

NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION

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COMMISSION MEETING

+ + + + +

OPEN SESSION

+ + + + +

Thursday,
March 5, 2009

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The meeting came to order at 12:35 p.m. in Suite 500 of the National Capital Planning Commission headquarters at 401 9th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C., John Cogbill, III, Chairman, presiding.

PRESENT:

- JOHN V. COGBILL, III, Chairman
- ROBERT E. MILLER, Vice Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia
- HERBERT F. AMES, Presidential Appointee
- ARRINGTON DIXON, Mayoral Appointee
- JOHN M. HART, Presidential Appointee
- PETER MAY, Department of the Interior
- WILLIAM MILES, U.S. House of Representatives
- RALPH E. NEWTON, Department of Defense
- HARRIET TREGONING, Office of the Mayor of the District of Columbia
- STACIE S. TURNER, Mayoral Appointee

NCPC STAFF:

- MARCEL C. ACOSTA, Executive Director
- LOIS J. SCHIFFER, General Counsel
- DEBORAH B. YOUNG, Secretariat
- NANCY WITHERELL, Historic Preservation Officer
- CARLTON E. HART, AICP, Community Planner

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P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

12:35 p.m.

OPENING REMARKS

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Good afternoon.

Welcome to the National Capital Planning Commission's March 5th, 2009, meeting.

Would you all please stand and join me in the Pledge of Allegiance?

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ALL: I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Thank you. Noting the presence of a quorum, I'll call the meeting to order.

If there is no objection, the open session agenda will be adopted as the order of business.

Seeing and hearing none, the agenda is adopted.

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[INSERT - Agenda]

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CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Agenda Item No. 1 is the Report of the Chair.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: I'd first like to acknowledge a receipt of a letter from Representative Edolphus Towns, Chairman of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, designating Michael McCarty, Mark Stevenson, and William Miles as his alternates. It's my understanding that William Miles will be with us later today.

I also want to take this opportunity to tell you, and most of you have already heard this, that I will be leaving you -- I would presume on or about May 1st.

Mr. Miles. We just introduced you. I don't know whether you heard that or not.

COMMISSIONER MILES: I heard it on --

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Oh good. Well, we are glad to have you with us. Thank you.

But I will, I have written to

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President Obama, advising him that I will need to resign from the National Capital Planning Commission, as I've been elected by the Virginia General Assembly to serve as a Circuit Court Judge in the 12th Judicial Circuit in Virginia.

It's been a great experience here.

It's been a wonderful opportunity, and I will surely miss every one and everything that we've done here, but I can tell you, my colleagues and the staff that I'm very pleased to say that I leave it with the Commission in good hands.

You all have done a great job. It's been a pleasure working with you and I look forward to continuing to hear about the great things that NCPC does.

I also would like to yield a little bit of my time to Peter May, who would like to update us, I believe, on the transfer proposal for Fort Dupont Park.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Yes, this is

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just a very, very quick update.

I think that when this was taken up by the Commission in January, we had talked about the prospect of returning to the Commission for this meeting with probably a revised set of covenants that have been agreed upon by the District and the Parks Service.

The discussions with the District are still ongoing and we don't have anything that's ready for consideration today, but we remain optimistic that we will be able to bring the matter back before the Commission fairly soon. I can't say that at this moment what a specific date would be, but we intend to bring it back and that's about what I have to tell you.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Thank you very much. Are there any questions for Mr. May at this time?

I will just add one other item. We had the opportunity -- some of us on the Commission and some of our staff had the

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opportunity to visit with Secretary Clough over at the Smithsonian.

They were trying to, wanted to tell us a little about what they were doing and it was a chance for us to for the first time to meet the Secretary and it was a very, very, a pleasant opportunity and we shared a little bit about what we were doing together and, and look forward to the new agenda items from the Smithsonian and a lot of the repair work that hopefully will come about as a result of the stimulus package.

That concludes my report. Are there any questions of me at this time? If not, then I'm going to turn this over to the Executive Director, Mr. Acosta, for his report.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

MR. ACOSTA: Thank you Mr. Chairman, and good afternoon.

There's just a few matters I'd like to bring the Commission up to date on.

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First, staff has completed the final draft of the Framework Plan. Copies of the draft plan will be available by March 12th for public review, prior to consideration by the Commission. The final draft will be formally presented to the fine arts on March 19th and to this Commission on April 2nd.

Also at your April meeting, the National Parks Service will also brief the Commission on their preliminary preferred alternative for the National Mall.

The two complimentary plans, both the Framework Plan and the National Mall Plan, focus on creating and improving destinations on and near the National Mall and in emphasizing connections in enhanced civic landscapes throughout the Monumental Core.

Staff of NCPC, the Office of Planning, and the District Department of Transportation continued to make progress on the joint planning efforts to study potential opportunities for a new memorial site, Woodway

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improvements, the creation of new open spaces, and development along North Capitol Street.

On February 9th, our partner agencies held their second stakeholder's meeting at Catholic University. The meeting included review of four urban design and transportation schemes that have been developed by the project consultant team.

That meeting included discussions of design ideas that will be studied further at a community workshop scheduled for March 14th.

The next Capital Space Steering Committee meeting will be held on March 20th.

Staff is currently completing the partnership's funding and resource tool section of the plan, and is working on the final document.

We also attended on February 20th, a meeting of the National Parks Second Century Commission's public forum as part of our ongoing coordination and outreach efforts for

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Capital Space.

The environmental assessment public comment review period for the Potomac Park levy. Project concluded on March 2nd. We anticipate that the NEPA and Section 106 processes will be completed by the end of March, and the project will be coming to you for approval for location and general configuration at the April meeting.

In addition, the Capitals Alliance Conference Report, which we had provided to you at the February meeting, had been sent out to delegates from the participating capital cities, in addition to the speakers, its embassy officials, congressional and federal representatives that attended the session.

The report is currently available on our website as well as on the Capitals Alliance website.

And, finally, I would like to announce a departure from our staff. Ellyn Goldkind will be leaving the Commission's

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staff this month for a position with the U.S. Department of State as lead architect in Design and Construction Division, Office of Real Property Management.

She'll be working with a multi-disciplinary team of architects, engineers, and construction managers in her new role, focusing on domestic projects for the Department of State facilities.

Since joining NCPC in May of 2006, Ellyn has worked on several very notable projects for this Commission, including the St. Elizabeths, Department of Homeland Security consolidation, and the National Naval Medical Center at Bethesda master plan.

We wish Ellyn well in her new position. Would also like to thank her personally for her outstanding work during her tenure with the Commission. So thank you Ellyn.

[INSERT - Executive Director's Report]

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COMMISSIONER DIXON: Mr. Chairman.

I'd like it properly inserted in the record.

I don't think that your announcement of departure should be silent on our end. I know that we all appreciate working with you and your leadership, and are very excited and happy that you are going to be serving the the Commonwealth of Virginia in a new role, but it's been a pleasure being with you and I'm sure we'll cross paths hopefully not in the courtroom in the future.

(Laughter.)

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Thank you, and let me just also add my congratulations to Ellyn on this great opportunity. The State Department is very lucky to have you.

You've been a wonderful asset here and we will miss you but we wish you Godspeed and much success in this great new opportunity.

All right. Well then we'll move on to Agenda Item No. 3, which is a consent

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agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Are there any questions on the consent agenda?

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: We have a motion made and properly seconded on the consent agenda, and let's see, that consists of the National Naval Medical Center connectors and courtyards. Any objection or any questions on that?

All those in favor of the motion please signify by saying aye.

