

Winter 2003

QUARTERLY

JANUARY | FEBRUARY | MARCH | 2003

NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House Concept Design

Eight years after it was closed and barricaded to normal city traffic, Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House is a step closer to becoming a beautiful and dignified public civic space worthy of the Nation's Capital.

The National Capital Planning Commission in March unanimously approved an updated version of Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates' plan to give a facelift to America's most famous avenue. The Van Valkenburgh design will eliminate the makeshift security measures, including jersey barriers and planters, and transform the area into a dignified and accessible public space that honors America's "Main Street."

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Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House Concept Design

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Redoing this stretch of Pennsylvania Avenue is one of the first major projects to be undertaken in conjunction with the Commission's *The National Capital Urban Design and Security Plan*. The security plan addresses the alarming proliferation of makeshift security measures that have cropped up throughout Washington's Monumental Core, and it proposes a variety of security elements to balance the need for security with good urban design.

Last summer, after reviewing design ideas from four of the country's preeminent landscape architect firms, the Commission selected the New York based firm of Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates to create a safe and beautiful civic space in front of the White House. The design's central elements include new paving materials and tree planting in the civic space; new security booths; a combination of retractable, removable, and fixed bollards; and a route for a planned transit system.

In an effort to help unify Lafayette Park with the White House, the concept proposes a surface of durable and stabilized granular stone, similar to that currently used at Buckingham Palace in London. The paving material would offer the durability of asphalt, while providing a character that is more pedestrian friendly. The paved surface will slope upward slightly, to emphasize the raised elevation of the White House. There is some historic precedent to the use of this paving material on America's "Main Street" – the surface was first used in the United States along Pennsylvania Avenue. At the far end of Pennsylvania Avenue at 15th and 17th Streets, large granite pavers will accentuate entry to the precinct, one of America's most important public spaces.

A DOUBLE ROW OF TREES ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE HELPS ESTABLISH A WELCOMING PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT IN FRONT OF THE EISENHOWER OFFICE BUILDING.





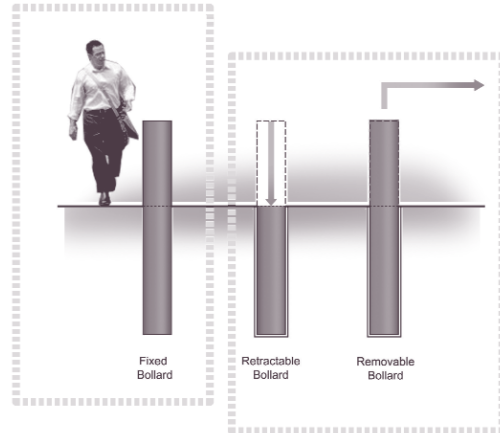
HISTORIC LIGHT POLES

The concept design also proposes replanting the tree row in place of the existing concrete bollards along Pennsylvania Avenue, where a row of trees once existed. The tree row would create a more dignified place for viewing the White House grounds. In addition, the Van Valkenburgh team proposes that the design of the security booths be inspired by the masonry piers of the White House fence, which employ a combination of stonework and metal elements. The booths will be visually incorporated into the streetscape, have a slender profile in the east-west axis, and complement the grand scale of the White House fence. Plans for this historic street also include replacing or refurbishing the mix of light poles along the length of Pennsylvania Avenue with the original twin lamp that Henry Bacon designed for Washington, D.C.

In the place of jersey barriers, the Van Valkenburgh concept utilizes specially designed metal bollards. Retractable bollards would also be installed to allow for the passage of secured vehicles at entrance points on 15th and 17th Streets on Pennsylvania Avenue and at entrances on Jackson and Madison Places. In order to accommodate the inaugural parade, removable bollards would be placed at the Pennsylvania Avenue entrances of 15th and 17th Streets.

