
Urban Design Workshop
Stakeholder & Public Group Comments

January 24, 2012

Introduction

The following are raw comments collected by group facilitators at the Urban Design Workshop held at the National Capital Planning Commission on January 24, 2012. The workshop was divided into two sessions. The first session included invited federal and local stakeholders from throughout the National Capital Region. The second session was targeted to the general public.

The workshop focused on urban design in Washington, DC and the greater National Capital Region. The sessions were designed to explore the federal government's role in improving the urban design and character of the National Capital Region. To structure the conversation, participants were distributed into small discussion groups where they focused on the following three topic areas:

1. Federal buildings and property in the **urban context**
2. Federal buildings, property, and campus design in the **regional context**
3. The National Capital Region's **general character and sense of place**

The thoughts and ideas that flowed from the discussion will inform NCPC Staff and the Urban Design Task Force in drafting the new Federal Urban Design Element of the *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital Region*.

The following is a summary of the thoughts and ideas that were recorded during the two workshop sessions. They have been organized by the three topic areas and the questions put to each group are included in the summaries.

STAKEHOLDER SESSION

Diane Sullivan's Group

Urban Context

- The FBI building represents everything that is bad in terms of federal building design in the urban context: scale isn't pedestrian-friendly, feels heavy, not inviting, no ground floor activity, thin tree canopy and no greenspace whatsoever (when there is a lot of building yard to work with!)
- One person mentioned that we need to plan our parking lots better so that there aren't vehicle and pedestrian conflicts.
- The Department of Energy and the Department of Labor were also discussed in terms of bad examples – again neither one of these buildings addresses the street. Both of them have huge building yards but with completely wasted concrete space.
- This conversation should be tied to building performance. There is a strong correlation between badly designed buildings and badly performing buildings.
- Good example of public space is the federal area near Reservation 113 with all of the food trucks...Nice design...good food!
- Programming seems to be very important in terms of the success of the public space...what does the community want to see in these spaces?
- The Department of Transportation Headquarters is probably the best example - it will continue to get better when more people live in the area.
- Security in general is always uninviting.
- The Pentagon is trying to balance access with security. They are figuring out a way to open up the Pentagon Memorial to the public.

Regional Context

- Connections are very important through the campus – the Navy Yard is a good example. Campuses take up significant amounts of land and create an island that no one can get through.
- They should be lined with retail. The NOAA building in Silver Spring would be a great place for retail since there is 24/7 activity in that building.
- Bike paths should be allowed on the perimeter of these campuses.
- Retail inside the campuses should be limited.
- There should be a “mixing zone” where security is not super strict and then gets stricter as you get into the core of these campuses. There is no need for residential buildings or parking lots to be behind such strict security! The standoff should be as small as possible.
- Campuses areas present opportunities for sustainability....district energy and district water systems.
- A bad example of parking is NSA – Fort Meade
- And obviously avoid the mistakes of the Marc Center – walking distance to metro is key!

Capital Character

- It's iconic, the memorials, the Capitol, the size of the buildings (both historic and new)
- The L'Enfant Plan, diagonal streets punctuated by vistas. Makes it a walkable district with "short blocks", Washington Globe lights
- It has a human scale element to it in the neighborhoods....Capitol Hill, Dupont Circle. Wonderful architecture.
- No billboards
- Neighborhoods are very fine grained.
- Lots of green and trees
- Reservations help stitch the city together
- Negative – access has changed dramatically over the last 15 years. It is so limited now. It no longer communicates the democracy of our government.
- Metro helps define the city and its neighborhoods...it's critical.
- Other regional areas of character: Dulles Airport, Shenandoah National Park, C&O Canal, Rock Creek Park, Mt. Vernon, Capital Crescent Trail, Monticello...oozes history.
- All of our universities
- We should consider our city a "riverfront city" but it is still not the first thing that comes to mind.
- Cherry Blossoms, Embassies, Kennedy Center, Botanical Gardens, Arboretum, Georgetown and Dumbarton Oaks, the National Zoo.

Carlton Hart's Group

The Urban Context

1. The way a building and the space around it engage with the streetscape can have a significant impact on the surrounding area. What are good and bad examples of federal public buildings and building yards?

Comments:

- Bad buildings – FBI HQ, Forrestal Building, FAA Buildings, Education Building, Reagan Building (didn't like that you had to pay to use it – programming), HUD, L'Enfant Plaza, SW Waterfront walk to the Mall. These spaces were all poor pedestrian realms with nothing redeeming there. Very disconnected from the rest of the city. No retail or just poor architecture.
- Good Buildings – National Gallery of Art, US Botanical Garden, National Cathedral. No discussion on why these were good beyond that they were pleasant settings that make these buildings attractive destinations.

2. There are many types of federal public spaces in Washington, including parks, plazas, and memorial landscapes. Is there a federal open space that you particularly like or don't like? What works or doesn't work about it?

Comments:

- Bad spaces – WWII Memorial, FDR Memorial, MLK Memorial, Kennedy Center site. These spaces were either poorly designed (didn't provide a good designation) or not very accessible for pedestrians. Thought Kennedy Center was a beautiful building architecturally, but was very inaccessible to pedestrians given the roadway network that surrounds the building.
- Good Spaces – SE Federal Center (The Yards) Park, the Natural Gallery Sculpture Garden, 4th Street, SW (near former Waterfront Mall), 7th Street, NW corridor from National Mall to Mass. Ave.), Constitution Gardens. The group thought these were good spaces because they were well programmed, well connected to the rest of their surroundings, and active pedestrian realms.

The Regional Context

1. There are various types of federal facilities in the region, including individual buildings at Metro stops, campuses, and military bases. How can these types of federal facilities be better integrated into their surrounding communities?

Comments:

- The biggest concern with this group was around the balance the need for security elements and making sure that they were well designed and integrated into the design. "Be clever with the using security elements" to allow for security but not blocking pedestrian movement.
- There was also an acknowledgement that these elements can't prevent every situation so there needs to be a discussion about what level of risk is acceptable.
- One member recommended relocating quasi-public operations/facilities outside perimeter fence (e.g. NIH blood donor bank is used by the general public but everyone has to go through security to reach it.)
- There was also some discussion of good master plans – like Joint Base Andrews have moved to a campus that emphasizes walkability. This was in part a response to MDE (MD Dept. of the Environment) stormwater regs that require the reduction of stormwater runoff at the installation. Since there is a finite land area, the best way to handle this is to consolidate parking lots into structures. This overlaps nicely with increased density/walkability of installation.
- There were also some concerns raised about design.
 - The repetition of design elements on a campus are not necessarily optimal because these elements tend to be over used. And sometimes the wrong elements are reused leading to poor design. (e.g. FDA White Oak "quad" concept taken a bit too far)
 - Often programming for buildings too strongly influence the design of a building and this can lead to problems and a reduction in the design character.

