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NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION

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BOARD MEETING

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THURSDAY,

NOVEMBER 5, 2009

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The Board Meeting of the National Capital Planning Commission convened in Suite 500N, 401 9th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C., pursuant to notice at 12:30 p.m., Preston Bryant, Chairman, presiding.

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

- PRESTON BRYANT, Chairman
- HERBERT AMES, Commissioner
- ARRINGTON DIXON, Commissioner
- ELYSE GREENWALD, Commissioner
- JOHN HART, Commissioner
- DAVID LEVY, Commissioner
- MICHAEL MCGILL, Commissioner
- PETER MAY, Commissioner
- ROBERT MILLER, Commissioner
- RALPH NEWTON, Commissioner
- JENNIFER STEINGASSER, Commissioner
- STACIE TURNER, Commissioner

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STAFF PRESENT:

MARCEL ACOSTA, Executive Director
LOIS SCHIFFER, General Counsel
DEBORAH YOUNG, Secretary

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

12:36 p.m.

CHAIR BRYANT: I bring the meeting to order.

Good afternoon. Welcome to the November 5th, 2009, meeting of the National Capital Planning Commission.

If you all would rise and, Ms. Turner, would you lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance?

(PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE)

CHAIR BRYANT: The minutes will reflect that there is a quorum. So, let's call it to order and without objection, the agenda that's been advertised will govern this meeting.

[INSERT - AGENDA]

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CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Today is a special day. First, the agenda is a light one. We are fortunate, but it's also a special day so much as we welcome back our godfather who served -- who served here for eight -- eight extraordinary years. We'd like to welcome back our predecessor, John Cogbill, so that we can properly express our appreciation and gratitude for his many years of service.

And with that, I'd actually like to call Mr. Miller to the podium. Mr. Miller and Mr. Dixon are two who served Mr. Cogbill the longest. So, I'd like to turn it over to Mr. Miller.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN V. COGBILL, III

COMMISSIONER MILLER: I would like to invite John V. Cogbill, III, our former chairman of the National Capital Planning Commission to come to the podium. Commissioner Dixon from the District of Columbia.

I served as Vice Chair with John for

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the last two and a half plus years and it was really a pleasure. I'm wearing the West Point colors for you today. And your leadership and civility and service and intelligence have been really -- have been very impressive and the nation has benefitted from this service and we thank you for it.

I'd like to just read the resolution of the National Capital Planning Commission to you.

Whereas, John V. Cogbill has served with distinction as a Presidential appointee and Chairman to the National Capital Planning Commission from June 13, 2001, to September 23, 2009, as best as I can here. I asked Deborah to put this in 24 point type but,

Whereas, Mr. Cogbill has ably and professional represented the Commission before Congressional committees, Federal, local and regional governments and various planning and civic organizations such as the American

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Institute of Architects, the American Planning Association and the Federal City Council.

Whereas, during Mr. Cogbill's tenure as Chairman of the Commission, a host of major projects were approved under his leadership and guidance including Pennsylvania Avenue, in front of the White House, the National Capital Urban Design and Security Plan, renovation of the old Patent Office Building, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosive Headquarters, Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital Federal Elements, Martin Luther King National Memorial, the National Law Enforcement Museum, the Pentagon and Air Force Memorials, the St. Elizabeth and Armed Forces Retirement Home Master Plans and reimagining Washington's monumental core of framework plan for connection new destinations with the National Mall.

Whereas, several initiatives recommended and extending the legacy of old

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imaginative plan to guide America, America's Capital is a 21st Century have been realized during Mr. Cogbill's tenure including the memorials and museums mast plan, the South Capitol Street Task Force Recommendations and the Circulator transit system, and

Whereas, Mr. Cogbill will be remembered for his personal character and integrity, the respect he displayed towards his fellow commissioners, the courtesy extended to members of the public and the grace, dignity and spontaneous wit and good humor he demonstrated as he presided over meetings during which the Commission deliberated on many controversial projects.

Mr. Cogbill will also be remembered for his confidence and in and support of the staff to carry out its duties and responsibilities.

Therefore, be it resolved that members of the Commission and the staff of the

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National Capital Planning Commission expressed their sincere appreciation to John V. Cogbill, III, for his dedicated service to the Commission and to the nation's capital and wish him much success in the years ahead.