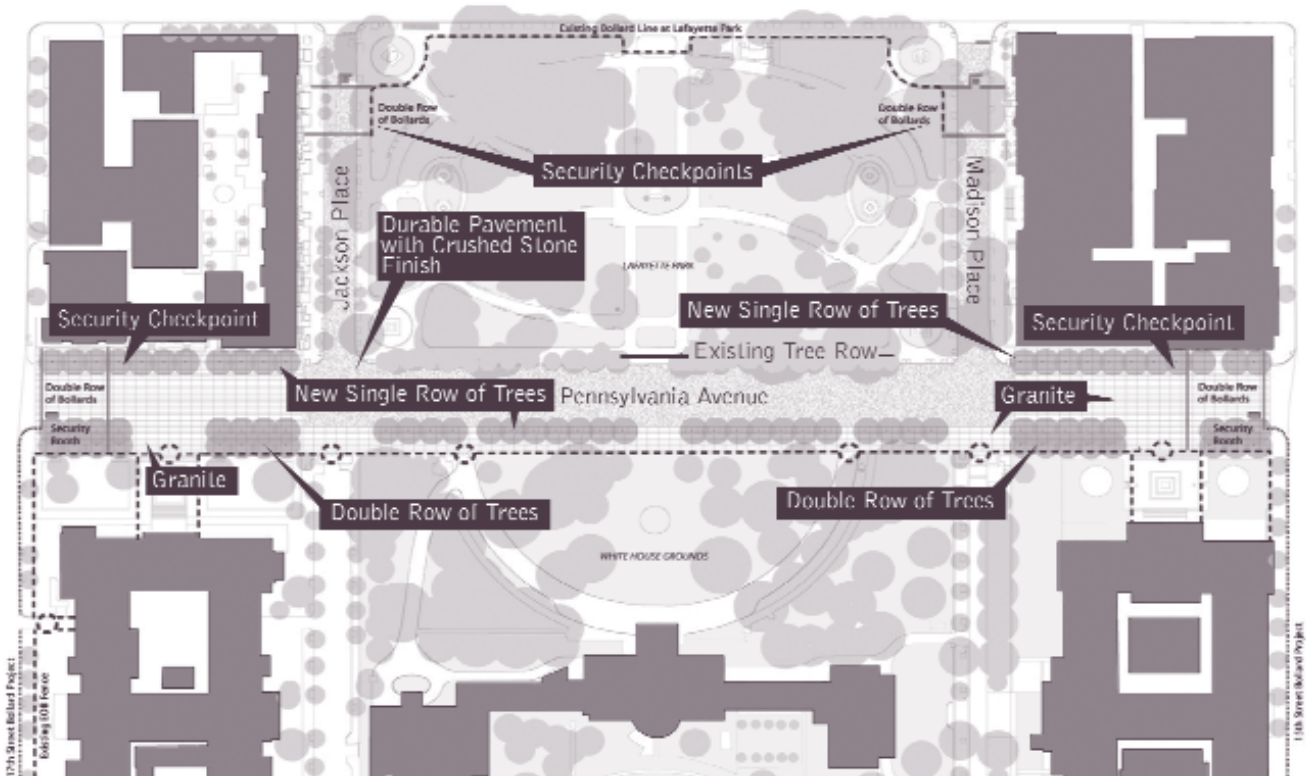


LOOKING FROM 17TH STREET, ROWS OF TREES ALONG EACH SIDEWALK HIGHLIGHT THE SPATIAL CORRIDOR OF PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE.

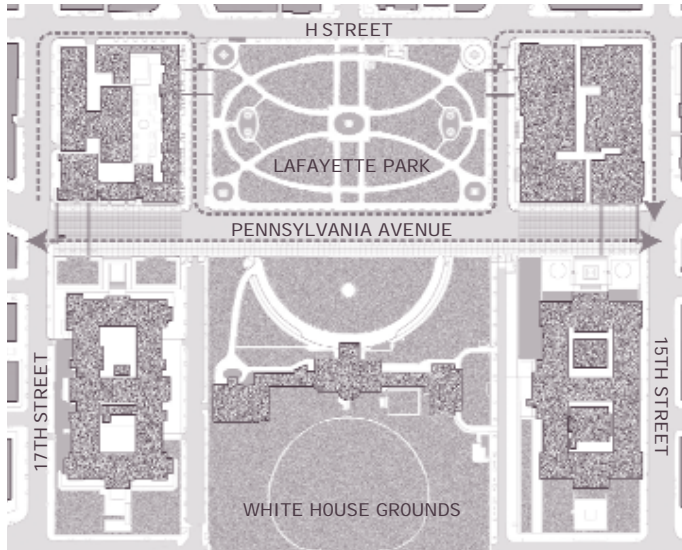


RETRACTABLE BOLLARDS WOULD PERMIT THE DAY-TO-DAY PASSAGE OF VEHICLES; REMOVABLE BOLLARDS WOULD BE MOVED ONLY ONCE EVERY FOUR YEARS FOR THE INAUGURAL PARADE.

PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE AT THE WHITE HOUSE SITE PLAN



Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House Concept Design



CIRCULATOR ROUTE OPTIONS

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A Circulator Transit System – a new hop-on/hop-off shuttle service now being planned for Downtown Washington – could follow a two-way route along Pennsylvania Avenue between 15th and 17th Streets. Alternatively, it could follow a one-way route, heading north along 17th Street, east on H Street, turning south on Jackson Place and winding around Lafayette Park, back to H Street, and south again on 15th Street.

