

QUARTERLY

APRIL | MAY | JUNE | 2004

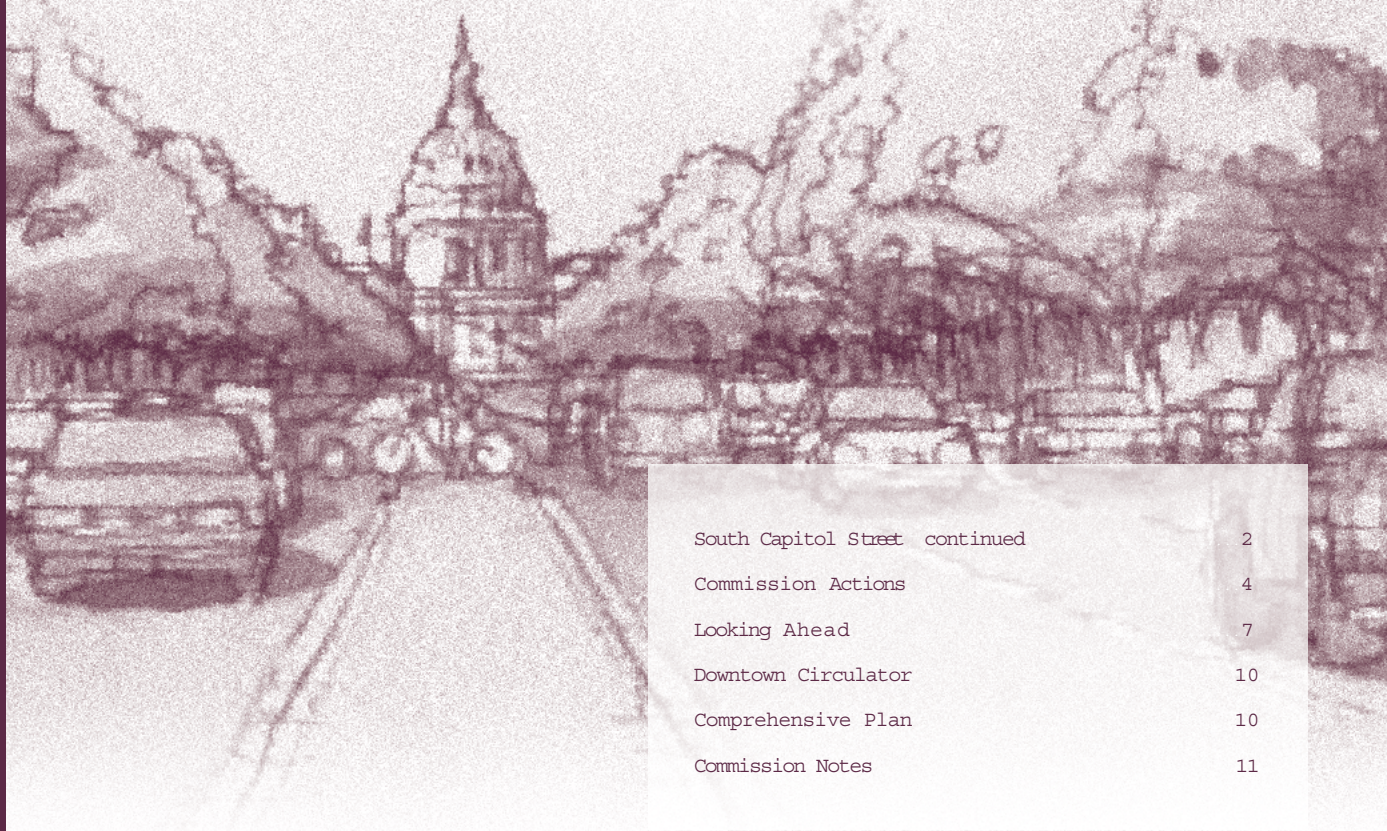
NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION

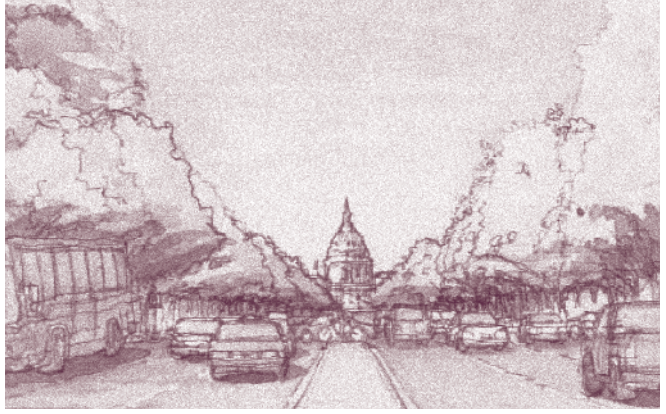
NCPC CREATES SOUTH CAPITOL STREET TASK FORCE

Agency Joins with Officials at an MOU signing for the Corridor

The National Capital Planning Commission has long envisioned a South Capitol Street corridor teeming with activity and reflecting the aesthetic and cultural values of the nation's capital—a corridor without the vacant lots, tangled freeways, and littered streets now found along this gateway. In recent weeks, NCPC took some big steps forward to help bring this vision closer to reality.

