



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **NCPC Reviews DC World War I Memorial and Washington Canal Park** *CapitalSpace Plan Released for Public Comment*

**Washington, DC** – At its monthly meeting on October 1, 2009 the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) provided favorable comments on concept designs submitted by the National Park Service (NPS) to restore the District of Columbia World War I Memorial. Located on the National Mall at Independence Avenue, SW, the memorial honors residents of the District who fought in the First World War. Authorized by Congress in 1924, the memorial was funded by District residents and businesses. Construction began in 1931 and President Hoover dedicated the memorial on November 11, 1931.

“This memorial is unique because it is the only District memorial located on the National Mall,” said Peter May, National Park Service Associate Regional Director, National Capital Region. “The Park Service is pleased to use American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds to provide a much needed restoration to this significant commemorative work.”

As part of planned restoration efforts, the NPS plans to clean and repair the 47-foot tall memorial and restore the surrounding landscape to its original design. These efforts include adding new historic bluestone paving and Elm trees, replacing non-historic paving with granite, and removing non-historic trees. In addition, the walks would be widened from eight to ten feet. When completed, the memorial could once again be used as a bandstand site, as it was years ago.

The Commission also commented favorably on a revised concept design for the Washington Canal Park. The District of Columbia’s Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development submitted the project on behalf of the Canal Park Development Association. Located on a three-block site between I Street, SE and M Street, SE and between 2nd Street, SE and 2nd Place, SE, the park will span two acres of federal land under District jurisdiction.

Each park block will have a distinctive design. The southern block will feature a prominent water feature, a large two-story pavilion with cafe, and offer ice skating in the winter. The middle block will have a small pavilion located above a plane of cascading water, two lawn areas, and benches. The northern block will offer a large, open lawn area and a pavilion. The three blocks will be tied together by common features including a linear rain garden.

The site is located on a portion of the former Washington Canal that connected the Potomac River and Tiber Creek with the Anacostia River. NCPC reviewed the original concept design in November 2006. The park is now being designed by the OLIN Partnership, which designed the landscape plans for the Washington Monument grounds.

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Before adjourning, the Commission voted to circulate the draft CapitalSpace plan for public comment. CapitalSpace is a joint initiative by NCPC, the National Park Service, and the District of Columbia to provide a unified vision for Washington's approximately 9,300 acres of parks and open space. The plan will be available for review and comment for a 60-day period beginning October 8.

"While Washington is fortunate to have an abundance of parks and open space, it also faces some unique challenges ranging from meeting the needs of multiple park uses to providing improved accessibility," said Julia Koster, NCPC Director of Intergovernmental Affairs. "CapitalSpace is the first time that all the park and open space stakeholders have worked together to not only create a common vision for parks in Washington, but to also address these challenges to ensure that our parks reach their full potential."

The CapitalSpace partners aim to address these challenges and strengthen park assets by working together on six Big Ideas. These include better utilizing and integrating the numerous parks less than one acre in size, connecting the Fort Circle Parks, using recreational fields more effectively, enhancing downtown parks, improving public schoolyards, and preserving urban natural and ecological areas.

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

- Concept designs for a munitions storage and maintenance complex at Andrews Air Force Base's Camp Springs located in Prince George's County, Maryland
- Comments to the District of Columbia Zoning Commission referral for a Planned Unit Development and Related Map Amendment on Square 442, lots 115-119 located at 625 Rhode Island Avenue, NW in Washington, DC.

*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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