COMMISSIONER DIXON: I would just like to add as one of the senior members of the Commission, presently at least, not in age but in terms of tenure.

I also offer my congratulations to John. John is set a very significant example of thoroughness and complete involvement in the Commission's work.

I believe that probably nothing has passed this Commission while he was Chair that he didn't read cover to cover. And that's very difficult and not always expected but very, very, very, very good. And he's just a personal guy who is very, very solid. He's a West Point graduate. You all know I may have my tenure at the Air Force Academy although I

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did finally shift to the Army, got the sense to do that, John, and retired from the Army as you know so many don't.

At any rate, glad to be here on this occasion. The best to you, John. I know you're going to do great things, particularly with the new leadership in your state and we're real happy that you're there to do what you're doing.

Thank you for what you've done.

MR. COGBILL: Well, thank you. Thank you very, very, very, very much.

This is an honor and a privilege. It's an honor and a privilege to have served with all of you.

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Commission, I thank you for what you've done for me today. My fellow Commissioners let me just say how much I appreciate what you have done for the National Capital Region.

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Everyone comes to this room with purpose representing an organization. But when we come into this room we come together to work on what's important and to make decisions on behalf of a region.

While each of us wear on our sleeve that which is important to us, we never let that interfere with the decisions we made on behalf of the region. And we would discuss openly. We would discuss intelligently and we discussed with great vigor the issue before us.

But I think we always came to the good and right decision.

And I want to also say thank you for listening, for listening to each other, for listening to the community, for listening to those who came before us the respectful way, the civility that you demonstrated to each other and to the community that came before you.

It is so important in this day and

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age that we listen and we talk and we debate and we don't shout over each other and we never did that. And when the people would come to the podium I would see each of the Commissioners engaged. I would see you respond to them with questions and incorporate in many occasions their comments and concerns into what we did because you listened and you reflected the people that you represented. But you also reflected the greater good of the National Capital Region. And I appreciate that.

And to the staff, to those of you who labor every day and not just our NCPC staff, but the National Park Service, Mr. Lorenzetti and all the folks who work for our Government at the state and the Federal level.

Everything that you do, the service that you give we could not survive without it.

This country has been made what it is because of what you did. The gifts that you give of your time, your talent and your

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service. The importance of giving back to the community and realizing that there are a lot of opportunities in the civilian world where you could step aside and not bear the responsibilities that you do. Not suffer the slings and arrows of those who have criticized without having facts and that does seem to happen more and more often these days. But you stay there. You persevere and you succeed and our country is a better place for what you do.

So, I thank you for that.

For the citizens of this great region who come before us, who shared their ideas with us, whether it's the citizens committee of 100 or any of the groups that we hear from. They all spend time trying to help us make better decisions because they too care about the region.

I have been permanently and irrevocably touched by the experience I've had

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here. I have learned from it. I have learned from each of you and I very much appreciate the opportunity to have served myself.

It is a pleasure for me to be here and it is a pleasure for me to say that I have contributed a small something to our country.

Thank you.

CHAIR BRYANT: I know Mr. Ames would like to say a word or two.

COMMISSIONER AMES: It would be very unusual, John, if I didn't say anything.

You know, I want to address you from a professional as well as a personal standpoint.

From a professional standpoint when I came here I realized you or nobody else really realized what you were getting as far as me as a Commissioner. And I want to commend you on the way you've handled me although you've called me out of line and whatever several times and I deserved it. But that's

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okay. I learned from it.

You became a mentor to me on how to conduct meetings in a fair and honest way and in a calm way. I believe along with a lot of other people here are better for having served with you.

On a personal note over the last four and a half years I've gotten to know you pretty well. You know I've had some rides to Richmond before when I was going to work the races. And I thought often since you've been gone of what you really mean, not only to me but a lot of other people. And I've watched you and I've listened to you and I've followed you as to how you handle your professional life with your law firm, how you handle this Commission, but especially I've watched how you've handled your family and the situations your sons are in, your daughter. And I want to say and this is not a joke. If I had one recommendation to you for you to have something

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to do with all this extra time you're going to have now that you're not serving here, I would suggest that you write a book and that book should be about how to lead your life for others. Because I can truthfully say that I've gotten that out of you that, you know, you're big on service. It was obvious when you attended West Point. Your patriotic status today of how you feel and the things you've done and accomplished in your life. But most importantly raising a great family.