ALL: Aye.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Opposed?

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: None opposed.

Abstentions?

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: None. The motion carries.

[INSERT - National Naval Medical Center]

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**PROPOSED TEXT AMENDMENT TO THE ZONING
REGULATIONS TO LOCATE FIREARM RETAIL SALES
ESTABLISHMENTS IN VARIOUS ZONES WITHIN THE
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

All right. Agenda Item No. 4A is the Proposed Text Amendment to the Zoning Regulations to Locate Firearm Retail Sales Establishments in Various Zones Within the District of Columbia. Mr. Hart.

MR. HART: Good afternoon Mr. Chairman and members of the Commission. This proposal is a text amendment to allow firearm retail sales establishments in the medium and high-density, commercial and industrial, zoning districts in the District of Columbia, and was referred by the Zoning Commission.

Before I talk about the proposal itself, I thought it would be helpful to understand some of the background.

On June 26, 2008, the Supreme Court of the United States decided in District of Columbia vs. Heller, that the 1973 District of

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Columbia law prohibiting possession of a handgun in a home violated the Second Amendment to the United States Constitution.

Following this ruling, the District of Columbia enacted revised laws regarding gun possession.

In July, 2008, the District submitted an initial text amendment and simultaneously with an emergency rulemaking allowing firearm retail sales establishments in certain zones.

Simply put, an emergency rulemaking is a temporary measure to allow the District to have rules in place while a permanent text amendment process occurs in the Zoning Commission.

The Office of Planning submitted the initial text amendment proposal to the Zoning Commission that included the following:

Firearm retail sales establishments, which I will also refer to as gun shops, should be located in the C-3-C, C-4, and C-5 zoning

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districts. That gun shops should not be located within a 600-foot buffer from libraries, churches, playgrounds, schools, and residential and special purpose zoning districts, and also that gun shops would only be allowed as a special exception use and not as a matter of right.

After submitting the initial proposal, the Office of Planning continued to refine it between July and November of 2008 by taking into account several factors, including comments received from the public, continued coordination with other agencies such as the Metropolitan Police Department and the Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives Bureau, as well as reviewing national Best Practices to understand how other communities have addressed this issue.

A revised proposal was submitted in November of 2008, along with a revised emergency rulemaking.

Now to the current proposal. This

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text amendment includes the following: amending the zoning regulation definitions to include the definitions for firearms and firearm retail sales establishments or gun shops; allowing gun shops in medium and high-density commercial and industrial zoning districts; making them a matter-of-right use and not a special exception use in these zoning districts; and finally, establishing a restricted or buffer area of 300 feet from any school, library, church, playground, or residential or special purpose zoning district. No gun shops would be allowed in this buffer area.

Next, you'll see some maps developed by the Office of Planning that show where gun shops will be allowed in the District of Columbia.

On the left is Map No. 1. It shows all of the zoning districts that allow gun shops. You can see here that there is our downtown and along the corridors where all of

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the zoning districts are.

Map 2 on the right shows all of the allowed areas for gun shops once you take into account the 300 foot buffer around the specific zoning districts, playgrounds, schools, libraries, and churches is included.

So the area that you see here is some downtown along New York Avenue and then some isolated spots in and around D.C.

I think it's important to note that current District law prohibits storefront gun shops. In other words, you can't have firearms and ammunition displayed in a window visible from the street.

District laws also include restrictions on how firearms can be displayed inside the store, as well. In effect, these stores are more like firearm brokers.

Staff has identified the following federal interests: the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capitol, the Federal Agency Coordination, and the Pennsylvania Avenue

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Development Plan.

First, the Comprehensive Plan. This is a broad planning document and looks at general land use categories and not specific land uses, such as gun shops. So this proposal is not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Next, is the Federal Agency Coordination. The staff coordinated with a number of federal agencies concerning this proposal because of the federal government presence in the areas that will allow gun shops. A list of these agencies is included in the Executive Director's Report.

After a review of the proposed text amendment, each agency noted that it had no objection to a finding that the proposed amendment had no adverse affect on the federal interest. And the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Plan is the final federal interest staff identified with its proposal.

This is a federal interest because

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the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation, which had oversight of the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Plan, was dissolved in 1996 and the responsibility for enforcing and upholding the Plan was transferred to three federal agencies: the General Services Administration, the National Parks Service, and the National Capital Planning Commission.

The Pennsylvania Avenue Development Plan area was created to provide for the development of Pennsylvania Avenue as a vital part of downtown Washington, as the symbolic ceremonial way between the Capitol and the White House, and as a link between the governmental city and the private city.

This area currently includes residential, commercial, and office uses and is divided between the C-4 and C-5 zoning districts. You can see the areas in dark green here that would allow the gun shops.

The Pennsylvania Avenue Development

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Plan itself includes descriptions of each square located within its boundary with respect to bulk, mass, height, and permitted land uses.

There is some description of, descriptions of what these might entail, like department stores, restaurants, and drug stores and what uses were prohibited. Gun shops are not in the list of prohibited uses.

The staff found that the proposed text amendment was not inconsistent with this plan.

Therefore, the Executive Director recommends that the Commission advise the Zoning Commission that the text amendment to allow firearm retail sales establishments in the C-2-A, C-2-B, C-2-C, C-3-A, C-3-B, C-3-C, C-4, C-5, C-M-1, C-M-2, and M commercial and industrial zoning districts in Washington, D.C., would not be inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capitol, nor adversely affect any other identified federal interests.

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This concludes my presentation and
I'd be happy to answer any questions.

[INSERT - Text Amendment - Firarm Retail Sales
Establishments]

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[INSERT - Northwest Current Article]

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CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Are there any questions for Mr. Hart at this time?

If not, then I'll bring it back to the Commission. Do note that this is a public hearing. We have one speaker who is asked to speak to this in an individual capacity, Jo-Ann Neuhaus, and, Jo-Ann, we will, you know, normally our procedure's three minutes for individuals. You know that.

MS. NEUHAUS: It's on. It's on.

(Laughter.)

MS. NEUHAUS: Oh, gee, thank you.

My name is Jo-Ann Neuhaus and for those who don't know me, I'm a resident of the Ventana, which is on "F" Street between 9th and 10th Street, and I worked for 20 years for the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation. And it's called the Pennsylvania Avenue Plan. Not the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Plan. So, I sort of cringed when I heard that.

I also want to say that it's a plan that basically -- based on what Carlton said,

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basically talked in a positive way about what's permitted.

We did not, when it was written, exclude brothels. We didn't exclude glue factories. We didn't exclude a lot of things because it wasn't written that way. It was written that this is what we want, not this is what we don't want, for the most part.

But, now I'll start what I was going to say.

I have some notes here because I knew I'd forget things.

My hope is that the Commission will agree with me that residential buildings, wherever they are located, should be treated uniformly, and to do this in the C-4 and C-3 zones and in the C-5, if it should happen, because it could happen there, but right now only the C-4 zone and the Pennsylvania Avenue area and adjacent.

There are a number of residential buildings that now exist. And, I'd like to

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see if there's some way that those could be equally protected as the residential areas throughout the city and as the mixed-use zone called commercial residential is protected as, as is the SP zone and the waterfront zone. And I think there's precedent for doing this, though not in the zoning format.

When the D.C. Council considered, as Rob remembers, knee-dancing places. I think there's a more formal name for this. They were going to be down here and we had a problem because we didn't really want them near our residences and near churches and the Council understood that.

I mean the city and the federal government spent a lot of money and a lot of time creating this area.

