

NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION

+++++

COMMISSION MEETING

+++++

OPEN SESSION

+++++

Thursday, May 7, 2009

+++++

The meeting came to order at 12:30 p.m. in Suite 500 of the National Capital Planning Commission headquarters at 401 9<sup>th</sup> Street, NW, Washington, DC, John Cogbill, III, Chairman, presiding.

PRESENT:

JOHN V. COGBILL, III, Chairman  
PETER MAY, Department of the Interior  
MICHAEL S. MCGILL, GSA  
ROBERT E. MILLER, Council of the District  
of Columbia  
HARRIET TREGONING, Office of the Mayor  
of the District of Columbia  
STACIE S. TURNER, Mayoral Appointee  
HERBERT F. AMES, Presidential Appointee  
ARRINGTON, DIXON, Mayoral Appointee  
RALPH NEWTON, Department of Defense  
JOHN M. HART, Presidential Appointee  
DEBORAH PARKINSON, U.S. Senate

NCPC STAFF:

MARCEL C. ACOSTA, Executive Director  
LOIS J. SCHIFFER, General Counsel  
DEBORAH B. YOUNG, Secretariat

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	Report of the Chair .....	4
2.	Report of the Executive Director .....	8
3.	Consent Calendar .....	15
4.	<u>Action Items</u>	
4A.	Potomac Park Levy Improvement .....	17
4B.	National Mall and East Potomac Park Pedestrian Waysiding and Sign Program .....	75
4C.	United States Coast Guard Headquarters .....	115
5.	<u>Information Presentations</u>	
5A.	Vietnam Veterans Memorial Visitor Center .....	176
5B.	North Capitol Street Urban Design Feasibility Study .....	216
5C.	Andrews Air Force Base Master Plan Update .....	261
	Adjourn	

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

(12:34 p.m.)

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Welcome to the National Capital Planning Commission's May 7th, 2009 meeting. Would you all please stand and join me in the Pledge of Allegiance?

(Whereupon, the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.)

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Thank you. Noting the presence of a quorum, I'll call the meeting to order. If there is no objection, the Open Session Agenda will be adopted as the order of business. Seeing and hearing none, the Agenda is adopted.

[INSERT - Agenda]

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

## 1. Report of the Chair

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Item Number One is the Report of the Chair, and I do have a report today. First, I would like to state for the record that I will continue on as the Chairman of the National Capital Planning Commission until further notice. The White House has indicated that I can remain in this position until such time as they designate a new chairman and a new member from Virginia. So I just wanted you all to be aware of that.

I would also like to acknowledge receipt of a letter from Robert M. Gates, Secretary of the Department of Defense, designating Michael Rhodes Acting Director Administration and Management. As his first alternate, Ralph Newton, who is here today. Director of Defense Facilities Directorate Washington Headquarter Services will be the second alternate, continue to be the second alternate. And Bradley Provancha Deputy Director Defense Facilities Director will be

### **NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

the third alternate.

Also, on April 29th, pursuant to a delegation of authority from the Commission, which was authority granted on December 14th, 1977, I approved a transfer of land to GSA and the Department of Defense of approximately 2.1 acres of land at the Southeast Federal Center in the Washington Navy Yard. A copy of that delegated action is included in your materials that you have in your place.

I also want to just make one administrative note. Those of you who are sitting to my right, you'll notice the little dim over there. We're having electrical problems, so I apologize for that. We also are concerned that we may have some more electrical glitches in our computer system, and if we do have a problem making that work I may just adjourn the meeting for a few moments or recess the meeting so that we can work on that and, hopefully, make sure that all of our technology continues to work. So I apologize

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

to you for that. The building folks will be here but not until tomorrow, which is usually the case.

Okay. With that, I conclude my report, and I turn it over now to the Executive Director --

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Chairman, can I ask a question --

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Yes.

MR. MCGILL: -- from the dim end of the Commission here? First of all, I'm pleased you're going to stay on for the time being as Chairman. And I'm curious, to make sure we avoid the problem we experienced when I first joined the Commission and the old chairman was retained without being reappointed and, thereby, no longer being eligible to be chairman and all of our votes had to be recast. So I want to make sure you're properly reappointed as an interim basis or something like that.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: I'll have

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

counsel provide you a written opinion. Actually, we thought of that, as well. I was just kidding.

MS. SCHIFFER: But I'm happy to get an oral --

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: We had that same concern, and we went back to the White House, we, the staff, did, and obtained from them assurance, written assurances that I could continue.

MR. MCGILL: Great.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: And since I am in an ongoing term which doesn't expire until --

MR. MCGILL: Oh, that's true, right. So you didn't expire.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: My term does not expire until --

MR. MCGILL: Excellent.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: -- 2013, so that makes it just a little easier.

MR. MCGILL: Thank you.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Thank you. Do you need to add anything?

MS. SCHIFFER: No, Mr. Chairman. You got the exact right answer.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Thank you. It's good to be the king. All right, Marcel, go ahead.

## **2. Report of the Executive Director**

MR. ACOSTA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And just a few matters I want to bring to the Commission's attention. First of all, as you may know, last month the Smithsonian Institution selected the Freelon Adjaye Bond/Smith Group joint partnership as the design team for the National Museum of African-American History and Culture. Our staff will continue to work with the Smithsonian and their new design team to address some of the major issues, such as its relationship to the Mall and other critical design impact issues that this commission has raised in the past. We also expect that this

### **NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

project will be submitted to our Commission for concept review in early 2010 to begin the process.

Also, at the last meeting, the Commission adopted the Monumental Core Framework Plan and some of the direction that we received that staff, that we should incorporate some fairly minor changes in response to some comments from both this commission, as well as the Commission of Fine Arts. We're currently working to address many of the comments that we received, and also we are working on a final copy edit prior to publishing the plan, and that will be available to the public in probably early July.

Also, last month, the National Park Service provided a briefing to this commission on the National Mall's Plan's preliminary preferred alternative. The Park Service is still accepting comments from the public on the preliminary preferred alternative through

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

May 15th and will subsequently release a draft plan and draft an environmental impact statement later this year.

Now, as follow-up to the Framework Plan discussions, yesterday our staff, in partnership with the General Services Administration, convened a public roundtable that was attended by over 30 representatives of the public, private, and not-for-profit sector, and Commissioner Tregoning and Commissioner Hart attended the meeting, as well. The discussion focused on how best to integrate active mixed uses into the ground floors of federal buildings and also looked at opportunities to enliven adjacent public spaces.

The debate was very lively. We had a very good discussion about ways to improve the vitality of these public areas, these very important public areas around the National Mall. And we'll follow-up with the participants and all interested parties on the

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

next steps, which includes expanding on some of the ideas generated by the roundtable members, as well as, in the future, releasing a publication on best practices and some policy recommendations.

On May 1st, the Greater Washington 2050 Coalition, which is led by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, will release their region-wide survey. They looked at many of the issues that were, in the public's view, very important regional issues and priorities. Transportation and the economy were identified as two of the top regional priorities from the survey, and the COG will come to this commission next month to give an informational briefing on the survey, as well as talk a bit about the Greater Washington 2050 Initiative.

Last night, NCPC kicked off its 2009 Speaker Series with a presentation by Melinda Dodson, the incoming President of the Australia Institute of Architects. She

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

discussed ongoing steps to reduce her country's carbon pollution and how their AIA is working from Australia into model sustainable practices. This lecture launched the first of our speaker series on city growth and planning and where we hope to hold two to three guest lectures this year.

Finally, on April 24th, Priscilla Brown retired from the federal government with 29 years of service. Priscilla started with the U.S. Peace Corps and subsequently completed 23 years of service at NCPD as an executive assistant. We'd like to thank Priscilla for her public service and wish her a fond farewell and happy retirement. She's not here today, but she's been of great service to our staff and we wish her well.

And that concludes my presentation.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Thank you. Are there any questions for the Executive Director? I was remiss in my earlier remarks in not recognizing one of our former members

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

who's here with us today, John Parsons, who used to sit here on behalf of the Secretary of the Interior. And he's with us, and we're glad to have him back with us. I won't ask him to recite his experiences with Banneker and some of the other, L'Enfant, but we'll catch that later. Peter, did you need to --

COMMISSIONER MAY: None on that topic, but I had something else that I wanted to update the Commission on --

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Sure.

COMMISSIONER MAY: -- which is Fort Dupont land transfer, and I just wanted to inform the Commission that a lawsuit has been filed against the Park Service regarding the environmental assessment and the finding of no significant impact. And so, at the moment, everything is on hold while we understand what that means and what our next steps are. So I just wanted to let you know that nothing will be proceeding in the immediate future, and that's about all I can say.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

[INSERT - Report of the Executive Director]

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Well, thank you for that report. I'm sorry that that's happened, but that's part of the process. Thank you very much.

### 3. Consent Calendar

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: All right. We'll move now to Agenda Item Three. This is the Consent Calendar. There are five items on the Consent Calendar. The first is a submission by the Smithsonian National Museum of American History dealing with space port operations: the Turner Fairbanks Highway Research Center telecommunications towers; Department of the Navy modernization of Building W-200 at the Navy Yard; Union Station improvements to Columbus Circle and Columbus Plaza; and, finally, the Capital Improvements Plan for the District of Columbia. Are there any questions or comments about that? If not, I would entertain a motion.

COMMISSIONER AMES: I will move it for approval.

#### **NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Motion made. Is there a second?

MR. MCGILL: Second.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Motion made and properly seconded. Any further discussion?

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: All those in favor of the motion please signify by saying aye.

(Chorus of ayes.)

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Opposed?

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Abstentions?

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: The motion carries. Thank you very much.

[INSERT - Consent Items]

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

**4A. Potomac Park Levy Improvements**

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: All right. This brings us to the action item agendas. Item 4A is the Potomac Park Levy Improvements on the National Mall at 17th Street and Constitution Avenue Northwest.

Ms. Saum, would you get us started?

MS. SAUM: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and members of the Commission. The proposal before you today includes preliminary and final site development plans for phase one of improvements to the Potomac Park Levy and the concept design for phase two. It is being submitted for your review by the National Park Service.

I'd like to begin by refreshing your memory as to the need for this project. The Potomac Park Levy System was authorized and constructed after a 1936 flood that devastated parts of downtown. It consists of an earthen berm that extends from 23rd Street to 17th Street along the north side of the

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

reflecting pool. And during flood events, sand bags and Jersey barriers are required to provide temporary flood protection at 23rd and 17th Street. The height of the protection required at 23rd Street is only a couple of feet, but at 17th Street the height of protection required is approximately 10 feet, and the concern has been for a number of years that that is inadequate to protect against a significant flood event.

When Congress authorized the construction of the levy, it authorized a structure that was designed to contain a flow of about 700,000 cubic feet per second. That's somewhere in the neighborhood of a 185-year flood, and so I'll use that term during this presentation when I'm referring to the congressionally-authorized level of protection.

In 1999, Congress authorized improvements to the levy at 23rd and 17th Street to provide more reliable protection,

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

but that construction was never funded by Congress. And in the wake of Katrina, the Corps of Engineers determined that that existing type of temporary protection at 17th Street was not adequate, and so they de-certified the levy. What that means is that if there is no temporary protection at this point here on 17th Street, this entire area extending down to an area near Fort McNair would be within the 100-year flood plain. And so, in response, FEMA proposed to issue new flood maps that would require private property owners in this area to buy flood insurance and federal property owners in that area to make upgrades to their buildings to protect them against flood damage.

And as I noted a moment ago, the congressionally-authorized level of protection is approximately 185-year flood level. FEMA's requirement is only for 100-year flood protection. So since Congress had not authorized construction of the

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

congressionally-authorized level of protection, last year, beginning of last year the District of Columbia stepped forward and dedicated two and a half million dollars that was originally intended to provide temporary protection until such time as the Corps of Engineers could construct permanent protection. And FEMA agreed to delay issuing those flood maps as long as that temporary protection was in place by November of this year.

A working group has been working together for over a year now to come up with, initially the idea was to come up with that temporary level of protection and figure out what the permanent solution would be. It pretty quickly became apparent that there was really no temporary solution that could be authorized by the Corps of Engineers and, therefore, meet the FEMA requirements.

So the plan now is to provide, in the first step, permanent protection in this

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

area of 17th Street. The height of the protection required to meet the congressional level is about 10 feet. It's 9.7 feet, I believe, as measured from the center line of 17th Street. So phase one includes the minimum that's necessary to provide the flood protection, and phase two includes elements that are not essential to that deadline, such as installing a stone facing on the levy walls to make them more appropriate to the location.

In January of this year, the Commission commented favorably on a concept design for the levy and recommended the development of a landscape plan that would be consistent with the previous plans that were developed by the Constitution Gardens and the Washington Monument grounds. The proposal you see now for the flood protection in this area is substantially the same, but the design and the engineering has advanced significantly since January.

This is kind of an outdated grading

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

plan, but I want to use it to illustrate the actual elements that are being constructed. There will be a post-and-panel system that will be set in place during flood events. It will be 140 feet long and will extend across 17th Street at point 253 feet south of the center line with Constitution Avenue. At the end of each post-and-panel system will be a curved levy wall made of concrete that will be approximately 9 feet tall at its highest end, which is where it meets the post-and-panel system.

Grading modifications that will be necessary to extend the earthen berm up to meet the ends of these walls will require the removal of this existing pathway. And so the pathway here will be realigned, and the pathway down here will be reconstructed not so much because of the grading but in order to make it compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act. There will also be a vault in this area near the lockkeeper's house for

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

storing the post-and-panel system when not in use.

The project area for phase one is this area shown in red. All the trees in this area will have to be removed because of the grading, but that's not necessarily a bad thing because the soil here, which is actually silt that was taken out of the river bottom when this area was filled, will be replaced as part of this project so that the new trees that are planted there can survive.

And phase two involves the regrading that is necessary to make this path ADA compliant. That will also require removal of trees and replacement. Phase two will also require the installation of stone walls here and a paved terrace in the area around the vault near the lockkeeper's house.

This is the grading plan for phase one. You can see here clearly where the earthen berm extends up to the flood walls. This is an ariel rendering of what the project

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

will look like at the end of phase one. This is what it will look like at the end of phase two but without the landscaping, but it does show the stone surfaces on the levy walls. And this is at the end of the project with the post-and-panel system in place.

As part of the Corps of Engineers' requirements for levies, no planting is allowed within 15 feet of a levy wall and within 43 feet of the center of an earthen levy. So when the trees are removed and replaced, they cannot be planted anywhere within this red area.

This is the planting plan that has been developed by the landscape architects, and the landscape architects are Olin Partnership, which is the same design firm that did the Washington Monument grounds. Here's a rendered view at the end of phase one, so only the trees in this area have been replaced. Phase two is this area, and this shows the existing conditions.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

This plan basically consists of a deciduous tree canopy with an under story of flowering trees, and this is consistent with the cultural landscape inventory that the Park Service did in 2008. And this shows phase two with the replacement planting here. The trees that will be used are native species, including dogwoods, willow oaks, swamp white oak, and red maples.

The materials that will be used as part of phase two include, as I noted, the stone walls on the levy walls, pavers in the terrace. Then there will be also be pavers on top of the vault, so the vault will not be visible most of the time; but, when access to the vault is required to get at the post-and-panel system, those pavers can be removed. And then the new paths will consist of stone set on an asphalt base.

The designer is still looking at options for the stone selection and the detailing of the stone work. They're looking

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

at several stone options. This one is inspired by the stone that was used on the C&O Canal and also by the stone that was used on the grounds of the Capitol and the Washington Monument.

I'd like to call your attention to this detail right here. The Corps of Engineers requires that the levy wall be visible for inspection at all times, and so there will be, I'm not sure exactly how many of these will be but there will be these reveals here that will allow the Corps of Engineers to inspect the levy.

This is a stone selection that refers to the Constitution Gardens overlook, the retaining walls there. That's the area that's also referred to as the beer garden. This is the stone that the Commission of Fine Arts preferred when they reviewed the project several weeks ago. And they're also looking at different stone dressing options. The Commission of Fine Arts did not express a

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

preference at this point. We're still hoping to see stone samples and actually get a better idea of exactly what it's going to look like, and that will be resubmitted as part of phase two sometime this summer.

The levy walls will be two foot seven across at the top and four foot ten across at the bottom. And you can see here there's a little jog in the concrete wall. When it's first built there will be just bare concrete that will be tinted in some way to make it more attractive, and then when the stone cladding is installed it will sit on that little lip.

In this slide, you can see something called a grade beam, and that is a concrete beam that will extend from the foot of the levy wall all across the street to the levy wall on the other side. And that's what the post-and-panel system will sit on. I'll talk about that again in a minute. And the end of the flood wall will have to be detailed

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

to receive the post-and-panel system. Again, this is something that's still being worked out between the designers and the engineers.

The design issues that we considered during our analysis include the height and the location of the levy walls, the grade beam expression, and the landscape design. We also studied it for conformance with the comprehensive plan and NEPA and 106, and I believe you should also have a copy of a letter that was sent by the DC Business Industry Association requesting information on the status of funding for this project.

The height is consistent with the level of protection authorized by Congress, so that wasn't really anything we had any control over, although the height of the levy walls may be adjusted slightly based on, there's some issues with the grade beam that we're still working out having to do with some existing utilities that cannot be removed. And so the grade beam may have to be a little

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

bit higher than originally planned in order to accommodate those utilities. And the location was as agreed to through the 106 process in which the reciprocal views between the Virginia Avenue right-of-way and the Washington Monument grounds are protected by the fact that the levy walls are located in a way that you can see right between them to the Washington Monument grounds.

The grade beam, as I noted earlier, is this element that extends across here. And we're still in discussion with the designers and the engineers on exactly how that will look. It's of particular concern here where the grade beam crosses the grass. We had originally thought that we wanted only a small width of the grade beam exposed and the grass to be able to come up to the side. The designer is now suggesting that it might be preferable to have the width of the grade beam be consistent with the width of the levy wall.

But that will, again, be submitted as part of

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

phase two.

And some of the details regarding the planting in phase two are still being discussed. One of the issues is what level of visibility the Park Service would like between the overlook site and the Washington Monument grounds. This alternative shows low dogwoods, basically, and no canopy trees here, so that people can see over the dogwoods and look at the Washington Monument. This alternative shows no dogwoods but the canopy trees, so people would be looking under the canopy trees. Here's the view of the first condition, and here's the second condition. And that, again, is something that will be worked out between the designer and the Park Service and the consulting parties.

The project is not inconsistent with the environment element of the comprehensive plan. The comprehensive plan calls for existing development to correct flood hazards, so that's the main reason that

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

this project is being done. It's also not inconsistent with the preservation and historic features element, since it protects those view corridors between Virginia Avenue and the Washington Monument.

The National Park Service completed an environmental assessment in January of 2009, and both the Park Service and the National Capital Planning Commission executed a finding of no significant impact on May 4th.

Both of these findings included mitigation that included potential adverse impacts to landscape and historic and cultural resources.

Those mitigations include replacement of the trees at a one-to-one ratio, the replacement of the flood walls so that they don't obscure the views and vistas from Virginia Avenue and the Washington Monument, provision of interpretation to help people understand what those walls were and why they're located where they are, and phase one archeological work. It's possible that there are the remains of,

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

basically, a pier or I can't remember the term for it, something left over from when that was part of the river and loading and unloading was done, and that may be under 17th Street.

And a programmatic agreement was executed on May 1st, which concluded the Park Service's requirements under the National Historic Preservation Act.

As far as funding, there are two issues here. One is that, even after the levy is put in place, there will be a problem with interior drainage in the Federal Triangle area. As happened in 2006, if we get a lot of water at one time and the sewer system can't handle, there's a potential for flooding of buildings in that area. And NCPC has been working to finalize the scope of services for a study of that system to figure out what the best solution is to deal with it. They're working in partnership with other agencies, including the General Services Administration, the Smithsonian, the Departments of the

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

Environment and DC WASA; and the plan is that all these various agencies will contribute money to it. And so there's complicated contracting arrangements that need to be done to transfer that money and to let the contract, and that work is still in progress.

As far as improvements to the levy are concerned, the Corps of Engineers has identified \$850,000 from its stimulus funds to complete the design work for that project, and it intends to request funds in its FY 2010 budget for construction of the project. In fact, it's my understanding that the District of Columbia may proceed with some of these activities independently, and so I've asked Commissioner Tregoning to respond to that.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: As you've indicated, Ms. Saum, the fact that the Corps of Engineers is seeking funding is a very welcome thing. Unfortunately, fiscal year 2010 actually starts only a month before the deadline that we have with FEMA, so it

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

wouldn't be physically possible to complete the construction of this project if waited on Corps funding. So with the help of the Commission, we're in conversations with people in the Administration. I think the city would be willing to front further the additional millions of dollars of cost for this construction if we could be reimbursed in fiscal year 2010 for those costs. So that's what we're negotiating.

MS. SAUM: And it's my understanding we're talking about somewhere in the range of \$3 million for construction.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: I believe that's correct.

MS. SAUM: So, therefore, the Executive Director's recommendation is that the Commission approves the location of preliminary and final site developments for phase one of improvements to the Potomac Park Levy near the intersection of 17th Street and Constitution Avenue with condition that the

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

National Park Service and the District of Columbia consult with staff of NCPC, Commission of Fine Arts, and the DC Historic Preservation Office in determining the final design of the visible elements of the grade beam that will form the basis for the post-and-panel system and that the Commission comment favorably on the concept design for phase two.

And that concludes my presentation.

I'm happy to answer any questions. I believe we also have some speakers.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: We do. Any questions of staff at this time, Mr. McGill?

MR. MCGILL: I wasn't aware of this requirement about the distance of landscaping from earthen berms. You said it was 43 feet on each side of the berm?

MS. SAUM: Yes.

MR. MCGILL: So that means that the connection to the existing levy along the reflecting pool, whatever that connection is,

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

from that levy to the point where we cross the street is going to have a 43-foot area on each side with no trees?

MS. SAUM: Well, if you'll look at the existing earthen levy on the north side of the reflecting pool, there are no trees on that. As a matter of fact, one of the improvements that were made by the Park Service recently was to remove some vegetation that had grown up on that over the years. And the proposed landscape design does show canopy trees that are planted on the side of that area with the hope that they will eventually arch over and cover some of that area.

MR. MCGILL: Well, I'm curious to what extent this is going to impair the view from the World War II Memorial because it seems to me that there's going to be a corridor there where you see trees now that you'll see no trees in the future.

COMMISSIONER MAY: It shouldn't significantly affect what's there now. I

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

mean, this swath of treeless area exists right now across the length of the levy. And based on periodic inspections of the levy, we have to go in and, you know, trim and cut trees and things like that. We did that not too long ago not just here but in other locations where we maintain the levy. Specifically, in the southeast along the Anacostia we've done the same thing, cut back vegetation. But in this circumstance, I mean, it will be what it is right now, for the most part.