2. Large campuses and installations need to work for occupants and visitors, as well as the surrounding area. Are you familiar with an example of a well-designed campus or installation? What works about it?

Comments:

- Good campuses – Fort McNair and NIH Historic Core. Both were mentioned because of them being stately and having good landscapes. These were places that were not “over value engineered” (or not cutting to the bone). Maintained their good aesthetic value.
- Brief discussion concerning the lengthy process necessary to have projects approved and how this affected the end design.

Capital Character

1. The federal government has an interest in maintaining those unique qualities that define it’s character as the national capital. What are some of those characteristics?

Comments:

- Monumental “quality” of the core is essential to maintaining its character
 - White House is a modest scale compared with other country’s Head of State residences – very important for U.S.A.
 - Building height scale in the city overall is very good (mentioned the Height Act). This is appropriate along the National Mall given the proportions along the Mall. The building size/scale not necessarily appropriate along the neighborhood streets (height is ok along Avenues)
 - Density seems to be “creeping up” which group thought was good, however the design quality seems to be suffering because too many architects are being hired that live outside DC and they don’t “get” the city.
 - Neighborhoods where buildings/spaces are human scaled seem to work best. The group also said that massive “super block” buildings were the worse designed parts of the city
2. The District includes areas that are predominately federal and others that are predominately private. What areas of the District of Columbia define it as a capital city (the Federal Triangle, Capitol Hill, the area north of Constitution Avenue and west of the White House) and what characteristics define those areas?

Comments:

- A few comments about this – generally, corridors/connections not adequate so there were many “urban wastelands” that one had to walk through to reach one’s destination. Improving the connections/corridors will provide better neighborhood/pedestrian experience [mentioned 10th Street, SW corridor from SW Waterfront to Mall and 8th Street, SE (Barracks Row) from Penn. Ave to M Street, SE.]

3. Are there places outside of the District of Columbia that help define this area as the Nation's Capital?

Comments:

- Group talked about gateways into the city (places or buildings that told them they were in/near DC) – National Airport, Dulles Airport, Memorial Bridge, GW Memorial Parkway, Key Bridge Marriott, Pentagon, National Cathedral, Penn. Avenue from SE, Mormon Temple and 4 Corners in Bethesda. Most of these were landmarks that can be seen from a distance. Roadways and bridges are also listed because many outsiders arrive by car.

Kael Anderson's Group

The Urban Context

- M St & New Jersey Ave intersection bad
- US DOT landscaping good because physical comfort amenities, retail, and visual stimulation
- Wind tunnels in urban areas is bad
- JBAB suffers from a lack of street-level retail because of security
- NRC – security requirements kills walkways but the plazas are good
- GSA & PTO buildings in DC have a stultifying impact because of their “island effect” e.g. isolated, fortress-type design
- Landscaping at JBAB and other federal buildings is designed to prevent pedestrian movement, such as for demonstrations
- Programming at spaces like Navy Memorial and Wilson Plaza is good
- Penn Av needs more amenities/activities such as farmers market or the “National Sofa” concept
- Constitution and Independence Ave aesthetics are destroyed by too many buses
- Union Square and Pershing Place are bad

The Regional Context

- NIH is bad - walled off
- Need more wayfinding and information amenities to inspire interest and inform people about federal facilities, such as the NBM
- Federal budgets, particularly defense agencies are mission-focused; they must compete for funding across the US. Consider partnerships with other organizations to fund enhanced design in NCR.
- Problem with some installations like Andrews is that federal workers leave at 5 pm so there is not enough support for nearby retail. Consider scheduling adjustments. Also there are some internal guidelines that discourage drinking and catering to restaurants
- Provide more clarity on if and how people can access gated facilities
- Make tours available on mobile apps. Have a website that collects them all, cross-promoting the different types of attractions and information resources

- Some federal installations like JBAB and Navy Yard have urban design guidelines, e.g. materials
- Clarify the building front or building that is the public face
- Marine Corps museum has strong, inviting visual cues and branding
- Limit the concentration of federal facilities – the PTO building in Alexandria works well. In DC, the Reagan building is better than the collection of federal buildings at L’Enfant Plaza
- Improve the look of security so that it blends in better. Quantico being a good example because it blends bollards into bushes

Capital Character

- Human-scaled detail, like in Federal Triangle (also see note at bottom)
- Public Art, such as that at a White Flint Metro development which celebrates our river heritage
- High quality architecture
- Views and corridors – with punctuation points – i.e. circles along Mass Ave
- Green – trees, parks
- Low building heights
- Need seating that addresses the unique needs of both visitors and workers (workers prefer seating arrangements that are more clustered, less exposed)
- Rich history, which is documented at punctuation points in suburban environments
- Extensive infrastructure systems, like Metro
- The sense of endurance in the architecture; the democratic ideal
- Parkways and the primary arteries into the city. New York Av being a poor exception, notwithstanding opportunities like the Arboretum
- Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens, RFK, South Capitol St, St. Elizabeths, and Naval Observatory present important opportunities to enhance the character
- Improve the appearance of parking – both on-street and garages
- Charge for on-street parking, such as on the National Mall
- Improve the sense of safety around transit stations - e.g. lighting standards

*Note about *human-scaled detail*: this comment was made by Susan Spain, Project Executive; The National Mall Plan; National Mall & Memorial Parks who subsequently provided the following elaboration:

“What came across strongly to me yesterday was that agencies do "monumental" and federal scale fairly well - but don't do human scale well at all. Monumental scale may also get reinforced in both commission processes.

As a result the needed human scale and interfaces are missing resulting in a built environment that is uncomfortable and intimidating. What is needed is a marriage of monumental (inspirational, mission oriented, enduring, stately, grand, symbolic) and the human scale flexible designed spaces (out of primary vistas and viewsheds; articulate building detail/texture/color/interest; provide a variety of information/education/entertainment opportunities for people; flexible people oriented services and programmed spaces; and spaces that have elements of joy, small scale delight, discovery, comfort and relaxation).

Commissions may need to consider how projects can successfully integrate human and monumental or federal scale.”