It's a mixed-use area. They use it as a model for the CRs, commercial residential mixed-use zone, so why treat it differently. And, that's basically my point.

And, so I'm asking that it be

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treated like the schools and the playgrounds and the churches and whatever you can't do within 300 feet.

And, in fact, I understand that in a commercial zone, if a firearm or gun shop wants to be located and they would -- that entity would be within a certain footage. Is it 500 feet of a residential zone? That it can't locate there.

So, there is a provision in the proposed amendment that says if you're within so many feet, you can't go there, if it's a residential zone. Well, why not a residential use. We've got a lot of them down here.

(Beeping sound heard off mic.)

MS. NEUHAUS: Is that three minutes?

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Go ahead.

MS. NEUHAUS: Okay, thank you. At the time PADC adopted the Pennsylvania Avenue Plan, with the requirement -- this is not a permission -- it's a requirement that there be

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residential down here and it be developed east of the FBI building, what we now call Penn Quarter.

There was no zoning category that fit that mix of uses, but residential was permitted in C-4, so we paid C-4 prices, we wrote down the land, and we got residential down here.

Federal government has put a lot of money into this. We redid the Avenue, put in parks and, although today I don't think the developers would go and have gun shops in their buildings, but you know, when times are hard you get some really unusual things happening. We now have some unusual things happening that are permitted. And, we just like to not have these right next to the residences.

And, some the buildings, the one that NCPC used to be in, residences on top, office in the middle, retail on the ground floor, be right in the building. And that's

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right on the inaugural route, I want to add.

So, to go one, PADC didn't seek to have a new zone created. When we asked to have the C-5 zone created, there was a real reason for it. We wanted to build to the maximum height as the Plan allowed and the Courts decided the Plan really is supreme.

And so, we asked the zoning Commission and the staff and we got the C-5 zone, which allowed for 160 feet measured only from Pennsylvania Avenue, and now that's different than the rest of the city too. You can't measure it from any other street.

Okay, I'm going to skip, skip, skip.

So, I sort of addressed that.

And, I, I think I basically -- although this says it much more nicely than I did, I just don't want the Plan area to be a stepchild that the residential uses here be considered.

I mean, we're dealing with a whole

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mess of -- I'm dealing, with a whole mess of things because the City regulations deal by zoning category and don't address the fact that we're in an area that has residential. We also have cultural uses. We have really done a fabulous job here. Thank you everyone.

That's it.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Thank you very much.

MS. NEUHAUS: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Other questions.
Mr. Miller.

VICE CHAIRMAN MILLER: I just wanted to take the opportunity to thank you Ms. Neuhaus for all your work to create this living downtown that we have.

MS. NEUHAUS: Thank you.

VICE CHAIRMAN MILLER: Let me ask you, did you testify at the Zoning Commission?

MS. NEUHAUS: I didn't know about it. I don't get the Federal Register. The only reason I found out about this is because

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I'm on the email list and I get announcement about these meetings.

And, I just found out yesterday, last night actually, when I looked at my emails from yesterday, that the record for the Zoning Commission is still open and -- I'm going to send something, and if that's the case -- I was told that, Harriet, yes -- I just asked who do I send a letter to, but I will be sending a letter to them about this now that it's open. I was first told a couple days before that the record was already closed.

So, yes, this is something I would like to pursue and I will pursue.

VICE CHAIRMAN MILLER: I just think that -- I think you have some valid points, especially the point that here is a zone where it's required that the residential overlay is not just a C-4 district. It's a C-4 with the downtown housing overlay.

MS. NEUHAUS: Oh yes, I didn't

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mention the DDD residential overlay, but that's also required.

VICE CHAIRMAN MILLER: But I think it's a local issue is why I was talking about your testimony before the Zoning Commission is where I think this needs to be resolved.

MS. NEUHAUS: Yes, but you could also say could you please amend it to do that.

(Laughter.)

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Oh, you're not supposed to ask us questions.

MS. NEUHAUS: No, I didn't ask, I just suggested. That's a suggestion.

(Laughter.)

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Thank you, thank you for your testimony and your suggestion.

MS. NEUHAUS: And, thank you and thank you for having me here. I appreciate it.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: It's, it's good to have you back.

MS. NEUHAUS: Thank you.

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CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Mr. Ames.

COMMISSIONER AMES: Mr. Chairman, I agree with Mr. Miller that this is a local issue that must get our advice. I firmly believe that this is something the Planning Department for the City of Washington needs to work with.

So, with that being said, unless somebody objects, I will make a motion that we accept the Executive Director's recommendation for his advice to the Zoning Commission.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Motion is made.

Is there a second?

VICE CHAIRMAN MILLER: Second.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Motion made and seconded. Further discussion from the Commission?

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: I will agree with my colleagues here that our role here is limited. I think the City has worked very hard on this and the Council has provided a draft ordinance. It's been reviewed by the

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Zoning Commission and I see no reason here that I could disagree in any respect with what the staff has done. That this does not adversely affect the federal interest, which is really the scope of our review.

Any other questions or comments?

Ms. Tregoning.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: Thank you Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to say that this is obviously a very sensitive issue in the District of Columbia.

The restrictions on the use of guns is something that is very, very important to the City and I will also say that you know we've worked very diligently with our Office of the Attorney General, with the Metropolitan Police Department, and others to try to craft a proposal that was reasonable and that would frankly, not subject the District to great legal vulnerability in terms of being able to withstand a subsequent legal challenge.

That being said you know, as I

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believe you're aware, there are actions pending in the Congress that might cause the City to revisit with the Zoning Commission the scope of these regulations. But, for the time being, I respectfully request that we do consider this a local matter and proceed.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Other questions or comments?

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: If not, then all those in favor of the motion please signify by saying aye.

All: Aye.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Opposed? None. Abstentions? None. The motion carries. Thank you very much.

**NATIONAL MALL AND MEMORIAL PARK'S WAYFINDING
AND SIGNAGE PROGRAM**

All right. That is the extent of the action agenda for this Commission.

We do have Agenda Item No. 5A, which is the National Mall and Memorial Park's Wayfinding and Signage Program.

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I would point out to each of the Commissioners that you have at your place a letter from Dr. Judy Scott Feldman, Chair of the National Coalition to Save Our Mall and a letter from the Commission of Fine Arts indicating their approval of the mall signage.

At this point, I will turn it over to staff. Ms. Witherell.

[INSERT - Letter from Save Our Mall]

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MS. WITHERELL: Good afternoon. The Park Service has asked to brief you today on their proposed program for pedestrian wayfinding and information signs on the National Mall.

This is part of a larger nationwide initiative from proof sign signage in National Parks. I'm very pleased that we can present this information to you and to the public today for information and your comments and we do invite your questions and your comments today.

I will mention that the Parks Service went to the Commission of Fine Arts on February 18th and received a sort of a partial concept approval with some comments and further guidance. And, since February 18th, the Parks Service on their public comment website, which is nicknamed PEPC, has provided information about the plan. And, we do invite you in the public in particular, people who're interested to go on the website and review the

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plan in greater detail and to make public comments.

And, then finally, you have two letters at your place today.

The first is the letter from CFA following up on their review two weeks ago.

And, the second is a letter from the National Coalition to Save Our Mall, with their comments on the program.

And, with that I will turn over the introductions to Peter May, who will introduce his consultant on the team.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Thank you very much. And, thank you for the work that you've been doing with our staff to move the Wayfinding Program along.

As Nancy said, the Wayfinding Program is part of a national effort on the part of the Parks Service to improve the visitor experience.