Congress has allocated \$6.1 million for planning and design and for the initiation of construction on Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House. Of this, \$2.8 million is for completing the planning and design of the project, and \$3.3 million is for conducting structural testing of streetscape components, initial surveying work, and utility location. In addition, \$5 million is allocated to the Federal Highway Administration for transportation studies to address the feasibility of a tunnel and to study traffic problems resulting from street closures in the immediate vicinity of the White House. The President's proposed 2004 Budget includes \$15 million for construction of the improvements, which are expected to be ready for the 2005 Inaugural Parade. NCPC expects to review preliminary plans for the project in early summer.



50th Anniversary of the National Capital Planning Act

NCPC recently marked an important milestone celebrating 50 years of the National Capital Planning Act. In 1952, Congress passed legislation reorganizing the National Capital Park and Planning Commission as the National Capital Planning Commission, expanding its authority and designating it as the central planning agency for the federal government. The revamped Commission's mission was to "plan for the appropriate and orderly development and redevelopment of the National Capital and the conservation of the important natural historical features." In recognition of the Commission's evolving role, the Act eliminated the word "park" from the agency's name and charged it with preparing a coordinated plan for the National Capital and reviewing all federal development plans in the region.

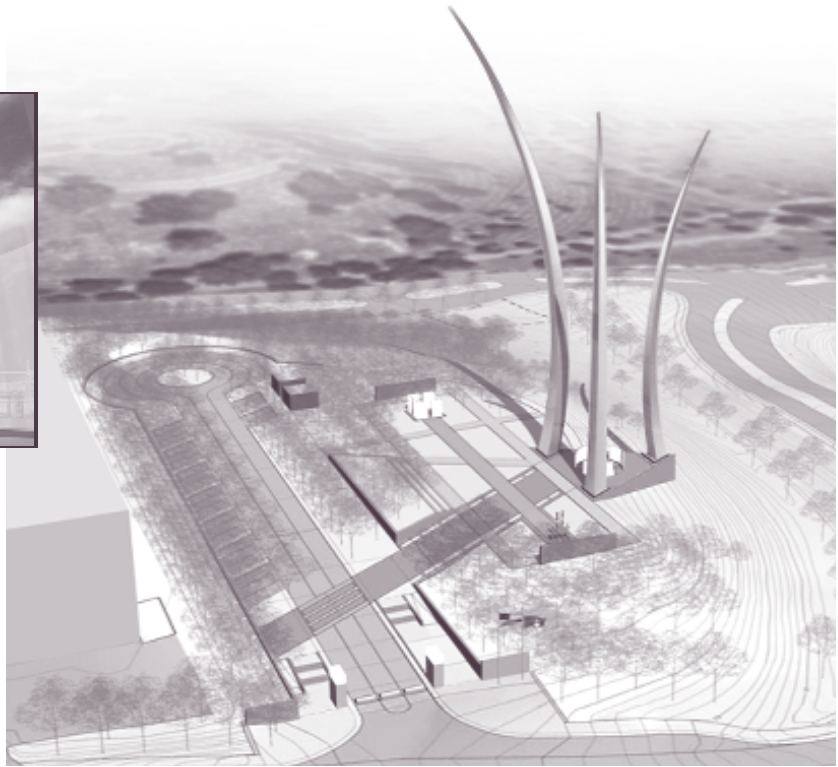
The reorganization of the agency reflected the transformation of development patterns sweeping the nation in the years following World War II. Fueled by the increased availability of the private automobile, this transformation saw Americans leaving the older city center to pursue their dreams in new, park-like suburbs. The explosive development flooding the countryside in neighboring Maryland and Virginia in the immediate post-war years brought new urgency to the need for improved regional planning, with better roads and mass transit and the acquisition of open space. A new relationship between Washington and its burgeoning suburbs had to be established. The reorganized planning agency with expanded responsibilities was designed to meet those needs.

In recognition of the 50th anniversary of the National Capital Planning Act, President Bush wrote to the Commission:

"During these 50 years, the National Capital Planning Commission has played an important role in preserving and protecting historical and natural landmarks in our Nation's Capital. Your stewardship and commitment to excellence have helped maintain the beauty and history of the city. I applaud your vision and dedication that have benefited countless Americans and visitors from around the world."

The Commission is honored by the President's recognition and continues to pursue its vision for America's capital.