MR. MCGILL: Okay. And I assume this requirement exists because of the potential damage the tree roots can cause to the stability of the levy, right?

COMMISSIONER MAY: Right.

MS. SAUM: I'd also like to note that the working group has been aware of this for quite some time, and it was information that was provided to the consulting parties. So the comments the consulting parties provided did not identify this as an area of

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

concern.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Other questions?

Mr. Ames?

COMMISSIONER AMES: I noticed on our desk we have a package from Flood Control America. What is --

MS. SAUM: That's one of the speakers who's going to be speaking in just a moment.

COMMISSIONER AMES: So you'll be available for questions about that process after they speak?

MS. SAUM: Yes.

COMMISSIONER AMES: Very good.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: All right. I do note -- thank you very much. I do note that we haven't replaced the staff, the Executive Director's recommendation. In that, you'll see that there is one version of the cladding for the stone shown but not all of the views that you saw in the presentation, but that's not to be addressed today. That's part of

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

phase two but just to point out that there is an example of that in your staff report. And, also, there is the finding of no significant impact dated May 4th, 2009 as signed by the Executive Director.

I would, as Ms. Saum mentioned, we do have public participation in this hearing.

We have three people signed up to speak. One of those is representing an organization. That's Dr. Judy Scott-Feldman representing the Coalition to Save Our Mall. And it's been our practice to allow people representing an organization to have five minutes and two individuals representing themselves be given three minutes. If you have not been here before, you'll note there's a clock on the wall that shows the three minutes. We will count down that time. We certainly don't expect you to stop exactly at three minutes, but we do ask you to try to stay within those time limits so that we can stay on schedule. There is a noise that comes through the system

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

at the end which is rather objectionable, but I apologize in advance for that.

What I'll do now is begin calling the people who are here. As Ms. Saum mentioned, we do have materials at your place. Our first speaker is Mr. John Frykland, and he has provided the materials from Flood Control America. Mr. Lindsley Williams, who will be speaking second, has also provided information at your place, which is one of the transcripts from the April 2nd, 2009 meeting, and I don't believe we have any handout at this time from Dr. Feldman. So I'll call Mr. Frykland forward.

MR. J. FRYKLAND: Good afternoon.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Afternoon.

MR. J. FRYKLAND: Good afternoon.

My name is John Frykland with Flood Control America. I am from Minneapolis, Minnesota, and I'm a general partner. We join all these citizens of America in being enthusiastic and interested that the central core area of

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

Washington D.C. downtown have its flood protection and be protected from the events that we all are afraid are coming.

With me today is general partner also of Flood Control America, Mr. George Frykland. George has been, in the past, a resident of the Washington D.C. area for over 20 years. And while he was here, he built over 20 of your subway stations. George is an eminent concrete engineer. He's built waterways all throughout California, built several dams and waterways on the Tom Bigby River down through Louisiana and Tennessee. He is eminently prepared for the concrete business.

Our new joint design built partner, Mr. Paul Pachino of Pachino Construction. Paul, as you, perhaps, would know, did the repair on the Pentagon after the 9/11 damage and performed extremely admirably. Paul would be our design build partner on our project.

I have provided you a one-page

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

summary letter to turn to look at as we go along here. I will now turn to our presentation.

We are proposing a permanent concrete wall that would span across the 17th Street reaching from the closest existing levies on each side of the street. It would span across in this manner. Once we're threatened by flood, the vertical supports would be erected. If there is no flood event, you would have a totally open view and no view corridors would be impaired in any manner. So we call it the invisible flood wall.

Here's an overhead view showing the vertical support structure directed into place in a concrete foundation crossing 17th Street.

Here's another view showing the extruded aluminum planks in place, and the planks are sealed horizontally and vertically. Once tightened down, there is no leakage. Another view, and here's some -- for goodness sakes, fastest three minutes in the world. Here's

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

some parks we have. Here's an invisible flood wall in East Grand Forks, Minnesota with a 14-foot flood wall.

We have over 20 Corps-approved projects around the United States, over 150 in all, one at the Naval Academy as a matter of fact. Here is our concrete foundation which goes on with all Corps approvals for concrete foundation. Here's some projects we got around the country. This is the invisible flood wall in front of the baseball stadium in Louisville, Kentucky. You'll notice there's no interference with vehicle or pedestrian traffic.

This is Holman Field Airport in St. Paul, Minnesota, a 3500-foot project, 8 feet in height. The aluminum planks can be installed by men rather than lifting cranes and are sealed, once again, vertically and horizontally.

How this would fit into your project: the invisible flood wall would not

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

require any grading, any disturbance of viewpoints, and we would take almost zero trees. Say that again: almost zero tree removals, no grading. The invisible flood wall could be fit into the situation as it exists today.

I've had to rush along, but I'm sorry. Thank you for the extra time. We do not mean to overturn the prior reviews. The thoughts we provided today to the NPS during its review cycle did not discuss or provide any feedback on it to us. Now FCA has teamed up with Pachino Construction and conjointly propose to delivering on time in one stage under one budget a viable alternative solution. My colleague is available for questions and myself, if there should be any.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Thank you, sir.

Questions from the Commission? Mr. Ames?

COMMISSIONER AMES: Why are you so late getting into the process?

MR. J. FRYKLAND: I would say that

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

we were trying to be involved in the process going along.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Sir, you need to

--

MR. G. FRYKLAND: George Frykland, general partner Flood Control America. As John has said, we identified this project early on 12 years ago when we started Flood Control America. As back and forth Corps Headquarters and Corps Baltimore and made our pitch, so we've had our oar in the water. Nobody has let us pull it to date. When we got the opportunity to respond to the EA by March 3rd or whatever it was, we took that opportunity to launch this new effort.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Thank you.

Other questions?

COMMISSIONER AMES: I'm trying to figure out, you know, I noticed in your package that you have an alternative for us to vote on as far as the ED report on recommendation. I'm having a hard time

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

grasping where all this is coming from. Who are we voting to recommend to? Is it to the Park Service, or is to the Corps, or to who? I mean, I like the idea of what you've got or I wouldn't have even brought it up, but I'm troubled with trying to push it through now at such a late date. But who are we recommending to, Mr. Executive Director?

COMMISSIONER MAY: To the Park Service.

COMMISSIONER AMES: To the Park Service. So what's the Park Service's reaction? You know, what's your feeling if we vote to add Flood Control America's system as an alternate? Because we can't pick who you use or what system you use necessarily, but, you know, is there any interest at all in at least looking at this proposal?

COMMISSIONER MAY: I'm not the flood control system expert. We rely on the Corps of Engineers to provide that expertise to the Park Service, but it's my understanding

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

that we looked at this system and numerous other systems that were commercially available and we were willing in the very beginning, if we could find, I think, a single solution, even if it was proprietary, to implement that on a temporary or an expedited basis. But given all of the issues that we needed to take into consideration, there was no single system that made sense and was justifiable from a sole source contracting point of view, nor did any given system demonstrate such superior ability to address the problems, such as not being able to remove any trees, for example. I mean, there's no system that does that that we were persuaded to go in a single direction.

So what we have designed is a system that, you know, could be built by a number of contractors and could use I think a variety of different systems. We also went out and did, you know, we visited sites where systems had been installed with the Corps of Engineers, with our operations staff, the

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

people who actually have to implement it in an emergency, and, you know, came to the conclusion that we were heading in the right direction design-wise.

So I think some of this stuff was considered. And I, you know, honestly, if we were to try to steer into a different and proprietary direction at this time, it would not yield, it would not complete the job on time.

COMMISSIONER AMES: My question to you is why would you not make a proposal? You haven't picked a contractor or builder or --

COMMISSIONER MAY: No. Well, I don't know. The District of Columbia government is actually doing the contract. I don't know what contracts they've issued. Is it a design build contract that they've issued already, or is it just a design contract?

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: I think it's just a design contract at this time. We don't have the funds in our hands to begin

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

construction but hope to at any moment.

COMMISSIONER AMES: Would that preclude these people from coming before you with their proposal? I mean, I'm not comfortable with us, as a body, inserting that they take a look at you. I think you need to do that on your own. I don't think that's our position to do that. That's just my personal opinion. But I want to make sure, I mean, you know, I like the idea. I think, you know, obviously, you've been successful with it. But I think we're out of our league by trying to do that. I'm just trying to figure out if there's a way you can get your system before the correct people, and I'm assuming now it's going to the city to be looked at.

MR. G. FRYKLAND: What's new in our package is the design build offer with Pachino Construction being the local lead. We can build this project and have it done by November 1st. We'll do it. Secondly, we'll do it below budget. And, third, we'll include

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

both phases.

COMMISSIONER AMES: I appreciate that, but I still believe it's the contracting authority, who it sounds like to me is going to be the city at this point, that needs to address that issue and not this commission. But, anyway, that's it.

COMMISSIONER NEWTON: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Yes, sir?

COMMISSIONER NEWTON: I would think that this is the wrong venue for this proposal altogether. We're a planning, not a building organization. We're to provide advice to the people that submit projects to this commission to assess its appropriateness in the federal city. You should be speaking to the contracting office, not this commission. That's my opinion, sir.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Okay. Ms. Saum?

MS. SAUM: I'd just like to note that I haven't had an opportunity to talk to the Corps of Engineers today since we received

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

this, but it's my understanding from the process that we went through with the environmental assessment that the Corps of Engineers, who needs to certify whatever is installed here, was not comfortable with this system, in which case it would not meet the purpose and need and, therefore, wouldn't meet the NEPA requirements.

MR. G. FRYKLAND: Is that the Corps of Baltimore District?

MS. SAUM: Yes.

MR. G. FRYKLAND: We are in conversations with them and have been on a continuing basis.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: Can I just say, Mr. Chairman --

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Yes?

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: -- we're certainly happy to continue to be in dialogue with this company and, when it comes to construction, we'll have an open bidding process. And, you know, to the extent that we

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

can consider any and all options within the scope of what has been approved by this Commission, we'll be delighted to do that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Mr. Miller?

COMMISSIONER MILLER: Well, just following up on that, can I ask the staff then is what we've approved, would it preclude the consideration of that?

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: No. I'm just saying that --

COMMISSIONER MILLER: And what's before us today, would it preclude, if we approve that, would it preclude this?

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: I'd like to be able to verify with the Corps of Engineers if they would be able to certify this. And if they said that they would, then it could meet the purpose and need and then it could be considered.

COMMISSIONER AMES: Could or would?

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: I can't --

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: I don't think that's an appropriate question. Really, I'm concerned that what we're doing is we're putting a planning staff, as Mr. Newton said, in the position of trying to analyze and interpret what is an engineering proposal. So my concern here is that, you know, as you've correctly pointed out, this is a process that we had a concept approval in January. And what we have done is very carefully look at site lines. We've looked at tree removal. We've looked at the condition and shape of the berm, the relocation of the berm in some cases; and we've done that with looking specifically at the criteria, the impact on the ground, and really not necessarily so much on the exact design but how that has to be done. I don't think we can ask the staff at this point to interpret what's been submitted by the Park Service to whether this would allow this other proposal to work. I really do think we have to, unfortunately for you,

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

confine ourselves to that which is before us, rather than to try to make an interpretation here that, one, would allow this or not allow this or to try to pass upon its viability as a system for the flood control.

So my concern is that we have studied this, and it's been not since just January but for over a year or two. We've been considering this, not very specifically, for at least 20 years. So I'm concerned about trying to do something here today that provides specifically an alternative arrangement that I just have not seen until today.

COMMISSIONER AMES: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Yes?

COMMISSIONER AMES: First of all, I wasn't trying to do what you're saying, and I don't think my question was out of line. What I'm saying is if you have the ability to check with the Corps of Engineers, I personally would like to see the staff check with the

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

Corps of Engineers. If they give a ruling or whatever that's favorable that they would approve this system, then it would be up to the contracting authority who, what I understand now, is the City of Washington as to whether they would consider that or not. I'm not trying to push, you know, anybody to consider this thing. I just want to make sure that everybody is given a fair chance. And if the Corps says no then they're not going to consider it anyway. If the Corps says yes, they still don't have to consider it. That's the point. But at least give it as much leverage as you possibly can, and I'd appreciate that. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER DIXON: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Yes?

COMMISSIONER DIXON: I just want to express my little concern here. There may be many other vendors, we don't know, who would also like to have this level of discussion of their very meritorious presentation, but I

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

don't think it's appropriate for us to be even creating a record right now about this. It's not in our hands, it's not our decision. There's no disrespect for you coming. I'm in business myself, and I like to get before as many people as I can. But I think this is not the forum, nor to comment necessarily appropriate on the record about a potential bidder at another level.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: I'll go back and just add another thought to this. Specifically, the language that you propose, and I realize it's just your recommendation, talks about approving an alternative concept and requesting that the Commission of Fine Arts reopen their proceedings is really beyond what we would do as a commission at this level. So I think we have to look at what's been provided by our staff with much consultation with a number of different agencies. And if you can fit within that that would be great, if you would have the

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

opportunity to do that; but I don't think we can, as planners here today, try to insert ourselves into that process.

MR. J. FRYKLAND: Well, our main point in coming today was, first of all, some showing of the product but, secondly, the design build feature and the many benefits that this would draw for the project. I --

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Well, no, thank you for doing that. It's just unfortunate that we're not the right forum, as you heard before, really for us to try to make that work for you today.

MR. J. FRYKLAND: Well, we'll work in finding the right one then.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Thank you. Thank you for being with us. All right. It's back to the Commission. If there are no further questions or comments, I would entertain a motion. Oh, we have two other speakers. Thank you. We have two other speakers. The second is Mr. Lindsley

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

Williams, and you have it here at your place the transcript from the Thursday, April 2nd, 2009 meeting. Thank you.

MR. WILLIAMS: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman. My name is Lindsley Williams. I've been here before both on this topic and others, and I thank you for your time this afternoon. I'm appearing for myself. I am authorized by DC BIA to answer questions about the letter they submitted, but it speaks for itself, and I will not try to speak for that organization unless asked a question.

Exhibit A of my presentation to you is the transcript from last month's meeting where the funding issues were surfaced in a colloquy of sorts between and among Ms. Saum and Ms. Tregoning and Mr. McGill and others. And, basically, my concern here is not only that we get an approved plan, and we seem to be on a course to get that, but that we have an assurance that the plan will come together and mesh up and couple up with funding so that

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

we can meet the deadline. Having a perfect plan, even with alternatives or not, having the perfect plan and not having the result by November 1st would be a huge problem for our community, and that's what I'm looking to have as much cooperation as we can. And we've seen really good efforts here. Everybody has been pulling together. I may have said this one other time, but we are often seen in the public, government is seen as being a place that's just large and bulky and it doesn't work. But here we have, and I want the recorder to make sure he understands this correctly, we have our government in action. That's two words. Instead of having government run together as one word when it simply just doesn't seem to do what it's supposed to do.

Let's get something approved.  
Let's get the funds. Let's get the damn thing built. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Thank you very

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

much. All right. That brings us to our third speaker, Dr. Judy Scott-Feldman on behalf of the Coalition to Save the Mall.

DR. FELDMAN: Good afternoon, Chairman Cogbill and Commissioners. I didn't prepare comments. I just wanted to observe and to listen and to see if something came that might be worth saying. I think this invisible wall concept is certainly an interesting concept. I understand the reluctance of the NCPC to be able to say anything definitively because it clearly has an engineering component. But from the perspective of the National Coalition to Save Our Mall, it is much more in keeping with the maintaining the historic and open context of the setting, of the views, and really seems to minimize drastically the effect that the proposed design would have.

I think part of the problem is the process, and the process is often difficult, as you probably know. Sometimes alternatives

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

don't show up until too late or what seems to be too late. I think this is an opportunity for it not to be said that the NCPC can't decide on this but for them to understand that this maybe could be a re-looking at the process. Maybe it's worth considering a re-look at the process because I'm surprised and happily surprised to see that there may be an alternative.

Secondly, we agree with the Commission of Fine Arts' statement urging all parties to look at the larger context here, the larger context of the National Mall. That's our concern. Many piecemeal projects happen, and some have to be expedited. But we would hope that everyone always keeps in mind that piecemeal by piecemeal we're destroying the integrity of the Mall if we don't think long term about the larger context.

The FONSI doesn't really mention the larger context of the Mall. It talks about the environment. But, again, we believe

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

that the context of the National Mall as our preeminent public symbolic space is considered. And in that respect, I'd like you to consider that this project is only one of three major projects now proposed through the Washington Monument grounds. There's the African-American Museum at one end, there's the levy at the other, and then there's the Sylvan Theater region where the National Park Service's Mall plan is considering replacing the Sylvan Theater with a multi-use structure, as well as use.

So we're talking about, essentially, three corners of the Washington Monument grounds about to undergo three unrelated design and use changes. And we believe, and now I'll say something that you will all probably find horrifying and shocking, but the National Coalition has been thinking about the larger design context and vision context for the future of the Mall, and we believe that the Washington Monument

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

grounds is a key place to focus some real attention on the Mall's symbolism, its design integrity, and on public use.

If you look at the history of the Mall, the L'Enfant Plan, and then especially the McMillan Plan, the Washington Monument was the key symbolic core of the cross-axis of the Mall, and we never did it. We've never completed the Washington Monument grounds in part because the McMillan Commission design was considered to be too drastic and might undermine the stability of the Washington Monument back in the 30s. Now we have different engineering opportunities to think through the questions of what could be done there.

The Washington Monument grounds, for those of us who walk on it, are a desert in the summer and a tundra in the winter. It is a huge barrier. I know it looks beautiful. The landscape looks beautiful, and the monument is wonderful. But to walk across it,

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

as I do when I teach classes, is a real daunting experience. And if you read the McMillan Commission Plan, they talked about it as the great landscaped centerpiece destination and lookout from which one would get the full expanse of the Mall's symbolism.

So we believe it's an opportunity for us to think of the broader context as well and to start thinking about how we can think about making the Washington Monument grounds and the whole Mall whole for the future. Thank you.

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Chair, can I ask Dr. Feldman a question?

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Yes, sir.

MR. MCGILL: Dr. Feldman, I'd like to ask you a question. As I recall, when this Commission was considering the plan that has been implemented to establish a security barrier around the Washington Monument and to re-grade the hillside to what it originally was intended to be, you opposed that because you argued that the Washington Monument

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

grounds should be open for festive gatherings and sports events.

MS. FELDMAN: Absolutely.

MR. MCGILL: It seems me that if the McMillan Commission Plan were to be implemented, there would be no way possible that a perimeter around the Washington Monument of some distance would be available for public gatherings and sports events because it would be much more of a structural solution than we proposed with the present plan in place.

MS. FELDMAN: I'm not suggesting that we implement the McMillan Plan. I have serious questions about the very ornate European style. I think that we have other ways to think about how to landscape that. You also recall when we were opposing the walls, it was the location of the walls. We proposed that instead of putting them in the middle of the grass that we could have put them around the perimeter and perhaps lifted

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

up the landscape at the end, that way keeping cars from getting anywhere near the Monument but really maintaining the open space totally unobstructed.

This concept is coming out of development of our thinking over the past three or four years. The more we think, the more we talk. And I give public presentations in at least 200 locations. I listen to people, and I talk to people, and really what I hear from so many people is the Washington Monument is a failed part of the Mall, the grounds. And at first, I thought that was shocking, but the more I walk on it the more I think that, yes, something could be done creative, creatively. And remember the McMillan Commission, the Washington Monument is not on axis where it's supposed to be.

MR. MCGILL: Right.

MS. FELDMAN: The McMillan Commission was going to put a pool because that's the spot where we now have the

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

Jefferson Stone where the great cross-axis intersects. We could think about that as being the place that we could create some kind of lookout and design a landscape, however modern thinking might go, that would once again restore George Washington, this monument, the father of the country, the cross-axis, to the prominence and to make it the public -- see, this is the thing. The McMillan Commission wanted it to be a destination, and it's not. I mean, it's great for softball, it's great for kite flying, and we don't want to lose those things, but there are creative ways of putting in trees and putting in places to sit and places to eat and creating some kind of forum where we could have musical performances. And especially with the African-American Museum coming in, it could be an opportunity to make the Washington Monument grounds a real vibrant lively place for all kinds of musical, theatrical -- when I was a kid, the Sylvan Theater was the

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

theatrical center of the Mall. These kinds of things, and I'm not a designer, I would give to designers and ask designers but not more than designers. It's about symbolism. It's about the Mall's narrative.

And, again, it gets back to the concept the more we look at it the more we see this as a design, a history, a symbolism, a national identity question, which goes beyond any of us. And that's why we keep thinking that it's some kind of temporary independent commission that could help us do this.

MR. MCGILL: So then you're saying that even though that it's good for kite flying and sports, even though it's a tundra in the winter and a desert in the summer, it's still good for those activities?

MS. FELDMAN: It is now, yes, but it could be better for other activities, as well, and it could have some shade and it could have some shelter.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Other questions?

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

Thank you very much.

MS. FELDMAN: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: All right. Now we have concluded the public portion, and, again, I apologize for that. I will bring it back to the Commission for further discussion.

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Chairman, I would move the EDR and make some comments if there's a second.

COMMISSIONER AMES: Second.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Motion made and seconded.

MR. MCGILL: You know, I see in this proposal we were given this morning very little different than that which has been considered all along in this planning process. Essentially, there's three components, it seems to me, of this proposal, of any proposal, for addressing the issue of extending the levy in a more permanent or effective way across 17th Street. The first issue is how far does the existing berm system

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

extend? Then how long does the post-and-panel system of some sort be erected to fill in the space between the two berms? And, thirdly, how is the resulting structure decorated so it's less obvious and unattractive?

My impression is that, in the planning process and the 106 consultation process and the EIS, all these things were considered. A variety of alternatives were looked at, as we've seen in presentations here before us. I also recall that the early idea of a much longer post-and-panel system and less extension of the berm was considered to be unacceptable by the Corps because it was not, from an engineering viewpoint, of sufficient strength to fulfill the tasks assigned to it.

Now, it seems to me that, as construction proceeds, as design is finished and construction proceeds, there could very well be an occasion arise where the monies available are not sufficient to match the cost

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

proposed, and this is something we experience in GSA all the time when we go through design engineering to cut back on the cost. And at that point, if such a dilemma were to arise, this proposal could be considered, among others, as one way of achieving the goal at less cost. But I do not believe that it's, A, an invisible wall; B, a superior alternative; and, C, something that we, as a commission, should mandate. And, therefore, I move the EDR.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Discussion? Ms. Tregoning? I'm sorry.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't think I'm going to speak to the alternative proposals that have been prepared. I just wanted to acknowledge the work of, well, acknowledge yourself and your leadership on this issue and the work of the Executive Director and the staff of the NCPC in continuing to really help to coordinate and move this process forward.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

I've sometimes jokingly called it an unnatural act all this cooperation among levels of government and federal agencies. And like I say, while we're still not at the finish line, I have found an extraordinary level of cooperation in a project that I'm very proud, on behalf of the City, to have been involved in.

