



## MEDIA RELEASE

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For Immediate Release  
June 2, 2011

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### **NCPC Approves Switzer Building Site Improvements and Perimeter Security** *Commission Also Provides Comments on United States Diplomacy Center Concept Design*

**Washington, DC** – At its monthly meeting today the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) approved preliminary and final site and building plans for site improvements and perimeter security at the Mary E. Switzer Building. Planned improvements include a new landscaped plaza with sustainable design elements, an outdoor vendor area with seating, a children’s play area, and large expanses of green space. The five-story Switzer Building is located in the Southwest Federal Center (also known as the Southwest Rectangle) at 330 C Street, SW in Washington, DC.

The new landscaped plaza on C Street would replace an existing 114 vehicle parking lot and serve as the building’s main entryway. Perimeter security will be integrated into the proposed site improvements using non-traditional security elements including garden walls, benches, bike racks, street lamps, newspaper boxes, trash receptacles, as well as bollards.

The new plaza is part of the General Service Administration’s (GSA) larger concept to create a unified open green space along C Street, SW between the Switzer Building and the Cohen Building. Plans for site improvements to the Cohen Building have not been submitted to NCPC for review.

Constructed between 1939 and 1940, the Switzer Building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Current tenants include the U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the U.S. International Broadcasting Bureau, and a child development center.

NCPC also provided comments on concept designs for the United States Diplomacy Center in the U.S. Department of State’s Harry S Truman Building. The center will house a museum and educational center focusing on American diplomatic and State Department history.

The 41,400 square-foot center will be built in two phases. The first phase would add an entry pavilion onto the building’s 21<sup>st</sup> Street side and provide security screening for visitors. Phase two construction would take place in existing space of the Truman Building’s George Marshall Wing.

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In its comments NCPC asked the State Department to refine details for attaching the new pavilion to the historic Truman Building, develop an alternative that lowers the pavilion's roof to match the building's cornice line, develop a design alternative that uses transparent glass, and integrate the Truman Building's perimeter security plans into the Diplomacy Center's design.

These recommendations will be considered by the State Department and the General Services Administration when developing the project's preliminary design, which will return to the Commission for review at a later date.

This month's agenda also included four consent calendar items (no presentations given):

- Preliminary and final site and development plans to relocate a gas line for construction of the National Museum of African American History and Culture, Constitution Avenue between 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Streets, NW, Washington, DC;
- Approval of a master plan amendment, building addition, and perimeter security at the H. Carl Moultrie I Courthouse, 500 Indiana Avenue, NW, Washington, DC;
- Approval of comments on the District of Columbia Capital Improvements Plan – Fiscal Years 2012–2017;
- Approval of a report to the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia regarding a Second Stage Planned Unit Development at Square 55 (George Washington University).

In addition, the Commission [delegated](#) six items to the Executive Director for review. The [final agenda](#) and [staff recommendations](#) for each project are available on NCPC's website.

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

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