It is comprehensive and servicewide

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and in the case of the National Mall, it's not really a one-size fits all. There is some customization that we had to do due to the complexity of the circumstances in the National Mall and the historic setting and so on.

You'll get all of the details about what the program is for the Mall with the presentation, but I would as further introduction say that what we are proposing does include a new sign type that's not part of the standard -- the pedestrian-guide pylon.

We believe that it fits well within the landscape. It is a very visible sign that will help guide visitors through the Mall, which for those who are not very familiar with it and don't spend a lot of time on the Mall can be a very, very confusing place.

The signage system is very efficient in its method of information delivery. It is more universal in that method and it is more accessible in terms of ADA and

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so on.

And, it is part of an overall program which we hope to significantly reduce the clutter that can occur or has accumulated over the years with different attempts to get the message across. In fact, in some of the key locations, the overall number of signs has been reduced by as much as 44 percent.

Now we're also adding signs in areas where there were not signs before. So there is overall a net increase, but we are introducing signage in areas where there simply has been none. And, we think it's important to include it.

Going back to the pylon for just a second, it is this new pedestrian guide on which we are seeking Commission comment. And, ultimately when we return we'll be seeking approval for.

We are showing a larger context of the signage package to introduce the Commission to the overall program.

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In terms of NEPA and Section 106 compliance, Parks Service has determined that the new signs qualify as categorical exclusions under NEPA and fall under the Servicewide National Parks Service, Servicewide Programmatic Agreement for Section 106.

We have been in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer and we do not yet have an official determination of no adverse impact, but we have indications that that's where it's heading; but, at their suggestion, we've made the information available for public comment and we are now receiving that comment.

One last thing I'll mention as context is the National Mall Plan, which you'll be receiving a more thorough briefing on at next month's meeting.

This project is related to the National Mall Plan. It is a common element. Wayfinding is a common element in all the

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alternatives that are being considered and it addresses a very real need that we've identified and that has also come through in the process of developing the National Mall Plan.

We also know that this wayfinding system as proposed is something that can easily be modified. So, no matter which subtle changes in direction may occur in the development of the preferred alternative for the National Mall Plan, we believe that this wayfinding system will accommodate that, and will be able to be integrated fully with the plan as that moves forward.

And, as I said, that plan will be presented in information briefing next month and it will give you a better sense of where the National Mall Plan is heading.

The National Mall Plan, we will actually finalize the preferred alternative for that, I think this summer and publish it at that point, but this is the preliminary,

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preferred alternative that you'll learn about next month.

And, with that, I would turn things over to Wayne Hunt, who will do the presentation.

MR. HUNT: Thank you. Mr. Chairman and Commissioners.

I love this thing by the way, you know, I wish I was tall enough to use its maximum extension.

We're going to talk about signs for about ten minutes and wayfinding and wayfinding is not in the dictionary yet, it's what I do. I'm a Wayfinding Consultant. We help people not get lost and in my career, which is not short, the National Mall is our ultimate assignment. It is probably an ultimate thing we could ever work on and we are so pleased to work on this project. And, we do understand the sensitivities of the Mall; and, I've read the 200-year history of the Mall. I've been here a lot and it's a

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pleasure for us to be a small part of this.

We do have a wayfinding issue hidden within a operation signage issue. So, as Peter said, we're going to give you kind of a broad overview and then zoom in on some of the finer points.

It's a little arcane, so hang in there. Again, this is part of a bigger sign program and it's about visitor understanding and experience. And, I know you all know the Mall very well, but you have to put yourselves in the shoes of a first-time visitor for about ten minutes. We have a huge percentage of first-time visitors, maybe 80 percent we're not quite sure, but most people you see are there that one day in their life or the one week in their life.

Pedestrian guide signs are based on the National Parks standards with a slight modification. I'll just skip this for a minute.

You may not notice this when you

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visit the Mall, but this is what our guests see, and we call this the voice of the Mall. It's the tangible, tactile interface between a visitor and a place are these signs. If you are a regular visitor, you don't notice this stuff. But, this is what years of sign making has added.

And, I'll go back quickly to this to sort of say, but most popular places are in the same condition. You have inconsistent signs, you have unchecked regulatory signs.

Unfortunately, most signs at National Mall will tell you what you can't do.

So they are limit behavior. They're negative. They're not positive about the great experiences. They restrict behavior and what we find in our business that each sign that we saw out there in the survey had some legitimate purpose that very day. And, the next day some other sign had a purpose and the next year.

So, you have a layering of

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individually-legitimate messaging that after 20 years becomes a very kind of cluttered environment.

This is the greeting to Lincoln and there are 12 of these here. This is Washington. This message is three times, in this presentation I think it appears four or five times. Clearly, the ticket distribution is a big issue. And, so the operating people add signs.

There are dozens of these sort of "wordsy" signs that protect the fountains and try to keep people from throwing coins in, etc.

You have a kind of clutter and clutter is not just in quantity. Clutter has to do with nonuniform sizes. So, when things are the same color and the same size, you have a perceived clutter reduction.

There are very few directional signs on the Mall. Very few that tell you what to do and they're not followed up upon.

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Design is inconsistent. We've got international visitors that we have a lot of pictograms and here is three different ways how we're showing the food issue.

So, different typefaces, different wording, nonstandard shapes, so this is sort of existing conditions and I do urge you next time you're out there on the Mall, take a look at this stuff. It's easy to kind of look past it, but it is to me a kind of an interface between a visitor and you and it's the first point of contact between a visitor and a place usually.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: May I ask you one question?

MR. HUNT: Yes.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Before you go on.

MR. HUNT: Yes.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: The photos you show, show that black and white little, looks like a scale --

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MR. HUNT: Okay, that's, that's my fault --

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: That looks like -- do you put that on there?

MR. HUNT: That's our scale tool.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Okay.

MR. HUNT: So the clutter is including our removable -- that allowed us to take pictures --

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: You'd know the actual size?

MR. HUNT: Yes.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Okay. That's just what I want to be sure of.

MR. HUNT: Yes, I should have explained. It's a technical detail. Very sharp observation by the way.

All alternates to the National Mall Plan do call for improved signage and wayfinding. It's a noncontroversial need. Although, when you solve the need, you can invent controversies. But it's a pretty

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universal feeling that we need improved signage on the Mall.

The National Parks Service has developed a wonderful plan called the UniGuide, done by a very good consultant. And, it's being rolled out nationwide. It does have variations for different kinds of parks: urban parks, rustic parks, history parks. It's very thorough but it's not quite enough for the National Mall, but it's 90 percent there for that.

At the "Big Eight" monuments or the "Big Seven," depending on how you count it, we're going to promise you a 44 percent reduction in sign quantity.

And, the current sign here at World War II, there is a giant "No Food" sign, which we airbrushed out here. This is how the design was intended, but if you visit this monument, you go through three or four information and regulatory signs before you experience the whole presence of the monument.

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This is a big place, and I had forgotten how big it was until we started to study it about eight months ago. Major monuments, major museums, 30 minor and named places, 15 nearby destinations we would include them in those things that a normal visitor could visit in a two-day visit on foot. You know, the White House, Botanic Gardens, National Archives. So, all of these things are part of a single visit that a visitor has here.

The place is big. It's two miles wide. It's 400 plus acres. We estimated 25 miles of walkways. If you walked every path that's pedestrian accessible and you didn't walk on the grass, 25 miles is long and is a lot of walkways.

We have 130 intersections or decision points. Now, all those aren't major, but a lot of them are major. We're looking at 25 million visitors, maybe 60 foreign countries, a high percentage of first-time

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visitors, and a wide range of needs, abilities and interests. So, it's as complex a wayfinding situation as I can imagine.