I do hope that we can come to some resolution about the funding. I think there are a lot of interests that are still very much aligned, and I'm hopeful that we'll be able to do that and meet the, you know, meet the goal that FEMA set. I mean, FEMA has not been always at the table here, the FEMA and the Corps, but I just want to acknowledge that, when presented with a set of what I think are very reasonable arguments about good government and good results, that they were very willing, ultimately, to be flexible in the implementation of their national policy in order that they achieve a superior result.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

And they made an exception for us that they have not made for other places, and I don't want to give them cause to regret that flexibility.

And like I have said before, it would certainly be a shame if every building owner, public and private, had to provide their own personal flood protection for each and every one of their own buildings, including the African-American Museum, because we were not able to complete this project as we all so intend. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Thank you, Ms. Tregoning. I appreciate that, and I appreciate the kind words for the National Capital Planning Commission staff. And I also think that, even though we did struggle at the beginning with FEMA and with the Corps of Engineers, they have been very responsive to us in trying to help us find solutions to this. And as you correctly pointed out, FEMA granted an exception here that I don't think

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

has happened anywhere else in this country. So we are on a good track, and I want to also thank you for your leadership and for the City's leadership in trying to get this problem resolved.

Yes, Mr. May?

COMMISSIONER MAY: Yes, I would add my compliments to both NCPC and the District for their work with us and with the Corps of Engineers to try to affect this solution to come up with this design and set us on a course to meet the deadline, and we look forward to actually executing the work. And then I think I would second the motion by Mr. McGill, which I didn't hear a second. I'm sorry, I didn't hear it. Okay, sorry.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: All right. We have a motion made and seconded. Is there any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion please signify by saying aye.

(Chorus of ayes.)

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Opposed?

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Abstentions?

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Motion carries.

Thank you.

**4B. National Mall and East Potomac Park  
Pedestrian Wayfinding and Sign Program**

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: All right.

We'll move now to Agenda Item 4B. This is the Pedestrian Wayfinding and Sign Program for the National Mall and East Potomac Park. Ms. Witherell?

MS. WITHERELL: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and Commissioners. The National Park Service is engaged in developing a plan for the National Mall to address the appearance and use of the Mall by millions of visitors each year. As you heard last month in a presentation of the National Mall Plan by Susan Spain, the public has commented strongly and in great numbers to the Park Service about the appearance of the Mall, that it does not

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

look good enough for what the Mall means to our nation, and also about visitor amenities, including information and orientation.

The Park Service has determined that removing the signs currently in the Mall, many of them installed in an ad hoc manner over the decades, and replacing them with a comprehensive and coordinated sign program will improve both the appearance of the Mall and the usefulness of the signs to the public.

All alternatives in the National Mall Plan, which is now in development, contain a comprehensive new sign program. The sign program was selected for funding through the Park Service's Centennial Fund with a match from the Trust for the National Mall.

The area for implementation of the sign program is the land on the National Mall under the management of the National Park Service shown here in this colored area, although including all of East Potomac Park which is off the edge of this large map. And

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

Presidents Park and other parks, for example, are not part of this program, although it's possible in the future. You'll note that the area of the Mall for the Smithsonian Museums is not included in the current sign initiative, and you know that the Smithsonian has installed identification and program information signs for its museums, which are near the sidewalks in front of its buildings.

I show these composite photos not to belabor the point but to show the range of sign information that the Park Service feels is experienced in observing is needed for the Mall and that a coordinated hierarchical sign system will reduce the number of signs and visual clutter. I'll point out the kind of condition, in particular, that the proposed sign program is meant to solve. You'll notice this photo in the corner, you'll see kind of a regulatory sign, "Trash-Free Zone. Please respect your national park." This is, you'll notice, the Tidal Basin and railing here. But

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

then here's another sign on the same sign post faced in a different direction that provides directional information, and then you'll also see that there's the back of the third sign. So aside from the many style changes, which I won't comment on because that's sort of obvious over time, you'll see that there are a lot of small signs that are placed and the Park Service feels need to be placed in particular areas, especially around water, "Please respect the Memorial. No wading, no coins," sits at World War II, and you do see quite a lot of signs reminding people to respect the Memorial. And I think the Park Service's goal through the entire Mall Plan and certainly our expectations for this, as well, and in this lessor format, through changing the signs, I think we'll engender respect for the Mall and for the park.

And, again, you see signs of different styles, but also some of them are quite large. That's at the Lincoln, and it

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

blocks view if you're standing there. And then you also see other kinds of signs that have just been put up over time to provide information for visitors.

The broader context for this initiative on the Mall is the development of a sign program for national parks, and it's called the uniguide system, and it's being installed nationwide and has already been installed in some national parks. And it's sort of an inventory sheet for some of the signs.

All of the signs that you'll review today are from this uniguide system. These are operational signs we'll be reviewing today, and they identify Park Service facilities and services. They provide program and emergency information, and they also post regulations. And these signs will replace signs that currently are on the Mall and that serve that purpose.

In addition, a unique wayfinding

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

sign pylon in two sizes has been designed to meet the specific conditions of the Mall, to include its historic design landscape and the vistas. And you saw a presentation by the Park Service at the March meeting on the overall sign program proposed for the Mall, and these are the other components still in discussion that you'll review shortly in the future.

There are some outstanding questions about the wayfinding pylon. As you know, the Commission of Fine Arts questioned the need for the taller of the two pylons in February and did not approve it when they gave concept approval to the rest of the entire sign package, and that's the taller of the two pylons. The Park Service is returning to CFA this month for further consideration of the entire package, including the taller pylon which has now been reduced slightly in height.

To study the pylons further and how and where they would be installed, we will

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

schedule a site visit for Commissioners at our June Commission meeting so that you can see mock-ups at various locations on the Mall. And map locations will also be studied at that time in the field. Another component of the sign program is identification of signs for memorials and monuments, and that's on hold pending further consultation, as well.

So the numbers for the total program proposed by the Park Service is 327 signs to be removed and about 305 to be installed, and that number is approximate pending final field checking. One hundred and seventy-one operational signs will be removed, and many of these are clustered near memorials, and the visual clutter will be reduced significantly when they're removed. And approximately 162 new operational signs are in today's submission, and that's about half of the total number of signs the Park Service would like to install.

And here's some so you can see them

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

in some greater detail. For example, this is a sign band that would be used on top of information kiosk and signs that would identify parking bays and ball fields. Of course, even restroom signs are counted in the total. Some signs, including signs for Park Facilities and Headquarters in East Potomac Park and elsewhere. Here's a rules and regulations sign that I'll return to, and some signs are also mounted on poles or on the side of a building or even on a fence.

The uniguide materials are painted aluminum for the signs, and the exposed sign posts will be of weathering steel. Internal sign frames are aluminum. And for signs that have sign bases, they'll be reinforced concrete.

Here's some, again, some additional very low signs mounted on the ground and, again, some on the wall. Some of the signs are movable, for example a sign to provide information about an upcoming ranger talk or

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

other programs.

This is one of the signs that I think will be a primary tool to reduce the kind of sign clutter that occurs now, especially around memorials. It's four feet six inches in height and is eight inches wide.

This is a flat sign. It's not to be confused with the pylons. And it will cluster some of the rules and regs in one column that's placed on the ground, and you post it in a vertical format.

And here, if you can get a closer look at them, this sign, for example, a low sign would be, "This area closed for turf restoration," would be in areas where, you know, rather than saying, "Do not walk." And here's one that provides information on how to get a ranger talk on your cell phone and, you know, a bookstore with the hours and, again, showing some information signs that might be mounted on a wall, where appropriate. "Do not feed the wildlife" and "Please stay on the

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

sidewalk."

This is a design build project, so what the Park Service is providing is information showing in some of the locations more specific replacement and siting of the signs, but this will be done in greater depth when all of the signs, when there's shop drawings for all of the signs. And we'll be field-checking them with the Park Service, and the DC Preservation Office will also be reviewing them further.

So, for example, these are existing signs around the World War II Memorial, and they look sort of extra strong here because they each have an identity tag to it that's key to an inventory list. But here are the replacements. It would include the use of this four and a half-foot regulatory sign that would be placed at several locations around the edge, the perimeter; information sign as you approach some of the buildings; and then small signs here. And these would be the

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

equivalent for signs to remind you not to throw coins or to step into the water. So, for example, this is an existing condition, and the proposed after condition could be having that one regulatory sign there or, perhaps, it would be to the side, and that would be one of the things that we'd like to check visually when we look at the shop drawings.

And, again, current conditions at the Lincoln, which has had an accretion of signs over the years, and, again, here are the existing signs. This image shows signs around the entire circle, and you can see some of the reduction in signs right at the Memorial. There will be some additional signs that will be in the area for regulation and for identification at a future time.

Here's at the Lake and Constitution Gardens, so that's to wildlife and staying on the sidewalk. And here's at the northeast corner of the Tidal Basin, and you can see

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

some regulatory signs that would be posted, as well as the kind of sign that would provide emergency information and how to reach the Park Police, for example, in case of an emergency.

Now, our review of the project, we've been interested in looking at design issues, how it fits with our comprehensive plan, and also with the master plan for the Mall which is now under development. And our design concerns are primarily the number and the location of the type of sign, and so our condition of approval for the operational signs is that the Park Service would consult further with Commission staff and with the Preservation Office staff on the determination of placement and the number of signs proposed, and the SHPO staff is concerned particularly in the vicinity of memorials. And there is continuing consultation and review of the remaining components of the program that includes the pedestrian guides which are the

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

wayfinding pylons; orientation signs which are the map kiosks; and identification signs for memorials and monuments.

This project is not inconsistent with the preservation and historic features element of the comprehensive plan, and that's because it will improve efficiency and visitor experience, as well as the appearance and image of the National Mall and the Monumental Core. And comprehensive wayfinding and sign program to improve the appearance of and visitor experience on the Mall is included in all alternatives of the National Mall Plan which is currently in development.

The Park Service determined that the installation meets the standards for categorical exclusion under its regulations, and NCPC also determined that the installation meets the standards for categorical exclusion under the Commission's environmental and historic preservation policies and procedures.

For Section 106, the DC State

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

Historic Preservation Office determined no adverse effect in a letter on March 9th with a condition that the Park Service continue to consult with their staff in the siting of signs, especially near major memorials. And they also asked to be included in consultation that continues through review by both this body and the Commission of Fine Arts.

There was some discussion of this at one of the National Mall Plan 106 meetings last month. Some correspondence was generated. The Park Service received two letters from the Coalition to Save Our Mall, and Dr. Feldman has also signed up today to speak. So there is continuing consultation on parts of this program.

The Park Service concurs with SHPO's determination of no adverse effect but with the same condition that you'll see in our proposed Commission action. And consultation and review regarding some components, again, of this program is ongoing.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

Therefore, the Executive Director's recommendation is to commend the Park Service for replacing and updating the current signs on the National Mall and in East Potomac Park with the proposed sign and wayfinding program and to approve preliminary and final site development plans for the installation of the uniguide sign system, and that includes the Park Service sites and facilities identification signs, and those are the codes for those categories, which I showed earlier, and for the rules and regulations signs with the condition that the Park Service consult with staff and the DC State Historic Preservation Office in determining the final placement and number of signs proposed in the vicinity of the memorials.

And, Mr. Chairman, that completes the presentation.

[INSERT - National Mall and Memorial Parks]

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Thank you very much. Other questions from the Commission at this point? Yes, Tom?

COMMISSIONER HART: Will this plan establish a fixed number of signs and their location, or is it flexible to accommodate some changes in the future?

MS. WITHERELL: Yes. The uniguide system is meant to be flexible. We want to protect and make sure that, if there is a change of signs, that it's part of this system, that we don't sort of add to the ad hoc quality that exists now. So the sign has enough variety of signs in it that can be used. The Park Service said that they will adjust signs even after installation, if that needs to be the fact based on field conditions or even on further consultation.

On the other hand, we want to make sure that we work carefully with the Park Service as they install the signs so that we're very careful about the number and

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

location of them. So there's flexibility for change in the future.

COMMISSIONER HART: It won't necessarily stop sign creep over time?

MS. WITHERELL: There will need to be, as new amenities and attractions to the Mall are added, other memorials and so forth, there will need to be that assessment. And, perhaps, the way to do this is to continue to review it with the Park Service on a regular basis when signs are being added or adjusted.

COMMISSIONER HART: Is there some process that's included in this plan to do that?

MS. WITHERELL: Well, I think the Park Service would continue to do additional shop drawings for siting of additional signs. And perhaps we can ask that they be submitted to us, whether that can be something done on a regular basis.

COMMISSIONER HART: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Mr. McGill?

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

MR. MCGILL: Well, I think perhaps a more question to the point is does the Park Service have authority in a single location over the placement of signs in this area? Do you want to answer that?

MS. WITHERELL: On areas in their jurisdiction?

MR. MCGILL: Yes.

MS. WITHERELL: Without further review is what you're --

MR. MCGILL: No. I'm asking whether, I mean I ask this for the following reason: we had a presentation by the Smithsonian Institution on sign standards for Smithsonian Museums. I asked the Smithsonian spokesman, "Are these mandatory?" He said, "Well, each of our museum directors has a very strong personality, and these are strong recommendations, but they really have the final discretion." Now, I would be amazed to learn that the Park Service, a single authority in the Park Service oversaw the

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

placement of so many signs at the World War II Memorial or the Lincoln Memorial. I suspect different entities in the organization put up signs for different reasons. And so then the real question about whether or not an effective long-term control plan is in place that NCPC and the SHPO can be involved in is whether there's a single person, a sign czar, in the Park Service.

COMMISSIONER MAY: I'll start to respond to that, but I'll hand off quickly to Steve Lorenzetti, the Deputy Superintendent for National Mall and Memorial Parks. First of all, one of the reasons we're doing this project in the first place is to try to stop that sort of sign creep to begin with. I mean, we don't want to have that kind of clutter. We want to have a sensible, understandable sign system. And just having this system has proven, I think, in other parks to allow us that, you know, allow us a system to provide enough information in the

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

right places.

Are we going to get it all right the first time around? No, there are going to be some tweaking that needs to occur. I'll let Steve Lorenzetti carry the ball from here.

MR. LORENZETTI: I'm Steve Lorenzetti, the Deputy Superintendent for Planning for National Mall and Memorial Parks.

To paraphrase the President, I am not, nor do I want to be, the sign czar for the Park Service. But we do have a problem, obviously.

These signs have come up over the years, and we've had different parts of the park put them up. There hasn't been as much coordination as we would have liked in the past.

We have a different system in place now. All signs do have to come through our resource management office where we do work on all of the 106 implications. This is a much broader package. That's why we're bringing them all like this. Scope creep, sign creep, I wouldn't say. Certainly, there will be

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

times in the future where we'll be adding signs, but it will be in a more uniform process now. We'll be using the unisign manual that the Park Service has developed nationwide, and it will come through and be reviewed by all the appropriate offices in the park and other agencies as necessary, as opposed to going out and just putting up a sign, don't walk here, don't do this, don't do that. In fact, we'd like to get away from the don't do signs. We are trying to get more into respect this site, you know, do things that you would do at your own home, your own city, etcetera. So that's our goal.

COMMISSIONER MAY: I also would like to add that there is a fairly distinct difference between the Park Service and the Smithsonian, I think. You know, what you've described in terms of the operation and the individual museums, you know, there is something of that issue in the National Capital Region with the individual park

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

superintendents and their policies and their level of independence. But we are talking about really, for this entire program, the way it is right now, a single management entity. There is one superintendent for the National Mall. And even when we get to the White House, which is the only truly abutting park which has a separate management structure, do we even start to have those issues. And that's not included in the program right now. When we implement it, we want to make sure that it is implemented consistently.

MR. MCGILL: Now, when you say the National Mall, do you mean that area between the Capitol and the Washington Monument, or do you mean the entire area that --

COMMISSIONER MAY: I mean the National Mall and Memorial Parks, which is not just the Mall and the monument grounds, the Lincoln Memorial and East Potomac/West Potomac Park. The entire jurisdiction. I can show you a map --

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

MR. MCGILL: That's okay. I mean, Commissioner Parsons and I discussed on various occasions what exactly is the National Mall.

COMMISSIONER MAY: That's a different subject. I'd prefer not to go into that one right now.

MR. MCGILL: Okay.

MR. LORENZETTI: This is a sign project for the National Mall and Memorial Parks. And, in fact, we will be using that name on all of our signs. All of the other memorials and parks inside of National Mall Memorial Parks, the Lincoln, the Washington Monument, Jefferson Memorial, all are under the umbrella of National Mall Memorial Parks.

If it helps, try to think of our sister parks out west, the North Rim, the South Rim of the Grand Canyon, all part of the Grand Canyon. That's how we view it here. Lincoln, Jefferson, Washington are all part of the National Mall and Memorial Parks, as are parts

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

of Dupont Circle, McPherson Square, Farragut, East and West Potomac Parks. So that whole family will be covered by the sign program.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Can we go back to the slide for the World War II Memorial that shows -- Steve, you might want to stay up there for a second -- that shows the existing and the proposed signs? All right. Going back to Mr. Hart's point, we see the existing signs there and we see where they're proposed to be for replacements. But the way I understand this, just to be clear, is this is not approving just signs in this area, but what we are approving, if we take the action that's proposed today, is we're approving the sign package and we're approving that the concept that the National Park Service continue to consult with the staff and the SHPO in these and future signs.

And so I think to your point, John, this is not a guarantee that these are the only signs. I think, realistically, we have

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

to assume that there will be changes in the future. But from my perspective, our relationship with the Park Service has been such that they are good stewards and they are doing, I think they've made a significant positive effort to improve the view shed here, but I wouldn't say that this would be the only place we would see signs in the future, but certainly we would continue to work with the Park Service and they with us on any future signs.

MR. LORENZETTI: Yes, that would be our plan. And I apologize that we do not have our designer, Wayne Hunt from Hunt Designs, here to explain how these locations were developed. He's much better at this. He does this for a living. I'm kind of his weak stand-in. But a lot of thought went into these locations, and we tried to do it with a minimalistic idea in mind.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: And we did have that part of the presentation last month as

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

part of the information presentation. All right. Any other question from the Commission at this point? Thank you for your help on that. All right. We do have a public hearing on this, and we do have one speaker, Dr. Judy Scott-Feldman representing the Coalition to Save Our Mall. Dr. Feldman?

MS. FELDMAN: I'm Judy Scott Feldman, National Coalition to Save Our Mall. Again, I didn't prepare comments because I wanted to see what was being proposed. First of all, I think we can all agree that we need better and fewer signs on the National Mall, no question about it. But I think the discussion that just happened points out one of the fundamental issues and one of the fundamental challenges with putting signs on the Mall because the Mall belongs to numerous jurisdictions or is managed by jurisdictions.

And I'm going to make my comments from the perspective of the visitor. I know that these are government agencies presenting

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

government projects, but from the point of view of the visitor the Mall is one thing. Now, we don't all know exactly where it is, but we have a pretty good idea it goes from the Capitol to the Lincoln and from the White House to the Jefferson and includes the museums and other things beyond Park Service land. So that is a fundamental visitor experience, which is who the signs are for I do believe. So I think it's something that we really need to address either now or in the future.

The categorical exclusion for the uniguide system, I understand how that works, but I think for the National Mall it's kind of an unfortunate thing to do. You can understand for Yellowstone or for one of the national parks out west or in the north or wherever, but the Mall is not a national park.

It has never been designated a national park ever by the President or by Congress. It is certainly part of the national park system.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

It is certainly part of National Mall and Memorial Parks, an administrative jurisdiction that includes Dupont Circle. But the National Mall is not and never has been a national park, and this is something that's come out during the Mall planning process that we, essentially, have undifferentiated federal land, including the Washington Monument, the Lincoln, and so on, but it doesn't have boundaries, and a Congressional Research Service report in 2003 confirmed that.

So the question is why do we treat it like a national park when, in fact, it is a unique symbolic symbol and we should be thinking differently about it? So first of all, it's not a national park unless Congress or the President designates it and defines it.

But, secondly, it is our nation's preeminent historic landscape. It's a symbol, and you can't separate the Capitol and the White House from the symbol.

So the question becomes can we

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

think about it as a whole and not approve Smithsonian and then Park Service and then National Gallery but somehow bring all the parties together with designers and come up with a beautiful, beautiful, unique National Mall signage program that we can all agree on?

The uniguide system, to me, is a real disappointment for this 19th century landscape. During the 106, we did ask that, it's probably for the other proposals, that we get some kind of historic design. And I did show the one at Central Park. I mean, I'm sure there are other historic parks that have their own distinctive little signs that say you're really somewhere special, this is historic landscape. And I think it's the opportunity, before we let the Mall signage look like Yellowstone signage, for us to think about the importance of the view.

One little comment I'd like to say.

I mean, the staff says that this conforms with the Park Service's master plan. We

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

should be very clear the Park Service is not doing a master plan. They have insisted they're not doing a master plan. And so there is no actual master plan for the Mall, and the plan that we are studying and it's got some, you know, some substantive aspects to it, is mainly the Park Service plan about maintenance and concessions. Now, that's useful, it's important, but it's not a master plan.

So we're back in the same question: are we going to look at piecemeal things, or are we going to give the National Mall the multi-jurisdictional, unified, symbolic aspect that visitors are looking for and that we can do? But it requires us somehow to get everyone in the room together and come up with a unified concept. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Thank you very much. Questions from the Commission? Ms. Tregoning?

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: It's not necessarily for Dr. Feldman, although I agree

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

with a lot of what she has to say about this.

I'm a little bit confused, and maybe Ms. Witherell can clarify this for me. Has this puzzle been broken into pieces? This is wayfinding and sign program, but I understand the pylons are not part of this approval?

MS. WITHERELL: I can go back to that slide and show the remaining elements.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: Okay. It would be helpful just to get that clarification. And I did want to compliment the Park Service. They've been working very closely with our staff. I mean, my comments were similar that, for the visitor, these distinctions, the White House, the museum, the Smithsonian, the National Gallery, the Lincoln Memorial, they don't know their jurisdiction.

They know that these are places that they might like to visit and that they would appreciate signage that would direct them to places of interest. That also applies to transportation. The city has a new circulator

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

service that explicitly serves the Mall. You know, signage to that kind of transportation is helpful not just to Metro. And, of course, you know, most people are interested in eating and getting refreshment, and a lot of that is throughout the city, not necessarily directly on the Mall.

So my question is that there's a comment in the EDR in the report that makes a reference to the ongoing discussions that are happening and the coordination with downtown.

I just kind of wondered why it was not included as part of the, under the approval as a condition that this coordination, you know, basically continue because I don't think we're quite there yet. We would certainly like to be able to continue to have these conversations and end up with a system of signs in and around, especially around, the Mall that essentially give people directions to the places that visitors most want to go, not necessarily to just Park Service

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

facilities.