Sarah Moulton's Group

The Urban Context

- Diversity of monumental buildings is key. Allow buildings to serve as layers of the federal government narrative by encouraging unique architecture that's monumental in scale. Explore more and get beyond the 'prototypical' federal building. Stop being risk averse!
 - Museum of the American Indian + USDA building are a good juxtaposition.
- Utilize time-tested rules to enhance the pedestrian environment and enhance street activity
 - Accessibility
 - Along street
 - Into plazas and buildings
 - To transit
- Proper scaling of buildings to street with setbacks to provide green space
- Good example: DOT HQ
 - Breaks up pedestrian realm with bioretention, seating, etc. It's experiential.
 - Good public (fed/local)-private partnership made it happen
 - Helping grow the larger Capitol Riverfront neighborhood
- Bad example: HHS
 - Huge, unprogrammable public plaza
 - Random bollards
 - Great location, horrible architecture
- Good and bad example: Freedom Plaza
 - Good: great starting place for events, protests, etc.
 - Bad: strange grade change
 - Bad: no shade due to viewshed protection down Pennsylvania Avenue. This is an ongoing challenge in many places in DC...do we protect the viewshed at the cost of environmental sustainability?
- All buildings should have good connections to the street / transportation network, with adequate (but nuanced) perimeter security, like 'sacrificial' ground-level retail
 - EPA building in Arlington
 - DARPA in Arlington
 - Capitol Visitor Center
- Federal Courthouse in Alexandria has a new streetscape plan that adequately addresses security while managing adjacent uses they might not have as much control over. Security gets tighter as you get closer to the courthouse, almost like peeling back the layers of an onion.
- Should be a greater emphasis on access to the riverfronts, whether for recreation or for development opportunities. Our rivers are urban gems that deserve more attention.

- Also need a greater emphasis on preservation and enhancement of green space – activate it! We have the second greatest amount of parkland per capita in the US, but much of it is inaccessible to the public.

The Regional Context

- Federal Courthouse in Alexandria also a good example of multiple entities working together to create a better federal facility.
- Washington Headquarter Services (Navy Yard) is a good example of balancing access with security at a regional context. There are a lot of transportation issues, too, but they are balancing a variety of needs.
- NIH and Bethesda Naval should be looked at together as a good example (Bethesda Naval) and a bad example (NIH) right next door to each other.
 - Federal campuses need to coordinate not only with each other, but with the surrounding jurisdictions and the public, too.
 - Bethesda Naval manages to look monumental, is accessible, yet very secure.
 - NIH threw up barricades and is walled off from the surrounding area.
 - Putting both so close to each other exacerbates rush hour traffic problems.
- Civic beauty and monumentality needs to extend out beyond Washington and into the region. No more boring buildings that retreat into the background. Look monumental. Serve as a dignified, proud hub for the neighborhood/city. The federal government has an obligation to do this for the region.
- New Carrollton wants to become a place. With so much potential, the federal government should capitalize on this opportunity to extend out into the community and become a place.
- Regional relationships should encourage, streamline shared goals. It seems to be easier for local governments to team up with private landowners on this, and is much harder for local gov't to team up with the federal gov't. We need to remove the barriers to making this happen.
 - Sustainability: energy/water/waste
 - Security requirements
 - Streetscape/public realm design
 - Transportation systems
- Good example: PTO in Alexandria
 - It exhibits monumentality beyond the borders of DC, but it's tied into the local community with surrounding non-federal adjacent uses like residential/retail.
 - It simultaneously defines and supports the neighborhood.
- Good example: Naval Academy in Annapolis
 - Public areas (like museums) are located towards the edge of the campus, almost engaging the rest of the neighborhood
 - Security increases as you get further into the core of the campus
 - Navy Yard is trying to use this scenario for their campus
- Many facilities both in town and beyond in the region have internal cafeterias and convenience shops that discourage employees from leaving the facility and hurt outside retailers.

- These need to either be moved to the edge of the building and become accessible to the public, or removed altogether with the understanding that employees can frequent nearby retail shops and cafes.
- Don't just look at cars and mass transit when locating/planning facilities. There are also helicopter/bike/ped issues to explore.
- When planning facilities out in the NCR, take a long look at the benefits of concentrating facilities versus dispersing them. Both may be beneficial, but it ultimately depends on the location.
- Consider how best to balance local needs with federal facility needs in the region, especially when it comes to transportation issues. Consider changing roads/signals/sidewalks when necessary, and look into other community benefits that can help improve the public realm.
- Work with local jurisdictions to discourage employees from using up all the on-street parking, especially in urban areas like Arlington. Adjust parking rates to charge more during the day when employee demand is high, and lower them in the evenings and on weekends to accommodate trips to local shops and restaurants.
- Plan for flexibility. The federal government might not always occupy the facility, so how can the facility be developed to accommodate other uses over time? How can the surrounding area continue to function if the federal agency moves out and another use moves in?
 - Example: Crystal City/BRAC moves

Capital Character

- Height Act provides a monumental consistency throughout DC that defines the city.
 - Monumentality
 - Permanence
 - Scale
- The L'Enfant Plan and McMillan Plan are the two biggest defining characteristics of DC.
- Even though Georgetown isn't a federal precinct, many people know that's where political movers and shakers go. Capitol Hill is a lot like this, too. Federal buildings aren't the only things that impact the character of a place – the people that make up the federal government and the places they go to discuss work impact it, too.
 - Maybe this starts to happen elsewhere, like in NoMa, where federal agencies are leasing big chunks of sfage. Could the mixed-use areas beyond the federal facilities start to accommodate a more politically wonky culture?
- Protect character elements people see when entering the area by car (Marines Museum at Quantico, Memorial Bridge, Arlington Cemetery, Iwo Jima Memorial), by water (Mount Vernon, although this isn't federal), by train (Union Station), and by air (the Pentagon, Washington Monument, US Capitol)
- The waterfront COULD define DC, although it doesn't really do so today.
- The embassies help define DC and link it to other capital cities.
- Encourage the federal core to embrace more things that are uniquely DC, like Capital Bikeshare.
- One major concern: As the federal government changes, how will the Monumental Core change? If more facilities move out to the greater region, how can the federal government continue to keep

the Federal Triangle, Southwest Federal Center, etc. feeling like a monumental and permanently federal place? Should we require headquarters facilities to stay in DC, or should they be able to leave?

