigure the existing surface walkways and make them into sunken walkways with low seating walls to serve as vehicle barriers. The underground visitor facility would include a security area to provide screening of visitors entering the monument, with a tunnel connecting that facility to the monument. Visitors would enter one floor below the monument's existing elevator lobby and exit through the existing doors on the plaza. Also included in the proposal are plans to bring the plaza back to a design that more closely resembles the historic plaza. The flagpoles will be retained.

RECONFIGURED WALKWAYS ARE RENDERED IN THIS AERIAL VIEW OF THE WASHINGTON MONUMENT.



The Commission approved the Design Concept Plan for these visitor and security improvements with the understanding that significant changes to the Monument Lodge or other elements be resubmitted for concept approval prior to submission for preliminary site and building plan review. The Commission requires that, prior to submitting the preliminary site and building plans, the National Park Service submit a revised Development Concept Plan, a completed National Environmental Policy Act document, and a record of significant progress in the Section 106 historic preservation consultation.

In response to concerns raised by some in the preservation community, the Park Service announced that prior to making final decisions about this important national landscape, it would enter into consultations with the D.C. Historic Preservation Office, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the Commission of Fine Arts, NCPC, the National Coalition to Save Our Mall, the Committee of 100, and possibly others.

Overall, the Commission is pleased with the Park Service's general approach to this sensitive security design challenge, which respects the historic landscape and setting of the monument and grounds and is consistent with the principles of the Commission's Security Task Force.

PROPOSED UNDERGROUND VISITOR CENTER AND SCREENING AREA FOR THE WASHINGTON MONUMENT.



OTHER COMMISSION ACTIONS

LAFAYETTE BUILDING, 811 VERMONT AVENUE, NW, WASHINGTON, D.C.

The Commission approved preliminary and final site development plans for the temporary installation of planters at the main entrance to the Lafayette Building. The Commission understands that the temporary planters will be replaced with permanent security elements once NCPD's Urban Design and Security Plan for Downtown has been completed. 3/7/02



RENDERING OF THE PORTER NEUROSCIENCE RESEARCH CENTER, NIH, BETHESDA.

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH, BETHESDA CAMPUS, MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MD

The Commission approved final site and building plans for the Porter Neuroscience Research Center at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland. 3/7/02

RONALD REAGAN WASHINGTON NATIONAL AIRPORT, ARLINGTON COUNTY, VA

The Commission approved preliminary and final site and building plans for the relocation of Airport Surface Detection Equipment to a stand-alone tower at the airport. This relocation allows the radar to provide Air Traffic Controllers with reliable data about the position and movement of aircraft and surface vehicles, enhancing the safety and efficiency of airfield operations. 2/7/02

THOMSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, 1200 L STREET, NW, WASHINGTON, D.C.

The Commission approved the preliminary and final site and building plans for construction of an addition to, and renovation of, the Strong John Thomson Elementary School. Once plans have been implemented, the school will house up to 360 students. 3/7/02



NEW ADDITION TO THOMSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, SHOWN NEXT TO EXISTING HISTORIC SCHOOL BUILDING.

WALTER REED ARMY MEDICAL CENTER, FOREST GLEN ANNEX, MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MD

At its January meeting, the Commission approved preliminary building plans for a new Fire Station No. 54, with the exception of site development plans. The project will replace the current fire station, located in the Forest Glen Annex, with a state-of-the-art fire station. Final site and building plans were approved at the March Commission meeting. 1/10/02 and 3/7/02

WALTER REED ARMY MEDICAL CENTER, FOREST GLEN ANNEX, MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MD

The Commission approved preliminary and final site development plans for the construction of bollards and a chain link fence for security purposes. In its approval, the Commission noted that it looks forward to reviewing a permanent perimeter security fence at the Annex. 2/7/02

WASHINGTON MARINA AND MUNICIPAL FISH WHARF, 1300 MAINE AVENUE, SW, WASHINGTON, D.C.

The Commission approved the Development Concept Plan for the Washington Marina and Municipal Fish Wharf, which revises the layout of the marina and fish wharf to reflect changes needed for efficient operation and improved public health and safety conditions. The Commission also approved preliminary and final site and building plans for Phased Development of floating docks. 3/7/02

THE COMMISSION MADE THE FOLLOWING FINDINGS:

The Commission concluded that the proposed two-car garage and deck addition to a property within the Naval Observatory Precinct District would not affect the federal establishment or identified federal interests, nor be inconsistent with the Federal Elements of the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital. 2/7/02

The Commission concluded that the proposed retail sales showroom for motor scooters at 2233 Wisconsin Avenue, NW in the Naval Observatory Precinct, would not affect the federal establishment or identified federal interests, nor be inconsistent with the Federal Elements of the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital. 3/7/02

The Commission concluded that the proposed Zoning Map Amendment to Tivoli Square, bounded by 14th Street, Holmead Place, Monroe Street, and Park Road, would not adversely affect the identified federal interests nor be inconsistent with the Federal Elements of the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital. This zoning action will facilitate the development of Tivoli Square, resulting in the rehabilitation of the exterior of the Tivoli Theater and interior renovation to accommodate commercial uses and the Gala Hispanic Theater. The rest of the Square will be developed with a commercial building, a Giant grocery store, and townhouses. 3/7/02