South Capitol Street continued	2
Commission Actions	4
Looking Ahead	7
Downtown Circulator Comprehensive Plan	10
Commission Notes	11





NCPC CREATES SOUTH CAPITOL STREET TASK FORCE



In May, the Commission assembled a joint task force to coordinate this significant revitalization effort. In June, NCPC's executive director joined local and federal officials for the signing of an agreement recognizing the construction of a new Frederick Douglass Memorial Bridge as a project of national and regional significance.

Both the task force creation and the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) indicate the level of progress that is being made in NCPC's decade-long desire to redevelop the South Capitol Street corridor into a grand gateway to the nation's capital. NCPC identified the area as ripe for renewal in its 1997 *Legacy Plan* and in its 2001 *Memorials and Museums Master Plan*, and followed up with more specific scenarios for the corridor in its 2003 *South Capitol Street Urban Design Study*.



NCPC's South Capitol Street Task Force met for the first time in early June to discuss the group's goals and objectives for the coming months. The seven-member team includes one presidential and one mayoral appointee from NCPC, and representatives from the National Park Service, General Services Administration, Department of Defense, District of Columbia City Council, and the District of Columbia's Office of Planning (DCOP).

The task force intends to build on recommendations contained in a recent report by an Urban Land Institute (ULI) advisory panel commissioned by NCPC and DCOP to offer specific land use, transportation, and urban design recommendations for the area. The task force will focus on facilitating some of the panel's key recommendations, including the planning, design, and redevelopment of the street and the replacement of the Frederick Douglass Memorial Bridge.

The replacement of the Frederick Douglass Memorial Bridge, as depicted in NCPC's 2003 urban design study, received a big boost forward on June 8 when U.S. Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta and District of Columbia Mayor Anthony Williams signed an MOU pledging the cooperation and support of the federal government to facilitate construction of a new bridge. Other speakers at the signing included Senator Jim Jeffords, Congressional Representatives Eleanor Holmes Norton and Steny Hoyer, DC Councilmember Carol Schwartz, District Department of Transportation Director Dan Tangherlini, and NCPC Executive Director Patricia Gallagher.

NCPC has long considered South Capitol Street ripe for renewal. The street could be a grand southern entrance to the capital city. Our goal is to create an exciting new address in Washington featuring new businesses, cultural, and residential uses.

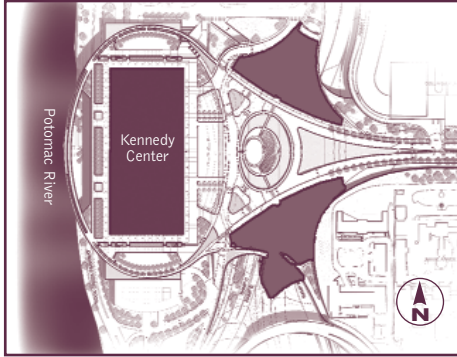
Collaboration between federal and local officials is vital to the success of this project. In fact, the ULI panel urged cooperation on this important endeavor and recommended that the federal government play a prominent role due to the many federal interests in the area and the significant federal resources that will be required to rebuild the street and bridge. Noting the extensive planning work that NCPC and the District have already completed, along with the extremely hot real estate market, the panel urged federal and local planners to act now.

NCPC's South Capitol Street Task Force will meet throughout the summer and report to the National Capital Planning Commission this fall. Their goal is to develop a plan of action for review by Congress and the administration that outlines redevelopment strategies that represent the diverse federal and local interests in the corridor.



June

June 3, 2004



Kennedy Center concept plan

NCPC Approves Concept Site and Building Plans for the Kennedy Center

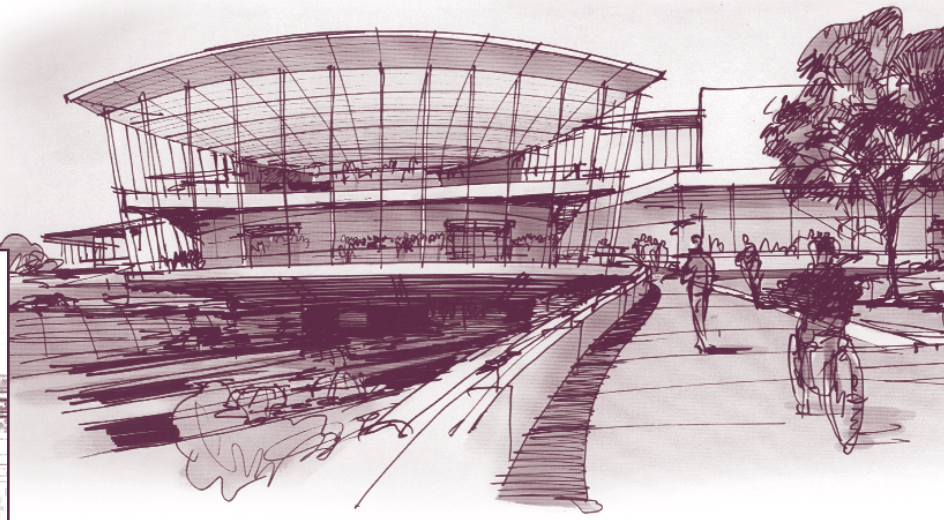
NCPC reviewed new plans for the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts at its June meeting, approving concept site and building plans for access improvements and a plaza flanked by two new buildings. The Commission provided detailed design guidance to the Federal Highway Administration and the Kennedy Center as plans for the cultural center continue to evolve.