Will Herbig's Group

The Urban Context

Good examples of public spaces:

- Capitol grounds (previously) – designed as proper setting for democratic government
- The National Mall -- but underutilized
 - Does it connect the city or divide?
 - Access to its destinations: needs transit sidewalks, parking, etc.
- Columbus Plaza at Union Station has tremendous potential, but a wreck currently.
 - Why was it allowed to get this way.
- McPherson Square probably our best outside of DuPont.
 - It actually has better edges and less traffic mess than DuPont
- Sculpture Garden Ice Rink
- Judiciary Square (parking below is good)
- Federal Triangle – Constitution Avenue building yards (well maintained and proper / very Washington)

Bad examples of public spaces:

- Capitol grounds (as currently exist) – scale of perimeter security and visitor center's impacts destroy setting
- Parking impacts citywide
- Public space edges citywide destroy access to parks and plazas. Makes spaces mostly unusable
- L'Enfant Plaza – confusing chaotic caustic
- Perimeter security impacts region-wide
 - Entry experience – second-class citizen treatment at arrival (i.e.: supreme court, federal reserve)
 - Sends wrong message
 - Sense of openness gone/eroded
- HUD building – plaza design attempts to be good, but fails. Only interesting when driving by in car or a fast bike

The Regional Context

Good examples of federal buildings and spaces in the region:

- IRS at New Carrollton?

- Pentagon? Questionable
- PTO in Alexandria
 - Self-sustaining
 - Mirrors a college campus
 - No fences
 - Urban fabric of existing town extended into new development
- TSA in Crystal City
- Lincoln, Nebraska state capital is successfully designed and integrated into the downtown
- Chicago Picasso plaza
- Regan Building
 - Works both internally and exterior
 - Design and program
 - Apply this approach to regional development projects
- Bad examples of federal buildings and spaces in the region:
- Alexandria federal courthouse very dismal/fails on any urban design scale
- Other thoughts:
- Explore opportunities in Prince Georges County.
- Federal facilities contain many great amenities for communities, but those most likely to use them are not allowed to use.
- Connections need thru mega-campuses
 - recreational facilities
 - Bike lanes
 - Jogging trails
- Avoid foreboding sense of arrival: fences, barbed wire, guns, intimidation
- The time of stand alone federal building must come to an end soon.
- Goal should become some level of public access in any new federal facility regardless of location
 - Atlanta's Federal Reserve Bank includes Monetary Museum
 - Other could do the same and invite people in
- Suitland = put more there
- No longer enough to have beautiful buildings in a meadow surrounded by a fence and earthen berms
- How will changing workforce policies impact physical planning?
- Arlington = an example of good regional openness (I don't know what this means?)
- Capital Character
- General thoughts:
- Scale, approaches and views
- Park-like/Urban yet green
- Openness (in all sense of the phrase)
- Defined "soft" urban character
- Composed views
- Public buildings on higher priority than private enterprise – this is fundamentally unique and should be celebrated more fully

- Absence of tall buildings
- A stark separation of the federal vs. local city (lack of a mix)
- An international melting-pot: federal, local, embassies
- “Washington” is two separate places: a.) a physical place we live and work within, b.) a political state of mind
- Good aspects of the capital’s character:
 - Degree of historic preservation
 - Planning and architecture that blends old and new / design=balance
 - A commitment and legacy to planning: L’Enfant and McMillan
 - Scale of the city / Height Act
 - Stylistic = related decisions
- Bad aspects of the capital’s character:
 - Areas west of the white House
 - Federal Buildings more mixed with private (but mostly institutional Lonely – something missing here)
 - GSA Retail addition could help along E Street
 - Needs greater transit connection to get people there
 - No reasons to really be there beyond meetings and duty location
- Regional - Capital Character
 - The Pentagon
 - Arlington Cemetery
 - Approaches : Parkways and bridges (but, missing a NE approach – NY Ave. horrible)
 - River system
 - Great Falls
 - C&O Canal
 - Rock Creek Park
 - Old Town and Georgetown (despite not being federal)
 - Mount Vernon
 - The topographic Bowl (asked by other group members “what’s that?”)

Stacey Wood’s Group

The Urban Context

Good Examples

- Navy Memorial Plaza – focus on the view from Archives to Old Patent Office Building (Portrait Gallery), the way the space is framed by buildings is key, how buildings relate to people, walkability and pedestrian experience
- Revitalized area around Old Patent Office Building - way the building projects into street and impact on views – helps activation of street; Staircase restoration would improve relationship, glass front of Shakespeare Theater was designed to take advantage of the view

- DOT Building – use of exhibit space to engage pedestrians on street
- Importance of architecture that meets the street and articulation of buildings

Bad Examples

- FBI building, L'Enfant Plaza, ATF building
 - Lack of pedestrian scale, unwelcoming, vacuous spaces
 - Loss of impact (visually) of stair element of Patent Office building.

The Regional Context

- Urban design of “fear”
- Setback requirements of buildings, fencing, barriers placed for security are challenges for urban design
- Suitland – floating in space and turned inward

Positive aspects of campuses:

- Incorporating security elements into natural features/topography of site help reduce impact
- Fort Belvoir – promenades to connect campus to streets (neighborhood);
- NIH – excellent pedestrian way finding (signage) and fencing.
 - Negative aspects of campuses:
- Campus is analogous to single tenant office park
- More signage is needed to identify what the mission of the agency is.
- Setback requirements make it difficult to add security and comfort to a space.
- Question the need for campus model of federal facilities in region

Capital Character

(1) Qualities of National Capital

- Low Height and ability to see right-of-way
- L'Enfant Plan and amount of public open space – ability to read street patterns
- Buildings consume entire blocks in a single style with no variety.
- We need more WOW!
- Spaces need to speak to people, become inviting.
- Federal Triangle – GSA has tried to active space with umbrellas, tables, green areas for congregating

(2) Federal Spaces

- Lincoln, Jefferson – o.k., WWII Memorial not as successful as older memorials
- Protest space, speaker areas for public gatherings, need to be addressed better by NCPC and NPS.
- Backdrop for memorials needs to be addressed for more impact as a city. The city image.

- In DC, you can walk along monuments as opposed to other capital cities such as Paris where it is very difficult, if not impossible to walk near them.
- Need to return spaces to public within buildings.