MS. WITHERELL: The signs that are before you today for final approval are operational signs, and most of them are clustered around memorials.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: So the title of this, it says wayfinding. It's not wayfinding?

MS. WITHERELL: Well, that's the whole program title, and what you're seeing today is the operational signs, 171 operational signs. And these are the signs that are still in development, which complete the total sign and wayfinding package, and they include map signs, map kiosk signs which you'll see a mock-up of at the June meeting; pylons which you'll see a mock-up of at the June meeting; and ID signs for memorials, which will not move forward to the Commission at the time, those are still in discussion. And your comments at the meeting two months ago concerned content, particularly of the

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

pylon signs and how to coordinate with off-the-Mall sites with other types of visitor amenities, and your staff has been working with the Park Service. I did speak with OP staff who feel satisfied, to date, with the progress on that; and I think more than 30 sites have been identified, including sites within walking distance of the Mall. And also the Park Service intends to place these pylons in locations which will allow them to orient themselves and to have the view of downtown signs, so that there's a seamless transition to off-the-Mall sites. And you'll be able to see that next month at the Commission meeting and in a site visit in the morning.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: So when you say that these are operational signs, they exclude wayfinding?

MS. WITHERELL: Correct.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: Okay.

MS. WITHERELL: Correct. And these are mostly site identification signs for the

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

Park Service, facility identification and their rules and regs, which are posted by the Park Service for their memorials.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Mr. Dixon?

COMMISSIONER DIXON: Yes, I just wonder whether, is there any coordination with the Smithsonian? I mean, I'm assuming that's taking place.

MS. WITHERELL: Yes.

COMMISSIONER DIXON: Since it's such a major player with all the buildings, of course.

MS. WITHERELL: The Park Service may be able to add more to that, but they have been meeting with them not only on the content of the pylons but also with the placement and relationship with the Smithsonian signs, which do not include wayfinding. The Park Service will be providing wayfinding for the entire Mall. Park Service signs identify their buildings, and also you've noticed program signs that describe, you know, not only the

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

hours of the museums but also what kinds of exhibits are currently showing.

COMMISSIONER DIXON: I think, for ease of reading, obviously, if there's some similarity in layout, the fonts, and the money being spent to figure that out should be applied across the board, though I do think it's important, and I'm sure it will be, that they will make a distinction between Park Service and Smithsonian because somebody has got to be responsible for what they put on those signs. And if there's a problem, they need to know who's responsible for it but not so different but different enough you would know.

MS. WITHERELL: And the map signs will show a broader area, as you see, and that can be keyed to some of the destinations that will be shown on the pylons, as well, and have further information.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Did you need to hear from Mr. Lorenzetti?

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

MR. MCGILL: I'd like to ask you a question in response to Dr. Feldman's comment about coordination with the Smithsonian and Arrington's. Does the Smithsonian own the land on which its buildings are located?

MR. LORENZETTI: Yes, it's been transferred to the Smithsonian.

MR. MCGILL: So and when the African-American History Museum is built, you will transfer that land to the Smithsonian?

MR. LORENZETTI: Actually, the way that legislation was written, it already has been transferred. We have an agreement with the Smithsonian. We are actually operating it for the Smithsonian, but it has been transferred.

MR. MCGILL: So then you don't have authority to say to the Smithsonian your signs must look like a certain way?

MR. LORENZETTI: That's correct.

MR. MCGILL: Okay.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Just to follow-

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

up on Ms. Tregoning's comment earlier about the wayfinding signs, certainly through the framework plan we've tried to incorporate that also, with the idea, just with the roundtable discussion we had last night of making the federal spaces more appealing to pedestrian and creating opportunities to bring people through the federal precincts up to the city center. So I think we are trying to address that but more informally than perhaps some would like.

Are there other questions? Ms. Tregoning?

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: I just, I very much appreciate Ms. Witherell's clarification. I'm just not finding it in the EDR report itself that this excludes wayfinding, and I'm just wondering if that clarification could just be made with an amendment to the EDR that notes that the proposed wayfinding maps and pylons and memorial identification signs are going to be

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

considered at a later date. You know, I thought we were approving the whole thing.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Okay. In fact, it does specifically say it's the uniguide sign system, but I don't think there's any problem with clarifying that to make that clear. And since I don't believe we have a motion on the floor at this time, if you wanted to make a motion.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: I'd like to move approval of the EDR with that amendment with the note that the proposed wayfinding maps and pylons and memorial identification signs will be reviewed at a later date.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: And I believe that's scheduled for next month. Some of it, just some of it, okay. Does everyone understand that motion?

MR. MCGILL: Second.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: There's a second to the motion. All right. Any further

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

discussion? All those in favor of the motion please signify by saying aye.

(Chorus of ayes.)

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Opposed?

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Abstentions?

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: The motion carriers, as modified by the original maker. The EDR, I should say, is modified.

**4C. Department of Homeland Security, St.  
Elizabeth's Campus, United States Coast Guard  
Headquarters**

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Okay. That brings us to Item 4C. This is the United States Coast Guard Headquarters, Department of Homeland Security at St. Elizabeth's West Campus. Ms. Saum, welcome back.

MS. SAUM: Good afternoon again. The proposal before you today is a concept design for the U.S. Coast Guard headquarters, which is part of the Department of Homeland

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

Security headquarters consolidation at the St. Elizabeth's West Campus. It is being submitted for your review and comment today by the General Services Administration.

The St. Elizabeth's West Campus is located in Southeast D.C. between Congress Heights and Berry Farms. The Coast Guard headquarters will be built on the western portion of the campus overlooking the Anacostia Naval Annex and I-295. In these images on this slide, north is to the top. But in all the rest of the images that you'll see during this presentation, north will be to the left.

In January of this year, the Commission approved the final master plan for the DHS headquarters consolidation. The complete text of the Commission action is included in the EDR, but I'd like to note several items that we'll be discussing today.

First, the Commission noted that approval of the final master plan is contingent upon

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

construction of a new access road that connect Malcolm X Avenue and Firth Sterling and require a new interchange on Park Service land now known as the Shepherd Parkway, which would be transferred.

The Commission also required that GSA, prior to any construction, submit to NCPC an amendment to the master plan for this access road. I'd just like to note that this work is currently in progress, and we expect that master plan amendment to be submitted, as required.

And, finally, the Commission noted that GSA conduct additional consultation regarding the location of the security fence in the area of the historic cemetery. And I'll address that later in my presentation.

The Coast Guard headquarters will be constructed as part of phase one, which is shown here in red. Phase one, overall, includes the Coast Guard headquarters building, the access road connecting to Firth

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

Sterling here, a gate equipped for vehicle screening here, and a 2000-car parking garage, and the power plant. The current submission only includes the Coast Guard headquarters building and the parking garage.

GSA plans to issue a design build contract for this work early in the summer, and so they're requesting the Commission's comments on the concept for the Coast Guard and the parking garage so they can be incorporated into the design package before the design build contract is let.

This is an ariel photograph of the site. The Coast Guard headquarters will be built in this area. There are several non-contributing buildings in this area that will be demolished. And there's also another contributing element, which is this pathway which was originally a railroad spur where coal was brought up to the power plant. This was originally stated in the design guidelines that were approved as part of the master plan

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

that this railroad spur would be preserved. The current submission that you'll see today actually covers part of this, but that has been done through consultation at the consulting party meetings through 106.

This is an illustration of the headquarter building and parking garage as approved in the master plan in January. While you're looking at this, I'd like you to note just the overall size of the building footprint and the courtyards here. The proximity of the building and the vehicle screening area to the historic cemetery, the curved parking garage, and the existing railroad alignment which is preserved here.

This is the headquarters building as included in the current submission. The building footprint has been enlarged, and this allowed the building heights to be reduced and also for these interior courtyards to be expanded. The access road was relocated to this corner, and the parking garage has been

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

straightened out, although we've been told that the facade of the parking garage will continue to be curved. And as I noted earlier, the railroad spur is being lost in this area.

The building program remains the same with 1.17 million square feet of office space for approximately 3,900 employees. The parking garage shown here accommodates 2,000 vehicles. The part that will service the Coast Guard headquarters that will be built first is this portion, which accommodates about 1,000 spaces of employee parking. The rest of the parking garage will be used by other DHS employees when more of the facility is renovated. So the amount of area that would be incorporated into this design has expanded from 28 acres, as shown in the master plan, to 30 acres in the current proposal.

This is a topographic plan that shows how the parking garage fits into the ravine here south of the power plant and how

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

the Coast Guard building steps down from the plateau down to the lower portion down here by I-295. The change in elevation is 36 meters or about 118 feet.

Here's a rendered site plan. I'd like to spend some time orienting you here. The building entrance will be up here. This is the center building entrance. The entrance is actually in this portion of the building right here. This will be the highest portion of the building, and I'll point that out several times in the ensuing elevation so you can orient yourself.

This is the highest elevation. It steps down to this lower part where there is a catch basin for holding rain water and runoff.

And this pale area right here is the historic cemetery.

I'm going to show you a series of elevations that show what the building will look like. From this area here, looking towards the entrance, you'll see the center

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

building on your left and the new building on your right, a view from the cemetery, a view from 295, and there will be a view down here which is actually going to be the view from Haines Point. North is still to the left here. Yes, that's basically the same as the view from I-295 because that's right across the road.

You'll see there's going to have to be a retaining wall right here, so there is a change in elevation from here to here. But you're going to have a pretty clear shot of it. Unfortunate choice of words there.

This is the view as you approach from the north. Here's the center building on the left, and the entry is going to be right here. This is a close-up of that entry building. I'd also like to note that this portion of the building right here, which is lower, is going to be all glass. And when you pull up into the drive, you're going to be able to see through that and see the river on

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

the other side. I think that you can actually see kind of a delineation of the Virginia coastline on the other side. And here's what it would look like with mature landscaping.

This is the view of the existing conditions from the cemetery. This is the existing warehouse, which is a non-contributing building that will have to be removed. This is just a massing diagram of the existing, of what the new building will look like from the cemetery and a view with mature landscaping.

This is the view of the massing from I-295. The design for the retaining wall that I mentioned earlier is still being developed. The goal is that it will be something that is actually stepped back so that we'll be able to include, there won't be a single large unbroken wall and that we'll be able to include some landscaping so it won't be so massive.

Here's a view with the mature

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

landscaping. And here's the view from Haines Point. This is just the massing diagram, and the entrance is up here. That's that highest portion that I mentioned to you. And here's a rendered view of this. And I'd just like to note that from the beginning of our work with GSA and the Department of Homeland Security on this project, one of staff's primary concerns has been the impact that this particular building would have on views of the topographic bowl, and I'd like to say that I think the designers and GSA have done an excellent job in minimizing the impact that this building will have on those views.

I'm now going to show you some facade elevations, but I'd like to talk first about the inspiration for the building materials that will be used. The building materials will include red brick, as is used in the center building, and native stone. This is the ice house, which is right next to the power plant. And because GSA is trying to

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

achieve the LEEDS Silver rating on this project, there will be extensive use of green roofs and green wall technology.

This is an axonometric diagram of the building. Again, the entrance is up here.

The center building would be right here. This is that tall portion that I mentioned. These are the courtyards. Some of these courtyards are at grade, and some of them are over building elements, and so areas where they're at grade it will be easier to plant things like trees because the tree roots will be unobstructed. The building height along the perimeter is two to three stories, and the building height in the courtyards ranges from three to five stories.

The green walls are located primarily on south and west facades, so here's green wall, here's green wall. The exception is the parking garage, which I'll show you in a minute, which has green walls on both the north and the south. And, again, as I

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

mentioned earlier, this is an engineered wetland that will hold storm water runoff.

The elevation on the top shows the north elevation, which is the elevation that faces the cemetery. Note the use of red brick here, and these little jogs in the grade elevation along here are basically rain gardens held in place by retaining walls that will catch rainwater as it flows down the slope.

In the south elevation, this is the elevation that faces the parking garage. I'd like to point out this little entrance here there will be corresponding entries from the parking garage so that staff can park in the parking garage and walk across and enter the building at this location.

This is the east elevation which faces the center building. The entrance is right here. That's that wall I mentioned where you can see across to the river. And when you go past the entrance, the road slopes

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

down towards the power plant, which is down in this area.

And this is the elevation that faces, basically, I-295. This is the portion that's closest to the road. There's actually additional portions of the building that step up the hill. And so this is an overall elevation that shows how the building will step up the hill. Here's some of these green walls. These trees are located in the courtyards, and this is the center building behind at the top of the hill.

These are two illustrations of the north elevation of the parking garage. This is the part that faces the Coast Guard headquarters building. This portion of the building will be built first, and this portion will be built later. The facades will be completely covered in green walls, and there will be stair towers here and here, and those are the doors where people can exit and walk across to the Coast Guard headquarters

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

building.

I'd like to talk to you now about the landscaping. Two-thirds of the rain water that falls on the West Campus drains through this site. And by law, the design is required to hold the storm water from a 15-year flood event on site. So two-thirds of the rainwater that falls on the St. Elizabeth's West Campus will have to be captured and held so that it doesn't run directly into the river.

So this entire landscape is designed as a series of rain gardens and catch basins where the water will drain into some of these pools and cisterns. Some of it will be able to be reused for watering and for the roof gardens. And I'd also like to mention that there's a lot of fly ash contamination on the ground in this site. This is, you know, from the remains of stuff that was dumped from the power plant, and all of that will have to be removed. And the idea is to restore semblance of native woodlands here.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

The inspiration for the design is the hydrology of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, where rainwater that falls in the mountains is gradually filtered through the Piedmont and the coastal plain before it flows into the Chesapeake Bay. So each of these courtyards represents one element of that ecosystem starting with the Blue Ridge Mountains at the top, which includes a lot of hard surfaces. And that will be in the entry area here. The Piedmont will be located in this central area, and then it will have its own little fall line where there's actually like a water fall that will flow down into this area that represents the coastal plains. And, finally, this area at the bottom will represent the coastal wetlands.

This is the closeup of the courtyard at the entry area. This is the materials that I mentioned, and there's a water feature here that will be reminiscent of, say, a mountain stream.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

The Piedmont is characterized by wooded hills and creek side prairies, and it's hard to tell here but the plan is actually that there will be like hillsides here that people can sit on. And you can tell in these elevations where the at-grade portions are because that's where the trees are located, so this is an at-grade portion, this an at-grade portion. And the tree shown here, it will take, you know, I don't know how many years, but it will take time for them to reach that size. But because they're planted on grade, we hope that they will eventually actually reach that size.

Here's another view of the Piedmont area, and this particular courtyard is designed for large gatherings, so there's more open space. And this is the fall line here with the water feature.

This is the coastal plain area, and this is the largest body of water. It's functionally used to act as one of the catch

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

basins for runoff, but it also is the largest courtyard space at grade, so it has the most number of trees and will, therefore, have the most amount of shade. And the area at the bottom of the building, as I noted, will be an engineered wetland. Sometimes it will have water in it, and sometimes it won't. But a lot of wetlands are like that. There will be sort of boardwalks that will extend out into there, and the hope is that there will be wildlife that you'll be able to go out and see. And the area is sort of screened from the vehicle screening area by large trees.

Down along the sides of the building there will be a series of rain gardens and retaining walls. There will also be pathways so that you can walk all the way down the side.

As part of our design analysis, we looked at the building facades and massing, the landscape design concept, the height of the parking garage, and the impact of the

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

security fence on the historic cemetery. That actually isn't part of this submission, but, as it was something that was noted in the previous Commission action, we included it. And we also looked at conformance with the comprehensive plan, the master plan, and NEPA and 106.

The designers have said that they were trying to make the building look as small as possible, and I think that they've made progress in achieving that. This is an image of the entry area as it was designed in the master plan approval. This is what it looks like now, and this red line shows the difference between what the original proposal was and what it is now. The height before and after changes, but it ranges between 6 and 26 feet.

Here's the view from the cemetery.

This is from the master plan as currently proposed and the different between the two. The change in height ranges here from about 40

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

feet down at the lower portion of the hill to about 26 feet in the middle and about 13 feet up near the top.

This is the view from I-295, and, as I noted earlier, the heights that I noted earlier are the same for this one. There's before and after and a comparison between the two. And this is the view from Haines Point before and after and a comparison.

With regard to the building facades, staff looked at the existing design guidelines which were included as part of the master plan and an attachment to the programmatic agreement. And the design guidelines say that for new construction facades should be red brick or fieldstone with molded and corbel brick detailing and that windows and doors should be vertically proportioned and recessed from the face of the wall. I think that you can see that the building facades is designed to meet those guidelines, but we think that the point of the

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

molded and corbel brick detailing and having the windows and doors recessed from the face of the wall was an intent to keep this from looking too flat. And from this elevation, which we acknowledge is still in early days, does look a little flat, so we encourage the designers to keep working on the detailing to provide visual interest on what is really a very large building.

Staff is very supportive of the concept for the landscape design. We think it's an important factor in minimizing the visual intrusions that this building will have on the topographic bowl. But we'd like to note that, as I mentioned, we recognize that it will take time for the trees to get that big, but we think it's really important that, between the size of the plant materials and the variety of plant materials used, that that happen as soon as possible. And so we encouraged the General Services Administration that, as the design build process moves on,

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

that that's something that doesn't get value-engineered out.

And, finally, I'd like to note that the parking garage was the only part of the building that did not get less tall since the master plan was originally approved in January. And we've been told that it would be possible to lower it as much as two stories, but the issue, as with so many things, is money. And while we recognize that there's nothing the Commission can do about that, we would like to note that making this building shorter would be a great improvement and we would encourage GSA to try to find the money to do that.

And, finally, regarding the security fence and the historic cemetery, I've been talking to representatives at the Commission of Fine Arts, the SHPO, the DC Preservation League, and the National Trust, and they all have told me that they feel that this issue here about the location of the

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

fence as it goes around the cemetery is not yet resolved. And so we're recommending that further consultation get engaged in this before any further submissions are received.

The coast project is not inconsistent with the comprehensive plan for a number of reasons, but among them it is not inconsistent with the transportation element because it does meet the parking ratio that's recommended of one to four. It includes storm water management techniques, as recommended in the environment element. And it is designed to protect the historic features of the St. Elizabeth's West Campus and the topographic bowl, as recommended in the preservation and historic features element.

And with the exception of the historic rail spur alignment, which, as I noted, was done through 106 consultation, the staff finds that the proposed project is consistent with the master plan for the DHS headquarters consolidation and with the

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

associated design guidelines. This project is covered by the NEPA and 106 activities that were conducted for the master plan. The environmental impact statement and programmatic agreement that were included last year include mitigation elements that GSA and NCPC is still tracking to make sure that those mitigation elements are met with. And as part of the programmatic agreement, a schedule for ongoing consultation, as the rest of the projects on this master plan are developed, was created and that consultation is ongoing and NCPC staff is participating in that.

Therefore, the Executive Director recommends that the Commission comment favorably on the concept design for the U.S. Coast Guard headquarters building and parking garage shown as Phase 1A of the Department of Homeland Security Headquarters at St. Elizabeth's West Campus and notes that the approval of the final master plan is contingent on the General Services

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

Administration's ability to construct a west access road connecting Firth Sterling Avenue to the Malcolm X Avenue, including the I-295 interchange to the Shepherd Parkway and recommends that, in further development of the design for phase one, the General Services Administration conduct further study of the building facades, with particular attention to the north side, to provide a level of depth and detail that will reduce the potential for monotony, preserve the variety and size of plant materials shown in the concept for the landscape design, and conduct additional 106 consultation to evaluate the feasibility of placing the cemetery inside the secure perimeter of the West Campus and notes the need for resolution of this issue before the security fence is submitted for approval and strongly encourages the General Services Administration to build one or more additional levels of the West Ravine Parking Garage underground, thus reducing its height and

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

bulk. And that concludes my presentation. I'd like to note that representatives of the General Services Administration are in the audience, and we would be happy to answer any questions.

[INSERT - Department of Homeland Security]

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Are there any questions from the Commission at this time? Mr. Ames?

COMMISSIONER AMES: My question is why is the cemetery not inside the fence? And since it's proposed not to be inside the fence, why do you want it inside the fence?

MS. SAUM: I don't believe that I expressed a personal preference.

COMMISSIONER AMES: I don't mean you personally. Did you not say in your presentation that you were asking them to reconsider putting it inside the fence?

MS. SAUM: We're asking them to engage in further consultation. I think the decision --

COMMISSIONER AMES: You took it the wrong way. I meant staff recommendation.

MS. SAUM: Yes. My understanding is, and I came in this process partially, you know, I haven't participated in all the design consultation because a lot of it happened

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

while I was away last year. But it's my understanding that there has been discussion about whether or not it was more important to have the building, the cemetery inside the fence so that there would be less impact on the cemetery by having the fence go all around it or whether or not it was important to have it outside the fence so that it could be always accessible to the public. And that issue has not been resolved.

COMMISSIONER AMES: So what is the staff recommendation on that?

MS. SAUM: Most of the consulting parties and I would say the staff support, having the fence on the outside. But, again, that's --

COMMISSIONER AMES: Having the fence or the cemetery on the outside?

MS. SAUM: Oh, I'm sorry. Having the fence on the outside.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Ms. Tregoning?

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: I might be

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

able to clarify this a little bit for Commissioner Ames. The issue was access to the cemetery and stewardship of the cemetery.

So, originally, I think the thought was to put it outside the security fence might mean more people would be able to visit it. But because of where you would have to enter, in order to get to the cemetery you have to go straight up hill and it's not very welcoming or inviting. On the other hand, if it was inside the security perimeter it might actually be a place that employees of Homeland Security and other people who would periodically be able to access the site might be able to more routinely visit.

COMMISSIONER NEWTON: Ms. Saum, I have a question about the general architectural styling of the Coast Guard headquarters in comparison to the general vernacular which is up on the plateau. There would appear to be a distinct difference in architectural styling. Was it a conscious

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

decision or just a natural response by the designer to do something that --

MS. SAUM: I think it might be more appropriate to ask the --

COMMISSIONER NEWTON: Okay. Well -

-

MS. SAUM: -- designer to speak.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: You can come up and just state your name and your position.

MR. JOHNSON: Ralph Johnson. I'm a principal at Perkins and Will Architects. The idea was to have the upper part of the building very similar in style to the center building, and as the building tears down the hill it would have more glass and become more abstract. So the parts that you would actually, the areas where you would actually see the two buildings together are very similar. They have the vertical windows, the brick, the stone walls. As you go down the hill, there's a little more glass that's added. In the internal parts of the

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

courtyard, which are only internally focused, are more glass as well. But the parts where you actually can physically see the two buildings together are very compatible.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Microphone went off.