PLAN OF REHABILITATED TIVOLI THEATER FOR TIVOLI SQUARE PROJECT, 14TH STREET, NW



THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CONCLUDED THAT:

A Consolidated Planned Unit Development for Square 126, Lots 58 and 851, located at 1700 and 1730 K Street, NW would not adversely affect the federal establishment or other federal interests or be inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital. 1/4/02

ON BEHALF OF THE COMMISSION, THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR APPROVED:

Preliminary and final building plans for the installation of temporary banners on the Wilber Cohen Building, 330 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 2/1/02

Preliminary and final site and building plans for the construction of the Family Lodge, National Institutes of Health, Bethesda Campus, Montgomery County, Maryland 2/1/02

Preliminary and final site and building plans for an addition to the Children's Inn, National Institutes of Health, Bethesda Campus, Montgomery County, Maryland 2/1/02

Preliminary and final site development plans for perimeter security (bollards and gate arms) at the INTELSAT Building, International Center, Connecticut Avenue and Van Ness Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 2/1/02



PROPOSED LODGE WILL
PROVIDE CONVENIENT
ACCOMMODATIONS FOR THE
FAMILIES OF PATIENTS AT NIH.

MEMORIALS AND MUSEUMS MASTER PLAN

The professional planning community has again recognized NCPC's Memorials and Museums Master Plan. This time the Federal Planning Division of the American Planning Association has awarded the Master Plan a first place in the Outstanding Federal Project category. The award will be conferred in April at the Federal Planning Division conference in Chicago.

WGIS DAY

NCPC and the Washington Geographic Information System (WGIS) Consortium have been coordinating with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOCG) in developing a regional, web-based, GIS emergency response system. As a first step in developing this system, NCPC hosted a March meeting with regional GIS professionals and policy makers. The focus of the meeting was to work on developing a strategy for gaining regional cooperation and reviewing possible technologies to implement this system.

The National Capital Planning Commission has been augmenting its staff in recent months and welcomes:

Elizabeth Miller, AICP, Senior Project Manager
Jeffrey Hinkle, AICP, Community Planner
Edel Perez-Campos, Community Planner
Shane Dettman, Community Planner (GIS)
Nicole Green-Catten, Community Planner (CAD)
Mike Patterson, Executive Assistant
Wayne Costa, Legal Counsel
David Zaidain, AICP, Community Planner
The Commission also welcomes Kiersten Todd Coon, Professional Staff Member on the U.S. Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs, Alternate to Senator Joseph Lieberman.



ELIZABETH MILLER, AICP



JEFFREY HINKLE, AICP



EDEL PEREZ-CAMPOS



SHANE DETTMAN



NICOLE GREEN-CATTEN



MIKE PATTERSON



WAYNE COSTA



DAVID ZAIDAIN

The Commission and staff extend their best wishes to Rae Allen and Patrick Tribe who have retired from the National Capital Planning Commission. Ms. Allen, who retired in January, first came to NCPC in 1969 and served as Secretary to the Commission since 1985. She retired with more than 36 years of federal service. Pat Tribe, who retired in March, first came to NCPC in 1970 and served as an Information and Research Specialist. He retired after spending 35 years in federal service, 32 of those years with NCPC. The Commission and staff appreciate their hard work and dedication over the years and we wish them well in future endeavors. The Commission and staff are happy to announce that Deborah Young, who has been with NCPC since 1992, now serves as Secretary to the Commission.

STRONG SUPPORT FOR NCPC AT SECURITY FORUM

More than 150 people turned out on February 12 at the National Building Museum to hear NCPC Executive Director Patti Gallagher present the Commission's strategies for balancing security with the preservation and enhancement of Washington's Monumental Core. Following Gallagher's presentation, Eleanor Clift of Newsweek Magazine moderated a panel discussion with Richard L. Friedman, NCPC Security Task Force Chairman; D.C. Congressional Representative Eleanor Holmes Norton; Robert A. Peck, President of the Greater Washington Board of Trade; Laurie Olin, the nationally renowned landscape architect who is designing perimeter security for the Washington Monument; and Andrew Altman, Director of the D.C. Office of Planning. The panelists showed strong support for NCPC's proactive work on a security plan. The Urban Design and Security Plan is expected to be complete this summer.

The event at the Building Museum is one of dozens of outreach events the Commission and staff have undertaken since the November release of NCPC's security design recommendations. The effort, led by Executive Director Patti Gallagher, has included presentations to community and professional groups, business organizations, and federal and local government agencies.

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The National Capital Planning Commission is the federal government's planning agency in the District of Columbia and surrounding counties in Maryland and Virginia. The Commission provides overall planning guidance for federal land and buildings in the region. It also reviews the design of federal construction projects, oversees long-range planning for future development, and monitors capital investment by federal agencies.

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- The Honorable Anthony A. Williams
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