The proposal for this important memorial and cultural building seeks to improve circulation, to better connect the center to its surroundings, and to create a plaza that will enhance the visitor's experience and create an enjoyable public space for those who live and work in the area.

Plans include a monumental plaza in front of the Kennedy Center entrance that would be adorned with a water feature and flanked by two new buildings for rehearsal, office, exhibit, and support space. Composed of white stone with slender colonnades, the new buildings incorporate glass facades that lend a sense of fluidity to the overall structure. A plaza will connect the Kennedy Center to the new buildings, 25th Street, E Street, and bicycle and pedestrian trails in the vicinity.

The proposal also includes a water taxi landing—first proposed in NCPC's 1997 *Legacy Plan*. The landing will be located along the bank of the Potomac River, directly below a proposed river overlook and promenade at the Kennedy Center, and will be accessible from the Rock Creek and Potomac Parkway trails.

Access improvements at the Center are extensive, but essentially encompass design and construction of numerous vehicular, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit access improvements, including a deck that is proposed to span the Potomac Freeway, which runs from the Center to the Lincoln Memorial on the east side and a



Planned bicycle trail connection at the Kennedy Center

connection between the Center and the Rock Creek Parkway trail on the west.

The Commission required detailed changes on the North, Center, and South Project Sectors, with the recommendation that the proposal provide better pedestrian connectivity; better connections to the historic street grid; minimal impacts to viewsheds; and better bicycle trail connectivity.

The Kennedy Center memorializes a beloved president and also serves as the center for creative and performing arts in the nation's capital. While plans for improving the Kennedy Center continue to take shape, the Commission is delighted to see its *Legacy Plan* vision being realized at such an important civic space.

District Presents D.C. Capital Improvements Plan 2005-2010

Mayor Williams and the D.C. Council submitted the District's Capital Improvements Plan, FYs 2005-2010 to the Commission for a federal interest review and comment. The plan contains 97 ongoing projects and 114 new projects for a proposed six-year cost of \$1.96 billion. Most of the projects involve the rehabilitation of public buildings and spaces such as schools, libraries, park facilities, and firehouses. In its comments, the Commission commended the inclusion of many projects that support federal interests; requested that the District further coordinate with federal agencies on projects of shared interest; noted the Commission's review authority over certain types of projects; and required the District to submit for the Commission's review the Highway Trust Fund Program component of the Capital Improvements Plan.



Underground parking garage elevation and landscaping plan for the old D.C. Courthouse

Southeast Federal Center Master Plan Proposes Mixed-Use Development

At its June meeting, the Commission reviewed the Forest City Washington Plan, which is the updated master plan for the Southeast Federal Center, located on 1st Street and Tingley Streets, SE. The plan outlines a general vision for the Southeast Federal Center that includes information on land use, landscaping, site circulation, parking, and construction phasing. The Commission is eagerly pursuing revitalization efforts south of the U.S. Capitol and considers plans for the Southeast Federal Center to be a big step in the right direction.

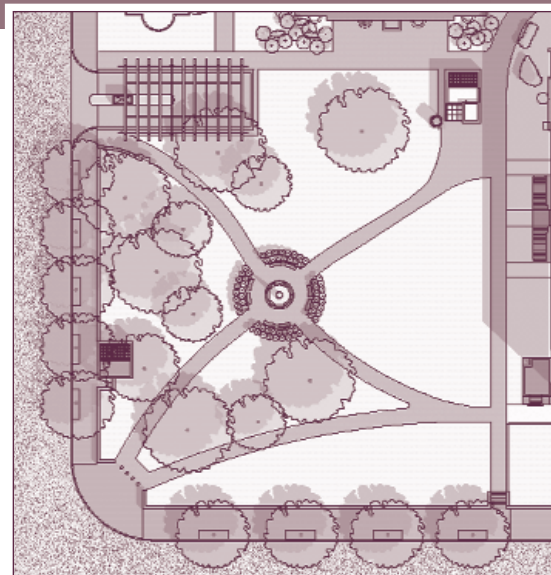
The land uses recommended for the Southeast Federal Center include office, residential, mixed-use, retail, cultural/community, and open space. Landscape plans for the site depict the location of street trees and water features; and the site circulation plan highlights sidewalks, alleyways, a bicycle network, and the Anacostia Riverwalk and Trail. More than 4,000 below-grade parking spaces will be provided at the center.

The project will be implemented in three phases: (1) residential and retail space within the interior of the site, and office space on the eastern side of the DOT headquarters on M Street; (2) waterfront park and remaining residential components; and (3) office, mixed-use, and residential space on the western boundary of the site.

Except for the design along Isaac Hull Avenue, the Commission accepted the Forest City Washington Plan and recommended including a commemorative site as depicted in NCPC's *Memorials and Museums Master Plan*. The Commission looks forward to the completion of this project and its anticipated benefits on the surrounding area.