It's just swamped. We've got something like oh, maybe 15 million people coming out of this Smithsonian metro stop every year into this sunlit space wondering where to go.

Ironically, less landscaping, which is a great asset, is a negative for wayfinding. From about late April clear through to October, you cannot see very much on the Mall, once you're in the property. You can't even see the Washington Monument from many places on the Mall the canopy is so rich.

Now, there is a kind of sight line that we've observed that is above the benches and the chain and below the tree canopy that is a kind of safety zone for seeing where you're going. We'll talk about that in a bit.

Back up and talk about wayfinding. Wayfinding is self-guiding, it's people can

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find their way around without help.

A wayfinding program is going to have a coordinated set of tools to facilitate that. It's maps. It's signs. It's consistent language. It's helpful rangers. It's volunteers. And, again, I want to emphasize the signage is the voice of this place. It's speaking literally to the visitors. You need to speak with the same accent.

There are all kinds of visitors and all kinds of wayfinding needs. Visitors need orientation. "Where am I now?" And, without orientation, you really can't enjoy a place. You need orientation and directions to find some place. So, being oriented and being directed are the two sort of missions of wayfinding.

Orientation comes from maps primarily and directions come from directional signage. So, we need elements that kind of work together for that orienting and

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directing.

Asking someone is always great, but us guys never ask anybody anything. We're going to try to find this with signs. So, people are quite helpful on the Mall, but the numbers sort of preclude not having directional signs. We need to solve the problem with some sort of signs.

This is an early picture of the strategy. We're trying to preserve the preserve, preserve the reserve, and do our information at the edges where people encounter the Mall from the city and welcome and orient them so they can do their cross traffic with very few elements in the internal park.

This is a kind of a view shed thing, and it's also pretty logical. We found that when you entered a property and you have a nice map or directional sign, it's a signal to change your behavior. It's a signal you're in a unique place. So this sort of perimeter

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sort of approach, and again, this is two miles, you know, 600 feet. The scale here is easy to miss sometimes.

Our strategy is this sort of network of unified elements, primarily at the perimeter. Map kiosks greet and welcome and orient and directional signs direct visitors and they present multi-directional information.

We want to use the fewest signs. We want to use the fewest words. We want very high quality, durable materials. We want this to look like it's substantial, so it doesn't look like -- so it looks intentional. We want understanding of typography and we want elegant forms. This is the sort of inventory from the UniGuide. These are the various tools that National Parks Services created to solve most signage problems or situations.

This is identity and you've got things like monuments, you've got ball fields, parking, bathrooms, food service.

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There's a whole -- there's a almost a tool for everything in this program.

Then you have regulatory formats: very low, post-mounted, chain-mounted.

And, then here you have the wayfinding tools, and it's this particular sign that is not specifically in the UniGuide.

And, this one is sort of half-way in and half-way out, I would say.

These are the proposed sign types.

And, again, this is the standard Parks Service sort of hardware and format, as is this.

This is our hybrid sort of wayfinding tool we would like to recommend.

And, by the way, the wording on these map directories. We've cut the wording by about 80 percent in terms of understandability. We've rewritten the copy.

It's quicker to scan, so I think we're on our way to having a more intelligent wayfinding

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system.

We have a brand new map. We found that the current map is very good for planners and not very good for visitors.

So, this is the latest in visitor mapping around the country where you use a simplified, summit perspective orientation. We have a north orientation and a south orientation, and we've exaggerated the key of destinations to keep oriented and we've highlighted the major destinations that capture 90 percent of the people. So, this is a kind of fairly quick-read map, with very simple legends. We try to minimize the legending.

The mapping is a whole different story, but I think it's going to be a very powerful map. It's going to really empower people. Here's a bigger version of it.

Now, the history of the Mall wayfinding in 1978, a terrific program was done, largely by the Smithsonian. It's almost

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all gone, but there are a couple of these left by the West Wing of the National Gallery.

This was an icon program done by a very seminal designer named Lance Wyman, who sort of invented the use of icons in a wayfinding. And, he's still around in New York and I've spoke to him about this program, and, we've all agreed to go back into this and find the good parts of it and bring it back. So, these icons are the original ones, and we've taken those and cleaned them up a little bit and added new ones for all of the new assets on the Mall. So, that we have a picture story and a word story.

We have a tremendous amount of foreign-speaking visitors. We know that if you have a picture of something recognizable or if I learn something that I can recognize, I can see it the second time on a sign, I can self-guide.

So, it's a words and picture kind of wayfinding that is very sound and is very

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best practices, very nice to organize. We're taking the national standards for ancillary icons and folding those in for restrooms, refreshments, bookstores, etc.

We're adding this layer of offsite or ancillary destinations, if you will, that are not park operated or part of the Mall technically, but are part of a typical visit.

And, of course, we're working with the Smithsonian on their version of these icons, some of which date back to the 1978 ones and some of which are brand new. So we're teaming with them to come up with the right artwork and the right language.

So what emerges is a visual language to describe everything on the Mall.

To organize those into message delivery, they'd be in some sort of a sign. They could be horizontal. They could be grouped. It sort of works the way the Mall is so rectilinear that things are forward or behind you or left to right, can be organized

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into patterns. And thus, the Mall was quite rectilinear. Of the intersections, all but a few are largely orthogonal.

So, to solve orthogonal wayfinding, this is what you would normally see. You would see double-legged signs or panel signs, two per intersection. It's efficient information-wise, but it's kind of cluttered and chaotic to have all these signs, so we'd like to take the information that these double signs have and combine it into a single universal pylon. It's less square feet. It's one footprint. It takes up much less of the visual view shed. So, this is the general idea.

We're not doing it at every intersection of course. We're picking the major intersections. We have a small one where there is more intimate scale and where there are less destinations. But, you can see we have to already prioritize what destinations are listed. We have three

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destinations and then we have a list of minor things, so that each sign has a predictable kind of hierarchy.

The height was very key to us and we've got some comments they were too tall. We found this is very comfortable for most people. We want them to read this while they're walking. And, by the way, this is about 8'6, which is even lower than almost all airport signs that you see within concourses of airports. So, it's very convenient to look horizontal and up to this degree.

Here's 15'10 or 5', so it -- we think from a readability standpoint. And, it's largely over people's heads. We get so many crowds, we would really like to have the information delivery above the 5'6 level, if we can.

It's place on the Mall is challenging. We observed a kind of low, hard-scape: benches, trash, new posts and chain, which is very elegant.

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And, you have the tree canopy, which, you know goes up, I don't know, starts 8, 9, 10 feet and I didn't draw one, it was very black and dense. So, our proposal is to introduce these few elements that read above this hard-scape line, but make use of this sort of viewable information space.

It's about the same width as the skinniest tree trunks. Most of the tree trunks are wider, in fact. This is a very good system for communicating. A small footprint, non-English speakers, four directions at once, high message capacity, and then, this middle point here. If you are looking for it, you can find these easily. If you're not looking for it, you've been here a lot, you can go right by it. It's a vertical form, which is more in the pattern of the landscape design of them all.

I'd like it to look like it's always been there. And, of course, it's got to be very durable. We're looking at

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different base details and how to deliver this to the ground-scape.

And then, these are individual panels, done with automotive paint on metal, so they can be removed. And, so they create a natural pattern, and we want to bring that pattern down to the stone as a detail. Still refining this, but it's a way to make it look like it didn't come out of a sign shop, but it came out of more of an architectural sort of process.