COMMISSIONER NEWTON: I personally like the style of the building as it cascades down the hill and the opportunities for the workforce to be able to get outside out of their office spaces and even have lots of opportunities to view the courtyards from their office spaces. I've always been a little bit of a modernist anyways.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Mr. Dixon, you had a question?

COMMISSIONER DIXON: Mr. Chairman, first of all, I want to thank everybody that's been working on this. It's not done yet, and we hope that it is going to be done. Can I ask what does it look like? Is money there now, Mike? Does it look like it's on, the

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

shovel will be in the ground or . . .

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Yes, we've got \$346 million in the FY 09 Omnibus Appropriations Act to construct Phase 1A and do some other work, as well. Then we also got money in the stimulus bill to go beyond Phase 1A and begin working on subsequent phases.

COMMISSIONER DIXON: That's good to know. I hope it stays in place, given the economy.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: How much we got in those two acts, both GSA and Homeland Security, for St. Elizabeth's is more than \$1 billion.

COMMISSIONER DIXON: Well, you know, first of all, I just have to say I hope it continues. I'm not pessimistic, I'm optimistic, but you can't take anything to the bank these days, if I can use that, I guess that's correct. This is a major presence in my neighborhood. I can walk to this facility. And our community, you know, has been engaged

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

in trying to be heard, and we, I think, have been heard and listened to.

The first player that come in is Coast Guard, and they'll be our first new neighbors, if you will, in our community. So how they come in is very important. I know that that will be like a domino because then the rest of Homeland Security will come in. I mean, this is a very serious, I don't think there's anything as major happened across the river, east of the river than this, maybe except for the downtown renewal, you know, when they moved everybody of low income into our community, which has been an issue for us to deal with since then. That goes back many years. This is a new positive, I hope, and I think it will be.

One thing I would like to see, though, the community is always looking for some amenities. You know, not what's in it for us, but how can we feel apart of this? The first presentation showed the access, the

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

receiving area being closer to the entrance. And when they moved further away from the entrance and moved around, it became harder to envision the community being able to get onto the premise and be a part of, in some way, be able to be included.

Let me be more focused maybe. One, I was hoping there would be some kind of a pre-visitors location which could be used not only for the community but maybe even for Coast Guard and Homeland Security. This is going to be a place of great interest by many people. First of all, its construction, its significance, and what we're relying on this whole body of employees to do and that's to keep our country safe. So there are going to be a lot people interested. It may not be enough to go beyond the real serious walls. I was hoping that there was going to be some effort to create some kind of a structure that would be far enough away from the real secured closed areas with enough, you know, some

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

facility for parking, etcetera, so that the community and others could come in and be brought into some part of this.

It also might be a vehicle, if it's placed properly, to get people to the cemetery, which is still outside of the walls.

We used to use Bolling Air Force Base, for example, for many community events and all kinds of things. And what happened was with all the security people had to have passports, they have to have everything, all kinds of documents to get into the base. So that's left us hoping for something like this to be considered for us here.

So do you know whether or not there's still room for this? And if so, maybe to think about creating some facility close enough outside of the walls to be a preview or pre-visitors center or something that could be useful.

MR. MCGILL: Well, I believe Ms. Saum's illustrations of the entrance area

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

included a parking lot, a visitor parking lot, outside the screening area, so that people visiting the cemetery, if they wish, could park and go to the cemetery on their own without any need to worry about an escort or being screened before going up there.

COMMISSIONER DIXON: I guess my political side is coming out. We're going to need to keep political support for this. That means that the community, locally and nationally, will have to be kept, you know, with us. And maybe to have a place early on where you can show, demonstrate, present, and connect it maybe to the cemetery. We're not talking about a huge structure. We're just talking about maybe an auditorium of some kind that could be used. You know, having visited a number of places like the Falls or the power plant in Brazil and the power plant in China and many other things, they always have a visitor center which is outside of the danger areas so people can be brought in and educated

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

and informed about what's happening here, what the program is here, and a lot of things that could be very helpful to keep a political momentum and the support and the education about this in place.

So I'm hoping that will be looked at. You know, maybe it's late in the dance, but I've said this from the beginning. We ought to have some place and not access to the view, which might be very difficult, or anything on the major campus above, closer to Martin Luther King but closer to the new entrance construction that's taking place. That will be useful, I think.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Ms. Tregoning?

COMMISSIONER TREGONING:

Commissioner Dixon, I don't know if this answers your question exactly, but we have been in discussions with GSA and Homeland about some of the historic structures on the East Campus that might serve the purpose of a visitor center or an interpretative center.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

It doesn't address your issues about --

COMMISSIONER DIXON: The problem with that is -- excuse me, but the problem with that is there's a wall there, and once you get a wall you have to have guards, passes. You have to have clearances, etcetera. I'm thinking of a place that would be more of a neutral zone.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: On the East Campus --

COMMISSIONER DIXON: Yes, okay, on the --

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: -- where there won't be any of that.

COMMISSIONER DIXON: Well, I understand, but that's in this area of the cemetery, that area which is now of interest to the community because of the construction would be useful to have something there, if possible. That's my point. The communication center for DC, it gives us access; but you have to go through a lot of clearances to get

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

it because you're behind the wall or behind the fence, and that makes it a little bit tougher. Some folks in the community don't want to give out IDs. They're not going to do anything, but it's a barrier.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: I will just say that on the East Campus that we are planning to have some facility that's something like that. Like I say, it's not, it doesn't give you that West Campus access, but we are looking at something that would be for the community.

COMMISSIONER DIXON: But I'm trying to protect the project. The West Campus and East Campus are two different things. One is our city doing a great job and planning it, and the other one is the federal government coming into our neighborhood and not having a place to shake hands and greet people and say, "We're glad to be with you."

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Chairman, Beth Savage, our historic preservation officer,

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

would like to add some comments in response to Mr. Dixon's comments.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Sure.

MS. SAVAGE: I just wanted to illuminate very briefly and address Mr. Dixon's comments specifically. The programmatic agreement that has been mentioned that we reached with the community, with Ms. Tregoning's office, with NCPC, with the Department of Homeland Security. It's a 42-page document which includes many mitigations and stipulations, some of which are specifically addressing the content of what your question addresses. One, we're going to have a signage program on the wall to the entrance to St. Elizabeth's so that the community can be apprised of what's happening behind the wall. We currently have a public outreach program that we do monthly in cooperation with the D.C. Preservation League where we take, and we'll be doing it on Saturday morning again, 60 participants onto

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

the West Campus and take them on a tour and tell them about the plans for not only the new construction that you've seen today but also for the really important preservation of the buildings and the landscape that are at St. Elizabeth's.

To follow on to what Ms. Tregoning said, we're working with the East Campus, as well as other partners, to find a partnership permanent visitor center/museum experience. That's a long-term plan. And we're working with the National Building Museum on an exhibit, as well. So we are very interested.

There will be a public access program. We're committed to that. It will evolve, it will change, obviously. As construction gets going and as we have the Coast Guard in residence and security for a Level 5 facility, things will have to change.

But we are committed to working with the community to maintain different degrees of access to the site for your express purpose.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

COMMISSIONER DIXON: Mr. Chairman, I'm not late in this dance. I've been dancing for a while here, okay? I'm probably one of the most vocal supporters of Homeland Security coming here, against some of my local community groups. And I'm very aware, well aware of all the conversations and the mitigating documents that you speak of. One of the things I do in a volunteer way is chair the Anacostia Coordinating Council. We get the word.

I'm here as an individual representing the Mayor and myself. I'm saying the word is great. What you've said, and I believe in all that, and that's fine. I'm saying I would like to at least, would hope that there may be some facility that would be part of your campus that would help us keep support for Homeland Security, Coast Guard, and give people a place they can come to feel apart of yours. I mean, the money flow probably will help the city by having it on

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

the other side, and that's good. We need that. But I'm saying I'd like to think about something here, and it would be very nice. I'm just one voice, but I'm going to tell you, you know, having been in other secured facilities, military and otherwise, I know what it means when you can say come into our, I mean have a visitor center. But you don't go down to the ground with the things you're above. NORAD, you know, many of the academies have visitor centers that are outside of the perimeter so they can brief and explain and people feel free to come in and be a part of things.

So all the other things I know about. I'm just saying, you know, don't push it off on the other side of the street. Try to find a way maybe to bring it to yours without having people go all the way up the road and into your security seven facility or five, which is important.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Are there other

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

questions or comments? Mr. Ames? Oh, I'm sorry. Mr. Hart?

COMMISSIONER HART: I have a question about the parking garage. It appears that it's a difficult nut to crack, and one question is does it have a green roof? I see that there's a lot of emphasis on employing green site and building design, and I didn't see anything other than the walls on the garage that were green. Is it a green roof?

MS. SAUM: Yes.

COMMISSIONER HART: It is a green roof.

MR. PORTER: Regional Deputy Commission for GSA. Yes, the parking garage does have a green roof.

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Porter, the entire facility has a green roof, right?

MR. PORTER: Correct. We're going for a LEEDS Silver rating for this project.

COMMISSIONER HART: I'm sympathetic to the fact that putting parking garages

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

underground is a very expensive proposition. And I would, you know, suggest that the design team look at widening the footprint of the parking garage, incorporating the drive through between the upper and lower by driving through the garage as an option because if you do that that will allow you to get the elevation down. I didn't see any cross sections that compared the office building to the parking garage, but it looked like we got a maximum three-story office building and a maximum six-story garage. In my mind, the way to get that elevation down might be to widen the footprint.

MR. PORTER: We already have, basically, gone through a little bit of historic issues on widening the footprint of the building and the garage, so I think that could be, we could consider that. But it might earn some resistance from our consulting parties.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Are there two

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

stories below ground in the parking deck?

MR. PORTER: Correct.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Okay.

MR. MCGILL: It's also located in a fairly steep ravine. It's quite distinct. If you're visiting the site, it's quite a drop-off, so that helps mitigate its height, too.

COMMISSIONER DIXON: One other comment I think I should make since I was advised about the effort to create the discussion with the community. You know, they're concerned very much about contracting opportunities when this project goes forward, and I know it's in all the materials you just referenced. But for the record, I want to be sure we do not forget that, if possible.

MR. MCGILL: And I can assure you we've had extensive meetings and continue to do so with the Ward 8 business community. Representative Norton is holding small business opportunity conferences, and we're participating actively co-sponsoring them. So

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

we're very much in tune with that. And our initial solicitation for offers for the demolition of the warehouse is for Section 8A contractors, so we're very much in tune with that.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: All right. I want to add just a couple of comments. First, I really like what you're doing. I think it's a great effort, and I think it's a significant improvement over what was previously provided to us. I think the LEEDS rating, the Silver rating that you're trying to get is great, the green roofs, and particularly the use of the water coming through this area. I note, just from, Christine, some of the things you said, you talked about catch basin, but you're really talking about wetlands down there, right? This is something that will not -- are there any permanent ponds there, or are we just talking about sort of natural drainage where it would wet an area, you'd get the growth from a wetland, and then it would

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

filter into the soil?

MR. MCGILL: In some of the courtyards, we have regular ponds.

MS. SAUM: Pools, yes. They're more architectural. They're not --

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Those are the cisterns you talked about?

MR. MCGILL: Well, it's got a combination of underground cisterns and surface pools because you've got water cascading down the hill from a substantial portion of the site. So the goal here was to grab the water and reuse it as much as possible, slow its descent, use it for decorative purposes. So there's, I think, a rather fascinating series of proposals to do this courtyard-by-courtyard going down the hill.

MS. SAUM: And I don't know how often the wetland at the bottom will have water in it or not. Maybe one of the designers could say.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

MR. JOHNSON: Ralph Johnson, Perkins and Will. The three pools at the bottom will always have water in them. That's been shown on the site plan. The rest are just wetlands.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Well, that's what I wondered because you showed it as water down there, and it looked like there were piers out there. So, okay, so those will have water in them all the time?

MR. JOHNSON: Yes. And the water level will vary, but it will always have water in it.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Okay. That was what I was getting at. Now, the retaining walls that we see, those are retaining walls just to hold the road in place. They're not necessarily the walls that we're talking about, the security --

MS. SAUM: There were retaining walls that stepped down the side. Oh, the retaining walls along the highway?

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Right, right.

MS. SAUM: That's necessary to contain the slope as it approaches I-295.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: But that's not the physical wall --

MS. SAUM: That's not part of the security.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Not part of the physical security.

MS. SAUM: And the height of that will vary from place to place.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: The railroad spur that's there, we said that that needed to be protected. Now we're saying it's going away. Did we properly address that in the EDR? Is it clear that we're changing our guidance on that?

MS. SAUM: The consulting parties determined that the benefits of expanding the footprints of the building could be lower and the courtyards could be higher outweighed the loss of that historic feature.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: I agree with that, but have we clearly set that out? I think it's clear from the transcript that that's what we're intending, and from a consulting parties you've all agreed to that?

MS. SAUM: Yes.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Okay, good. I just want to be sure, from a legal point, we haven't created a dilemma.

MR. MCGILL: We go through the 106 process for every building.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Okay. The last point is just a personal preference, and it's the issue of the cemetery. It seems to me that having this outside the perimeter of this facility, I have a hard time understanding that and its context with this facility. It is part of the facility. And when we went out there and visited this site a year or so ago, just walking down the hill is part of the experience, I think, of going to that cemetery, as opposed to someone describing it

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

as walking up the hill to an isolated cemetery. To me, if we're going to have visitors to the point we're going to have people coming inside, that's one of the facilities that I'd want to see. And I'd want to tie that into the project, as opposed to making it just appear as a separate solitary facility outside of that perimeter. So just to you all as you consider going forward, that's my personal preference.

Any other questions or comments?

Mr. May?

COMMISSIONER MAY: Yes. In light of the past vote on the master plan, I thought it would be appropriate for me to say a few words about further votes and progress on this building in particular and on the campus development in general. As everyone knows, the Department opposed the master plan primarily because for two issues: the impact on this national historic landmark and the impact on Shepherd Parkway, the adjacent park

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

land. The vote has been taken, so we're just going to try to be vigilant with regard to the impact on the national historic landmark and hope for the best and hope that things can be shaped in such a way that that impact is avoided.

With regard to Shepherd Parkway, we are continuing to have discussions with GSA and with Federal Highways in looking at alternatives that would eliminate or avoid having to run the access road through Shepherd Parkway. I understand that the master plan approval is dependent on the access road, but, obviously, if there's a way to actually avoid it I would hope that that approval could be modified to reflect a new circumstance. I'm not holding out hope that that will absolutely happen, but it's within the realm of possibility in my mind, and we're certainly working hard with the GSA and Federal Highways to try to address the Park Service's concerns with Shepherd Parkway, and I appreciate all

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

the things that they've both done with us in the months since the vote on the master plan was taken.

I would also want to bring some attention to the outstanding issues that need to be addressed as we go forward. This master plan approval did include a lot of additional actions that need to occur at certain times, including, you know, before any construction project can be initiated, and some of those have to do with Shepherd Parkway but also some have to do with the East Campus and how the impacts there are assessed both from an environmental point of view and a historic point of view, and I want to make sure that we remain attentive to those concerns.

Depending on how things continue to go with this, we're in a position now I think that, since we're at the concept stage, it does not have a direct bearing on the issues which the department had objected to that we're prepared to move ahead with this at this

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

stage, but we'd certainly note that, unless things to continue to progress and all these other boxes get checked as we proceed that we may not be able to give our support to this project in the future.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Thank you. Mr. Miller?

COMMISSIONER MILLER: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted, on behalf of D.C. Council Chairman Gray, to reiterate what I think I expressed at the approval of the master plan back in January that the importance of the project to the federal government and to the District government and thank the GSA and Congresswoman Norton for the partnership that's existed and the public outreach that has occurred throughout the process and Congress for the funding for the project and the importance of really being a catalyst for economic development, meaningful economic development east of the River and encourage the GSA to continue maximizing the

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

opportunities, employment and contracting opportunities, and also encourage the importance, the adherence to the commitment to have regular periodic, maybe by appointment, access to the point and to the cemetery and really to the incredible design of this project. I think that it will be important for people to see the site, so I just wanted to say those words and move the EDR.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Thank you very much. Okay. We have a motion made and seconded to adopt the Executive Director's recommendation. Further discussion? Yes, ma'am?

COMMISSIONER TURNER: I think that Commissioner Arrington Dixon's comments are important, so before agreeing on the EDR is it possible to actually put something in there that memorializes his idea? So underneath the recommendation to actually add a bullet that says that we will explore the possibility of incorporating a visitor center outside of the

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

main area so that that is at least further explored before ruled out?

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Sure. I mean, it's possible. Okay.

COMMISSIONER PARKINSON: Can I just ask a question on that? If it's not in the master plan, is there enough flexibility to do that?

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Well, that was my question. I was going to go back to the staff on that. At this stage, we've looked at a master plan, we've talked about a secured facility on the West Campus. Was there ever any discussion? Maybe we need to ask this GSA representative to talk to that.

MR. ACOSTA: Yes, I'm informed that that would probably require an amendment to the master plan to consider a general visitor center on site. So that's just something we -  
-

MS. SAUM: But it could be done, I think, as part of the -- this is just a

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

concept submission. There will be subsequent submissions on this project, and that could include a master plan amendment.

MR. MCGILL: Well, we also have Phase 1B, which would be the garages and the whole entry complex, and that starts outside the perimeter of the fence.

COMMISSIONER DIXON: I think if there's a will there would be a way, and I think there's a will -- there's a will, there's a way, and I think this is something that will keep the will of the people in the community and, in many ways, engaged in this very important project. I appreciate my colleague from D.C. for bringing it up, and I hope we can find a way to try to include it. There's still things going on. You're changing the garage size. You're talking about putting the cemetery inside a wall. I mean, with that going on, we're not talking about a major structure of any kind. And it's more than a visitor center. It's almost a

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

hospitality, some kind of a softening of this whole Homeland concern we face in this world.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: As I understand the request or the motion now and the second is that we consider this type of facility. I think we ought to be a little more specific on the language of that. Do you want to take a couple of minutes just to try to craft that? I mean, this is a pretty important point. I think we ought to -- do you think it needs to be, I mean are you comfortable with just the language we will consider, explore the feasibility? I like that better. Yes, sir?

MR. MILLS: Mr. Chairman, I'm Chris Mills, Department of Homeland Security Program Manager. Just to add a little bit more information for your consideration, in Phase 2 of the project -- actually is it Phase 2 -- we do have at gate one where the historic gatehouse is the requirement to establish a visitor center for processing badges and for access normally. We can look at that in terms

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

of how we structure that to see if there's an opportunity to provide a viewing area that increases more of that function that was originally called for, which, again, was a who's got an appointment, who's coming in, to expand that. We'd have to look at that in terms of how that impacts our overall program.

Remember, we're limited on how much space we have on the West Campus and the East Campus, 4.5 million square feet of program space between the two. But I think we're more than willing to work with GSA and figure out if there's something there that we can do, while still maintaining our security, to provide the request that Mr. Dixon has just made.

I would also mention that we have made that commitment, as Beth Savage pointed out, to provide controlled periodic public access to the point, to the cemetery, and also to the, as specifically was pointed out, the auditorium, as well, for public meetings and such. So we're continuing to be bound by

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

that. We continue to tend to work towards that access. And as we get into construction and get closer towards occupancy we'll be able to finalize those details out.

MR. MCGILL: I'd like to add that I think the way this is suggested has to be done carefully because Phase 1A, which is what we presented to you today, is the Coast Guard building. It is a design build contract, so that means after we come in and get approval of preliminary design we then go to contract to do final design and construction. This is the same approach we took with regard to the census. It is being funded out of the FY 09 Omnibus Appropriations Act. That appropriation is finite as far as a specific amount of money for a specific project.

Now, Phase 1B is the road from Firth Sterling to the gate, the road up to the parking garage, and one of the parking garages. So it seems to me that the time for us to consider this as an option in this area

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

of the site is under Phase 1B and not under Phase 1A.

COMMISSIONER DIXON: Then, you know, I accept that information and hope that, if I'm not here for whatever reason, it will be put in at least as a consideration there. I appreciate that, Mike.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: So is it my understanding that we are now no longer going to add that amendment? So we're back to the original motion, which is to adopt the Executive Director's recommendation as provided in the staff report on page two. And the second for that was? Did you second that?

COMMISSIONER DIXON: Yes, I did.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: All right. That's the motion made and seconded. Further discussion? All those in favor of the motion please signify by saying aye.

(Chorus of ayes.)

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Opposed?

(No response.)

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Abstentions?

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Motion carries.

Thank you. That's a very good discussion, very helpful. Thank you very much. All right. We're going to recess here for five minutes before we go on to our information presentations. We'll start again at 3:26.

(Whereupon, the foregoing matter went off the record at 3:24 p.m. and went back on the record at 3:34 p.m.)

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Please take your seats. All right. I do see a quorum present. We've completed the action agenda items. We'll now move to the information presentations, and first of those is Agenda Item 5A. This is an information presentation on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Visitors Center. Ms. Sullivan?

**5A. Vietnam Veterans Memorial Visitors Center**

MS. SULLIVAN: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and members of the Commission. The

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

National Park Service, on behalf of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, has requested to give an information presentation on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Visitors Center. You might recall that you reviewed and commented on a concept design in December of 2007. I'm going to provide you with a little bit of background on the history of the project, and then the National Park Service will give you an information presentation.

So the site of the visitor center is just north of the Lincoln Memorial and to the west of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and is bounded by 23rd Street Northeast, Constitution Avenue, Henry Bacon Drive, and Lincoln Memorial Circle. The site is known as Site A in the environmental assessment that was completed for site selection.

So here's a little background on the congressional authorization and the major Commission actions that have happened over the past few years. Congress authorized a

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

visitors center in November of 2003. The law requires that the visitor center be built underground, but NCPC and CFA have approval authority for site and design under the Commemorative Works Act and final approval shall not be withheld, but the visitor center may be sited in the reserve, that the site of the visitor center shall be limited to the minimum necessary to educate the public about the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the Vietnam War and amends the Commemorative Works Act to allow NCPC and CFA to develop site-specific design guidelines that are mutually agreed upon.

In August of 2006, NCPC approved Site A for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Visitor Center conditioned upon the implementation of the package of mitigation set forth in the design guidelines that it's necessary to reduce the otherwise significant impacts of the proposed action, as indicated in the Executive Director's finding of no

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

significant impact for the site selection. In October of 2007, CFA approved the concept design with comments and conditions in accordance with the design guidelines. And then in December of 2007 NCPC approved comments on the concept design in accordance with the design guidelines. And then, most recently, in April of 2009, CFA reviewed and took action on the revised concept, and you have that action in front of you today.

So here is the site plan for what you saw in December of 2007. We have the visitor center here. This is the courtyard area; three exhibit walls with skylights above; two ramps that access the center, one from Constitution Avenue and one from Henry Bacon Drive; a set of stairs that also go down to the entryway from Henry Bacon Drive. The approximate square footage of the proposed center is about 34,000 square feet, and the National Park Service architects are going to speak a little bit more about the design and

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

the progress that's been made on the design since then.