Navy's Alternative Fuel Tank Approved

The Commission approved preliminary and final site and building plans for the installation of an above-ground bio-diesel fuel tank at the Department of the Navy's Quarters K gas station in Arlington, Virginia. The proposed tank would hold alternative fuel, generated by farm byproducts. This project is part of a Department of Defense initiative to use more environmentally friendly fuel sources.



Underground Parking Garage for Old D.C. Courthouse and City Hall Approved

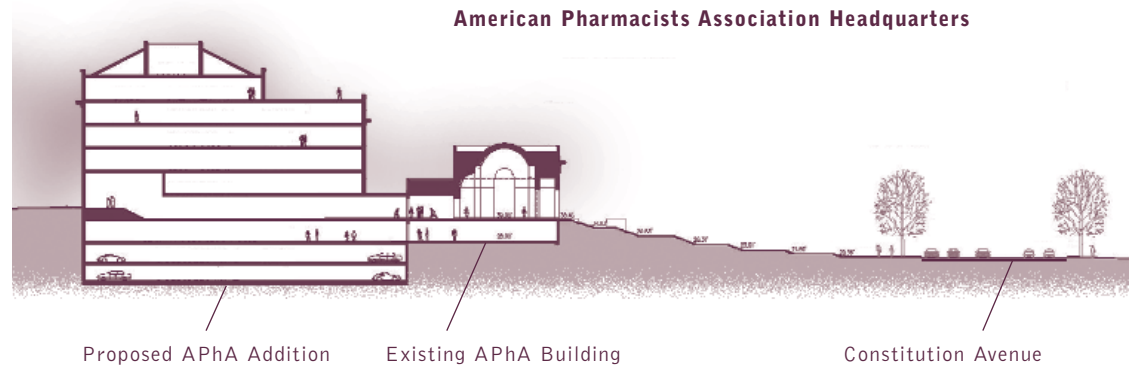
The Commission approved preliminary and final site and building plans for an underground parking garage at 5th and D Streets in Northwest Washington. The 218-space garage will serve the Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces and the Old D.C. Courthouse/City Hall Building. The proposal includes landscaping; trees along 5th Street and Indiana Avenue; low shrubbery and benches around Darlington Memorial Fountain; and a 30-inch-high plinth wall along the south and west sides of the park. The Commission determined that the proposal adequately responded to issues the Commission raised during a previous review of the project in August 2003.

Zoning Change to Allow Conversion of Watergate Hotel

The D.C. Zoning Commission submitted a proposal to modify the Watergate Hotel, a Planned Unit Development located at 2650 Virginia Avenue, NW. The Watergate complex includes the Watergate Hotel, three apartment buildings, two office buildings, and interior retail spaces. The zoning modification will allow the 250-room hotel to be converted into a cooperative apartment building with 133 units. Most of the changes will be internal, resulting in the removal of certain hotel-related uses and converting guest rooms into apartments. Other changes include the provision of additional parking and a new restaurant. In reviewing the project, the Commission determined that the conversion would not adversely affect federal interests and is consistent with the Federal Elements of the Comprehensive Plan.

May

May 6, 2004



American Pharmacists Association Headquarters

Old D.C. Courthouse: Preliminary Plans Approved

The Commission reviewed plans for rehabilitating the Old District of Columbia Courthouse at its April and May meetings. When the Commission reviewed the proposal in April, it approved the concept design for the entrance pavilion and plaza elements but directed the D.C. Court to further study several other aspects of its design. The May submission of preliminary site and building plans, which the Commission approved, reflects the D.C. Court's response to NCPCC's direction.

The primary exterior alteration to the Courthouse involves constructing a new main entrance pavilion that faces Judiciary Square. Composed of transparent glass with steel elements, the entrance will house security screening machines and provide accessible entry for all visitors. In front of the pavilion, the D.C. Court proposes a paved plaza with hedges between the flanking courtyards and the Courthouse facade. Interim plaza elements include switchback ramps, grass panels, and a security barrier along the E Street sidewalk. Other exterior work includes the construction of a loading dock and the cleaning, repair, and preservation of the historic building.

The Commission determined that plans for the Courthouse are consistent with the principles of the draft Judiciary Square Master Plan and with the open and historic setting. In preparation of final plans, the Commission recommends further refining the design with special attention to the use of open space.

East Side Pumping Station Rehabilitation Approved

The Commission approved preliminary and final site and building plans for improvements to the East Side Pumping Station in Anacostia Park that will reduce sewage overflow into the Potomac River. The project includes demolishing an existing underground pumping station and constructing a new above-ground pumping station with new landscaping and parking. In its approval, the Commission reminded the D.C. Water and Sewer Authority to submit plans for modifications to the main sewage pumping station, which is located at the Southeast Federal Center.