Commission Actions



AIR FORCE MEMORIAL
Arlington, Virginia
March 12, 2003

In a unanimous vote, the Commission approved James Ingo Freed's conceptual design for a memorial honoring the men and women of the U.S. Air Force. The Air Force Memorial will be located at the Arlington Navy Annex in Virginia, one of 20 prime sites identified in the Commission's Memorials and Museums Master Plan. The three-acre site rises approximately 100 feet above the Pentagon and provides views of Arlington National Cemetery and the Monumental Core.

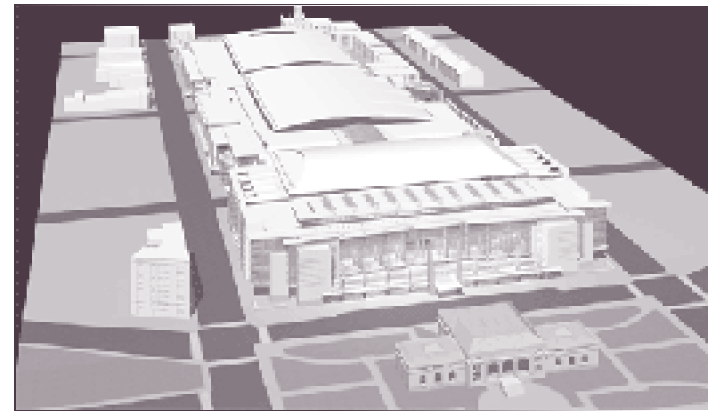
The design is intended to evoke soaring images of flight, while providing a spectacular visual gateway into the Nation's Capital. Three stainless steel spires, climbing into the air in an evocation of flight, comprise the memorial's central design. A glass-walled, open air chamber would be located at the base of the spires. Other memorial elements include: a central parade ground with a chapel-like contemplation area and a nine-foot honor guard statue; stone seating that faces the memorial and the Monumental Core; and two small buildings that would accommodate restrooms, a small office, an information kiosk, and mechanical equipment.

In giving concept approval, the Commission recommended that the Department of Defense work on improving vehicular and pedestrian connections to the site; consider having additional parking spaces for visitors; permit the memorial to remain open until 10:00pm to allow visitors to enjoy night views from the memorial; and avoid a night lighting scheme that would illuminate the memorial with a flashing red light. The Commission also recommended that the Air Force Memorial Foundation look into removing the statuary honor guard because of its incompatibility with the memorial's contemporary design and its possible interference with ceremonial activities on the parade ground.

The Commission looks forward to viewing a more developed preliminary design for a memorial that will honor the men and women of the United States Air Force.



WASHINGTON
CONVENTION
CENTER



WASHINGTON CONVENTION CENTER Washington, D.C. *February 6, 2003*

At its February meeting, the Commission approved the draft Transportation Operations and Parking Plan for the new Washington Convention Center, subject to several conditions. They included securing a permanent marshalling yard prior to the center's opening and, in the absence of such, ensuring the orderly arrival and processing of trucks so that there will be no overflow to the neighborhood. In addition, the Commission called on the Convention Center Authority to work with the District Department of Transportation and the D.C. Office of Planning to establish appropriate truck and bus routes and to implement an off-street parking plan, including shuttle service, prior to the center's opening.

As requested at the February meeting, the Washington Convention Center Authority reported back to the Commission in March to offer an update on its progress. The WCCA stated that, although it anticipated only a limited need for a marshalling yard, it had identified an appropriate site and was in the process of pursuing that site. The WCCA reported that some of the construction work required to complete the roadway network had been delayed due to weather conditions, but would be completed through an aggressive work schedule. The WCCA has been negotiating with parking operators in the vicinity to procure off-street parking, and has been working with the District Department of Transportation on issues such as resident permit parking, and truck restrictions and parking regulations on the block immediately surrounding the site.

Commission staff expects to review the final Transportation Operations and Parking Plan within three months of the center's opening to help resolve any outstanding issues. Once the new Convention Center has been operational for one year, the Commission should receive an update on the effectiveness of the Transportation Operations and Parking Plan and any proposed changes for the upcoming year.

AMENDMENTS TO PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE
PLAN FOR SQUARE 491
Washington, D.C.

January 9, 2003



A bold and exciting new cultural destination is planned for a premier site on Pennsylvania Avenue across the street from the National Gallery of Art and next to the Canadian Embassy. The state-of-the-art Newseum, dedicated to journalism, free speech, and a free press, is being designed to attract pedestrians, encourage street life, and enliven this area of Washington's Monumental Core. The museum's dramatic design will feature broad expanses of glass, a soaring atrium, and the words of the First Amendment etched into the building's Pennsylvania Avenue façade.