And I think you have been a model for a lot of people. And believe it or not you've given me without even directly you telling me ways to do things with my family. For that I appreciate you more than you'll ever know. I'm going to miss you. I think your position here has been turned over to capable hands and I look forward to serving with him what little time I have left.

But this is a very special touching

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moment for me and I'm a little bit surprised that I'm able to get through this without being emotional. As harsh as I seem to some people I am a very emotional person. But you've meant a lot to me personally and for that I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Thank you.

MR. ACOSTA Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the NCPC staff to thank Mr. Cogbill for his professionalism, for his courtesy, for his generosity, his spirit and for being there when we've needed him. He's always been a very supportive person in terms of our various endeavors and efforts that we try to do for the staff. And I think the staff has also learned from him in terms of his experience and his expertise. He's always been willing to share that with us and I think that's a very important part of being here. And I think we would have not been a very successful staff

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without his support.

I think a lot of the good work of the staff was due to his leadership and I'd like to thank him for that.

So, it's been a real privilege to serve with you and we wish you the very best.

Thanks so much.

CHAIR BRYANT: The Chair would entertain a motion on the resolution read by Mr. Miller. It's been moved and seconded.

All in favor of adopting the resolution?

(AYES)

CHAIR BRYANT: Welcome back, John. We're glad you're here.

Thank you.

Next on the agenda is Mr. Acosta for the Executive Director's Report.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

MR. ACOSTA: Thank you, Chairman, Bryant.

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You'll find my written report in your packet. But today I would like to focus my time today on the Building the Region Together Initiative.

As you may recall, our Commission in the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments co-sponsored an event in July with senior White House officials and senior regional officials to discuss partnership opportunities between the Federal Government and our host communities.

Since then in July our staff has worked with the COG and our sister agencies to identify proposals that build upon those discussions.

So, I would like to have Julia Costner to come to the podium to make a short presentation on the status of this initiative.

[INSERT - EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT]

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[INSERT - SUMMARY REPORT ON WORK PROGRAM
IMPLEMENTATION]

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MS. COSTNER: Thank you, Chairman Bryant and members of the Commission.

As Marcel noted today I'm going to provide an event or excuse me an update on our activities to follow up to this summer's Building the Region Together event.

NCPC co-hosted the July 20th event with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, bringing together top Administration officials, Federal and local agency representatives and regional leaders to discuss shared goals and opportunities for collaboration.

It was an honor to be joined at this event by several senior White House officials including Valerie Jarrett, Xavier Briggs and Adolfo Carrion.

Several of our Commission members attended as well as senior officials from DOT, GSA, DHS and EPA.

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In the past, the Federal Government and the region's jurisdictions have worked together on specific issues. What made this event unique is that it marked the first time that Federal agencies and Administration representatives met with representatives from across the region's localities to broadly discuss areas of interest that could be addressed holistically working across jurisdictional and issue boundaries.

Led by COG's Chair, Penny Gross, local elected leaders did a great job of communicating that they understood the challenges metropolitan areas face such as transportation and mobility, housing affordability and providing healthy sustainable communities. And that there is real collaboration in this region to address those issues.

Ms. Jarrett highlighted both the Administration's desire to work effectively

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with the Federal Government's host region and the Administration's focus on metropolitan areas. And there was a great deal of interest in the Federal Government's unique role here as the region's largest corporate citizen enlightened employer and economic driver.

The message was clear. You don't need to convince us to partner. Instead bring these creative strategies and potential solutions for the issues we both care about.

Administration representatives asked COG and NCPC staff to provide proposals for Federal and local collaborations. NCPC and COG staff have worked together to take the ideas from this event and translate them into meaningful proposals that our agencies can focus on using and leveraging our existing resources.

These draft proposals are shaped within the framework of our existing work programs with some proposals expanding

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activities that are already underway while others may be implemented over the next two years.

In your packet we provided a draft work program that spells out these specific proposal ideas. We'll be discussing their feasibility with the Office of Urban Affairs and OMB later this month.