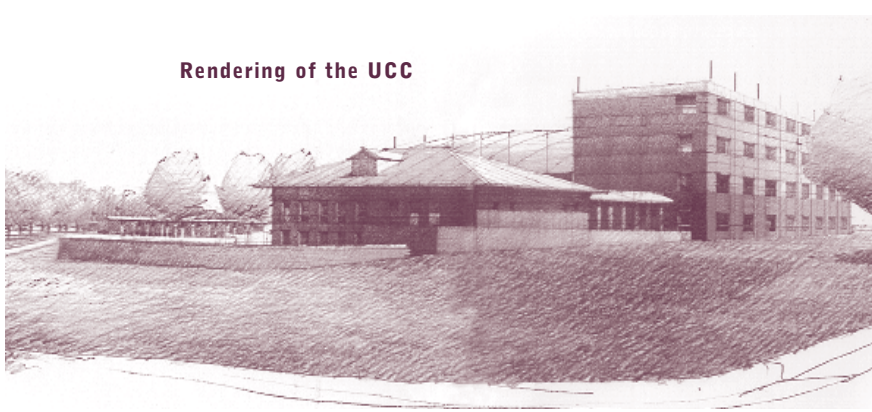
American Pharmacists Association to Build Addition to Historic Headquarters

The Commission approved preliminary site and building plans for an addition to the historic American Pharmacists Association building, located on Constitution Avenue between 22nd and 23rd Streets, NW. An old addition will be demolished and replaced by a six-story building connected to the original building, which was designed by John Russell Pope and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The Commission rejected the proposed location for the 22nd Street garage entrance and directed the association to move the garage farther north on 22nd Street to minimize the visual impact on the Pope building.

NCPCC Guides Security Improvements at Department of Agriculture Headquarters Complex

The Commission approved concept site development plans for perimeter security at the Department of Agriculture's headquarters complex, located at 1400 Independence Avenue, SW. The design concepts, which are tailored to each of the four buildings in the complex, include hardened tree wells, bollards within hedges, and retractable bollards. As the Department of Agriculture prepares preliminary and final site development plans, the Commission recommended increasing the spacing between bollards; increasing the pedestrian circulation and queuing space at street corners with bollards; providing additional street trees and hardened benches; minimizing the use of wedge-type vehicle barriers; coordinating with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority regarding the placement of other bollards and security elements around the Metro station entrance on 12th Street and Independence Avenue; and relocating bollards along 12th Street.

Rendering of the UCC



Unified Communications Center Moves Forward

The Commission approved preliminary and final site and building plans for the Unified Communications Center (UCC), located on the east campus of St. Elizabeths Hospital. The 144,000-square-foot facility will provide a consolidated communications system for various city agencies. While recognizing that the facility will operate 24 hours a day, the Commission requested that the applicant reevaluate its parking proposal, attempt to adhere to the standard of one parking space for every three employees, and implement alternative transportation services for UCC employees. The Commission stated that plans for antenna placement should consider D.C. regulations for antennas, the safety of workers, and the scenic views of the nation's capital. Finally, the Commission requested that the D.C. Office of Planning complete a framework plan for St. Elizabeths East Campus.

George Washington University Residence Hall: No Adverse Federal Impact

The Commission concluded that the proposed consolidated planned unit development for the George Washington University residence hall at 2025 F Street, NW would not adversely affect identified federal interests and is consistent with the *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital: Federal Elements*. The development encompasses new dormitory space for nearly 400 students and will include 1,300 square feet of retail space.

Modifications to D.C. Highway Plan Will Accommodate Southeast Federal Center

The Commission approved modifications to the D.C. highway plan for the streets that form the perimeter of the planned U.S. Department of Transportation headquarters at the Southeast Federal Center. The proposal reestablishes rights-of-way for portions of New Jersey Avenue and 4th Street in Southwest, and establishes a new right-of-way for Tingley Street between New Jersey and 4th.

LOOKING AHEAD...

Federal Capital Improvements Program: Guiding Government Building and Renovation

Each year, NCPC publishes the Federal Capital Improvements Program (FCIP) to coordinate proposed federal projects in the region over the coming six years. Of the projects submitted by federal agencies, the Commission identifies those that support key regional planning initiatives. NCPC also uses the FCIP as a means for recommending new projects that other federal agencies should include in future programs.

The Commission expects to release the latest draft of the Federal Capital Improvements Program (FYs 2005-2010) as its next meeting. Once the draft program is released, the public will have the opportunity to submit comments or questions on the program during a 45-day public comment period.

WORTHY OF THE NATION Second Edition to Be Released

Washington, D.C. has changed substantially in the 30 years since NCPC's *Worthy of the Nation: The History of Planning for the National Capital* was originally published. NCPC hopes to capture that transformation in its second edition, due out in spring 2005.

First Lady Laura Bush bestowed a great honor on the National Capital Planning Commission by writing the foreword for the Commission's updated edition. In it, she shares her fondness for America's capital and for the visionaries who helped shape the capital city during its relatively brief history.

The second edition will chronicle more than 200 years of Washington's development as the seat of government and symbolic heart of our nation. Antoinette Lee, who worked on the original book, reviewed and revised the existing material where necessary, and wrote new chapters that cover development in Washington from 1976 through 2002. Readers also will notice new illustrations and a new book design.

Worthy of the Nation has been one of the most definitive resources on Washington's planning history. The Commission hopes that this second edition, being prepared in cooperation with the Smithsonian Institution, will continue to aid scholars, planners, and legislators in their research while giving readers a new appreciation for their capital city.