AN ARCHITECTURAL
RENDERING OF THE
PROPOSED NEWSEUM
DEPICTS A DESIGN
CONCEPT THAT IS OPEN
AND TRANSPARENT.

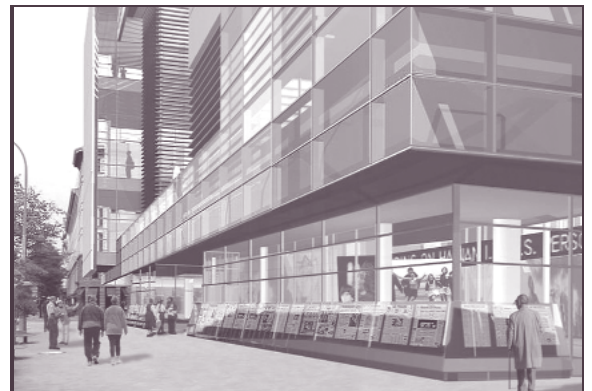
Private development projects located along Pennsylvania Avenue between the Capitol and the White House must conform to the 1974 Pennsylvania Avenue Plan. In cases where a development proposal deviates from the plan, an amendment—reviewed by NCPD—must be made to the Pennsylvania Avenue Plan. The Commission examined several aspects of the 1974 guidelines in its review of the Newseum project.

One of the amendments to the Pennsylvania Avenue Plan is the addition of "museum" to the square's allowed uses. A museum at this site will include active street-level retail and enliven the sidewalk and street. It will also draw Mall visitors across Pennsylvania Avenue to the Penn Quarter and Downtown. The new building will also include residential use, which is stipulated in the Pennsylvania Avenue Plan. An increase in the maximum height will allow for massing that includes three transparent bars, stepping away from Pennsylvania Avenue at heights escalating to 137 feet. The Newseum would extend to the Pennsylvania Avenue building line, positively reinforcing the L'Enfant Plan right-of-way line along the avenue.

In its approval of the proposed amendments, the Commission recommended adding the following two amendments to language in the guidelines for Square 491: 1) "The treatment of the building and site at the ground level will firmly delineate the 6th Street building line through streetscape features along the building line and in the open courts created by the entrances. The treatment of the building line at grade and the architectural character of the entrances and open courts will be lively and encourage pedestrian activity, and be well integrated with the design of the building"; 2) "The hours when the bay doors of the loading dock will be open will be limited. Trucks may not park on the sidewalk but must pull directly into the loading berths inside the bays." The Commission further requested that the Newseum study ways to reduce the number of bay doors for the loading dock.

Overall, the Commission found that the amendments would increase the construction envelope anticipated in the square guidelines but would respect the adjacent Canadian Embassy building.

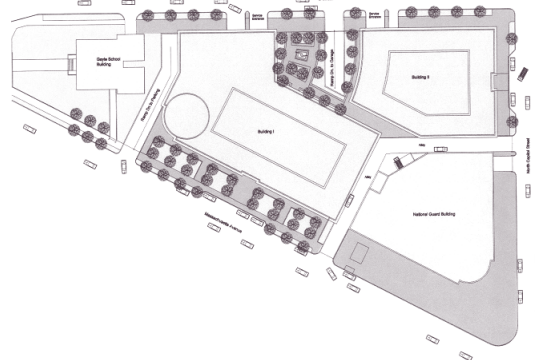
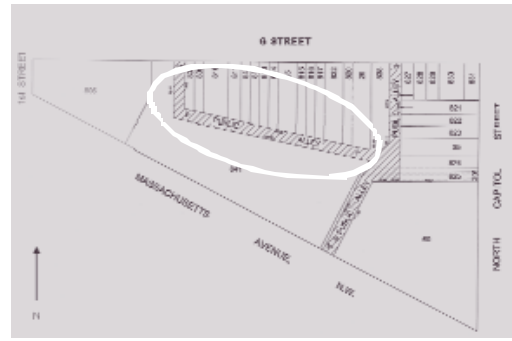
THE DAILY DISPLAY
OF "TODAY'S FRONT
PAGES" IS A POPULAR
NEWSEUM ATTRACTION.



PUBLIC ALLEY
SQUARE 625

Closing of Public Alley in Square 625, Washington, D.C.