As I mentioned, NCPC and CFA established a set of design guidelines which the Commission will use to review the project.

The design guidelines are laid out in the Commission action, which you have in front of you, from August of 2006. I'm going to read through them very quickly because they are important.

The visitor center will be constructed underground, as required by the authorizing legislation for the project, with no portion of the building or related building elements visible from any portion of the Lincoln Memorial steps and podium, from Constitution Avenue, and from within the axial view sheds of 23rd Street Northwest and Henry Bacon Drive Northwest.

Number two, the visitor center entrance will be only minimally visible from the Vietnam Veterans Memorial to satisfy the

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

projects purpose and need but in accordance with the authorizing legislation not interfere with or encroach upon the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Number three, to maintain the character of the historic landscape, the visitor center's design concept will be based on maintaining the existing grade and any new slopes will be gradual. The project will raise the existing site grade only to allow for an accessible entry ramp.

Number four, the visitor center will be designed such that light emanating from the center's interior will not be visible from any portion of the Lincoln Memorial, from Constitution Avenue, and from the Vietnam Veterans Memorial so as not to interfere with or encroach upon the Lincoln Memorial or the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Number five, the visitor center will not intrude into the landscape. No protrusion, such as skylights, monitors, light

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

wells, or sunken area ways will be visible from the sidewalk surrounding the site.

Number six, the visitor center's site lighting for public safety will not interfere with or encroach upon views to and from the Lincoln Memorial and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Number seven, the visitor center's design will provide only the paved area necessary for visitors to enter and to exit the building and which will also provide service access. The design will not include additional paved area for gathering space or queuing.

Number eight, the project will not include new vehicle parking areas. Number nine, the visitor center will have a single entrance for both visitors and service. Number ten, the visitor center's associated pedestrian street-crossing points will be designated to address traffic impacts effectively and to protect pedestrian safety.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

Number 11, the visitor center will be constructed only on the portion of the site that lies outside of the critical root zone of existing elm trees. The applicant will develop a tree protection plan to protect and preserve the trees both during and after construction in accordance with standard design and construction procedures.

Number 12, the project will place new landscaping on the site in accordance with the National Park Service's Cultural Landscape Report for the Lincoln Memorial referenced in the environmental assessment and will maintain the open grass panel on the site surrounded at the site's perimeter by elm trees.

Number 13, the visitor center design will not impede the use of the site for multi-purpose recreation on the site. And, number 14, the visitor center will be designed without guard rails or perimeter security elements.

Finally, there is one other

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

requirement in addition to the design guidelines, and that requires the National Park Service to reconstruct softball fields lost as a result of this project on another site within one-half mile of Site A in accordance with the mitigation required and the Executive Director's finding of no significant impact for the project.

The Commission action in December of 2007 found that the concept design met six of these design guidelines established by the Commission at site approval. It did not meet two of the design guidelines, and the Commission recommended that the applicant modify the project to meet them and found that there was not enough information to evaluate whether the concept met the remaining seven of the design guidelines and recommended that the applicant provide further information and analysis of these design elements prior to or during the preliminary design phase. You have that complete action from December 2007 in

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

front of you. All future submissions will be reviewed according to these design guidelines.

And so, with that, that concludes my presentation, and I would like to introduce Steve Lorenzetti from the National Park Service.

[INSERT - Vietnam Veterans Memorial]

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

MR. LORENZETTI: Thank you. I'm Steve Lorenzetti, Deputy Superintendent for Planning at National Mall Memorial Parks. Mr. Chairman, Commissioners, thank you for having us here. What we want to show you is an informational presentation on where we stand now on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Center. Since December of '07, we've listed two comments we got from this Commission, as well as the Commission of Fine Arts, the 106 process, the NEPA process, many public meetings. And what we've done is we've taken this and made many small tweaks to the design that we believe adds up to a much greater whole.

With that in mind, I'd like to introduce Jim Polshek of Jim Polshek Partnership Architects.

MR. POLSHEK: Thank you, Steve. I'm James Polshek. I'm the founder of the firm that bears my name and the co-designer with Tom Huang who will be up in a moment.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

Steve, in a way, said everything that I intended to say. The collaborative nature of the way we've approached this since we last saw you is really demonstrative of the fact that there's no right or wrong, that it is necessary, actually, to bend in every way we possibly could. And the presentation you're going to see is made up of a number of small moves that, taken together, I believe that, we and the Park Service believe that they actually meet the vast majority of the guidelines and should clarify some of the questions that you had the first time around.

So with that, Tom Huang, whom you met before, will go through this. It will take about 15 minutes, and then, of course, we'll answer what questions you may have.

MR. RUO: Thank you. We're going to show you, hopefully, a side-by-side comparison of the 2007 design, as you last saw it, and the summary of the changes that we've made to date in working sessions both with the

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

Park Service, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, as well as the Commission of Fine Arts and the NCPC staff members. As staff indicated, this is the design and the site plan of the 2007 visitor center. It is centered around a courtyard which allows emergency exiting. It allows natural light to come into the facility. It also solves several technical issues, such as mechanical and plumbing ventilation, all requirements of a building.

In addition, you see a series of gently sloping ramps, one from Constitution Avenue and the other from Henry Bacon Drive, that will allow for an approach and descent into the center, which is, at this point, we think 14 feet down from the sidewalk level. That's the dimension, if you recall, where we think you need to provide an acceptable ceiling height, plus construction, to plant the roof on top of the building. Also indicated here are the exhibit walls, as you

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

can see, in parallel position.

Here's a site plan depicting the 2009 version of the revised visitor center. Again, many of the things are the same. There is still, we think, need for a courtyard, gently sloping ramps both from Constitution and Henry Bacon Drive, as well as the exhibit walls here. However, we have come up with a few ideas to really address the amount of visibility of the center from various points around the site.

The first idea that really unfolds into a series of subsequent benefit is the idea that we raise the grade slightly, an approximate three foot six above the existing level of grade. The top diagram shows you the section through the site as it was in 2007. I just want to note that the grade of the existing site is slightly raised at the southern end at about an elevation 23. It goes down to elevation 19 at the northern end. What's depicted in the lower diagram is our

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

proposal to raise the grade slightly, such that there is basically a level portion on the southern half of the site, and then a gentle slope down to 19 on the northern portion of the site.

The results of raising the grade is that the ramp that approaches the center is reduced in overall length. Instead of having to go down 14 feet from elevation 19 to elevation 5, you now have to go down approximately only 11 feet from elevation 19 to elevation 8. That reduces the ramp by an approximate 60 feet of length since the ramp is at one foot and 20 slope.

Here's a diagram showing two site plans, 2007 on the left and 2009 on the right.

Again, in order to achieve the full ramp length, you can see here we had to kink the ramp in several locations, including putting the ramp directly hard up against the building in order to achieve our 14 feet level difference.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

In the revision of 2009, the 60 feet less ramp actually allows us to simplify the ramp configuration so that now this is just a straight line and a simple offshoot, as well as have a series of subsequent effects. One of the greatest effects of raising the grade is the ability to reposition the building on the site.

The red outline depicts the 2007 location, the black the 2009 location. Both at the Commission of Fine Arts and the NCPCHearings of 2007, there was some concern not only about the proximity of the building to the tree root line of the surrounding elm trees but the relationship and the proximity of the center to the existing National Park Service food concession kiosk. By shortening the ramps, we're able to get a little bit more distance between both and hopefully a more comfortable positioning on the site.

We've also, again, simplified the ramps. There was some commentary in previous

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

meetings and hearings that the approach ramps of 2007 focused the visitor upon the concession kiosk from the northern approach. We've actually straightened this ramp out so that it is exactly parallel with 23rd Street and the orientation now avoids that vista. So here you can see that orientation avoids really an axial relationship to the concession kiosk. In addition, we have slightly reoriented the approach and exit stair so that it is axially related to the flagpole at the memorial.

Here's a roof plan of the 2007 design. It depicts the level grade situation with the ha-ha condition. The ha-ha is a slight slope down to a level portion of the site and a rail that is three foot six above that level portion to prevent people from falling into the courtyard. Also depicted here are the exhibit walls which protruded slightly above the adjacent grade some 18 inches in this intermediate zone, some three

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

foot six here at the condition where it interfaces the courtyard.

By raising the grade of the 2009 design, you're actually able to maintain the ha-ha condition such that that high point hides the rail condition of the perimeter of the courtyard. We have also been able to make these skylights flush with adjacent grade. We'll talk about the details of how we achieve that in a second.

In addition to making those flush, we have pulled them back in plan. Go back to the 2007 version, and you can see that those exhibit walls actually protrude out into the courtyard. Here they stop at this point now.

In addition, because the ramp has been simplified, we are able to put a rather substantial berm up against the building. So, again, previously, because the ramp lengths were driving themselves to the extreme edges of the approach, there was a ramp up against the building here. Now there's a substantial

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

berm in front of the building.

The combined shortening of the exhibit walls and the berm we think substantially reduces the amount of visible building. Here you can see the berm moving from that point to that point and the exhibit walls being pulled back from that point to that point. In the lower drawing, you can also see that the dash line indicates the profile of the existing grade, a very subtle, almost imperceptible raise in the level of grade.

So to summarize, we slightly raised the grade. That allowed us to move the building on the site further to the north, slightly to the east. It allowed us to simplify the ramps such that they have a better relationship to the edges of the site, as well as improved vistas and an improved relationship to the kiosk. We were able to add this berm on the face of the building to cover up more of the visible elevation of it.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

We were able to flush out the skylights of the exhibit walls, as well as pull them back from within the courtyard.

To show you the result of all those changes, we've depicted a side-by-side comparison of the view simulations. In the previous hearing, we showed you all of these.

We've done a selection of the views here depicted in red to give you an idea of the impact. Here is the 2007 view from position A at the corner of Constitution Avenue and 23rd Street. Again, you can see the exhibit walls protruding just slightly above the grade and visible from this corner. But once we raise the grade and flush the exhibit walls out, those are virtually invisible.

From position D along Constitution Avenue, again the exhibit walls here, there's the approach stair and ramp, the raised grade which hides not only the skylights but the courtyard beyond. Here we depict actually this wall as a planted wall. In some of the

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

meetings with staff, there's been an encouragement to really try and take this wall and treat it more as a landscape element, which I think we've embraced. So further design refinements will actually show some amount of landscaping either as a grassy strip between the stair and the wall or actually planting that wall.

Here's a view from Henry Bacon Drive. You can see that the building actually is visible off the edge of this view, but when the berm is added it actually comes more to the south and hides a substantial amount of that elevation.

Here's a view from the Lincoln Memorial steps as it was in 2007. We've depicted here new trees that will be planted as part of this project and in accordance with the historic planting plan, per the Cultural Landscape Report of the National Park Service.

Here you can see there's the courtyard and the exhibit walls before and with the raised

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

grade after.

Down at the base of the Lincoln Memorial, here it is in 2007, the courtyard just barely visible. Since the building has moved off to the right in this view and the grade has been raised, again, it has substantially improved what is visible from the Lincoln Memorial.

Just to give you a little bit of view into some of the details, which we're not going to go into great depth. Here are some of the details of the 2007 design. They're taken, first of all, at the intermediate point of the exhibit walls, which is depicted here; at the edge of the courtyard and the exhibit wall, which is depicted here; and along the southern and western edges of the courtyard, which is depicted here. This is the typical ha-ha detail.

We've revised these such that now the exhibit walls are flush with the adjacent grade. Here's the grass. Here's the top of

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

(202) 234-4433

[www.nealrgross.com](http://www.nealrgross.com)

this glass light and monitor. And on the western and southern edges we have just slightly revised the typical ha-ha detail so that there's a small curb, as opposed to an 18-inch knee wall here.

In addition, we have come up with an idea which, admittedly, is in the very preliminary stages of design. This is really just a concept. None of these are yet the language or the method in which we're going to deploy a railing around the courtyard on the northern edge of the courtyard. The idea behind this screen wall is to allow for a semitransparent material, perhaps perforated metal, perhaps something like this which is a ceramic rod assembly, that will prevent people from falling into the courtyard. So it acts as the rail condition, but it also allows visibility of the grass surface and the planted roof beyond, such that really from the sensitive angles from the southern area here, when you're looking back toward the north, the

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

idea is that you'll be able to see the grass through this screen wall. That screen wall we hope to bring down in front of the glassy area of the visitor center so that it can help mitigate the direct sunlight coming into the facility while still allowing us some ambient light. It also acts as a sort of separator from what will prove to be an emotional experience on the inside and the activity of the outside.

That was our summary of the changes. We have, I think, some time for questions, if there are, or comments.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Thank you very much. Questions or comments from the Commission? I had a couple. What's the difference in the size? I mean, did you actually change what's inside the space?

MR. POLSHEK: We reduced the program by about 10 percent, but what we took out was what was called a resource center for people who wanted to linger and find out more

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

about the project. But there are a lot of ancillary things related to the resource center because of all the electronics. That being removed has allowed us to open the north wall of the public areas that are enclosed to the courtyard.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: What does that do for the courtyard space itself?

MR. POLSHEK: Well, it makes a much more pleasant habitable space because before that the lower walls at least were completely solid. There are still changes that we're studying to make it even more habitable, but it would be inappropriate to talk about at this time because we did not show them. But that is the answer, in short.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: That's because of the screening material that's going to be in front of it?

MR. POLSHEK: No, no. The north wall will not require screening material.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: All right. The

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

access from Constitution Avenue, it comes down in the middle of the block. What's the rationale of bringing it down to that location?

MR. RUO: Actually, we've visited the site fairly recently, and there is a strong desire line, a goat path, if you will, right here as people try and cut around that corner. Now, the existing crosswalk across 22nd and Constitution is actually on this side of that street. We've positioned this not only to be parallel with 23rd Street, but this is actually a place where there are not existing elm trees. So that is probably a pretty good spot to bring in a new sidewalk.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: So you'd actually, you're basing that, in part, on where people are going now?

MR. RUO: Yes.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Okay, all right. The ha-ha wall up there on the top over the open area, one of the questions I have is do

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

we really want -- I guess from a public safety point of view you have to have something there. But, you know, on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial we don't have a wall or any sort of retaining wall along the top of that to keep people from coming up to the top of that. We just don't allow them to go up there. Would it be possible to do the same thing on this to eliminate that safety wall, if you will, by just not allowing people on the roof of the structure?

MR. POLSHEK: It's a wonderful idea, and we would be extremely sympathetic to it. In fact, it's something that the Park Service would have to weigh in upon because the condition is different than the Memorial. But if that were possible, that would be really wonderful news.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: The reason I bring that up, too, is the idea just that you don't want people standing on top of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial staring down at you.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

You're in this facility where you're experiencing what I think will be a very emotional understanding or better appreciation of this, I'm not sure that it's going to be very comforting to have people standing over you looking down in that area.

MR. POLSHEK: Fair enough.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: There's a bridge, there's also a pedestrian bridge in this? What is that for?

MR. POLSHEK: Let me explain that because that is something that is definitely going to change and is going to be a significant improvement, since you brought it up. That connects the underground public spaces here across there and into the exhibits. We think now that it's possible to eliminate that since we changed the program. The reduction in program made this possible, and it would go parallel to here and along here and into the exhibits. And that would then make an unimpeded courtyard below. And

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

everybody that's heard that thought seems very, very sympathetic and has encouraged us to go forward and explore it.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: I like that. I couldn't figure out what that was for. You've explained why, but that's a concern I had. The other is the skylights and putting the skylights in an area where the grass abuts it, you know, where you've got soil and grass abutting it. And one of the things the Fine Arts Commission said that that's a difficult technical solution. How do you plan to address that?

MR. POLSHEK: One, we don't think it's a difficult technical solution. It's actually a rather simple one. The glass will be non-reflective glass. We think it's extremely important to the scheme not technically for getting diffused daylight into the exhibit walls but to express the idea that there is a place underneath there and so as to not make it completely invisible from the

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

surface.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: And the only reason I guess I asked that question because we went through this with the Washington Monument Visitor Center, and that was one of the big concerns was having that, the non-reflective glass is helpful, but having that panel up there which is different from the natural elements. It would seem to me to be - - conceptually, I can't make that, I can't quite understand that. You'd have to show it to me, I think, when you bring it back next time.

Let's see. I think those were all my questions. I like the idea of having the flagpole along the axis going across there. I guess that raises another question. People coming from the memorial itself, the tendency I think would be to cross it mid-block rather than go down to the corner and across. I know that was one of the things that you hadn't addressed before.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

MR. RUO: Right. And that remains one of the issues that we need to further study. Obviously, we're amenable to either using the existing crosswalks or if NPS, DDOT, etcetera, finds that a mid-block crossing is safer and desirable, we'll work with them.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: I just think that's naturally where people are going to go. All right. Those are my questions. Mr. McGill?

MR. MCGILL: Would you show on this drawing where the proposed fence is that you were talking about erecting to keep people from falling in the courtyard?

MR. RUO: Well, on the southern and western edges of the courtyard it's a solid wall. What we showed as the transparent, semitransparent screen wall actually goes on the northern edge here, the logic being that if someone is looking from the south, the Lincoln Memorial, in other words, where you're slightly elevated and the ha-ha effect is less

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

effective, that you'll actually see through that semitransparent screen to the grass. So all you're seeing is grass.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: You know, I just had one thought in reaction to that. I've seen several buildings recently that have been using perforated skin, and it's fascinating. The concept and the appearance is fascinating, but one thing I noticed that's very striking is that the southern side of such a screen with the sunlight predominantly shining on it most of the time is more reflective, and you don't really see through. You see the wall if you're inside in one of these buildings. If you're inside facing out on the dark side, it does look like you're almost looking through a clear glass, but when you're standing on the outside and the sun is shining you don't see through that wall. You see the sun reflecting off the wall, and you don't have the --

MR. POLSHEK: Actually, that's exactly right, and that's what we like. This

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

is more for people inside to give it a sense that they're outside, not for the people outside looking into it. And as long as we're talking about that, I found it interesting the other day, though I have some seen some details but not much, the winner of the African-American Museum does, in fact, have a screen that performs very much like this does.

A built example of that is the de Young Museum in San Francisco, and that's copper and that is one of the things we're considering because in a very short time it turns greenish/blackish/brownish, which makes it much subtler in the context of the Mall.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Another example is the main library in Phoenix, public library.

MR. POLSHEK: That's correct.

MR. RUO: I think, to address your concern, really this is the reason why we did not propose yet a single design. We have to study it both from the interior and how it

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

looks, as you suggest, from the exterior, especially in direct sunlight.

MR. LORENZETTI: The way I look at this, the skylights are definitely not going to be invisible. They're going to be patches in the grass that are pretty obvious. And with the ramp from Constitution, in order to get the ramp down, you're going to have to start grading all of the grass panels around it to the point that you begin to lose the multipurpose recreational aspect. So the combination of putting glass stripes through the land which provide visibility and, you know, taking away from the opportunity for recreation I think runs counter to the intention of this.

MR. RUO: This kind of edges into kind of a philosophical issue. The idea of recreational activities on top of this visitor center is something we really chose to avoid.

So to a certain extent, the addition, or actually it's been from the beginning the

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

expression of the interior walls and the structure, for that matter, that holds it up serves a second purpose, which is actually to keep ball playing or frisbee throwing or whatever off that particular area.

And, likewise, in here we really would not, I don't quite know how we would do it unless we pitched the grass here, but the point of that actually is to, one point, of course, is to make this single wall here far less visible than it was in early designs, which Tom showed in an earlier drawing, and also to kind of camphor the landscape here, but it will be all grass. We couldn't have very effective recreation area in that place anyway. What's not shown here are trees along here.

MR. LORENZETTI: The ballfields in this area are a tad problematic. We had two ballfields here. One no longer exists because our visitors were hitting balls into the concession stand and interfering with our

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

other visitors. The one that remains is the one in the northeast corner. A ballfield in this area, it's just very difficult to have that kind of space. A multi-use field, small-scale, you know, passive recreation, throwing the frisbee around, that might be possible in this area, but it is rather difficult. We do have fields just across the street to the west of 23rd Street. We have many fields there. We have many fields on Haines Point, so we do have a lot of fields. We have fields just below the reflecting pool. We have many other fields in this area. We feel we still have that section of our visitors pretty well covered.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: I had one more, just going back to the Commission of Fine Arts. It says the tapered wall would be inappropriately reminiscent of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial itself. How do you address that?

MR. POLSHEK: The tapered wall.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

They mean this --

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: No, I think it was the other one next to the berm. By the exit.

MR. POLSHEK: I'm not sure.

MR. RUO: In the discussion of the Commission of Fine Arts, I think that comment actually referred to this wall. And really, you know, in subsequent meetings with staff, including 106 consulting parties, the idea has been to integrate some kind of landscape between the stair and the wall.

MR. POLSHEK: Yes. And I think before, by the time we come back, not only will we have added probably a four-foot strip of planting there, but the wall will be a green wall because it can then grow from the bottom, which is more successful than growing from the top. And the stair will probably splay more to be more integrated into this level space that exists prior to the entry, making the entry somewhat more visible.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: All right.  
Those were my questions.

COMMISSIONER HART: There was an exhibit that showed the relationship of this to the memorial and the street in between. Can we go to that? Because you spoke about the demand lines for pedestrians, and I think what this shows is that the sidewalks around the memorial are not opposite any connection points to this visitor center. How are we going to resolve that?

MR. RUO: Again, that, I think, remains to be studied.

COMMISSIONER HART: Because I don't buy the argument that you're going to have a lot of pedestrian traffic coming down from the north. It's all going to be coming from the memorial if it's going to be coming from any place.

MR. RUO: Well, what's shown here very light is actually a paved area right at the curb for an existing bus drop-off queuing

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

area. So the busses line up here. There are actually several points where that strip of pavement connects to the sidewalk. So one idea that's been discussed is at the point where the curve on the east side of Henry Bacon meets the sidewalk pretty much lines up with one of those panels, and that might be an opportunity to cross.

MR. POLSHEK: You were referring to people coming from here, though, were you not?

COMMISSIONER HART: Yes. That was called out as being a demand line. I'm not convinced of that. I think that the bigger demand line is going to be directly to the east.

MR. POLSHEK: I think you're probably correct in that.

COMMISSIONER HART: Well, the visual connection between the entry and the flagpole may be important. It's sort of a stretch to say that people want to walk that way.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

MR. POLSHEK: Which way? This way?

COMMISSIONER HART: Right.

MR. POLSHEK: Well, it isn't a matter of walking that way so much as a point of orienting yourself to the flagpole, which, in turn, creates a memory of where the memorial is. So it's not a matter of walking.

COMMISSIONER HART: I understand the visual connection. I just don't understand why we're running stairway, you know, along that.