(3) Spaces outside District

- Pentagon
- View from Arlington

Julia Koster's Group

The Urban Context:

- DOT HQ: Good example. Historic walk, seating, retail, water feature as security feature, Metro access. Good at placemaking – connected, walkable to other uses.
- Good for people watching.
- Capitol Grounds: Good example. Evokes federalism. Stately. Landscaping of trees and bushes feels permanent, uncluttered. Well maintained. Landscape design respects buildings and still feels open.
- Didn't like security features – not well integrated and has limited access (doesn't lead to a "grand" entrance.)
- Overall, one problem with security is that public entrances (ex. Archives) now feel hidden and like add-ons. Not stately, clumsy.
- Plaza/parking deck area at 2nd and D over 295 (tax court): Bad example. Inaccessible, desolate, ugly.
- "Where dogs go to die".
- L'Enfant Promenade: Bad example. Discourages walking.
- Pennsylvania Avenue, NW: Not a great example – missed opportunity. Doesn't provide good pedestrian experiences – funnels people.
- ATFE HQ: Good and Bad features: Fortress-like, hard edges, inaccessible courtyard/open space. But, it integrated security, included retail.
- FBI: Bad example. Looks empty, not accessible, particularly since there are now no public tours.
- New BRAC facilities generally look nice (building design), often have more integrated security. But, just not accessible at all – since campus designs, land uses were not planned concurrently with planning for transportation. NGA campus design is better than others because planning for the (new) roads and the design of the site occurred at the same time.
- IRS at New Carrollton: Bad example. Walking access to Metro is very poor, weird parking location.
- Suitland: Bad example. Federal campus with no connection to the community.

The Regional Context

- SE Federal Center: good job planning this. Originally it was a scary place. As it has developed, great mix of uses, transit, good anchors (navy yard, DOT), grocery stores. Serves as a "hub"
- Valuable to have early, holistic planning approach with lots of stakeholder input through the process-inclusive.

- Riverwalk along waterfront in DC is emerging as a good public space.
- White Oak/FDA: working hard on TDM even tho it's not near Metro, looking at programs
- Design facility to include bike paths, trails and (ways to) walk
- Connectivity – very important
- Most fed sites don't have a mix (of uses). Can this happen inside federal campuses?
- How can the public access (interior) uses, like cafeterias?
- SW federal center – has gym, grocery store, accessible, public is going in and out of area
- Issues (initially) with crime and security
- MARC center – not incorporated into the community
- Area in Anacostia (Saint E's to Poplar Point)
- Not connected.
- Fed funding, mission makes it hard to plan comprehensively for campuses
- (Result is) shuttles for feds, a piecemeal approach
- Some good examples of partnerships with private (transportation) providers
- Nebraska Avenue Complex: great interior amenities, easy to park. It's not open to the public
- Generally fed buildings not really public
- There are 2 kinds of campuses: self contained, and enclaves that are more integrated into community (NW rectangle) with more services provided privately.
- (Emerging) Crystal City: multimodal, residential, mixed uses to be added, public spaces and connections to other places,
- Public Art
- Mixed uses with residential – can this happen on federal sites?
- Issue: Size triggers more security requirements, so the positive aspects of getting denser (more services) is counterbalanced

Capital Character

- Anyone can walk around on a nice day and hang out, sit down. That's great.
- Green character-roads, grounds,
- Parks as a system
- Areas south of the Mall are less walkable
- Height limits are a plus
- Lack of overhead wires
- Vistas: terminus, Capitol, Library, views of the bowl, entrance quality
- Nature of federal architecture: Indiana limestone, WPA era features, monumental, grand
- Street Grid: we should stick to the (L'Enfant) Plan, reopen streets
- Also, look at Highway Plan
- FBI building – (frowny face)
- Often boring streets, monolithic scale
- Overall, "good looking but boring."
- City is interconnected, less so as you move further out.
- Parkways define regional capital character

- Our architecture is boring,
- Height can be bad, particularly height with block size
- Overall: Limits innovation, creativity: 'we're afraid of making mistakes'
- Federal enclaves – when workers leave, dead after hours
- Pentagon, Arlington Cemetery are part of capital image.
- Design in region:
- NIH good strong example
- Same federal enclaves (as in DC), on a bigger scale.
- Pastoral feel to waterways (not used)
- Park system extends out of capital, particularly into Maryland
- TOD is defining region in a big way: can, should this inform federal (design) character
- Colonial, federal, brick are distinctive federal elements in the region.
- Region has less consistent planning
- Security features: a big negative to character
- Security is informing design negatively
- Limiting experience of the real thing: the Capitol Visitor Center actually keeps people from seeing the capitol.
- Federal architecture is, should be public architecture. (But it's not)
- Federal public space is freeze dried.
- Dead quality
- No programming
- Better defined gateway experiences
- Lot has to do with park systems
- Possibility of water taxis to reach feds on the waterfront?

Christian Madera's Groups (Both Sessions - Compiled)

The Urban Context

- Perimeter security should be integrated into buildings and landscapes as much as possible.
- Reevaluate physical security. Make security operational.
- No bollards!
- Navy Memorial is a good example of a space that engages/activates the street (at least on Penn Ave)
- More/special design consideration is needed when a building is next to a freeway (i.e. NASA)
- Pay more attention to the needs of pedestrians and cyclists
- Pay more attention to the waterfront and park spaces
- Try to re-establish the street grid and break up super blocks (DOT HQ is a successful example)
- Put more focus on how federal buildings interact with the sidewalk
- Although it's hard, try to retrofit street level of historic buildings were possible to work better
- FBI Building (while style isn't well liked, the bigger problems are scale/massing, doesn't engage the street, lack of activity).

- ATF Building. Has retail, but the security moat is a problem.
- Try to line buildings with retail/community uses
- Make sure the streetscape and landscaping is well thought and designed for pedestrians
- Think about designing spaces that could be activated by programming (markets, concerts)
- Add residential and retail – more mixed use.
- Federal buildings in the core shouldn't have cafeterias – they should patronize outside retail
- Make sure buildings are human scale – something can still be monumental without being out of proportion.
- Make federal spaces like the National Mall and parks serve as an amenity for visitors *and* locals. This means different types of uses/design.
- Make sure the Monumental core integrates/connects with surrounding areas. Don't be insular.
- There are issues of scale – “grand” often means pedestrian-unfriendly distances. Think about this when building “grand” buildings and “wide” streets.
- Put more focus on incorporating the waterfront into the city's core
- Avoid creating/building federal precincts/enclaves. These aren't activated/integrated with the rest of the city. Add other uses.
- Try to make spaces more flexible, so they can be grand when they need to be, but active/interesting for regular life otherwise
- Avoid creating isolated/detached spaces (ie. Freedom plaza, or Boston's Govt Center)
- Think about shade – DC is hot in the summer
- Keep the height limit in place in the monument core. Perhaps explore lifting it outside.

