

# STAFF RECOMMENDATION

NCPC File No. 6433

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**U. S. NATIONAL ARBORETUM**  
REVISED PLAN FOR MODERNIZATION OF HEADHOUSE/GREENHOUSE  
3501 New York Avenue, NE, Washington, D.C.

Submitted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture

June 29, 2006

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## **Abstract**

The Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service, has submitted revised final site and building plans for a portion of the previously reviewed greenhouse and its complementary headhouse, involving a change to reduce the size of the headhouse and to provide a connecting exterior corridor between the two buildings.

## **Commission Action Requested by Applicant**

Approval of revised final site and building plans pursuant to 40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1) and (d).

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## **Executive Director's Recommendation**

The Commission **approves** the revised final site and building plans for a new modified headhouse and greenhouse for the U.S. National Arboretum, including a connecting covered walkway, as shown on NCPC Map File No. 43.20(38.00)-42050.

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## BACKGROUND AND STAFF EVALUATION

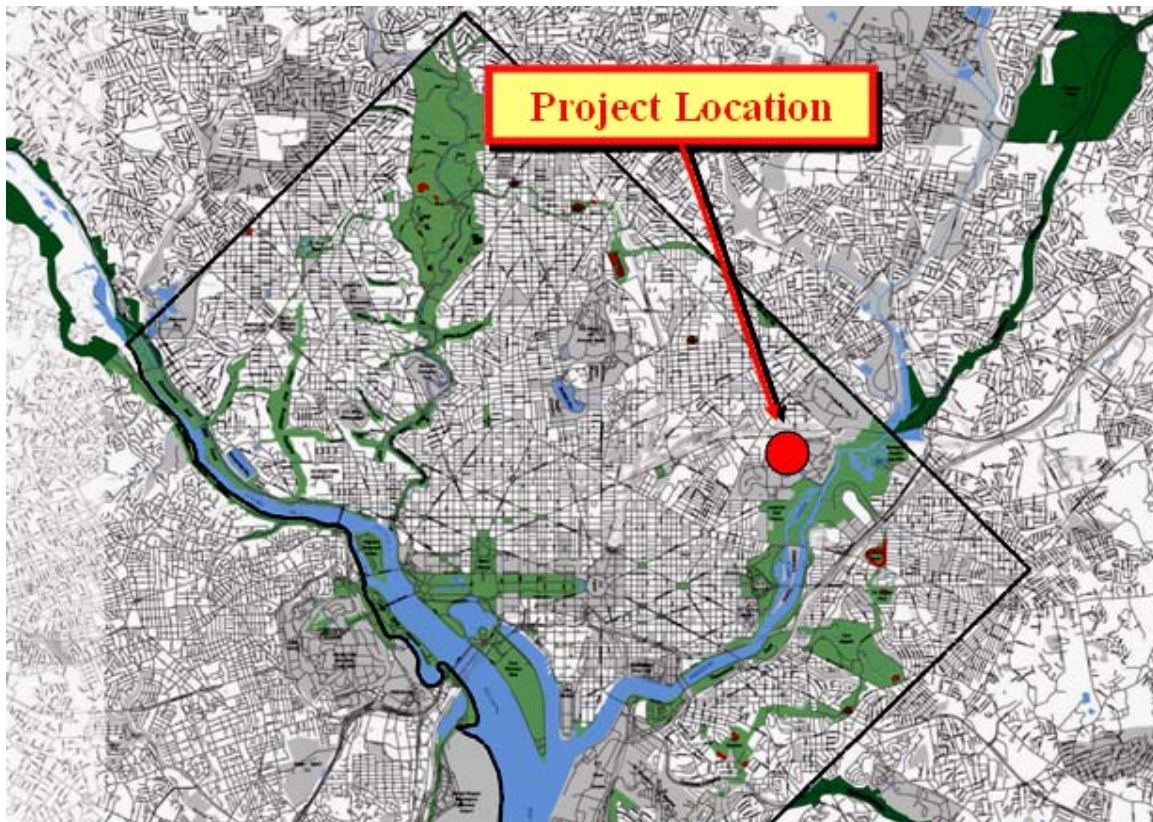
### DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