We tested full-size mock ups in about 50 locations. We would put these up and they were fake messages, except for one was correct. People gathered around these to get information. They couldn't wait to read these. We had to hide behind the bushes, where people were trying to use these signs. There is a hunger for wayfinding information on the Mall that you wouldn't believe. So, people gathered around these, and we're trying to sort them out, and go places.

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So this is in front of Lincoln. Here we are at Third and Madison. It's sort of in the tree line. It's there if you want it. So, it's a kind of -- I think it's a good adding up of the criteria and designing something that meets the criteria.

This is kind of a rough count of what we've got, what we're proposing. This huge increase is largely in a tidal basin area, for safety signs and water use signs. The net increase in the Mall proper is almost the same. We're only slightly higher and the wayfinding signs includes map directories and the pylon signs of the two sizes.

These are the colors and materials we are trying to make the colors distinguishable, but down a little bit, so that they differentiate, but they're more subtle. The mock up had brighter colors. We've already softened the colors.

We like a granite base. The project phasing is currently is this: we're

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working on Lincoln first. It almost works as a demonstration project by the way. And, then we would attack the west end of the Mall and East Potomac Park. And, then the third phase would be the Smithsonian end.

This, don't forget is 600 feet, so these squares wouldn't even show on this chart, so this is what we've got here at the corner, right here just south of Lincoln and here you see the tree line and the kind of relationship to the lower bench and trash area. So, this is the information area.

Here we're in front of Lincoln. These are the only two that are actually within the reserve that are -- but this intersection is a huge intersection for these three major monuments and the food service and the restrooms, so these two are quite important.

This is maybe a net effect of improving the operational signage. This goes away and we get this instead. This goes away

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and we get this. So, in addition to the count being lower, we're going to have smaller, more refined, more predictable elements.

These are things from the standard UniGuide manual, which I think are very nice and very subtle. So, that the same typography, the same colors, would go on a stanchion sign or a chain sign or even on a fence sign.

Again, this is the small pylon in front of Lincoln. This is the sort of Lincoln pattern and again, we've got 12 regulatory signs here right now. We are cutting that way down, so we are looking at ways to identify Lincoln. Other memorials that may be a variation on the standard design, and that's the two proposed signs that are essentially not in the standard design book.

And, I've got a nice model here that sort of shows the particulars of the design with the base and the panels.

And, I believe that's the

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presentation. And, I would still entertain comments and questions.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Thank you very much. Questions from the Commission? Ms. Tregoning.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: Thank you Mr. Chairman. I have a couple of questions and maybe they're concerns.

You know, what you're presenting absolutely seems like an improvement, but what strikes me is that visitors to the Mall, these first-time visitors -- you know, the Mall is in the middle of the city, so you know, in some ways, some of the destinations that people might also be interested in I would like to ask you not to exclude those destinations that aren't government-run or Parks Service run.

So, if you're near the Penn Quarter neighborhood, it would be great if the signs directed you to food and shopping and entertainment or whatever other opportunities

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that there might be off the Mall. That the signs point to where Metro is. That I can imagine a future where there might be bike kiosks on the Mall, so that there would be the opportunity for people to get to that kind of transportation.

And, the other thing I would suggest, maybe as a quid pro quo, I think that the City would be very interested in allowing your signage on City property, outside the Mall. So on Constitution, on Independence, at places, you know, at places where people are, you know, are entering the Mall. Maybe they need that wayfinding before they actually get into that interior space.

MR. HUNT: Should I answer now?

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Sure.

MR. HUNT: I did mention Metro. We have Metro signs throughout this program for Foggy Bottom, Smithsonian, and the one south of the Mall. So, Metro is a very big offsite destination.

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We met with the VID that has put up the blue signs in the city and there was some talk to combine these programs at one point, and we all agreed that the City has a sign language that is sort of neutral and city-like and the Mall is a destination on the City signs. So, when you get to the Mall, we have our own National Parks Service look.

We would love to expand these out further where it's part of legitimate perceived mall visit and certainly to the south, there is a -- we don't want to overlap too much with the VID signs, which do have a lot of pedestrian information on it.

And, I think our approach now Commissioner, is to identify those key parts that you would want to get to from the Mall that would be part of this two- or three-day visit.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Yes.

MR. HUNT: So we agree?

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: So, excuse

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me, things like other museum destinations? Because there are lots of museums all around the Mall that are not Smithsonian or Parks Service operated.

MR. HUNT: Right now we've identified just a few that are like in the two-or three-block range, but we could entertain a longer list.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: I think that we'd be delighted to provide you with that list.

MR. HUNT: That's quite a flexible system.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: Okay.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Mr. Ames.

COMMISSIONER AMES: Thank you for a good presentation. It's exciting to me to see your ideas and what you're thinking about doing.

My question would be: there's not going to be a lot of difference in the number of signs? Am I correct?

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MR. HUNT: That's correct.

COMMISSIONER AMES: But, wouldn't there be considerable difference in the number of square feet of signs.

MR. HUNT: I hope there's substantially lower square feet of signage.

COMMISSIONER AMES: That's what I'm looking for.

MR. HUNT: It's hard for us to measure that accurately, but I think there'd be substantially lower square footage.

COMMISSIONER AMES: Which is my recommendation. What I'm saying is, my recommendation to you is to make -- I know you can't do exactly -- I don't expect you to go out and measure each sign that's there, but that to me is a major factor in the acceptance of this program. That, not only does it better serve people, but it also opens up for more beauty there because it decreases the amount of square footage that's there to look at.

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And, again, I commend you for your work. It's very impressive. Thank you.

MR. HUNT: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Mr. Hart.

MR. HART: It looks like the signs are all opaque. Is there any provision for lighting? Either back lighting or front lighting?

MR. HUNT: I think we have enough challenge to get these approved without lighting. Lighting seems to be a very sensitive issue on this Mall. We are not lighting these currently self-lit. It was part of the discussion and it ended up that these would be free-standing, ambient-lit signs.

Now, there are some dark areas on this Mall that could be nice if there was a lit sign. So, right now we don't have provisions for ground lighting the signs specifically. We are depending on the ambient light that's around it. But that is a very

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good idea and a good concern.

MR. HART: Well, it's just a matter of coordination between what lighting is out there and where you put the signs. Because the Mall is not just a daytime experience.

MR. HUNT: No, in fact, it's a great nighttime experience. And, things like signs by the way, give people of sense of confidence and security that the place is organized and is a good place to be at night, I think.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Mr. Miller.

VICE CHAIRMAN MILLER: This looks like a very good project with a good purpose.

Just following up on what Ms. Tregoning said, not only telling people the information about what's in the general area, but I'm curious as to why you distinguish between the White House and the U.S. Capitol Building and the other -- I mean the people on the Mall want to know where those places -- you call them minor at one point in your

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presentation --

MR. HUNT: No, they're not minor.

VICE CHAIRMAN MILLER: -- because they're not part of I guess the --

MR. HUNT: If I said minor, I apologize.

VICE CHAIRMAN MILLER: -- jurisdictional parameter you are given --

MR. HUNT: Well --

VICE CHAIRMAN MILLER: It seems like they all should be treated -- people want to go --

MR. HUNT: You've been listening in to our meetings. As a Mall visitor, I do not distinguish between a museum, a monument, and offsite museum. It's all one great week or ten days or two days.

I think that the National Parks Service part of the Mall has a kind of identity which is suggested by their colors. The Smithsonian has a kind of collective identity that goes with it. So, it

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chapterizes these things. I hope that they don't appear to be hierarchical or minor or major.

