



MEDIA RELEASE

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Architect Frank Gehry Presents Eisenhower Memorial Alternatives to NCPC

Commission comments on National Mall Turf and Soil Reconstruction Project and Veterans Affairs Medical Center Domiciliary, and approves Fort Dupont Park Transfer of Jurisdiction

Washington, DC – At its monthly meeting today the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) received an informational presentation from project architect Frank Gehry on three alternative design schemes for the future Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial. The memorial will be located on a four-acre site south of Independence Avenue, SW across from the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum.

“The Commission was pleased that esteemed architect Frank Gehry was chosen to honor our 34th President by designing a national memorial in his honor. Mr. Gehry’s three memorial design schemes were strong and intriguing,” said NCPC Chairman L. Preston Bryant, Jr. “The Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial will make an exciting addition to our nation’s capital. We look forward to working with Mr. Gehry, the design team, and the Eisenhower Memorial Commission as the project moves forward, and anticipate seeing a concept design this fall.”

The Commission does not take action on informational presentations. NCPC will review the memorial in three phases: concept, preliminary design, and final design.

The Commission commented favorably on the National Park Service’s concept design proposal for the first phase of reconstructing the National Mall’s center lawn panels. Through three phases the Park Service proposes to replace and reengineer the panels’ lawn and soil, install a new irrigation system that relies on below ground cisterns, and add curbs for the panels. The first phase includes three panels, extending from 3rd Street to 7th Street, NW. The Park Service anticipates starting construction on this first phase in the spring of 2011. The second phase includes center panels from 7th to 12th Streets, and phase three includes center panels from 12th to 14th Streets.

Currently soil on the Mall is highly compacted, turf is worn, and the lawn drains poorly. Improving these conditions is a priority of the National Mall Plan. The proposal includes removing and replacing the top soil, adding a drainage layer, re-grading the surface, adding a slight crown in the center, harvesting rainwater through a new gutter system and underground cisterns, replacing the irrigation system, and adding 18-inch-wide shallow curbs made of White Mount Airy granite or precast concrete around the three panels. In its comments the Commission recommended that the Park Service use granite for the curbs. NCPC’s comments do not constitute an approval action, and the project will return to the Commission for preliminary and final review.

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The Commission approved the National Park Service's proposal to transfer jurisdiction of approximately 15-acres of land in Fort Dupont Park to the District of Columbia for recreation purposes. This parcel is located in the northern portion of the park and is bounded by Ely Place, Minnesota Avenue, and Ridge Road, SE. It currently houses the Fort Dupont Ice Arena, two baseball diamonds, a multipurpose field, tennis and basketball courts, and surface parking.

Following transfer the land would be used for expansion of the Fort Dupont Ice Arena and construction of a youth baseball academy. The underlying land would remain titled in the United States. In its approval the Commission noted that any projects developed on this transferred land would need to be submitted to NCPC for review before construction.

Lastly, the Commission provided comments on concept designs for a 38,000-square foot, three-story, 77 bed Domiciliary at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Northwest, Washington, DC. Located on the northeastern portion of the campus, the Domiciliary would primarily be used for transitioning homeless veterans. It would also house a work therapy program and a medical clinic.

In its comments NCPC required that proposed parking spaces located east of the Domiciliary be removed from the concept design, that additional landscaping be added between the building and North Capitol Street, that utilities proposed southeast of the facility be relocated, and that retaining walls on the eastern side of the project be minimized. The Domiciliary project will return before the Commission for preliminary and final review.

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

- Preliminary and final building plans for four new antennas and radio communications equipment on the roof of the Ariel Rios Building, located at the corner of 12th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
- Preliminary and final building plans for four new antennas and radio communications equipment on the roof of the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives Headquarters, located at the intersection of New York Avenue and Florida Avenue, NE
- Preliminary and final site and building plans for the Warrior in Transition Unit Complex, Fort Belvoir, Virginia
- Concept designs for The Shops at Dakota Crossing located in the Fort Lincoln Urban Renewal Area (Fort Lincoln New Town), bounded by New York Avenue, South Dakota Avenue, 33rd Place, and Fort Lincoln Drive, NE
- Preliminary and final site and building plans for Washington Canal Park, located at 2nd Place, I Street, and M Street, SE
- Preliminary site and building plans for a New Metrobus Garage Facility located in DC Village, Southwest Washington, DC
- Concept designs for the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority Combined Sewer Overflow Long Term Control Plan, Anacostia River Projects (CSO-19)—Anacostia Park

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.