#### Background

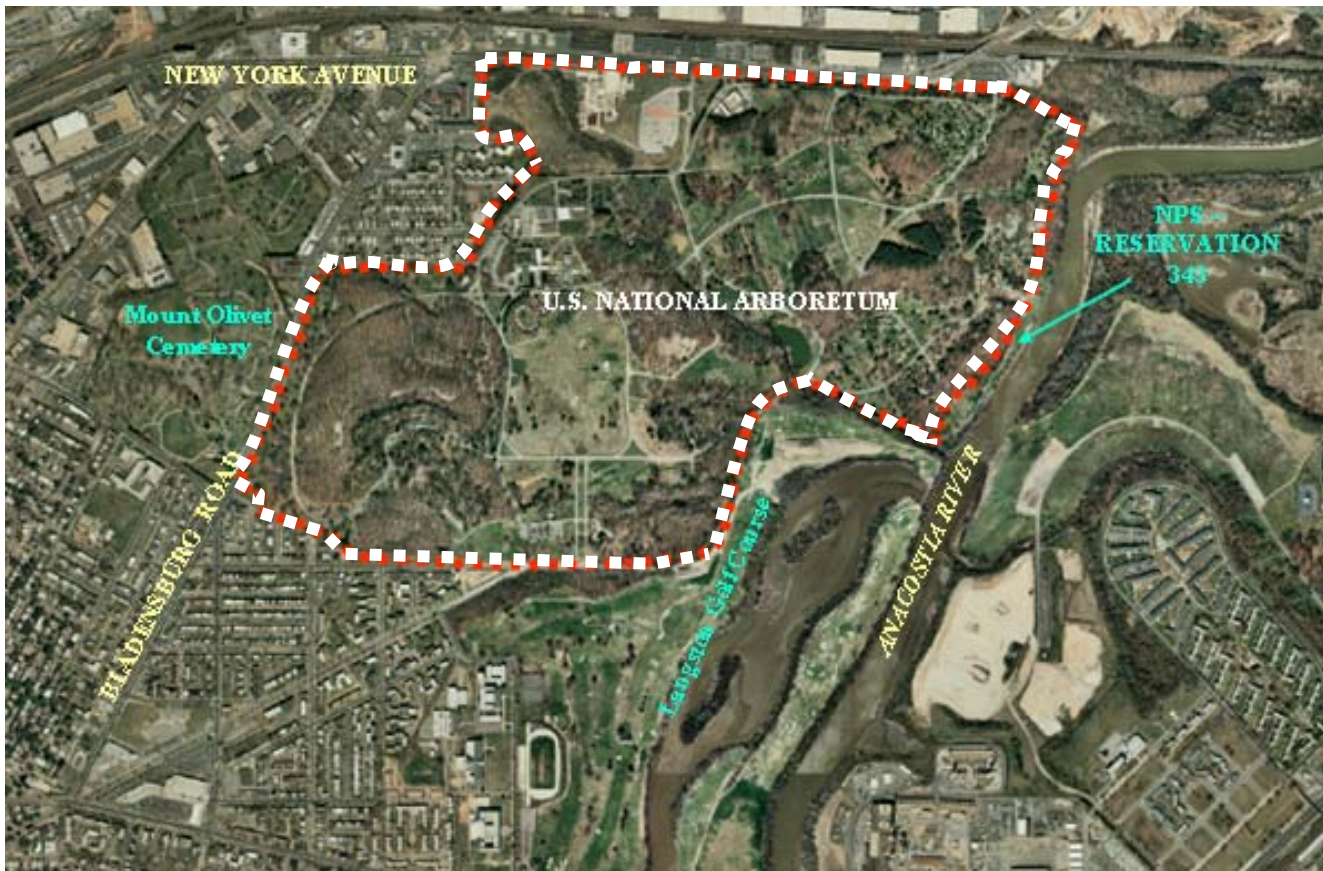
The preliminary and final site and building plans for the new headhouse and greenhouse were previously approved by the Commission in 2004. This proposal requests a modification to those previously approved plans.