The Regional Context

- High security buildings should not be in urban areas (i.e. Mark Center). They should be remote.
- Government should create master plan for where these top security facilities should/could go.
- Don't put high security facilities near metro, but make sure they still have good connections to transit
- Security is the big issue. Reevaluate what the objective is. Should really just be about controlling who has access to certain buildings. Protect against every conceivable threat is impossible.
- Improve design of perimeter security
- Avoid walling off spaces.
- Rethink the need for campuses. Make them more like college towns/campuses or urban districts. Add mixed uses, make them walkable Give them a main street. Make them permeable.
- National Mall might be a good example of open area with secure buildings (better campus model)
- Also an example – the US Capitol complex is permeable (for pedestrians), even though the buildings are secure.
- A good campus has public access and amenities
- Focus on ensuring regional facilities have good access to transit
- Put campuses near transit, but not “at” transit (unless designed to fully integrate with other uses)
- Make sure that facility engages community (avoid Suitland type scenario)

- Don't locate all services inside the facility/secure perimeter. (USPTO does this well), or let people on the campus to use them (e.g. Ft. McNair had tennis courts people could use prior to 9/11).
- Move community enhancing uses (retail/food/conference space/recreation) outside security perimeters.
- However, from federal employee viewpoint, cafeteria builds community and increases productivity, reduces driving/emissions.
- USPTO – successful example with walkable retail, little/no parking, transit use, good TMP
- For remote facilities, consider creative solutions (FDA Whiteoak – has lunchtime bus. Worked with local retailers)
- At St. Elizabeths, line the perimeter with retail
- Onsite daycare makes it easier for employees to use transit
- Younger workers want transit amenities
- Help people live near where they work. Improve local schools. Create mortgage programs.
- Make campuses/military bases more walkable
- More partnership needed with local planners
- How does “telework” work for secure facilities? Will there be micro secure telework sites? Near transit?
- Try to maintain/restore natural ecology/wildlife in areas

Capital Character

- People need to have access to “their” government. Permeability and accessibility are key.
- Can't be all walled/fenced off.
- If security is an issue, create areas the public can access/visit (i.e. the diplomacy center at State Dept as future model).
- What defines the city is cohesion
- Grand buildings and public spaces, heroic scale in the core, but small, defined, intimate residential neighborhoods
- Uniform architecture, wide streets, linear grid, building yards/set backs, green space, trees, parks, vistas, well lit buildings (at night). Cohesive.
- Walkability
- A dichotomy of buildings. Sculptural/monumental -or- more plain, integrated into urban fabric. This is good.
- Monuments and memorials contrasts with normal urban fabric. Creates destinations points. Creates memories for experiencing the city
- Monumental core's character is well established – so don't be too afraid to be a little innovative/creative
- Adding residential to federal precincts might be a good idea (housing for federal employees ideally)
- Sustainability is important
- Would be good to integrate with the waterfront
- Transportation/mobility is critical – for both residents and tourists
- Don't let security define design. It harms walkability/access and traffic.

- Wide streets are hard to cross for pedestrians (so consider that)
- Reopen/reestablish grid where possible
- Federal city/precints should be useful/livable for residents.
- More flexible spaces would be good – Navy memorial both commemorative and active urban space.
- Focus on walking and biking
- No bollards

PUBLIC SESSION

Gene Keller's Group

The Urban Context

1. The way a building and the space around it engage with the streetscape can have a significant impact on the surrounding area. What are good and bad examples of federal public buildings and building yards?

Various commentary's and observations noted that:

- Federal building blank facades and limited street-level animation of building entry points were poor examples of federal urban presence and urban design
 - Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery and American Art Building near Verizon Center demonstrates a good example of defined entries, entry sequence with subtle security features, and interior and exterior gathering spaces where the general public feels open and comfortable
 - Federal Buildings need to provide-
 - accommodating intimate spatial sequence that is interesting and appealing
 - has aspects of greenspace or softscape that is inviting and is comfortable during various seasons of the year
 - allows grouping and observing (people watching), yet feels secure and open
 - More or improved quality federal plaza areas or exterior spaces associated with the federal building
 - Poor areas of exterior space show or demonstrate undefined space usage (i.e. no benches, no seating walls, no visual focus or fountains etc.)
2. There are many types of federal public spaces in Washington, including parks, plazas, and memorial landscapes. Is there a federal open space that you particularly like or don't like? What works or doesn't work about it?

Participant's observations noted that:

- Meridian Hill Park was a favorite personal and neighborhood gatherings and leisure space for families
- Roosevelt Island also viewed as a "unique oasis" due to its close proximity but very isolated and natural wilderness feel
- Virginia Avenue was inviting because of the amount of greenspace and interspersed various height federal buildings that had a more human scale

- The National Mall because of the vast open vistas, greenspace and various associated museums. It was noted how it is well worn and appears overused at some locations
- The following important qualities for building districts that relate to federal public areas-
- Viable and recognized connections and accessibility to those features
- Mixed use activities and animation of the street areas to the greatest extent possible, including non-working hours
- Continuity to other public spaces

The Regional Context

1. There are various types of federal facilities in the region, including individual buildings at Metro stops, campuses, and military bases. How can these types of federal facilities be better integrated into their surrounding communities?

Participant's observations noted that:

- Security and approachable or inviting access where important to campus settings for federal building or activity areas
- Transit oriented development should be a priority to achieve compatibility with the communities and the region
- Achieve limited neighborhood impact by maintaining a buffer (but providing access through the buffer at limited reasonable points) and achieve adequate transportation access accommodation
- Maintain or achieve viable adjacent access points to the bordering community or neighborhood when identified by the community as desirable
- Consider fostering and maintaining a livable environment approach to it physical planning that includes factoring in housing needs of existing and potential employees
- Include security in the design efforts at the start; but make it low key or as invisible as possible

2. Large campuses and installations need to work for occupants and visitors, as well as the surrounding area. Are you familiar with an example of a well-designed campus or installation? What works about it?

Participants noted that few good example really exist:

- An opportunity was vastly passed up at the NIH Facilities in Bethesda
- Missed opportunity at the Navy Yard from the riverwalk side

- Several respondents cited the Federal Department of Transportation Headquarters at M Street and New Jersey Avenue, SW as a good example

Capital Character

1. The federal government has an interest in maintaining those unique qualities that define it's character as the national capital. What are some of those characteristics?

Participant's observations noted that:

- Iconic quality architecture
- Continued recognition and observance of the Height Limit Act
- Monumental classic architectural features
- Foreign Embassies
- Cultural Icon areas such as the Kennedy Center, Smithsonian Museums, etc.