The Commission tabled consideration of a proposal to close the alley system for Square 625, located on Massachusetts Avenue, NW. The closure would allow for the construction of the Republic Square project, which is an office and retail development being administered by the National Capital Revitalization Corporation. The Commission expects to further consider the project at its April meeting. 3/12/03



Department of Transportation, Washington, D.C.

The Commission approved preliminary and final building plans for the installation of 12 cellular Wireless antennas on the roof of the Department of Transportation building, 600 Independence Avenue, SW for a period of five years. As part of its approval, the Commission required that GSA implement a written radiofrequency safety program and mandate the use of RF personal protection monitors for workers that carry out activities on the building's roof. 2/6/03

Department of Veterans Affairs
Washington, D.C.

The Commission approved preliminary and final building plans for the T-Mobile wireless panel antennas, one GPS antenna, and an equipment platform to be installed on the roof of the Veterans Affairs Building. The project approval is for a period of five years and is based on the conditions that the General Services Administration implement a safety program for the roof that includes a written radiofrequency safety program and training of building maintenance personnel about antenna safety issues. Written documentation of this safety program should be submitted to NCPC within 60 days. 1/9/03

Eisenhower Executive Office Building
Washington, D.C.

The Commission approved preliminary and final site development plans for the installation of presidential bollards along the curb line on the west side of the Eisenhower Executive Office Building. The project was approved with the understanding that: the placement and location of bollards at the intersection of 17th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue will be modified in the future for compatibility with the plan for security improvements along Pennsylvania Avenue between 15th and 17th Streets. It is also understood that there will be no chains installed on the bollards to link them together and that the bollards will be positioned in such a way that they will not interfere with crosswalks and handicapped ramps. 1/9/03

Food and Drug Administration, College Park, MD

The Commission approved preliminary and final building plans for six AT&T Wireless Panel Antennas and an equipment platform on the roof of the FDA Office and Laboratory Building, 5100 Paint Branch Parkway, College Park, MD. The project was approved for a period of five years with the condition that a safety program be implemented for the roof of the building. The written radiofrequency safety program should include training for building maintenance personnel on antenna safety issues. Written documentation of the program should be submitted to NCPC within 60 days. 2/6/03

Food and Drug Administration, White Oak, MD

The Commission approved final site and building plans for the central utility plant at the FDA consolidation site with the condition that GSA implement noise mitigation measures identified in the sound analysis report for the site. The plant will be a cogeneration facility that uses natural gas to make electricity, cold water for cooling, and hot water for heating the buildings that will make up the future FDA campus. 2/6/03

General Services Administration, Washington, D.C.

The Commission approved preliminary and final building plans for the installation of 12 Cellular Wireless antennas on the roof of the Central Heating and Refrigeration Plant on 13th and C Streets, SW for a period of five years. As part of its approval, the Commission required that GSA implement a written radiofrequency safety program and mandate the use of RF personal protection monitors for workers that carry out activities on the building's roof. 2/6/03

NATIONAL
INSTITUTES OF
HEALTH



National Institutes of Health
Bethesda, MD

The Commission approved preliminary and final site and building plans for the renovation and addition to Building 6A at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland, except for the west elevation which should be redesigned to be a more prominent entry elevation compatible with Building 6. The three-level brick addition would include laboratories, aquatic space, and a magnetic room, along with support spaces. 1/9/03

International Chancery Center
Washington, D.C.

The Commission approved preliminary and final site and building plans to locate a guard booth at the northwest corner of the intersection of International Court and Van Ness Street, NW. The guard booth is one of five that the Department of State anticipates constructing at the Center. 1/9/03

Map Amendment to D.C. Zoning Map in Square 4327,
Washington, D.C.

The Commission found that the proposed map amendment would not adversely affect federal interests, nor be inconsistent with the Federal Elements of the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital or the Fort Lincoln Urban Renewal Plan. The amendment would rezone approximately 44 acres of undeveloped land to commercial use – the site is currently zoned commercial, special interest, and residential. In its comments, the Commission recommended that any development to this site be administered as a Planned Unit Development. 3/12/03

Text Amendment to the Zoning Regulations of D.C.,
Washington, D.C.