MR. POLSHEK: Why there would be a stair here?

COMMISSIONER HART: Yes. That's not, it's not a natural path that you're going to, you know, go from one to the other. That's my response.

MR. POLSHEK: Okay. Well, it's just a different response than we had to the site.

MR. RUO: Can I also add that the closest subway stop is actually, I believe, up

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

23rd here. And as you all know, the Peace Institute is under construction, soon to be open. So we are expecting some amount of traffic to be crossing whatever way they'll get across this intersection but approaching from the west.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Other questions?

Thank you very much. I appreciate you being here.

MR. RUO: Thank you. It was nice to be back.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: All right. That moves us on to Agenda Item 5B. This is an information presentation on the North Capitol Street Urban Design Feasibility Study. Mr. Walton?

**5B. North Capitol Street Urban Design  
Feasibility Study**

MR. WALTON: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and Commissioners. Today, Matt Bell from EEK Architects, our lead consultant on the North Capitol Street Urban Design and

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

Feasibility Study, is here to present our design options to the Commission for your comments.

NCPC has had a longstanding interest in North Capitol Street. It dates back several years and includes two plans approved by the Commission: the Legacy Plan which looked to create an enhanced gateway experience into the Monumental Core from the north along North Capitol Street and the Museums and Memorials Master Plan which looked to locate new museums, monuments, and memorials outside of the Monumental Core. Two of the sites identified are within the boundaries of this project, the site at McMillan Reservoir, Site Number 17; and the site at the Armed Forces Retirement Home, Site Number 85. We also wanted to incorporate several of the elements from an ongoing initiative we have here at NCPC, the Capitol Space Plan. And our goal was to create an implementation strategy for these plans.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

We worked in coordination with the District of Columbia Office of Planning on this project, which provided excellent leadership throughout the process to the project manager Howard Ways and with the District of Columbia Office of Transportation who provided transportation expertise through Gabriela Vega. So thanks to Howard and Gabriela and also to my teammate Cheryl Kelly who worked hard on this process, as well.

We also convened a working group that included local Ward 5 A&C commissioners; local developers with property in the area; and institutions, Catholic University, Trinity University, the Washington Hospital Center and Children's Hospital; as well as our federal partners from the Armed Forces Retirement Home represented by Tim Sheckler from GSA; the VA Hospital represented by Muhammad Ali Sami; and the Park Service represented by Doug Jacobs. The work you're going to see represents about six months of work, which included two

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

stakeholder meetings and three public meetings. And although the work you're going to be looking at today isn't in for review, we'd appreciate any comments or suggestions you might be able to make as we finalize the project.

So with that, I'll go ahead and turn it over to Matt Bell for the presentation.

MR. BELL: Great. Thanks, Ken. Good afternoon. What I want to show you is the alternatives we've come to in looking at the Cloverleaf and North Capitol and Irving Street and some of the possibilities that are available to us as we imagine a sort of different future for this part of the world. As many of you probably know, it was built as sort of highway interchange in the middle of the city, and we came to the conclusion very quickly that it is one of these things that really is sort of an urban design porcupine in the sense that it propels things away from it

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

and it keeps neighborhoods from being connected and really is a place where you would expect to find it out in the suburbs on an interstate highway and not somewhere you would expect to find in the middle of our city.

A couple of other things interesting to note about it is that this whole area historically was part of the Riggs estate and, of course, it was subsequently developed and sold off to become the Armed Forces Retirement Home. Parts of it became the Washington Hospital Center, and parts of it became residential apartment complex, and Catholic U has acquired just east of the North Capitol area, as well. So the whole area was historically a very large estate, and then this developed from, it was an extension of North Capitol Street in the earlier part of this century or, excuse me, the previous century I should say.

Some of our project goals, we

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

looked at alternative configurations for the Cloverleaf, and we have three study models that we've been working with the community to look at here. We wanted to develop strategies to improve it as a gateway. It is one of the most important gateways into the Monumental Core and look at the possibility of accessible open spaces, civic spaces, memorials, and streetscapes. It is characteristic, I should add, of this area of town is that this area of town has a lot of green space. Very little of it is accessible. And one of the things that the community was very interested in finding out about it is to the extent to which we could improve accessibility to open space. And then we also wanted to develop some recommendations for improving safety, connectivity, and transportation options.

This is a general diagram of what's in that area. Of course, the Armed Forces Retirement Home which recently has had a massive plan approved; Catholic University to

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

the east; and also the Brookland Metro Station. This, of course, is North Capitol Street, and this is Irving Street going east/west. The Washington Hospital Center, which I mentioned, there's a conference center plan for this location. Trinity University is here. Pope John Paul II Cultural Center is in that location. A little further afield is the McMillan Reservoir site which is seeing some development interest and Howard University. So it sits at a nexus of a lot of institutions, a lot of important places in our city both for education and also potentially for future neighborhoods and also for healthcare. And there is a significant amount of traffic that comes in and out, commuters coming into the Hospital Center complex and also coming down North Capitol Street, as well as a significant amount of people moving sort of in an easterly fashion out to Prince George's County via commuters and then, of course, with the areas, more or

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

less, in a general sense anchored by these two metro stations on either side.

When we sort of started taking a look at this area, we sort of backed up and said, well, how does it fit into the larger puzzle of the city? And one of the things that, of course, you immediately become aware of is the work that's been done by NCPC and also a lot of the development work that's happened in various areas on the other capitol streets, on South Capitol and on East Capitol, the visions for what the future of East Capitol might be should the stadium there go away in the not-too-distant future; sort of the improvements, lowering of the bridge and the gateway promenade coming in from South Capitol Street and also the new ballpark in that location and the improvements that have been made there; certainly the Mall to the west, historically a wonderful place and object of study now, and this being something that certainly needs to be part of that. It

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

needs to be something that has a kind of a sense of place and a sense of arrival as good as some of the best places we have in our city.

The other thing that's important to point out in this slide, as well, is there are really potentially three important parallel park systems in the city. One is the Anacostia Basin, which is over here. The other is Rock Creek Park, and we see this potentially as a place where some of the Fort Circle parks and some of the green space that is there could be collected together to become something maybe not on the size of Rock Creek Park but certainly something that could become an amenity in ways that it is not currently.

We also looked a little bit at the capitol space initiatives, the studies that have been ongoing, to link some of the open spaces in this area. The Fort Circle Parks, of course, being an important historic linkage of the forts that protected Washington during

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

the Civil War. And then some of the open space, it's a little hard to read here, but some of the open spaces in detail that are existing or proposed for this part of the world. And as I mentioned to you, it is important to recognize that a great deal of what is here is green, but a lot of it is in privately-held hands.

The land use, just to give you a sense of the scale, this is the actual location here of the intersection of North Capitol and Irving here. You know, if you go a ten-minute or a five-minute, excuse me, in a ten-minute radius out there one of the things you notice is that there's almost nothing there but the highway. In that location there you get a little bit into the Armed Forces Retirement Home and Catholic U, and then this is the Veterans Administration Hospital and the Washington Hospital Center.

You can see pretty well the outline of the Riggs estate, which is about like that.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

It was a very large landholding. And the McMillan Commission, if you go back and look at the Park Commission plan, North Capitol Street dead-ended into the Riggs estate. Today it curves, as we know, but if you go back, it actually dead-ended into that and picked up on Michigan Avenue, which is about right here.

If you sort of start to look at the character of this part of the world, it's an interesting sort of panorama of a lot of different kinds of places. Certainly, these are smaller neighborhoods, small-scale neighborhoods with townhouses and lower-density development. There's the historic part, Lincoln Cottage, and other aspects of the Armed Forces Retirement Home. Up there, it has more of a town sort of scale.

In the center here, if you look at North Capitol Street in here, and as it comes to the town part it's a little bit, probably a little bit better in terms of its relationship

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

to the neighborhoods on either side of it, when you get beyond a certain point it really turns into a highway. It becomes very much kind of a high-speed place. It is detailed like a highway. It has very wide radiuses and things that make it something that allows for traffic to move at a higher speed.

In this area between the Cloverleaf and just south of McMillan Reservoir it's kind of a transition zone. You come around that bend, you get a view of the Capitol through there, but it's got a little bit of a neighborhood in here, some small blocks. There's McMillan Reservoir there, but it's really transitioning into the urban core of the city in this area. So this is really very much a transition area.

And we have taken a look most carefully at these two areas here. How does it, how does one begin to make it a better place that both moves traffic and provides for a place where pedestrians and neighborhoods

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

can get connected and then also how does it provide a transition into the center of the city.

We started out, as well, by looking at how big this thing is. I think it's, correct me if I'm wrong, I think it's 19 acres, this area, right? It's very large, and if you overlay it on scale with a number of areas we know in this city you come up with some very interesting and surprising observations. For example, here's Irving here overlaid with North Capitol here, and these are the ramps here, which take you every which way you want to go. And underneath that is Dupont Circle, and so you can see how much larger this thing is than Dupont Circle. And Dupont Circle, many of us would recognize as a wonderful neighborhood. It has a lot of wonderful amenities. It's also a place where a lot of traffic and transit moves through. It handles a lot of different aspects of mobility.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

The other one we looked at was something a little bit less urban and a little bit more landscaped in character, and this is the area of the city -- we like to go back and look at the city, of things that work in the city for precedence and for examples of how we might conceive of new places. This is P Street as it transitions from Dupont Circle on the east side into Georgetown and with Rock Creek Parkway coming up through there, and it has a number of ramps and places where we could move from the surface streets of the city down into Rock Creek Parkway. And, of course, we love Rock Creek Parkway. We think it's a wonderful amenity in our city. It moves a lot of traffic, and it also is a place that you see people biking and hiking and also spending time on weekends and picnicking and walking and things like that. And so we thought that this was an interesting precedent, as well, for here because it allowed for a park landscape to have something

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

(202) 234-4433

[www.nealrgross.com](http://www.nealrgross.com)

that also moves traffic and connects neighborhoods on either side.

By background, as well, we looked very carefully at the memorials and museums plans that NCPC has done to look at the places where the NCPC has identified where some of these future memorials and museums and monuments can be located. We think that this is a good opportunity, as well, as we move forward looking at these different options for places, particularly at the intersection of North Capitol and Irving or just south of there or at the Armed Forces site or, as I mentioned, right at the center where those two streets come together.

Then when you get there and you start to look at what actually you see right there from those locations, there's a lot of important monuments there already. There is the shrine at Catholic U. There are historic buildings at Trinity University. There is the use of sort of the Washington Monument and the

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

United States Capitol. There are also, interestingly, from this point, you can see directly westbound and see the National Cathedral. So it is a point where your introduction to the Monumental Core and to the monuments of the city is quite powerful. There's also historic buildings at the Armed Forces Retirement Home, which will be rehabilitated in the future.

We started off by looking at North Capitol Street, as well, in terms of not only conceptually as an entry into town but also in detail about how one might begin to re-conceptualize it as a place and make it less like a highway. This is the existing condition, three travel lanes in each direction, there's no parking, there are large headlights. It's everything you would want in an interstate highway here on North Capitol Street. And we started to look at the section north of the Cloverleaf, and we said with a few simple changes we might be able to make

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

this a much more habitable and more inviting place, inviting more street trees, perhaps, to introduce more of a landscape there, to introduce potentially hiker/biker trails. And also there's enough landscape on either side where one might also be able to introduce wetlands or other places that are less like just places on the side of a highway and places that could actually potentially improve the sustainability of this part of the world, as well.

And this gives you a sense. This is it today, the three lanes here. There's some of the buildings of the Armed Forces Retirement Home and the land that Catholic U owns on the east side. And with a few changes, we think one could easily imagine the introduction of more trails to move through here. You would want to set them back a little bit from the moving traffic. We think there's room to be able to do that and to make it much more of a place that could approach

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

some of the qualities of landscape that you have in places like Rock Creek Parkway, which is a really kind of wonderful place to drive along, as well as to go on foot or ride a bike.

We looked south of the Cloverleaf, as well. And one of the things this diagram shows a little bit is the potential for this really to become a linear park. It still could handle traffic, but it could become a linear park. And one of the schemes intentionally makes it much more of a park-like space, and I'll describe how that works.

But this is south of the Cloverleaf here. This is McMillan Reservoir here. We have a lot of the same kinds of streetscape features in this location. You can see the transit lanes and the travel lanes, and some of it is off-peak parking here which faces the townhouses, which probably provides a bit of a buffer for pedestrians and for the private houses in this area.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

This is one of the sketches we made to just show with a little bit better planting of street trees, potentially with the development of McMillan that could happen there, that once you get into that zone south of the Cloverleaf and you start to get introduced into the urban grid, a more urban kind of streetscape is possible there that would be a different sort of place than what is there currently without changing any of the cartway features.

So this is what this looks like today. You can see the Capitol down here. You can see the sidewalk is pretty narrow and not very welcoming in those locations. One study we made showed that improving the sidewalks, crosswalks, better features, better setbacks, better public environment there as a kind of gateway into the Core. Certainly, the landscaping of the street trees helps, as well.

So that's on either side of the

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

Cloverleaf and some of the studies that we've done. It is truly a barrier, particularly east/west, from the neighborhoods moving east/west from Brookland over to Petworth and Columbia Heights, but it does provide for a significant, it does handle a fair amount of traffic.

And one of the first things we looked at was, well, what would happen if you simply made an at-grade intersection? Just brought it all down to grade, a simple intersection. And you're not going to see that as a solution today because what we discovered was that traffic volumes, both in terms of what is necessary there today and also in terms of planning development in the future, would require an absolutely enormous intersection with double left turns all over, and we felt that that was not pedestrian friendly. So what we've been looking at are situations where we could use Dupont Circle and P Street as a model where we could have

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

differences in grade but still make a good production environment and a good environment for the movement of traffic and transit.

So the first scheme here, the first one we call "Option 1: Memorial in the Park," and the theory behind this one is that it becomes a park space that anchors this linear park that gets developed down North Capitol Street here. It provides for a new face and entry into the Armed Forces site. It takes the Armed Forces plan that's been approved and modifies it slightly here. One would take North Capitol and keep swinging it to the east here, and we would go with Irving Street over that here, go over top, not unlike some of the grade changes that happened at P Street and going into Georgetown, Q Street and P Street, and that that area would be the first place coming into the city you would encounter an important public space.

And that gives you the sense of the scale around there. This is the shrine, of

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

course, and the main building at Trinity University.

So some of the features of this one include this park is about seven and a half acres. This would be a bridge over here with North Capitol passing under here. It realigns North Capitol somewhat in there. We get about two and a half acres of developable property, which is areas that we would benefit from by getting rid of the Cloverleaf and introducing potential building sites and reconfiguring the work.

This is probably, of the three I'm going to show you, the most radical change we're looking at in terms of feasibility because it is a reconfiguration of almost all the road network in here, but it does provide significant frontage for Catholic U's property here, for Armed Forces here, and also potentially for the Veterans Hospital there.

These would be, in all probability, would be signaled intersections there, so you

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

would come down North Capitol and stop, and if you were going to the Veterans Hospital or to the Washington Hospital Center you would make a right turn and then another right turn here; or if you were coming out you would come here and make a turn and make a turn here, as well.

So it would require, this would require this area, around the area to be two-way, but people traveling into the city would have more of the unimpeded movement down there from north to south. And we could have a location for a monument or a memorial in the center of that space. And seven and a half acres is a pretty sizeable community park.

And this gives you a sense, here we are now from above the Armed Forces site. This is the shrine. Here's North Capitol here. There's Irving right here with the Veterans Administration Hospital there and the Capitol down here, and this should work to bring this in right. So you can get a sense now of the memorial location there, the

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

potential new conference center here, the shrine, and then coming along and then encountering this space, and then making the turn here which is very dramatic and seeing the axial alignment of the United States Capitol.

The next one is more traditionally based upon Dupont Circle and some of the other circles we have in town where we have an oval, we've made an oval here and Irving Street would pass under it, and there would be small ramps going up on either side to navigate the grade change here. And you would be coming down North Capitol, and it would serve as a way to sort of stop the traffic briefly, and then you'd move around the oval and then continue down North Capitol, or you could make a right turn here if you were westbound on Irving here, if you were coming from Irving Street up to that, you could come up to a ramp here and turn right or go around and come back down into North Capitol there.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

Part of the theory here is that you could do it actually either way. You could put North Capitol up or North Capitol down. This particular scheme we chose to show it this way because the theory is that if we have transit moving east/west here, there's a desire to have pretty good transit between the Brookland Metro Station and Columbia Heights, that moving under the North Capitol would allow the traffic to move unimpeded. So that's the theory here.

Again, the scale of the walk here.

This has a smaller park, 2.6 acres. I think the open space at Dupont Circle is about 2.3 acres, so it compares favorably to about that size. It does give us additional potential development areas around that area, a new entry into the Armed Forces Retirement Home, potential frontage for Catholic, private development, and also a site for the Veterans Administration Hospital there. It certainly is in the lexicon of Washington D.C. open

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

spaces. We could have a memorial site in the center there, and then you can see here also that model is, that one over there, you can see the underpass of Irving in that location.

And this is the 3D. Again, North Capitol and Irving here. It gives you a sense of what this would be like, a memorial balloon floating in there. Then North Capitol moving this way, and then this space here, excuse me, Irving going under and North Capitol encountering this space.

The last one is one that we did where you leave the bridge overpass and underpass infrastructure in place and you change the ramps, the idea being that if you do something whereby you just sort of keep the North Capitol going over and Irving going under here in this location, as it's configured today, and what you do is you get rid of the ramps and make a much tighter configuration there.

So we call this one the four

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

corners, although it seems to have a few more corners than just four there. Maybe we need to find another name for it. I'm not sure, but it gives you a sense of the scale there.

We have two versions of this, actually. This one, you can see here, this would leave these where they are today. And the way these work is that these would become streets, and they would be inclined slightly, so if you were coming down North Capitol and you wanted to get to the Hospital Center you would make a right turn. There would be an intersection here, and you could turn onto that street and then make your turn into the Washington Hospital Center. Conversely, if you were coming out the other way, you could come out here in the evening and make a left turn at this intersection and come up that street and then go out North Capitol Street. So the idea being that the streets around the outside are a one-way set of streets here with development sites in the center.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

This gives us about a four-acre park with additional possibilities for development there. And this gives you a sense of what this is like three-dimensionally, potentially a memorial location there and then the buildings describing that.

This is a version of that scheme where this is developed just as a park without buildings in the center, so you look at a new entry for the Armed Forces Retirement Home, potential frontage for Catholic, and we were trying to maximize the park space here, again, while keeping the overpass/underpass relationship that exists today for Irving and North Capitol in place. So it's a slightly different version of the same thing there, so you get larger open space here, North Capitol proceeding in this way down to the U.S. Capitol.

So just to give a little bit of a summary of this, they each have different positive aspects that are aspects that maybe

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

are more positive in some than in others. Clearly, this one has the largest sort of contiguous open space. It would be a bit of a challenge more for transit moving east/west here whereas some of these other ones that allow for transit to move unimpeded through Irving Street perhaps may maximize the viability of transit in there. All of them would be introducing new stop lights and traffic movement here so that as you came southbound into the city you were not on a highway, you were on something that would stop you before you continued down North Capitol Street.

We have done some order of magnitude cost estimates here. I mentioned that this one is probably the most expensive because it involves the almost total reconfiguration of this area, whereas this one and this one keep the overpass configuration more or less where they are today, although they have different development potentials for

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

what one might want to put there, this one being a more landscape solution and this one, of course, being more with buildings.

You know, the intention here is to increase connectivity east/west and north/south, which is significantly impeded today by the interchange, and also to see what sort of benefits could accrue to each of the different properties on all different sides of these sites.

We did look, initially, also at running it straight through, continuing the line of North Capitol Street so that it would run straight through the Armed Forces Retirement Home. We don't think that's feasible for a number of very good reasons. We were asked to look at this, but the historic property is there and the street never did that historically anyhow. So we think that that really needs to come off the table.

We think that, certainly, there's a

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

potential to make greenway through here. Right now it's green but it's not really very useable, but we think some minor changes there could make it quite a bit more useable. We think you can also make a great place. I mean, this is a city that has a lot of great public places, and we think this could actually become one of them that enhances transit, walkability, and bicycle access.

And we also think that it's an important place to focus on because it is one of the main gateways into the Monumental Core.

Right now it's not so great, and it could be a lot better, and we think this is real opportunity both in terms of making neighborhood connectivity and also presenting a kind of set up for the entry into the capital of the country that would be of significant dignity for that to occur.

We think, as well, that, as a neighborhood site, it could also be a place for memorials, too. And with the

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

redevelopment, a lot of the activity that's been happening in this area with the plan by the Armed Forces Retirement Home and some of the other activities that institutions like Catholic U are looking at and the interest in McMillan Reservoir as a development site, this is really something that could help to make those neighborhoods even more sustainable and viable in the future.

So we have these models. We can take a look at them, and we can revisit slides and answer questions.

[INSERT - North Capitol Street Urban Design and Feasibility Study]

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Questions from the Commission?

COMMISSIONER DIXON: Mr. Chairman, they did a tremendous job on these models. I'm impressed with the presentation. I understand you mentioned the real concern was connectivity. I never had any problem hobbling into the Veterans Hospital or getting up and down North Capitol Street, but I appreciate connectivity. Which one of these would give us the most land to be able to develop? The city owns this property; is that correct? The city owns most of this property or not?

MR. BELL: Do you want to clarify that?

COMMISSIONER DIXON: The city owns the property we're talking about?

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: It's a little bit complicated in that this was land that was acquired for highway purposes, so if it stops being necessary for highway purpose

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

it typically reverts back to the original owner.

COMMISSIONER DIXON: Okay. I'm sorry I asked, but I understand. Okay. But it could be our property with the new highway design, etcetera? It could be something we could --

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: It's complicated, but let me put it this way: the city would have some considerable ability because it would be our action that would make this possible. And one of the interesting things that was proposed as part of the kind of community interaction was that let's just say you could give four corners of development on one of the busiest intersections in the city to additional parties. Maybe you would do that in exchange for a land swap that might bring more parkland, more contiguous parkland, which is what the neighborhood really wants, in places that are not necessarily right in the middle of a very busy intersection.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

COMMISSIONER DIXON: I think it's fascinating, and I think it shows also a great partnership between NCPC and the community and city to try and look at this. I think it's fine. Keep at it. I don't know where you go from here, but it's good.

MR. BELL: Well, we're in sort of the last phase of the study, so we're taking comments and making revisions and trying to incorporate the comments that people have so we can have them for the final report that we're making.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Mr. McGill?

MR. MCGILL: Have you done an origin destination study for traffic on North Capitol?

MR. BELL: The traffic consultant we have has looked at where the traffic is going, yes.