#### Site

The site for the improvements occurs on an approximately  $\frac{1}{4}$  acre site located north of the Arboretum administration building directly adjacent and east of the existing headhouse, building 18. The revised plans involve a portion of the site encompassing less than 800 square feet.



**REGIONAL LOCATION OF NATIONAL ARBORETUM**



### **AERIAL VIEW OF ARBORETUM AND ITS VICINITY**

#### Revised final site and building plans

The new greenhouse structure will remain as previously approved by the Commission in 2004 but an exterior connecting corridor from Building 18 to the greenhouse is now being submitted as a revision. Accessibility would be enhanced by a new covered sidewalk and requires minimal space reduction of the headhouse area only. The exterior canopy materials are completely utilitarian in composition and are limited to a length of just 85 feet. The new connecting corridor will be either an open-sided vinyl canopy or, as an option, the same prefabricated exterior standing seam wall as the new greenhouse, set on a hip-high knee wall with a gray standing seam roof.

#### **PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTION**

In March of 2004, the Commission approved preliminary and final site and building plans for the project by delegated action of the Executive Director. At that time, the applicant proposed to



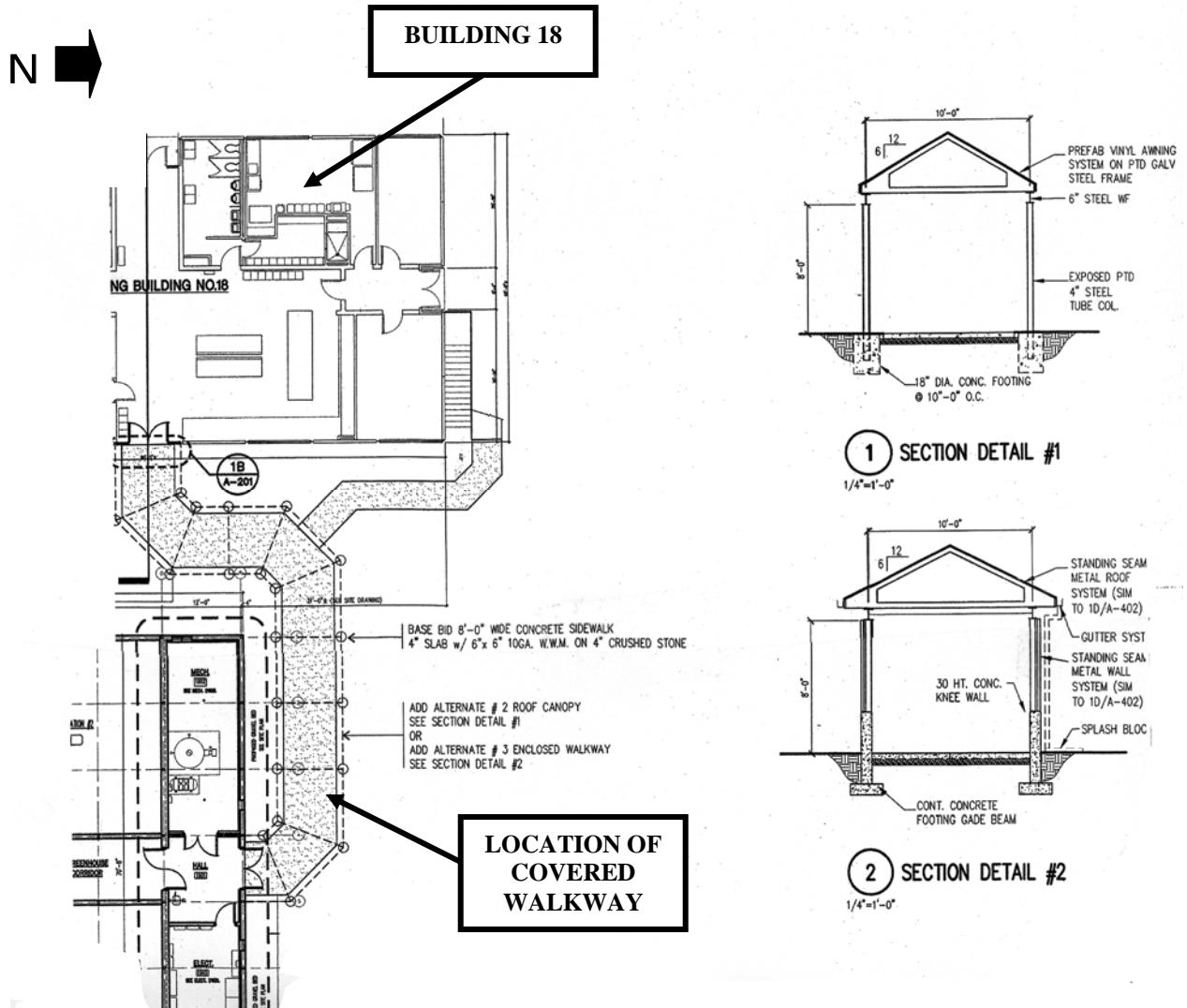
construct a new headhouse and greenhouse for the U.S. National Arboretum, as shown on NCPC Map File No. 43.20(38.00)-41308. The Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service, had at that time submitted plans for the new greenhouse and its complementary headhouse to include office space and research storage, in conformance with the November 2000 Commission approved master plan.