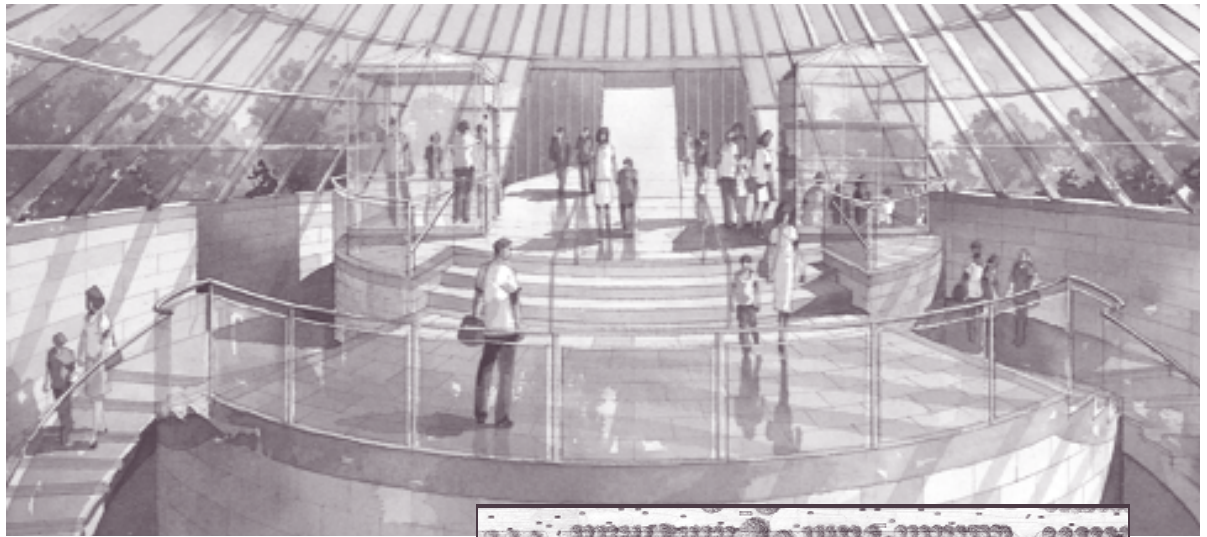
The Zoning Commission proposed to amend the District of Columbia Zoning Regulations by adding the Forest Hills Tree and Slope Overlay District. The intent of the regulations is to protect mature trees and sensitive steep slopes in the Forest Hills neighborhood. The text also establishes standards for the character of future development and outlines a special exception process for property owners. The Commission concluded that the proposed zoning text amendments would not adversely affect the identified federal interests nor be inconsistent with the Federal Elements of the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital. 2/6/03

U.S. Marine Corps Base
Quantico, VA

The Commission approved preliminary and final site and building plans for a new residential building at the complex in Quantico. The three-story brick building will house 200 enlisted personnel in individual room arrangements with common space activity areas, such as a library and laundry. In its approval, the Commission requested that the Navy revise and submit the final project site and building plans with modifications relating to the parking layout and landscape planting plan. 1/9/03

Washington Dulles International Airport,
Loudoun County, VA

The Commission provided favorable comment to the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority on preliminary and final site and building plans for the new Air Traffic Control Tower at Washington Dulles International Airport. The existing tower, which is located atop the historically and architecturally significant terminal at Dulles Airport no longer accommodates the personnel and equipment required to efficiently control the airport's volume of air traffic, communications, and navigation control. The Commission recommended that the Authority maintain the vacated tower and consider its potential reuses. 3/12/03



PROPOSED WASHINGTON
MONUMENT VISITOR CENTER

Washington Monument, Washington, D.C.

In its action on the Washington Monument project, the Commission voted 5 to 4 to approve the revised development concept plan and reaffirmed its approval of the concept of an underground visitor facility and concourse. The Commission also approved preliminary site and building plans for the landscape plan, retaining walls and paths, and the Monument Plaza. The Commission also approved the concept of an addition on the west facade of the lodge, but stressed that the addition should be of a size to meet the needs of the National Park Service without overwhelming the historic Monument Lodge. The Commission requested that the National Park Service submit at least two alternative designs for the addition. 1/9/03



PROPOSED WASHINGTON
MONUMENT LANDSCAPE PLAN

Wetlands Creation Pilot Project, Washington, D.C.

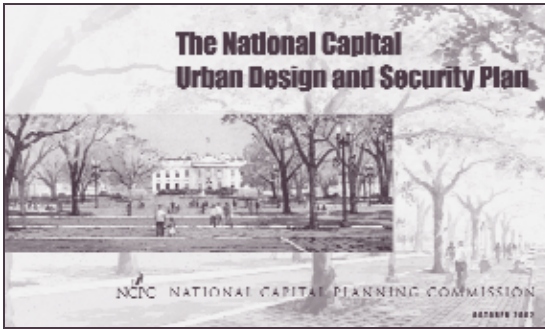
The Commission approved the modification to the general development plan for the Anacostia Stream Valley Park Unit No. 1 in Prince George's County at the confluence of the northwest and northeast branches of the Anacostia River at Hyattsville and the town of Cottage City. The modification is related to the development of a pilot wetlands creation project. 1/9/03

Wheatley Elementary School, Washington, D.C.