The White House is a huge draw of people and most people go to the White House after they've been on the Mall . They would go there and walk up there or have a tour. So, we need to present this as equals, but I sort of think it's kind of good to differentiate by color.

To me it's a sorting technique, and I kind of know the stuff that's blue might be off the Mall. Things that are National Parks Service brown or Smithsonian gold are likely within my grasp within the Mall. It's a subjective feel, but I get your point.

VICE CHAIRMAN MILLER: I think yes, the visitor doesn't care.

MR. HUNT: They really don't care in the end.

VICE CHAIRMAN MILLER: They don't need that.

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MR. HUNT: Yes.

VICE CHAIRMAN MILLER: And, the other just concern I would raise: I understand what you're saying about what's comfortable for people to view --

MR. HUNT: Yes --

VICE CHAIRMAN MILLER: -- in terms of the height --

MR. HUNT: Yes.

VICE CHAIRMAN MILLER: It does seem that it's a little bit high. You showed the height of the --

MR. HUNT: Yes.

VICE CHAIRMAN MILLER: -- hard-scape, like the bench and then you showed the height of the canopy. It seemed -- and this went to the height of the canopy. It seemed like you could go somehow in between and maybe still be able to find these wayfinding signs.

MR. HUNT: It is a tough call, how big to make these. It sounds big, but this real estate scales it down. The minute you

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place something out there, it is swallowed up by the real estate. So in our business it is a continual self-evaluation. How big should something be to be effective, human-scaled, and yet scaled to the environment. We may end up looking at these a little bit lower.

VICE CHAIRMAN MILLER: What was the height again?

MR. HUNT: This is 10 at the top and so the messaging here is around 8 5 and I didn't bring a scale figure.

VICE CHAIRMAN MILLER: More to the Metro sign?

MR. HUNT: The Metro is much bigger. The Metro is even bigger than this. The Metro is in the 12 foot range, and it's much bigger. Metro is, I think, about 30 inches. We're at 14, which is quite slim and 10 feet with this version.

VICE CHAIRMAN MILLER: And how many of them will there be there?

MR. HUNT: I think they've --

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VICE CHAIRMAN MILLER: I realize your cutting down the total number from what's there now but --

MR. HUNT: I think this particular element I think we have 42 at the build out and that's on the whole 2-mile by 1-mile Mall with the 130 intersections. So it's, and they're never closer than about 400 feet. I mean that's a whole football field, so the space is so grand it absorbs the stuff in our experience. I'll give you a scale figure here you can see.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Ms. Tregoning.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: Just a follow up on that. In your presentation you showed us only two destinations that were for the blue signs: the White House and the Capitol. What else would be on the blue signs.

MR. HUNT: Here's my scale guide. This is about right.

(Laughter.)

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How's that? That's almost exactly an inch and a half scale.

From memory, the blue signs include the Metro stations, the White House, National Archives, Capitol, Supreme Court. To the south: Holocaust Museum, Bureau of Engraving.

It's I would say it's a perimeter around that like I said would be in a perceivable walk from the center of the Mall. But, again, to your earlier point, we could reach out a little further.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: I think that would be great and I think that helps to understand you know, what you kind of include and don't include on the Mall.

I would point out that in your orthogonal map you know, you made no differentiation between the White House and the Capitol and the other Mall destinations.

So, I mean I just do think that for the visitor, those are the most visited sites in the federal city. In particular I think it

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does make sense to consider using the same color of signage and make the other destinations, maybe use those for the blue signs. But, like I say, your map doesn't differentiate.

MR. HUNT: Well, the map doesn't have the colors, but the map does use the White House and Jefferson as the icons and Lincoln and the Capitol are both sort of enlarged, if you will --

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: Orient the --

MR. HUNT: -- for reference.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: Right.

MR. HUNT: Yes.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: But they also happen to be the major destinations.

MR. HUNT: Right, yes, yes.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Mr. Miles.

COMMISSIONER MILES: I'd sure like to thank you for your presentation. I certainly found it informative.

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But the one question I had on the structure is, if you had sort of an estimated life span or potential maintenance or maintenance cost going forward? I know you can't judge fading over climate conditions or what not, but from the federal angle, you know cost is always an issue for us now. So will we be back here in 10 for replacement, 20, so on and so forth.

MR. HUNT: There is nothing more discouraging than a great looking sign program that looks terrible in three to five years, for hard use or vandalism or weather. The National Parks Service in Harper's Ferry wants these to be extremely durable, so we're going to use stone at the bottom, automotive-painted panels that can be changed out. I think you'd have an easy ten-year life, if they don't get vandalized.

Now we understand from the Parks Service that they get run over a lot. Whatever you put out there, with all these

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permitted activities and trucks that things get hit. But, I think this would about as durable as any configuration you could do.

Another reason to get this a little higher is to discourage the inadvertent vandalism that people fool with. If it's just above their head height, they're a little less likely to do that. And, this is the hard use curve kind of area.

But I appreciate the cost and in the contracting, Harper's Ferry will have a long-term return on investment as part of their bidding process to make sure that they get something that is going to last.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Yes.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Could I just note to the folks who don't know what role Harper's Ferry plays in this.

MR. HUNT: Oh, sorry.

COMMISSIONER MAY: That Harper's Ferry is the Office within the Parks Service

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where --

MR. HUNT: I apologize.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Yes, the sort of signage central and in interpretation -- and that's where a lot of our operations are based out of. And, this contract is actually done through the Harper's Ferry Center, so that's the reference to that. It's like when we talk about Denver, you know, all these things that happen out of Denver and nobody knows why, but anyway, that's where the contract is, so.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: I had a couple questions too. I agree with Mr. Miller about the lighting. I think that would be helpful and I think Congressman Norton has talked about that in the past, in increasing lighting on the Mall. And, I think it would be something that would be very helpful and I think attractive.

But, again, as Mr. Miles said, there's a cost to that, because once you put lighting on it, then you have to maintain that

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as well. So, that would be of interest to me.

I think it would be helpful for us to see mock ups of this at some point too. I think, because CFA has noted some concern about the taller pylons and maybe looking at the smaller. I think that would be helpful to us.

When you talked about the eye, being it vertical or horizontal or higher -- vertical, horizontal -- my concern was, you know I look at something and it's easier for my eye to train down. At least, that's how I see, so I'm more inclined to be comfortable with lower and smaller signs. But again, the mock ups would be very helpful to me in doing that.

MR. HUNT: I think we are planning to have some sort of mock up process to get everybody out there in the field and look at one or two of these and maybe at different sizes even.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: That would be

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good.

MR. HUNT: Yes.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: One of your earlier slides too seemed to indicate there was a 44 percent reduction in signs but then the numbers seemed to --

MR. HUNT: I don't want to mislead you with numbers. The heavy sign count currently is in the monument's themselves. I mean the regulatory and the behavioral signs.

Within the monuments, we are going to reduce it by 44 percent.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Okay.

MR. HUNT: The things that get added that bring the number back up are things that don't exist today, especially around the tidal basin, around those areas. So, the monuments should be a lot cleaner and a lot more like they were intended to be.

You go to the monument Walk In World War II, you trip over ten signs to just to get there. We're trying to simplify that

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down to one. So, that the real improvement will be in the memorials and monuments themselves.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: So you won't have the "no food" signs.

MR. HUNT: You will, but we're going to hopefully get by with just one that's standardized, that's enforceable with Park Police, and not have to repeat it six times.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Okay. The other point and Ms. Tregoning made this about the signage for sites off the Mall.