Many of our partnership proposals are inter-related. But we've generally grouped them around three goals. Fostering regional coordination, establishing the region as a leader in sustainability and leveraging investments for community, economic and innovation development.

The first group of projects looks at regional coordination. You may recall that this summer the Commission heard about the Greater Washington 2050 Initiative. COG has been spearheading this 2050 Initiative which is establishing a comprehensive vision, shared

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goals and specific measurable benchmarks to measure regional progress.

Key to this initiative is a voluntary regional compact that will encourage jurisdictions to work towards the region's shared goals. This compact is anticipated to be signed by local jurisdictions in early 2010.

NCPC has been the lead Federal participant in this effort and will continue to work with COG, staff from other Federal agencies and the Administration to identify ways that the Federal Government may be able to participate and support this initiative.

In your packet you did receive a copy of the draft Greater Washington 2050 Plan.

Using the framework of the 2050 Initiative another proposal is to develop a high-level regional business plan using again the framework of the vision, goals and benchmarks in the 2050 Compact.

The business plan would provide a

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detailed evaluation of areas that appear ripe for cooperative action such as knowledge hubs, green energy infrastructure or work force housing. This may include developing a tool like an investment prospectus that might offer new ways for Federal actions including funding to be shaped to incentivise regional decision-making and broad systemic outcomes.

The next group of project proposals is organized around the goals of establishing the National Capital Region as a leader in sustainability.

The three project areas that we're looking at are first sustainability guidelines and tracking, consistent with several recent Executive Orders through out review of Federal development projects.

We're also considering a sustainability showcase effort that would highlight the many Federal and regional green projects that are already underway and make

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these projects visible to visitors, workers and the residents in the region.

We are already exploring the development of an eco-district, precinct scaled plan anchored by Federal facilities that would demonstrate how buildings, infrastructure and open space can function together as an environmentally low impact unit to achieve sustainability goals and reduce operating costs. With this effort we want to expand our approach to sustainability from individual green buildings and towards establishing green neighborhoods.

The final group of projects focuses on more effectively linking public investments to community, economic and innovation development. And specifically looking at opportunities to foster liveable, sustainable development around major Federal facilities that benefits both the community and the Federal Government.

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One example we would like to explore is to more fully leverage the substantial Federal investment at the new DHS Headquarters at St. Elizabeth's. Renovating this historic property to accommodate thousands of Federal workers is a very significant Federal investment. It also presents additional opportunities to work with other Federal agencies and local governments to encourage co-location of businesses, more housing and services and improved transportation options.

We see many other opportunities to explore how major investments across the region such as transit or again our investments in Federal facilities can reinforce our regional development aspirations.

Two other projects that we're looking at include building off of COG's existing transportation land use grants program and creating a new jointly administered Federal local connections program that would enable

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local jurisdictions to work with cooperating Federal partners to strengthen the liveability and transportation options in the neighborhoods around Federal facilities.

The other idea that we're working with COG on is developing an innovation cluster plan that would enable the region to better capture the economic development opportunities from Federal, university and private research activities.

We're very pleased with our ongoing work with COG and the opportunities that this regional outreach effort is providing to expand our relationship with Federal colleagues and regional stakeholders. These proposals are very much works in progress and I'd be happy to discuss these ideas in detail with any of you after the meeting or at your convenience.

COG and NCPC's staff will be working together to bring these ideas forward to other

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groups and to the Administration representatives that attended this summer's event.

We'll continue to provide the Commission with updates as we move this initiative forward.

Thank you very much.

[INSERT - REGION FORWARD]

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CHAIR BRYANT: Thank you, Ms. Acosta.

Questions for Ms. Acosta?

Very well. Thank you.

CONSENT CALENDAR

The next item on the agenda is the Consent Calendar. There are six items.

The first four are pretty much the same. I think I have to read them for the record.

The Wilbur Wright Building, installation of three telecommunication antennas, one GPS antenna, an equipment cabinet for Cricket communications.

3B, the West Heating Plant, installation of three telecommunication antennas, one GPS antenna and equipment cabinet for Cricket communications.

3C is the GSA Building on 3rd Street. Installation of three telecommunication antennas, one GPS antenna and

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equipment cabinet for Cricket communications.

