



MEDIA RELEASE

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National Capital Planning Commission Provides Favorable Comments on Jefferson Memorial Security Designs

*Commission also Hears Informational Presentations on Commemoration
Analysis and White House Area Transportation Study*

Washington, DC – At its October meeting the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) provided favorable comments on the concept design for perimeter security at the Jefferson Memorial located on the Tidal Basin in West Potomac Park. President Franklin D. Roosevelt dedicated the memorial, designed by John Russell Pope, in April 1943.

The National Park Service (NPS) submitted three concept design alternatives for the Commission's consideration. All proposals included plans for a vehicle barrier to protect the iconic memorial. In the first alternative the barrier is a streetscape feature that roughly follows East Basin Drive. This alternative proposes a barrier consisting of stone piers connected by cables sheathed in rigid metal.

In the second alternative, the barrier consists predominantly of a solid stone wall and is located inside the memorial grounds. The third alternative provides a more formal barrier consisting of granite walls located in a concentric circle around the memorial, except for the South Lawn, where it would be located along the sidewalk on East Basin Drive.

The Commission commended the NPS for developing three meaningful alternatives. Although it provided the most favorable comments on alternative one, it recommended that the Park Service consider some of the design concepts for the walls and benches from the second and third alternatives. The Commission anticipates seeing the next phase of design, preliminary, in the spring of 2011.

“We were pleased that the National Park Service submitted three strong alternatives for securing one of our nation's preeminent monuments,” said NCPC Chairman L. Preston Bryant, Jr. “While the Commission found the first alternative to be the best overall, we encourage the Park Service to consider elements from each alternative to make the most attractive option for enhancing and protecting this important site.”

Each design alternative included some type of seating element. In addition, each scheme proposed relocating an existing food kiosk, widening the East Basin Drive sidewalk, and providing ten dedicated spaces for tour buses and five handicapped spaces.

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The Commission also heard two informational presentations, the first of which updated Commissioners on the joint Washington as Commemoration Study, a four-phase examination of commemorative works in the nation's capital conducted by NCPC and NPS staffs. The first two phases included development of a catalogue of existing memorials and identification of major themes and subthemes in Washington's commemorative landscape. Today the Commissioners learned about the third phase, an examination of how other capital cities establish and site commemorations. National capitals (Berlin, Canberra, London, and Ottawa) and American state capitals (Boston, Salt Lake City, and St. Paul) are included in the study.

Representatives of the Federal Highway Administration provided the second informational presentation on the draft findings of the White House Area Transportation Study. Following the Oklahoma City bombing and September 11, portions of Pennsylvania Avenue and E Street near the White House were closed to vehicular traffic. This resulted in disruptions to Washington's traffic patterns. The study examined a number of possible scenarios to improve circulation. These options included adding a new tunnel, improving area traffic operations, and increasing transit services. The study area extended from M Street (north) to the National Mall (south), and from the Potomac River (west) to roughly Union Station (east). A final report will be available next year.

The Commission does not take action on informational presentations.

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

- Revised preliminary and final site and building plans for modifications to benches at the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Memorial.
- Concept designs for modification of the National Museum of American History's West Façade.
- 35 percent design drawings for development of Parcel D at The Yards, Southeast Federal Center, located on M Street between 5 ½ Street and 4th Street, SE.
- Preliminary and final site and building plans for renovations to Buildings 3 and 5 at the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland.
- Preliminary and final site and building plans for improvements to the North Gate (South Courthouse Road Gate) at the Naval Support Facility in Arlington, Virginia.
- Final site and building plans for an AT&T Wireless Communications Facility at the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center in Beltsville, Maryland.
- Transfer of jurisdiction of air rights for the 11th Street Bridge Project from the National Park Service to the District of Columbia Government.

The final agenda, along with staff recommendations for each project under review, can be found here: http://www.ncpc.gov/DocumentDepot/Final_Agendas/FinalAgenda_Current.pdf

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.