**The proposed
American Veterans
Disabled for Life
Memorial**

April
APRIL 1, 2004

**National Law Enforcement Museum:
Commission Seeks Revisions to Design Concept**

The Commission directed the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund to resubmit and more fully develop its design concept for the entrance to the below-ground museum and open plaza. The Commission directed the museum to revise the massing and height of the entrance pavilions and to simplify the plaza design, making it more in keeping with the plaza's character as a green precinct and an open space.

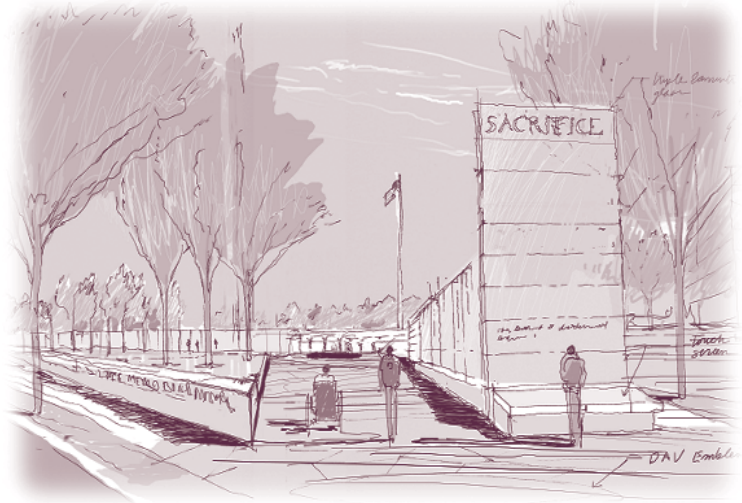
The Commission requested details on the paving materials for the lower plaza and the elevations and sections of the skylights and ramps that connect the lower and upper plaza. The Commission further requested a circulation plan and an environmental assessment. The National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund must work with the D.C. Courts to prepare revised plans and develop a perimeter security plan.

**Commission Adopts New Environmental and Historic
Preservation Policies and Procedures**

The Commission adopted the revised National Capital Planning Commission Environmental and Historic Preservation Policies and Procedures, which describe how the Commission considers the environmental and historic aspects of proposed actions, including commemorative works. The document was last updated in 1982, and in preparing the 2004 version the Commission consulted with the Council on Environmental Quality and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

**Rooftop Antenna Approved for
H.H. Humphrey Building**

The Commission approved preliminary and final building plans for the installation of transmitting and receiving antennas and equipment cabinets on the roof of the H.H. Humphrey Building, located at 200 Independence Avenue, SW. In its approval, the Commission required that the General Services Administration provide a radiofrequency safety program for maintenance personnel who work on the roof.



**American Veterans Disabled for Life
Memorial Design Approved**

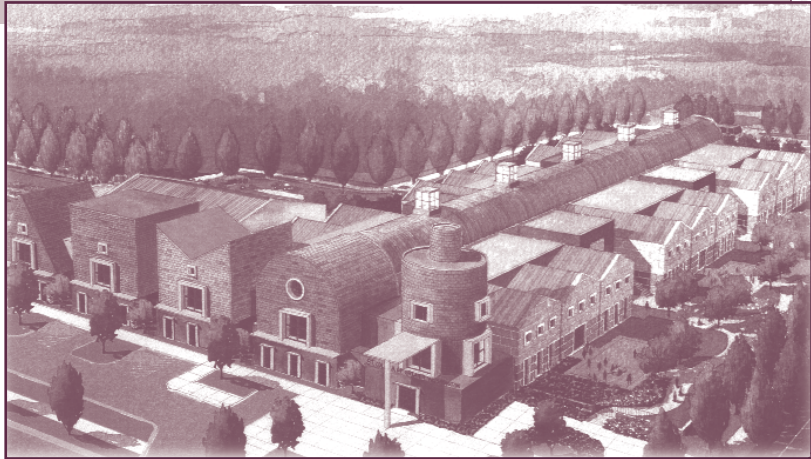
The Commission approved the design concept for the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial, which will be located on a two-acre site on Washington Avenue and Second Street, SW. The memorial will honor veterans who have been wounded while fighting in the name of liberty and freedom.

The memorial design comprises four primary elements: fire, trees, a reflecting pool, and walls. The fire element, representing hope and endurance, will emerge from the center of a black stone base that is surrounded by a thin stream of water. A grove of trees, fronted by a reflecting pool, will frame and reflect a view of the U.S. Capitol dome. Stone and glass walls will be used to define paths within the memorial space, provide a visual screen, and filter sounds beyond the memorial. The stone walls, known as "Walls of Loss," will be composed of white marble or white granite and inscribed with stories of bravery and sacrifice. The glass walls, known as "Walls of Light," will be laminated with varying levels of transparency and reflectivity. Artwork—as yet undefined—will be incorporated into the design.

In its approval, the Commission recommended refining the openings in the stone walls; studying the circulation patterns around and through the memorial; and further studying the height of the walls.

**Smithsonian Institution:
Temporary Modular Building Approved**

The Commission approved preliminary and final site and building plans for a temporary building at the east end of the National Museum of American History to house a Smithsonian childcare program, which was displaced by the closure of the Arts and Industries Building. Within five years, the permanent childcare center—known as the Smithsonian Early Enrichment Center—will open within the National Museum of Natural History. At that time, the temporary structure will be removed and the site restored.