And then, fourth, the Frances Perkins Building on Constitutions Avenue. Installation of three telecommunication antennas, one GPS antenna and equipment cabinet for Cricket communications.

The fifth item is the National Naval Medical Center, the Fisher Houses.

And then last is the Department of the Air Force at Andrews Air Facility in Washington, the munitions storage and maintenance complex.

Is there a motion on this Consent Agenda?

[INSERT - WILBUR WRIGHT BUILDING]

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[INSERT - WEST HEATING PLANT]

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[INSERT - GSA FACILITY]

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[INSERT - FRANCES PERKINS BUILDING]

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[INSERT - NATIONAL NAVAL MEDICAL CENTER]

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[INSERT - DEPT. OF THE AIR FORCE]

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UNIDENTIFIED PERSON: Moved, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIR BRYANT: It's been moved and seconded.

All in favor of adopting the Consent Calendar Agenda say aye.

(AYES)

CHAIR BRYANT: Opposed, no.
It's adopted.

PEDESTRIAN PYLON PANEL

Then the last item on the agenda is the Pedestrian Pylon Panel for the Wayfinding and Sign Program of the National Mall of the memorial parks.

Ms. Witherell is here and I'd like to see if Mr. May has any opening comments.

COMMISSIONER MAY: No. I'd be very happy to wait until after the presentation and would like to speak then.

CHAIR BRYANT: Okay. Good.

MS. WITHERELL: Good afternoon, Mr.

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Chairman and Commissioners.

Well, the Park Service has submitted today the final piece of -- that was deferred from the July meeting when you gave final approval for the construction/ fabrication of pylons and maps for the Wayfinding and Orientation Program on the Mall. And the Commission has seen I think at most of the meetings since the spring some aspect of this overall sign program. And just to refresh your memory, this is a program that is being funded in two parts. Half with centennial funds from the National Park Service and the other half with private money raised by the Trust for the National Mall. And the Park Service's goal is to remove all of the existing signs on the Mall to replace them with this new sign program and to have as much of it as possible, hopefully most of it in place before the Cherry Blossom Festival in this coming spring.

The last time in July, the one item

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that was deferred was the color, the panel color for the pylons. In past there had been some discussion over previous months about it.

But the precipitating event was the letter that we had just received from the Commission or Fine Arts from their action in June where they approved a nonchromatic scheme which had been play for a month or so and they specifically did not approve the four-color scheme which had been presented by the Park Service earlier in their meetings.

And as you know, this program is a comprehensive sign program for the National Mall and for East Potomac Park and is meant to incorporate the signs of the Smithsonian has on the Mall. The Architect of the Capitol and also with the DDOT signs that are off the Mall.

There are also DDOT signs on the Mall. They're on the north/south cross streets and they're also on Independence and

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Constitution. So, the system is mean to work seamlessly as possible and this is also the first time that Wayfinding has been introduced comprehensively to the Mall.

This is an earlier image that I've been using and, in fact, there is some minor adjustment about specific locations that were made this summer. But in general there are a little over 100 signs, a combination of pylons and maps. About a quarter of them are maps and they are along Madison and Jefferson, the historic original part of the Mall.

You see more of them in West Potomac Park because of the path system and also in West Potomac Park they moved to Constitution -- Constitution and Independence. And then they're around the Tidal Basin and they continue around in East Potomac Park as well.

The Park Service had planned to work with local entities on the content, in fact at the meeting with the downtown bid. But thanks

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to a lot of energy on the part of the Office of Planning put together a stakeholder group that included all of the bids and other organizations such as the Visitor's Center, Cultural Tourism, D.C. and so forth and they met with the Park Service and some others throughout the summer to continue working on the content, both of the pylon and of the map.

And I'll show you some of the changes that have occurred.

The content is specifically not before you today but a lot of the conditions of your approval prior and also the Section 106 review conditions called for a continuing consultation on content and location. And so I'll be presenting some of that today.

The big change that you're seeing on content that you didn't see before is the inclusion of text dining and shopping on all of the appropriate pylons that lead to parts of the city north and south and east and west, I

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guess, as well, with the name of the neighborhood. And then those neighborhood names have been added to the maps. This should really ease the Wayfinding on the part of the visitors to the Mall.