The Commission approved preliminary and final site and building plans for the rehabilitation of the historic portions of the Wheatley Elementary School, as well as the addition of a gymnasium, 1299 Neal Street, NE. A few of the items that the building program includes are exterior rehabilitation of the school's historic portions; a gym/cafeteria addition; new outdoor play areas; and new perimeter landscaping. Built during the early 20th century and serving as a good example of public school architecture from that period, the school is eligible as a D.C. historic landmark. 2/6/03



WHEATLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



Policy on Design and Review of Physical Perimeter Security at Federal Agencies

At its January meeting, the Commission adopted guidelines for future project submissions of physical perimeter security at federal agencies. The policies were drafted following the adoption of The National Capital Urban Design and Security Plan and were then circulated during a 45-day public comment period.

The policy directs agencies requiring physical perimeter security to consult The National Capital Urban Design and Security Plan as they design improvements. Where immediate improvements are required to secure a building perimeter, the Commission suggests that agencies utilize cost effective, temporary improvements. If security measures are intended to be in place for more than 60 days, plans for those installations should be submitted to NCP for review and/or approval. According to the policy, the Commission can delegate the review and/or approval of temporary perimeter security measures to the Executive Director and can delegate authority to modify submission requirements as appropriate. The Executive Director is expected to ensure that such projects are reviewed on an expedited basis.

Temporary perimeter security measures may be approved for no more than two years – these approvals will require the applicant to report back to the Commission at the mid-point of the approval period with a proposed schedule for replacing the temporary measures with a permanent solution, in accordance with guidance articulated in The National Capital Urban Design and Security Plan. The Commission hopes that these policies will help agencies in planning for security and in designing measures that will enhance the aesthetic appeal of America's capital city.

NCPC hosted a Hail and Farewell reception and award ceremony in February to welcome new Commission members and staff and to recognize NCPC members and staff who have left the Commission. In addition to those mentioned in the previous Quarterly, the Commission would like to thank Senator Joe Lieberman and Congressman Dan Burton – and alternates Cynthia Gooen Lesser, Kevin Landy, Jason Yanussi, and Jennifer Hall – for their service as ex officio members.

The Commission welcomes Jose L. Galvez, III, who was appointed to the National Capital Planning Commission by President Bush in February. Mr. Galvez earned his Bachelor of Architecture from the University of Virginia and serves as Senior Vice President of Cochran Stephenson & Donkervoet, Inc., a Baltimore-based design firm. Mr. Galvez will serve a six-year term as the Presidential appointee for Maryland.



As Chairman of the Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs, Senator Susan Collins – represented by Johanna Hardy – will serve as an ex officio member to the Commission; and, as Chairman of the House Committee on Government Reform, Congressman Tom Davis – represented by Peter Sirh, Melissa Wojciak, Victoria Proctor, and Shalley Kim – will serve as an ex officio member. The Secretary of Defense has recently appointed Raymond DuBois to serve as one of his alternates. The Commission welcomes all of its new and returning members.

In the early spring, several NCPC staff members traveled to Denver to attend the national conference of the American Planning Association. Executive Director Patti Gallagher moderated a conference session on the Commission's security design work. Joining her on the panel were Mike McGill of GSA, Andy Altman of the D.C. Office of Planning, and Alex Krieger of Chan Krieger and Associates.

The APA's Federal Planning Division selected The National Capital Urban Design and Security Plan as the Outstanding Federal Project of 2002. Richard Friedman, chairman of the Interagency Security Task Force and presidential appointee on the Commission, accompanied by William Dowd, director of NCPC's Plan and Project Implementation Division, accepted the award in Denver on the agency's behalf.

The Urban Land Institute has selected the Commission's South Capitol Street Urban Design Study as the project for this year's Gerald D. Hines Student Urban Design Competition. This national competition for graduate students is designed to raise interest among young people in creating better communities, improving development patterns, and increasing awareness of the need for multidisciplinary solutions to development and design challenges. Competitors will prepare master plans and specific building plans for the study area, and offer overall planning, development, and design recommendations for the surrounding urban fabric. The Commission's Executive Director, Patti Gallagher, is serving on the jury panel to judge the entries.

QUARTERLY

NCPC Quarterly

WINTER | 2003

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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 Linda W. Cropp
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