School for the Disabled Approved for Capitol Hill

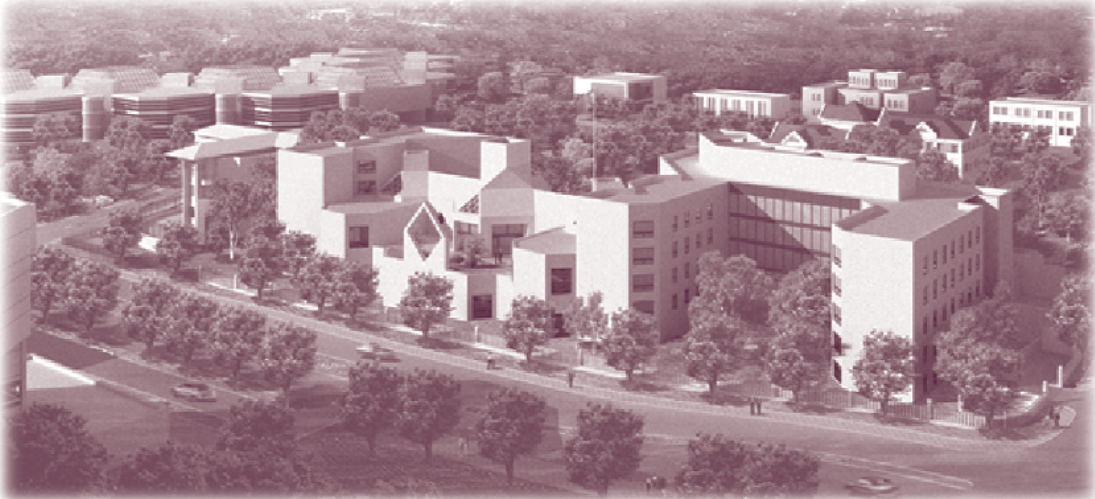
The Commission approved preliminary and final site and building plans for Saint Coletta of Greater Washington, Inc., to be located on 19th Street and Independence Avenue, SE. With a staff of 200, the school will serve 225 mentally disabled and autistic children and 25 adults. The project includes a school building with an attached gymnasium, outdoor classroom areas, surface parking for disabled staff and visitors, and a circulation drive for school buses. Designed by Michael Graves Associates, the building is intended to reflect Capitol Hill’s colorful painted brick rowhouses and create a playful environment for the students. As a means of providing both security and visual screening, the school will be separated from the sidewalk along 19th Street by a 6-foot 7-inch cast iron and concrete wall, covered with evergreen and flowering vines. In its approval, the Commission recommended using a low wall and landscaping to visually screen the disabled parking area from the sidewalk along Independence Avenue, SE.

Site location and rendering of the Saint Coletta school

Chancery of the People’s Republic of China Approved

The Commission approved final site and building plans for the Chancery of the People’s Republic of China, located in Northwest Washington’s International Center. Designed by the son of renowned Chinese-American architect I.M. Pei, the new chancery reflects a contemporary interpretation of traditional Chinese design. Three building elements of beige limestone are planned around gardens and exterior spaces to create a balance between architecture and landscape on the three-acre site. The chancery will not be used for residential or consular (e.g., visa and passport) purposes.

Rendering of the Chancery of the People’s Republic of China



DOWNTOWN CIRCULATOR IS A STEP CLOSER TO REALITY

The National Capital Planning Commission's vision for a surface transit system in Downtown Washington is closer to being realized now that the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) has approved a purchase of 29 clean diesel fuel buses.

The new circulator vehicles will provide a much-needed surface transit system that connects Metrorail riders to tourist landmarks, employment centers, entertainment destinations, and public services throughout Washington's monumental core.

NCPC first conceived the Downtown Circulator in its 1997 *Legacy Plan* as an inexpensive, hop-on/hop-off vehicle that would provide residents, workers, and tourists with an easy connection to common destinations that are just beyond walking distance from Metrorail stations.

Two routes are expected to be up and running by early 2005 with two additional routes added at a later date. The National Capital Planning Commission will continue to coordinate with WMATA and other federal and local partners in improving Washington's transit network.