MR. MCGILL: And is it primarily, you know, I ask because we had this, NCPC sponsored this fascinating exercise of looking

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

at the New York and Florida Avenue intersection after DDOT said let's build a huge viaduct. And one of DDOT's rationales was, well, about a third of the traffic on New York Avenue is suburban communities going to suburban destinations, and our study team said, well, this is nonsense. You're going to disrupt a whole area and destroy its potential for becoming a real neighborhood in order to accommodate suburban commuters who could be using the beltway. And I'm curious to what extent that's also true here for North Capitol because it seems to me that your presentation, understandably, even though you talk about creating a neighborhood intersection or a neighborhood feel, you're still accommodating a hell of a lot of traffic on North Capitol Street.

MR. BELL: Yes. The reality is there is a lot of traffic there. There are commuters who go out to Prince George's County, but there's also a lot of people

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

coming into work at the Washington Hospital Center and also, you know, that is a destination for people, as well. So, you know, any time you do things like this you really have to try and balance the needs of what the traffic demands are and also the livability, as well.

What we did look at was looking at the future of this area, if you take into consideration the future development of the Armed Forces Retirement Home and all the other development projects that we know of that are out there, which is significant in this area as well. And one of the things we also circle back with the community over was they felt they didn't like the design of it, but they liked the mobility of the area, you know. So I think what we're trying to do here is to find the ways to make it interconnected but also still have a level of mobility here that works.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Mr. Ames?

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

COMMISSIONER AMES: I congratulate you on your study so far. I think it's very good. One thing, two things I'll mention to you. One, the section in your report where you talked about the idea of going through the Armed Forces Retirement Home, if I were you I'd take a pair of scissors and cut that section out and don't bring it up again.

But with saying that, saying that, we went through an arduous process with the Armed Forces Retirement Home about their development ideas for their sustainability, to lease land to developers, to give them money because they're not funded on a yearly basis.

Their funds come from a trust fund. And you hit on a subject, and this is something that Ms. Tregoning was talking about then, about trading off land.

One of the big thoughts of the neighborhood close to the Armed Forces Retirement Home is they wanted access to the Armed Forces Retirement Home property to be

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

turned into a park. Now, the Armed Forces Retirement Home, protecting their turf, didn't agree with that. But I see the possibility, if the correct plan is adopted, of the city being able to possibly transfer or trade, whatever way you want to do it, some land that would have a strong commercial value at this intersection for some of the proposed parkland that the residents of that area wanted, which would serve two purposes. One, I think the neighborhood would do back flips over it; and, number two, it would create maybe a quicker source of income to the Armed Forces Retirement Home, you know, to keep moving forward. And I --

MR. BELL: Good suggestion.

COMMISSIONER AMES: -- I hope you keep moving this project forward, but please keep that in mind, you know, because I think you can connect a lot of dots with keeping that part of the situation going.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Other comments?

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

Mr. May?

COMMISSIONER MAY: Yes, I had a couple of questions to start with. Did you actually look at the volumes of traffic in comparison to the examples that you cite at Dupont Circle and --

MR. BELL: Yes, we did. Yes.

COMMISSIONER MAY: -- and is it comparable volumes at both?

MR. BELL: Yes. I don't have the numbers offhand. We'll have them in the final report, but we looked very carefully at examples that had similar volumes.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Okay. Did you ever, in this circle option, did you actually consider the possibility that North Capitol would go below and Irving would stay at grade and then actually have the transit run through the circle? Because I remember seeing something like --

MR. BELL: Yes, you could do that, too, and we may include that in the final

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

report as an option. The reason why we pursued this one was we felt it handled the possibility of a more direct transit link east/west here, but you could it the other way, too. A lot of it depends upon how you want to route the transit through there.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Right. Well, I mean, I assume when you talk about transit you're talking about street car.

MR. BELL: Probably, yes.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: That's the thing that's hardest to accommodate, so that's what we'd be looking at.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Right. And the thing about a street car is that I wouldn't really want to send it down, you know, into an underpass so --

MR. BELL: Well, except that it's harder to take it up and around a circle.

COMMISSIONER MAY: I'm not saying around, I'm saying through. Again, I think that there was something that I saw recently

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

that that was done somewhere, and I don't know why. Maybe I just --

MR. BELL: You can look at that. I mean, surely, yes.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Just a thought.

I like, you know, all of the schemes have some element of giving an external street to the Armed Forces Retirement Home; site development, which I think is terrific because it was always so inwardly focused and the idea of having some of it turn out and face a neighborhood I think is just such a terrific thing. That's why I was thinking, you know, at least in theory, the idea of straightening North Capitol made sense, but I can see how problematic that would be.

And then I would also say that it seems that, in the scheme of things, that there's something really special about that first scheme because it's not trying to do a sort of typical L'Enfant plan because we're getting a lot of that. You know, we're

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

getting a lot of L'Enfant-inspired moves that are not original.

MR. BELL: Yes. That one is directly the result of looking at P Street and Georgetown Rock Creek Parkway. You know, I think that one has a lot of merit just for the reasons you cite, and one of the community members the other day said that he preferred that one because he felt it was truly transformative, that it was something that really looked at the different corners of the Home, and the Catholic, and the park space, and it was something transformative and different for exactly the same reasons.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Right. I mean, it really could be a terrific thing, and I think it would perhaps link better with the ideas of, you know, the linear park and --

MR. BELL: One other way to look at that is to say that a more picturesque approach there might be more appropriate, rather than a more formal L'Enfant approach.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

It would be something interesting to debate, you know, relative to the Monument Core and things.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Right, right. It wouldn't have immediately occurred to me. I think it's terrific seeing it in this concept. So that's what I have to say.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: The only question I had was those pedestrian movements in that circle, that's fairly high speed area I think in getting people across six lanes of traffic. It would be an interesting dynamic.

MR. BELL: Yes, we have looked at that. We've made street sections to look at where the pedestrians would go and done a preliminary layout for traffic lights and diagrams for where the pedestrians would move and things like that. You know, part of it is it was astonishing to me to learn one day from a traffic engineer that the most efficient speed for moving traffic is 35 miles an hour, and that's because the cars can be closer

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

together. They don't have to have these great distances between them. So when you start to think about lower speeds and the sort of network, the grid network, and trying to make more connectivity, you actually end up probably with better possibilities of movement at lower speeds, which makes a better pedestrian environment. That I think is what we see in many of the best neighborhoods in the city.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: I like it. I'm not a real fan of 4A or the four corners option A, only because the buildings are getting too tight I think and it creates a canyon and it's difficult, from a driving perspective, to figure out where you go in that environment. But the rest of them I think really have a lot of merit. And, Peter, straightening out North Capitol, we could always advertise that as easy on/off access to Lincoln's summer home. This has been very good. I really think you've done a great job.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

Any other questions or comments? All right.  
Well, thank you very much.

MR. BELL: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: All right. We  
move on to Item 5C, which is the update on the  
master plan for Andrews Air Force Base. Mr.  
Hart?

**5C. Andrews Air Force Base Master Plan**

**Update**

MR. HART: Good afternoon, or  
should I say good evening? It's kind of late.  
Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and members of  
the Commission. The Air Force is here today  
to present an update on the Andrews Air Force  
Base master planning process. As a reminder,  
last month you approved the strategic planning  
development facility on the Andrews Air Force  
Base with a requirement, and that requirement  
was that the Department of the Air Force  
report back to the Commission on the status of  
the Andrews Air Force Base master planning  
process prior to submitting any future

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

projects.

As a little background, the last NCPC approved master plan or general plan for Andrews Air Force Base dates back 1979. Although the Air Force has submitted a number of projects on the base since that time, generally these projects have been additions or renovations to existing buildings for very small facilities. Only recently, since the base realignment and closure process was completed, has there been a real need to review and update the Andrews Air Force Base master plan in order to implement the changes recommended in the BRAC.

In February of 2009, the Air Force hired a consultant, PBS&J, to conduct the update to the Andrews Air Force Base master plan. John Medeiros from PBS&J will present the status of their efforts and what their next steps will be. Here representing the Air Force is Brian Dolan, who will introduce Mr. Medeiros.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

MR. DOLAN: Thank you. Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and members of the Commission. I'm Brian Dolan of Asset Management of the 316th Wing at Andrews Air Force Base. I'm responsible for community planning, environmental, and other base asset management issues. As Carlton mentioned, at Andrews we are facing the challenges of sustaining an aging infrastructure, absorbing the changes through not only BRAC but joint basing with Naval Air Facility Washington, as well, and other mission requirements as they evolve, and also all this within a constrained physical environment.

Outside the fence, we're working with our partners in Prince George's County and the Maryland National Capital Planning Commission, the joint land view study which John will speak to you momentarily, to ensure that development outside the base is beneficial and consistent with the mission, as well.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

So Air Force District Washington has enlisted PBS&J and their team to update our general plan. They bring a lot of expertise to the table, notably their work on the installation planning and master plan efforts at Fort Belvoir. Mr. John Medeiros, Colonel, U.S. Air Force, retired, program manager for PBS&J will now speak to that effort and let you know where we stand. Thank you.

MR. MEDEIROS: Chairman, Commissioners, thank you very much. Thanks for your patience. I'm sure it's been a much longer day for you than it has for me, so thank you. For those that aren't sure, I'm trying to do the mental gymnastics on PBS&J. It's Post, Buckley, Schuh & Jernigan. You can go through some other gymnastics if you want to, but thank you. And thanks for the opportunity to present this update on the Andrews general plan.

So I can give you a little bit of a

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

reference point. Several of the commissioners may not have a general visual where Andrews is. Generally speaking, it's about southeast just outside the beltway. Here's the beltway, 495, right here. Most of Andrews is located right here, and there are a couple of other small communication sites not depicted on the map.

One of the most interesting things about -- and by the way, the runway here you can see is located generally north and south and the base, therefore, is divided into east and west, and east side of the installation administratively mostly and the west side where the bulk of the installation is located.

It's an interesting installation because of the multiple echelons of command that are at Andrews. Air Force District Washington is an intermediate command. They're located down here on the west side of the installation and recently stood up as a result of 9/11, and I'll talk a little bit about the history of

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

that in a second.

At a higher level, higher echelon of command, the Air National Guard Readiness Center and the National Guard Bureau, they're located in a very large administrative facility. And part of the BRAC Commission has a recommendation that I'll talk about in a minute here on the east side of the installation.

The host wing is a 316th wing. That stood up when Air Force District Washington stood up. They are responsible for the day-to-day operations of the installation.

They also have a little bit of operational capability. They provide helicopter support for air lift in the National Capital Region.

79th Medical Wing is pretty much a self-contained unit down here. They're impacted by BRAC, as well. The 89th Air Lift Wing used to be the host wing at Andrews until the stand up of Air Force District Washington.

That's an air mobility command unit that's

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

responsible for the presidential airlift and executive airlift support around the nation. They are a tenant, and, although their headquarters is right in this part of the base, quite frankly they own almost all of this flight line over on this side.

In addition, you have the 317th Wing. That's actually D.C.'s Air National Guard located at Andrews, and they provide two primary airlift missions or two aircraft support missions. One is air superiority for the D.C. area. They fly the F-16s, they fly fighter cap in the D.C. area, as well as doing the executive airlift support, pretty much the same as what the 89th does.

And lastly is the Naval Air Facility Washington D.C. That was actually a separate installation that was located inside Andrews Air Force Base until the BRAC 05 Commission. I'll talk a little bit about that. It was mentioned already about joint basing, how joint basing affects what's going

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

on at Andrews Air Force Base, and, quite frankly, all of the installations that are impacted within the D.C. area.

Little bit of history. Carlton already mentioned the last general plan that was approved by the NCPC. It was approved in 1979, and multiple general plans were approved since then. The last one was approved in 2003. That's the general plan of record right now. There have been two environmental assessments, one directed by BRAC, as well as one initiated by the installation, installation development environmental assessment. That did many things. It tried to capture a lot of the movement that's going to go on at Andrews Air Force Base over the next few years, in particular with the stand up to the Air Force District Washington, clearly a much larger focus on the infrastructure and taking care of the Air Force base called Andrews. It is the gateway to the National Capital Region.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

Andrews Air Force Base, the host wing, the 316th, has also gone through an extensive strategic plan update. That, quite frankly, along with the general plan in 2003, is the basis for the update that PBS&J is doing right now. A lot of great work.

The strategic plan highlights several areas that you would think has great planning principles: transient-oriented development; pedestrian-oriented development; community centers; a cool zone is a center for the airmen and some of the visitors at the base; as well as mission efficiencies; asset management; full life cycle management of both the natural and the built infrastructure at Andrews; and then, of course, land use; as well as incorporating the BRAC issues.

BRAC actions, a variety of BRAC actions clearly. The top two impacted folks leaving Andrews. The Air Force Office of Special Investigation is being moved down to Quantico and being co-located with the other

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

service special investigative units, creating some DoD synergy there. And then the move of the Air Force Flight Safety Agency to Will Rogers in Oklahoma, a fairly small footprint at Andrews. There are two C-21 executive type aircraft that had electronics gear on them that moved with that mission.

And then, of course, the stand up of Joint Base Andrews. What that does is takes all of the real property that belonged to the Navy facility inside Andrews and transfers that to the Air Force. So now the Air Force becomes the complete landlord for the installation called Andrews. By the way, there are 24 installations affected. That's just not an Andrews issue. There are five installations within the D.C. area: Fort McNair, Henderson Hall, Bolling Air Force Base, the Naval District Washington, as well as Andrews and the Air Force District Washington affected and impacted by that decision to go to joint basing.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

Bolling, by the way, is currently a base that belongs to the Air Force District Washington. They will become part of the Naval District Washington 1 October and will no longer be an Air Force installation. And that footprint, by the way, changes some of the dynamics that are going on at Andrews. It was mentioned earlier about the strategic planning facility that came before this commission a month ago. Part of that is because the focus for the Air Force will be driven more towards Andrews for the installation-type support activities for the Air Force mission that's going on in the Pentagon, as well as in the area in general. And, of course, it is the only full-up airfield within the National Capital Region, DoD airfield.

I might add because of all that mixture of people, they have a great joint service open house that's going to happen not this weekend but the following weekend if you

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

want to go out to Andrews and be a part of that great event.

The realignment of the 135th, very small facility addition, and Malcolm Grow Medical Center. There really is no large footprint change to the medical community. However, it will become just an inpatient or, excuse me, it loses its inpatient care responsibilities and only ambulatory surgery clinics there. Part of that is part of the D.C. Growth at Fort Belvoir, as well as up at Bethesda as they consolidate the medical activities there.

Three projects that BRAC specifically required. One is the movement of all of the least locations inside, primarily, Crystal City. There are Pentagon activities, though, that just didn't have enough room inside the Pentagon. They're all being moved out to Andrews. That's the National Capital Region leased facilities. And in the same time, there's a guard readiness center that

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

was also scattered in various facilities, lease facilities, primarily in the Crystal City/Rosalind area. They're being consolidated onto Andrews Air Force Base, as well, the two largest iconic projects as a result of BRAC at Andrews. And then there's a traffic lane that will be added on the far east side of the base to ease traffic going in that gate.

Projects besides the three I just talked about. We already talked about the strategic planning and development facility. I only highlight that one because that is really an impact of the BRAC decisions to go to joint basing. Andrews will now become the center for conferences, for secured communications capabilities for the Air Force as they have. They reinforced our summits, a whatever a wide variety of requirements would be, but that facility is now required to support that mission and the visiting quarters mission supports that, as well. That's phase

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

one of a two-part visiting quarters requirement.

Four of the projects are funded. Air sovereignty alert facility. Again, I talked about that briefly. That's an active-duty mission performed by the D.C. Air National Guard. There's a temporary lodging facility which is really what we would think of as efficiency apartments to take care of families as they're transitioning into and out of an installation, moving a mission storage area to a friendlier part of the base, as well as a companion project for that large BRAC project is an administrative facility addition. So that's going to be one facility, two projects, an \$81 million project, and the BRAC project on the other side. And then future projects that are programmed to come into Andrews are listed, as well.

Land use. Besides the normal traditional planning principles that are applied as we're taking a look at the update

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

and as has been applied in the previous general plans, we're going to focus on the four additional planning principles that are highlighted there. Town centers, in particular, are becoming more friendly; walkable installation encourage redevelopment; adaptive reuse of facilities; those sorts of things; and then the four-stand management.

Installation security is always, of course, at the top of the list. It's problematic from an access point of view, but it is what it is, and it's incorporated into all the designs as a standard feature now versus an add-on feature to all facility design and when we plan installations. The land uses are typical of all Air Force installations. There's nothing magical up there. It's just a matter of how they come together to provide that sense of community on an Air Force installation that makes sense to both the local community, as well as the mission of the Air Force.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

Transportation management plan. Right now, Andrews has commissioned another contractor to do the update for their transportation management plan. That's Gannet Flemming. They're about 50 percent now. The Commission, I believe, has access to that study. We are incorporating their recommendations, as they make them, throughout the life cycle of our update to the general plan. So, in theory, as they finalize their transportation management plan, we have gone on a parallel effort and have been able to incorporate their recommendations, as well.

Again, their existing conditions have recently been submitted. The base has not even verified those yet. Some of the specific goals are there. Again, they support the planning goals from the previous page, and we're integrating them into the final plan.

Government coordination, it's ongoing at federal, state, local levels. There's no question about it. A lot of county

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

interface. A joint land use studies going on right now. It's supposed to be completed in 2009. That will create a great footprint for how the contours, how the queues the air compatibility zones, these sorts of things, for aircraft safety. Those crash-impact areas are all negotiated, so we can make sure that the right type of development -- it's not no development, just the right type of development -- can occur in these zones up here and off the south end of the airfield.

Cultural resources management plan, it's being reviewed and updated, as well. And I talked about the transportation management plan.

My last slide is where we sit in the general plan approach. Right now, we have just completed our concept study right here that was submitted to the installation. We are headed toward a preliminary submittal. That's considered a 50-percent submittal, if you will, where we start to do some in-depth

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

area development plans, as well as taking a look at the impacts of the transportation management. We will be involved with some informal staff discussion with the National Capital Planning Commission, and we'll present that to them in an informal way as soon as we submit it to the installation and do the same thing as we go to a pre-final submittal in the August time frame, continue informal discussions with the NCPC, and then, of course, our final submittal is due in the November time frame. And then after that, with all of the appropriate environmental NEPA documentation that goes with it, it will be submitted to the Commission for their 90-day review period.

So that's my last slide. I'll get off here. I want to thank, one, the Commission again for taking the time out of your day to hear our update, as well as to Carlton for his help in helping us make sure we present the right level of information to

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

this group of folks. So thank you very much, and I hope you enjoy the joint air show that's coming up.

If you have any questions, I'll be happy to answer them now or try to. We have a couple of our planners here, as well as the installation folks, that if we get too deep I'll kind of punt to those folks. But if you have any questions up front . . .

COMMISSIONER NEWTON: I have a question, Mr. Chairman. This is just a curiosity question. You're taking over real property responsibility for the Navy airfield on the east side?

MR. MEDEIROS: They are.

COMMISSIONER NEWTON: Yes. The Air National Guard Readiness Center, is that your real property, as well?

MR. MEDEIROS: They normally operate under a licensing agreement, so it's not quite where it's owned by the installation. But it's owned by them but

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

licensed to the Guard, and that's both for the Air National Guard facility, as well as the 113th Wing that's there. So they actually have two portions of land. There you go. Perfect. You can't capture them completely, but down in this corner here is where the 113th is. That's the wing that's down there supporting the air sovereignty mission, and then that piece or parcel of land that's up here.

I know the 113th operates under a license. I'm virtually positive that the headquarters function operates under a license, as well. That's their normal method of operation now.

COMMISSIONER NEWTON: Thank you, thank you.

MR. MEDEIROS: That way they can deal with the Guard and, you know, the state functions and they have a relationship that exists, those sorts of things. That's why I'm not sure about the headquarters. It's really

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

not about a state, Maryland state issues that go on, okay?

COMMISSIONER DIXON: Mr. Chairman, a comment and a question. One, I'm a former member of the 459th, so I've spent a little time on the base.

MR. MEDEIROS: Good on you. Were you a 141 guy, or are you a tanker guy?

COMMISSIONER DIXON: Well, I did a little of everything. I worked for the exec, I was exec to the commander of the unit.

MR. MEDEIROS: Good.

COMMISSIONER DIXON: The other thing, you're not going to do anything with the golf courses except improve them?

MR. MEDEIROS: You know what? I'm going to let the planners give you the -- I tell you what. I am doing everything I can --

COMMISSIONER DIXON: I just want to be sure --

MR. MEDEIROS: -- that real estate. That's licensed real estate, as far as I'm

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

concerned.

COMMISSIONER DIXON: Okay. And the other question is you represent really the planner side? You're not really there for the actual military facility itself?

MR. MEDEIROS: That's correct. I'm with PBS&J. I'm on the contractor staff. Exactly. That's correct.

COMMISSIONER DIXON: Thank you. Golf course, a yes or no on? Pass?

MR. MEDEIROS: I use that golf course. I can tell you it's a nice golf course. We'll preserve that at all costs.

COMMISSIONER DIXON: I don't need to hear anymore. I'm fine.

MR. DOLAN: Yes. The golf course, like any new mission requirement that comes along, the golf course is an important recreational opportunity for military and other members, and we balance them all. We're getting pretty built out on the base right now.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: The TMP, that comes in with your master plan?

MR. MEDEIROS: Well, coming in with it would probably be an overstatement. Multiple plans are out there both for resources, transportation management plan. The general plan operates and functions as kind of a capstone document that covers all of those, so we take all of the elements that come out of the transportation management plan and make sure they would be included in the general plan. But I think it's an overstatement to say that it includes the transportation management plan as part of it.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: But we need that in order to make your master plan work.

MR. MEDEIROS: Yes, sir. And that's what they're dealing with. The Gannett Flemming on the base is working with Carlton on the TMP. Quite frankly, that's a little bit ahead of us, so you should be seeing that before you see our general plan.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Okay.

MR. MEDEIROS: And, again, that's the purpose of us going in parallel track with them to make sure we include all of their recommendations.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: And a note on the slide, it says strive to meet NCPD guidelines. We have a little higher standard.

MR. MEDEIROS: As we do, too.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Okay.

MR. MEDEIROS: And there's the art of compromise that will also come as a result of that, I'm sure. Part of that will be the transportation. As you know, with the security aspects of the installation, unlike the Pentagon, for instance, which is a perfect example of how you can get mass transit right to the doorstep there. It just becomes more of a commuter issue and a car pool and bus transportation issues on to and off the installation.

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: Okay.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

MR. MEDEIROS: So I couldn't be quite definitive in that statement. Any other questions?

CHAIRMAN COGBILL: That's all I have. Any other questions? Thank you very much. We appreciate you being with us. And if there's no other business to come before the Commission, we stand adjourned.

(Whereupon, the foregoing matter was concluded at 5:16 p.m.)

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701