**PROPOSED LOCATION OF MODERNIZATION OF HEADHOUSE.GREENHOUSE AT NURSERY**

**PROJECT ANALYSIS**

**Staff recommends approval** of the revised final site and building plans. The modified project, which involves less than 800 square feet of revised building area, would have no adverse impact on land uses or environmental resources of the general site. The proposed project plans are in conformance with the master plan location for the facility and no other changes are proposed.



**PROJECT FINAL BUILDING PLAN INDICATING LOCATION OF WALKWAY AT LEFT AND COVERED CANOPY SECTIONS AT RIGHT**

Comprehensive Plan

The proposal is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital. Polices of the Commission that apply to the action include:

6. Utilize available federally owned land or space before purchasing or leasing additional land or building space. Agencies should continuously monitor utilization rates of land and building space to ensure their efficient use.

7. Consider the modernization, repair, and rehabilitation of existing federally owned facilities for federal workplaces before developing new facilities.

8. Establish the level of employment that can be accommodated on installations where more than one principal building, structure, or activity is located or proposed through the master planning process as established by the Commission.

(Locating Federal Workplaces Policies, the District of Columbia and the Monumental Core, pages 39 and 40)

#### National Environmental Policy Act

In conformance with NCPC project submission requirements and USDA NEPA compliance procedures, USDA completed an Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact for the project, as part of the master plan that identified and reviewed the modernization project, in October 2000. The EA and FONSI remain current for the minor modification of access to the new greenhouse.

#### Historic Preservation Act

The Department coordinated the project's review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act with the District of Columbia Historic Preservation Office and final approval for Section 106 compliance was achieved on February 9, 2004.

### COORDINATION

#### Coordinating Committee

The Coordinating Committee reviewed the proposed modernization of the greenhouse at the Arboretum in February 2004. The Committee forwarded the proposal to the Commission with the statement that the project has been coordinated with all agencies, except for the District of Columbia Office of Planning (DCOP). The participating agencies were: NCPC; the District of Columbia Department of Transportation; the Department of Housing and Community Development; the Fire Department; the General Services Administration; the National Park Service and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.

The representative for DCOP withheld coordination pending discussions with the Arboretum on overall security needs for the facility. NCPC staff, however, found the proposal did not alter security operations proposed by the 2004 project's preliminary and final site and building plans. The project does not affect the Arboretum boundary perimeter and is not a facility available for public entry or use. Consequently, the Office of Planning determined that its concern related to an operational management issue, which was not in the scope of that earlier submission review.