2. The District includes areas that are predominately federal and others that are predominately private. What areas of the District of Columbia define it as a capital city (the Federal Triangle, Capitol Hill, the area north of Constitution Avenue and west of the White House) and what characteristics define those areas?

Participant's observations included:

- Variety of Cultural venues, both private and public particularly the Massachusetts corridor and Georgetown area
- Historic U Street area-variety of building types

RFK Stadium area and its unique physical design and appearance and the fact so much open space exists around it that calls out for alternative uses.

3. Are there places outside of the District of Columbia that help define this area as the Nation's Capital?

Participants noted :

- The Pentagon
- National Airport
- Mount Vernon and its surrounding areas of the Parkway
- National Battlefields and Cemeteries
- Variety of prevalent greenspace that is accessible

Kael Anderson's Group

The Urban Context

- Good – Portrait Gallery Courtyard
- Good – NBM building articulation
- Bad – ATF, Peace Institute, Kennedy Center, FBI, NIH
- Many federal installations on the eastern side of the region, like Suitland Federal Center are an ugly security fortress (for public safety not terrorism)
- McMillan Sand Filtration Plant – bad because no interaction with the community
- Freedom Plaza – suffers from a poorly-executed design (can't see the street diagram)
- Found spaces like Penn Ave in front of the White House (for roller hockey, etc.) and Freedom Plaza – function as good landing spaces for meeting people and holding events
- WWII Memorial is cold and cuts off viewsheds. But it is a convenient place to meet people
- Tidal Basin is a great place
- We have too many memorials that don't relate to current and future citizens, such as all the war general statues. And there isn't any Native American commemorations/recognition
- Some streets are too wide – they lose context; aren't human scaled. Would help to occasionally have public spaces along the street that offer respite
- Street experience is not consistent, in many areas one feels pushed along because sidewalks are too cramped. Need to give more thought to the experience around Metro Stations.
- The area south of the National Mall is too barren, too much hardscape
- Many federal buildings with multiple street fronts Like National Archives don't have a consistently good street presence

The Regional Context

- White Oak is bad b/c it's no longer accessible
- BARC is good b/c it has great visual access
- Andrews AFB bad – functions as the hole in the donut
- Metro stations need to be accessible (have restrooms) and create an improved sense of arrival, and improve orientation
- Van Ness campus is bad b/c it has an expansive hardscape environment
- Walter Reed is a great balanced, low-profile, green campus in the city
- Need to soften the area around federal buildings
- Need to manage security better
- The waterfronts are underutilized. They should be more of a centerpiece, invariably it's a consequence of the auto-centric development
- Should better use rooftops
- Parkways are great spaces

Capital Character

- The riverfronts, other waterways, and the region's overall Piedmont Watershed
- Stone material used for buildings
- Green Infrastructure
- NGA Sculpture Garden
- The different types of green spaces – from the formal gardens to lush natural landscapes like the Parkways
- Great Streets Initiative – provide a great sense of arrival
- Glenn Echo – good, multi-purpose space
- It's a city of neighborhoods, many having their own shopping districts—although some core areas are deficient
- Nomenclature is a concern: the District of Columbia should better honor Native Americans, rather than Christopher Columbus
- Should better allow people to experience the river and the many civic assets lining the it
- the memorial landscape is too dominated by interest groups
- Capitol Visitor Center is a bad example of capital character
- Need better way-finding at federal campuses, important streets, and areas in DC outside of the core, such as gateways, parkways, bridges, the Aquatic Garden. Create a better information network
- Improve the sense of arrival at Union Station
- Provide more things to create visual interest at the eye level, better foster spontaneity

Will Herbig's Group

The Urban Context

Good examples:

- Unique design of bollards (American History Museum)
- Bollards as design amenity
- Look to provide barrier/buffers that are “sit-able and site specific”

Bad examples:

- Too many barriers, i.e.: State Dept and Capitol Hill. These are places bollards go to die. It is a graveyard of bollards
- L'Enfant Plaza/Promenade a sea of nothingness... horrible federal zone... feels like soviet empire
- Closed streets
- Jersey barriers
- Fake planters growing weeds /sprouting trash...
 - Not fooling anyone into thinking they a friendly beautiful planters
 - Obviously barriers

- Simply too many of them
- Commercial intrusion into ROW (street vendors)
- Vendors impact views, quality of public space
- Focus on quality and design
- Vendors add to the city, but how to make best parts work without making city junky
- Design, form, programming
- South Capitol Street – desolate wasted opportunity

Other Comments:

- Uninspired approaches into the nation’s capital from the south (see character below)
- Use the spaces we have out there and make them each inspirational and worthy of the capital city
- Car, train, walk, etc. all should be first class and inspiring
 - Minimize reliance of private vehicle use -- should also be first class and inspiring
 - Rebalance access and mobility
 - Vehicle circulation = impacts to public space
- I.e.: Washington Circle – Some like the space “as is” / Others disagree

The Mall:

- Too vast without amenities
- Currently desolate
- Create friendlier amenity rich environment from Capitol lawn to Lincoln steps.
- It is not currently a world-class public space (see character discussion below)

The Regional Context

- As a good neighbor federal facilities must be truly integrated with the community in which it resides
 - United States Patent and Trademark Office is an extremely good example of a federal complex in the region
 - Mark Center is the worst (out of scale, access issues)
- Security-in general -- We are getting carried away / No need to secure to the degree we are building at
 - The group asked the facilitator - Which federal facilities do not have fences? They are all built like fortresses
 - Parks don’t have walls and fences... federal planners should take lessons from them
- When planning future facilities consider Metro capacity / Metro issues at certain stops.
- Federal precincts have too many streets closed for autos
 - We must reopen E—Street
 - Provide system of viable transit and trains for all users
- Most federal campus fences could be located farther from the property line? Can fences be softened behind active uses that give back to the surrounding community or earthen park like berms?

- Campus fences are located too far out from the facilities they are designed to protect. They are grabbing too much public space that could be used as community /tenant amenity
- We would like to see federal development /assets paired with identified community development sites
 - Sites that have identified problems that must be solved – i.e.: greyfield redevelopment sites, economic redevelopment sites
 - Develop database of mitigation sites and act as matchmaker to bring fed and host communities together
 - Establish a “Mitigation Bank” to drive federal growth and solve the region’s priority problems

Capital Character

1. What makes this place special?
2. Where are federal interests strongest?
3. What are locations outside DC that identify this place?

Failed Attempts:

- Interstate 295: Nothing says “you’ve arrived.” This approach should be treated in a manner more in keeping with the GW Parkway
- NE arrival via New York Avenue is just as dismal/a big mess. It is not befitting of the nation’s capital
- What can be done about the pitiful “Welcome to DC” signs that dot all arrival points? They are plain tacky.
- The FBI building is an icon of bad taste and sends a symbol of negativity.