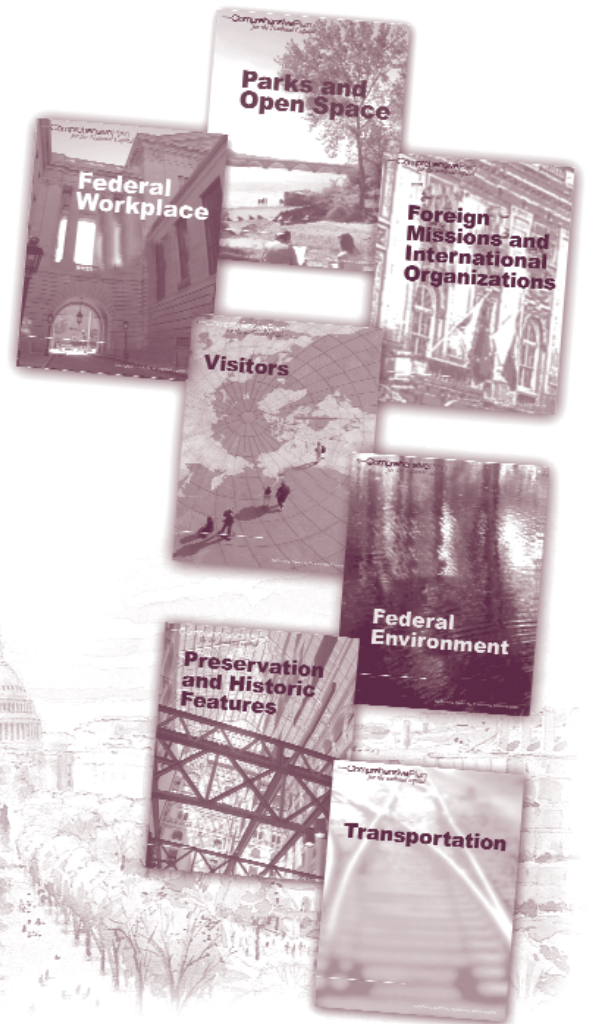


PUBLIC WEIGHS IN ON DRAFT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

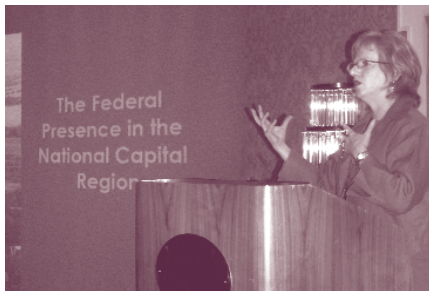
In March, the National Capital Planning Commission released its draft *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital: Federal Elements*. The revamped Comprehensive Plan serves as a blueprint for long-term planning and establishes goals and policies for future federal development in the National Capital Region.

The Commission encourages public comment on all of its planning initiatives and in response to public interest, extended its 60-day comment period an additional 30 days in order to maximize public participation in the planning process for its draft Comprehensive Plan. The agency hosted two public meetings at which citizens, federal agencies, and congressional staff asked questions and provided input on the various elements of the Plan.

NCPC staff is now in the process of reviewing public comments and will make adjustments to the Comprehensive Plan as appropriate. At NCPC's July 8 meeting, staff will give a presentation summarizing the public comments they received. The Commission will be asked to adopt the final plan in August.



Commission Notes



More than 5,000 planners from across the nation came to Washington, D.C. in April to attend the American Planning Association's national conference. NCPC Executive Director Patricia Gallagher served as co-chair of the local host committee, and NCPC staff played a significant role in developing sessions, hosting mobile workshops, and preparing the Planner's Guide to D.C.—all of which helped to make the conference a success.

On May 12, Executive Director Patricia Gallagher participated in the Department of Homeland Security's government-wide Continuity of Operations exercise. Responding to a terrorism-based scenario, more than 40 federal departments and agencies implemented plans to ensure the continuity of leadership and essential functions at locations outside the National Capital Region.

On Saturday, June 5, 18 NCPC staff members joined more than 50,000 runners and walkers as they participated in the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation 2004 Race for the Cure 5K in downtown Washington. Led by team captain and cancer survivor Christine Saum, and co-captain Deborah Young, NCPC staff braved the rain to raise money for a good cause. The team was paced by Shane Dettman who clocked in at 25:41 and Paul Jutton at 25:57. The other members of our dedicated team included Marcel Acosta, Marcella Brown, Priscilla Brown, Stefanie Brown, Wayne Costa, Patti Gallagher, Connie Harshaw, Lawan Price, Angela Roach, Barry Socks, Ramona Taylor, Ken Walton, Samantha Williams, and Nancy Witherell. Thanks to all for participating in the effort to find a cure for breast cancer.



Improvements along Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House are advancing on schedule. New sidewalks have been constructed; bollard foundations have been installed in some areas; and most of the utility work along 15th Street has been completed. The White House provides the latest construction reports online at www.whitehouse.gov/pennproject.

In April, the Environmental Protection Agency designated NCPC as one of the "Best Workplaces for Commuters." EPA and the U.S. Department of Transportation established the program to recognize employers whose commuter benefits programs help to reduce traffic congestion, improve employee recruiting and retention, and minimize the environmental impacts associated with drive-alone commuting.

The International Federation for Housing and Planning selected an abstract of the *National Capital Urban Design and Security Plan* for inclusion in its World Congress publication. The federation will hold its 48th World Congress in Oslo, Norway this September, where the abstract on NCPC's plan will be released to researchers and practitioners of planning, architecture, construction, economics, and the social sciences.

In March, **NCPC Community Planner Kenneth Walton** received the digital government "Agent of Change" award from Accenture and MIT. The award recognized Mr. Walton as an individual who demonstrates creativity and initiative in citizen-centered services and who inspires a high level of performance from others. Mr. Walton's outstanding use of CAD, 3D, and multimedia technologies was showcased at the Federal Office Supply Expo.

The Commission welcomes **new staff members Phyllis Vessels and Terrine Flythe** to the Office of Administration. Phyllis Vessels joined NCPC in April as a human resources specialist. Ms. Vessels has more than 32 years of experience in human resources and most recently worked with the General Services Administration. Terrine Flythe, who joined NCPC in May as a human resources assistant, has 13 years of experience in human resources from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

QUARTERLY

NCPC Quarterly

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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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