We have talked for years about the idea of getting people off of the Mall and into the community, into the businesses, into the restaurants, and I know we can't advertise all of these sites, but I think that that is consistent with what we worked with the Parks Service on their National Mall Plan and also with our re-imagining the Washington Monumental Core. For us being able to link the two, link those sites in the Monumental

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Core with the National Mall is I think a very important program for us.

MR. HUNT: Okay.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: That's all my comments.

COMMISSIONER DIXON: Mr. Chairman.

It's amazing how many comments that we have on this subject. It's very well presented actually. I guess we've all been lost.

(Laughter.)

So we appreciate signage. I was curious by one. The material, granite, is very expensive, probably appropriate because it has a solidness about it. And, I'm wondering about the cost. Is there a less expensive way to go?

But, secondly, the other question has to do with you limit it to three signs pretty much per face aren't you?

MR. HUNT: Three major destinations.

COMMISSIONER DIXON: Yes, yes, so,

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is there going to be a pattern there where you might look at the top will be one thing, the second one and the third one, and if we do all these destinations, it could expand the number that you might need.

Two questions: one is material, two the number of signs and that's my questions.

MR. HUNT: We say in wayfinding that you cannot direct everybody to go everywhere, everyplace. So we prioritize what's closest, or what is furthest away and important, and try to get the message count down.

We've got the three big messages and then we have a minor list. This one says restrooms, refreshments, information, East Potomac Park, as a secondary thing.

So, we think if we hit the big monuments, memorials, the big museums, you're going to interface with a lot of the traffic on the Mall, a lot of pedestrian traffic.

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As regards to granite. This could be a painted metal base, but the bottom halves of signs take a real beating from landscapers and tractors and you know weed whackers. So, if we can afford a stone base, I think long-term it's a better value and this would last a very long time and then if we have very high quality upper panels on a steel frame, I think this is a model that has better durability and better long-term value than a conventional post and panel sign.

COMMISSIONER DIXON: I think of course with the granite is that it -- these trucks will chip granite and a chipped piece of granite is just as bad as a dented piece of metal --

MR. HUNT: And, this stuff takes a beating --

COMMISSIONER DIXON: -- but is less expensive --

MR. HUNT: -- out there --

COMMISSIONER DIXON: -- to replace

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the metal.

MR. HUNT: Yes. You see people standing on the signs at the inauguration. I mean these things become furniture. It's a hard use environment, Commissioner. It's a challenge.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: I have a question on three destinations?

MR. HUNT: Yes sir.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: And, I just wonder whether they would be covered? The Vietnam Veterans Memorial?

MR. HUNT: Oh, absolutely.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Okay. And the second would be the George Mason?

MR. HUNT: Now, George Mason didn't make the "Big Eight." But, it's one of my favorites, by the way.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Yes, and mine too.

MR. HUNT: And, we are going to hit that on the map and when you get south of the

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primary Mall, it's going to appear on the signs.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Okay.

MR. HUNT: I'd love for people to go to the secondary destinations and in fact, on our directory map we have a little list of things you might have overlooked.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Okay.

MR. HUNT: You know. D.C. Memorial, George Mason, some of those things that are very interesting and historic. We like to try to balance the property by having people go to the far corners and not just clog Washington. Plus, Washington is fully subscribed almost every day anyway.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: What about the John Marshall Park?

MR. HUNT: Not on there yet.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Okay. Like that might be or might not be?

MR. HUNT: It could be in the list we are talking about.

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CHAIRMAN COGBILL: In the list.
Okay.

MR. HUNT: Yes.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: All right.
Those are my questions. Ms. Turner.

COMMISSIONER TURNER: When I think about finding my way around, besides just the signs, which are obvious that you need to know what direction you're in, I'm always curious about how far I am from a different location.

So, to that point, if you're trying to find your way around, is there any type of overlay in addition to the signs that's going to help people have context or perspective of where they are, so they may know the Capitol is east, but how far is it? One mile, is it two miles?

And, so are there other elements to the program outside of signs that are going to supplement it? Is it additional stations? Is it maps that give you broader perspective of the Mall as a whole? Is it guides?

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MR. HUNT: You get a prize for the best question.

(Laughter.)

I'll see if I can answer that. The current handout map has a radius distance system, but it's not credible, nobody believes it, and if you try to walk end to end, you can't do it on a hot day. It's very hard to show distances that are believable on a map.

Now, on our directory maps, we're going to have scale references and maybe you can kind of buy into that. We're going to have maybe walking distances to main elements listed on the directory map, but I think the scale issue is going to be best dealt with in a carry-around map that, boy I've only gone this far and I've only got to D.C. and I still got to get down to the Smithsonian.

There is a separate project from Harper's Ferry to do interactive wayfinding on cell phones and hand-held devices that we think in the industry will become best

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practices very fast, that will allow a lot of people to dial up where they are; how far things are; get interpretation; orientation, GPS already does that. So, I see hard signs, posted maps, paper maps as the analog tools to be supplemented by these new age digital tools that are coming on line.

It's a challenging place to figure out and if you do, you don't know how big it is. In August, this is a giant place to get around. It's dusty and it's staggering to get end to end.

So, I'm not sure we can solve the scale perception issue with the signs, but we certainly are sensitive to it.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: Is it a cost issue? I mean you have -- I mean those signs -- you already know the locations where you're going to put all those signs, so you know the distance. You know what I mean? I mean is it that it's just that otherwise you'd be making 40 Jefferson Memorials that are all

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the same and now you'd have to make 40 that are all different because they would have a little parenthetical that has the number of miles to the distance.

MR. HUNT: You know, we have done a lot of trail work, trail signs, and trail signs historically would have a distance of 1.2 miles to the Lake or something. We looked at that and decided it was such a fine informational error that it was difficult to deliver that in this kind of bold context. We could look into that. It is a problem and as I said to the Commissioner, people just don't understand the scale of this place until they're out there. And, a lot of people leave without seeing what they wanted to see by the way, because they just couldn't get around. They ran out of time.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Other questions?

MS. WITHERELL: I was just going to add one comment to the lighting discussion. You'll hear next month a presentation on the

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National Mall Plan and one of the components on that is to study lighting for paths, improved pedestrian lighting, so you may want to go ask the Park Service to talk about that in the context of the signs next month and you can listen for that information.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Well, thank you.

It has been a very helpful presentation. We appreciate your being here with us. Thank you very much.

MR. HUNT: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: I believe that concludes the business -- Oh, Mr. Ames. All right.

COMMISSIONER AMES: Mr. Chairman, one thing I would like to say in tagging on with Mr. Dixon. I'm going to wait until our next meeting because I know you'll be here then, because I want to think long and hard about what I say before you leave.

But I did want to make a comment about something that we were informed about by

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Executive Director and that's the departure of Ms. Goldkind.

I want to say that we have in this department a group of professional people that make presentations to us that sometimes get fired at, they get thrown at, then they get agreed with at times, but she amongst the rest is a true professional and I will say that the National Capital Planning Commission is going to sustain a great loss and somebody else is going to sustain a great gain.

And, I do thank you for your efforts and your presentations, the many you have given us. The disagreements and the agreements, but the professional manner in which you handled yourself, whichever the case may be, and I thank you for that.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Other questions or comments?

ADJOURN

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Then we stand adjourned.

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(Whereupon, the Open Session
Commission Meeting of the National Capital
Planning Commission was concluded at 1:55
p.m.)

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[INSERT - OnSite Magazine Article]

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[INSERT - Closing a Portion of Manchester
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