Good Examples:

- View corridors throughout the L’Enfant City
- Height of buildings, both good and bad impacts, but generally good.
- A human scale city that is inviting and focused on the street
- Sculpture Garden has all the elements for success -- water, landscape, program (year-round)
- Use the NGA Sculpture Garden approach as a model for the National Mall as a whole
- Citywide “Urban yet green” character extends throughout the city and region -- build upon it.
- Too many trees in places
 - Focus on type of tree per corridor and their impacts on views
 - Maintain street trees and trim them in an urbane manner to frame important views and vistas
 - Pennsylvania Ave has gone wild and does not capitalize on the vista it is intend to frame
 - With proper maintenance we may rediscover lost sightlines citywide
 - We must look at sightlines worth rediscovering and restoring

Regional Character:

- Mount Vernon Trail
- GW Parkway
- Arlington Cemetery
- National Airport: Most spectacular air arrival in world
 - Waterfront, river, bridges (Build upon lessons from

Julia Koster's Group

The Urban Context

- Return to smaller, mixed use, more residential scale for new development (ex. Dupont Circle)
- Move away from object (hero) building to soldier buildings (ones that support the overall design)
- Hold the line, preserve existing fabric
- Q Street NPS Park example (near Dupont Metro entrance) Bad example of approach to public space
- Need to create an entry
- Restrictions imposed by NPS sticking to "1920's" plan out of sync (didn't anticipate Metro)
- Need to create spaces according to the times and current context
- Interest in more contemporary design reflecting modern city
- More competitions of ideas and more opportunities for public and smaller firms to contribute
- Washington is monumental, iconic –we know how to do this
- Now need to prioritize creating intimate spaces in buildings and streets.
- More vibrant, with smaller gestures
- Need both (monumental and intimate) in cities ex. Paris
- Activating spaces
- Need ground floor retail (Penn Avenue is a bad example)
- Need sense of full enclosure (ex. Place des Vosges)
- More fully enclosed outdoor rooms, not 3 sided spaces
- Need to plan at a small district scale
- Need to welcome public into spaces
- Rethink obstacles into opportunities: Use sustainability, security mandates to drive connections and better design (barrier could be planter and stormwater feature)
- Federal Triangle (Building bunching) discourages mixed uses, less vital.
- Allow for temporary pop-ups, like London's 5th plinth
- Spaces for programming
- Activate the Potomac
- Major cities have very active waterfronts, we don't.
- Federal spaces do a bad job of meeting the waterfront. Good examples: Seattle, Chattanooga, Brooklyn Bridge parks, maybe Riverwalk in San Antonio
- But, don't overdevelop in proximity to Mall

- Barriers, walls in relation to water, public spaces
- G'town park is good
- Kennedy Center is bad
- Use water for access
- Roosevelt Island, opportunity not realized
- Bridges and connections lacking on riverfronts, think about number of bridges in Paris
- (We (heart) Paris for this group!)
- River could be great opportunity, since there are the highway/road barriers along edge
- Ecodistrict, upcoming waterfront properties are a good start.

The Regional Context

- Walled campus around Suitland – bad example
- But, are these sites public in the first place?
- Does the public know where they can/can't go? (Example: EPA HQ, Fed Triangle)
- Connected paths
- We have a great history of urban campus planning (UPenn, Stanford, Princeton)
- Campus quads are beautiful, public spaces in private campuses
- Feds have forgotten how to do traditional campus design
- Fort McNair is good example, military knew how to do this well
- Pentagon courtyard is amazing
- Portrait gallery interior
- Bad example: ATF – group didn't like, lots of barriers, puts 'back' to the streets
- Need welcoming front door
- Amenities at ground floor, activation
- Find ways to let the public access space(
- Discussion on entering enclosed spaces obliquely, sense of discovery (see diagram)
- Arcades
- Future design should provide consideration of land form
- Federal parks should display natural characteristics
- Natural design, sitting in public spaces, less formally planned in landscape to soften
- What about security – haven't talked about what that's doing?
- ATF, bombproof shell
- Rethink internal uses in federal buildings – use these to add to street level or find ways to go through security (to get to them)
- Also, eyes on the street – safer
- Reagan building – no one knows (the food court) is open
- Old Post Office – tourists (and tour guides) know it is there
- Use smart growth Planning
- Redesign with more publicly accessible spaces, move uses
- Federal city in New Orleans
- Compliance with UFC criteria – still can use retail liners

- What to program in standoff distances,
- Example of what might work: Foggy Bottom townhouses fronting offices

Capital Character

- Views with reference points: good examples, Mount Pleasant to the Capital, 16th Street, Cathedral (to and from)
- New, beautiful programmed (something)
- Discussion on height restrictions
- Makes Washington unique, human scale
- 2 views: city needs to be more dense, would be more urban
- DC is already dense, has urbanity
- G'town, Alexandria have good scale
- Height limits make buildings out of scale at the ground level
- Sites are maxed out and bulky
- Changes dynamic on a lot by lot basis,
- No intimate spaces
- Areas where height, density could change – consider this
- Would reduce development pressure in some areas
- But, we don't want Rosslyn
- Height (keeping it or raising it) isn't a "silver bullet" (for development) either way
- Height limit to street width creates good spaces
- Interaction between federal buildings to residences –this is unique, fantastic (example was Capitol Hill)
- Trees, green spaces, parks are defining
- Throughout city, can walk to a park anywhere
- Avenues, Street trees
- Certain downtown streets: uniform not transparent (at ground level), affect street light
- L'Enfant Plaza: Don't do this! Windswept.
- Navy Plaza at Archives is programmed, active, great
- Maybe the question: Is this space 'lunchable'?
- Openness of Pennsylvania Avenue
- Liked closure (of the street)
- Created great public space (walkable)
- Rethink closures – use to make great streets
- Likes paved plaza in front of National Gallery
- Loved new Prez Park South proposal
- Contemporary, advanced thinking for landscapes
- Sculpture Garden Activities: art sculpture, jazz, skating
- Use spaces as venues
- Create more experience, more temporary events, less commemorations

- Historic design can hamper innovative design: example was new lighting (sustainable and better design)-hard to do with existing historic standards
- L'Enfant Plan was the "federal government in 2-D"
- But, can the squares (from this plan) be themed
- C&O Canal – history, connections to water
- Arboretum – totally underutilized.