The other big thing that's occurred over the summer is the creation of a good quality mock-up with the monochrome grey and testing that in the field. And so most of the presentation today consist of photos that were taken during these various field checks that occurred.

So, I'm going to show you three locations where that took place and I think most of you also had the opportunity to see the actual mock-up on your way in today.

So, the first is a pylon at 7th and Madison at this corner. And just to let you know, there are two DDOT signs, one here and then one up at this intersection as you move into downtown on 7th Street. And this is the

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content for them. So, we would look at this column which is the face of the pylon that would face north and we see archives, Navy Memorial Metro and we also see Chinatown dining and shopping.

And I put the off mall content of the other two DDOT signs so the one right across the street has archives and the Metro and then the one a block north at Constitution says Downtown Navy Memorial and also has the Metro Station.

And this is what it looked like this summer when we went out to the site. And we're facing east toward the Capitol.

The fixed locations that included the formal part of the Mall and then we looked at open and then canopied sections on the Washington Monument grounds.

Here's the location looking south towards the city, southwest. Here's another view farther distant.

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Next location is at 15th and Independence and this is the content of it. This one has a Mall content because of where it's located in the city and here's the first photograph at -- here's another one showing it in relation to some of the other street furniture and signs that are there.

Here's the third one looking west.

And the fourth one, this is Andy Lewis from the D.C. Shipo's office who accompanied me on several of the site visits to test content. And also there was a condition in the 106 Review to test visibility near memorials as well.

And I like this photo in particular because it shows the signs that will be removed. Compare the newer system. It's much clearer than the current system.

Third location is just off 17th Street along the south walk to the south of the Washington Monument and the photos also show

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the World War II Memorial in the image which was important for our testing as well.

And this is the content and again in this location most of it is related to on Mall locations. You'll see book store, restaurants and refreshments on this one. Also Washington Monument tour tickets to direct visitors to where they need to buy the tours.

The north view on 17th directs people to the Ellipse and to the White House.

So, here's the photograph looking west with the World War II Memorial behind it.

A closer shot. Here's one with a little more space. And then the distant shot.

Our analysis focused on color this month and the staff has benefitted from many conversations with a full range of people over the summer. Of course with Commissioners, many of you expressed your views. Other staff here, there's been a very lively discussion.

Also with Park Service the Office of

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Planning stakeholders, Section 106, Consulting Parties. I also went out to the Mall quite a bit during the mock-ups. We were interested in how many tourists came up to talk to us and ask about it. And also I spent quite a bit of time July 4th weekend going out on the Mall and talking with various people who were visiting from out of town as well as people who were from this area.

And I was struck by the range of opinions about the color and its meaning and its utility for the overall Wayfinding Program as well as specifically for these pylons. And people also commented on the pictograms and on the leveraging which they found to be very clear and understandable.

Staff prefers the all grey scheme for the Mall. Judging on ascetic grounds, it seems more formal and more architectural, a little less urban. Many parts of the Mall there's not a lot of color distraction and so

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the monochrome color of grey shows up very well. It's visible enough but it doesn't draw the eye unnecessarily, especially in the area of memorials but also in the areas where you have open space, the long views.

We had questions of the rationale for the color. Very early on we met with the Park Service starting last January. We were concerned a little bit about some of the jurisdictional questions that had arisen in recent years, particularly between the Smithsonian and the Park Service and how that was characterized in both the pylons and the maps.

And we also noticed, although there were lots of humorous jokes about how people wanted to see the rest room right away if they needed it. It did sort of the ancillary functions of the Mall did tend to pop and some of the pylons in relation to the major memorials as well.

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The color coding was recognizable and interesting to some people. Other people didn't understand it or didn't think that it was particularly relevant or compelling. And I got a range of use from people.

Some people wanted every -- one gentleman in particular wanted every memorial distinguished by its own separate color. You know, we had a whole range from people who knew and were interested and people who didn't read it or didn't process information that way.

So, the big test was to go out in the field and see if the grey -- see if the grey monochrome scheme actually worked and so those were the photos that were taken this summer. And we were very pleased to see that we thought the color or the contrast between the white lettering and pictograms and the grey color worked very well. In fact, better than some of the colors in particular. The yellowish gold for the Smithsonian.

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In addition, it was my view that the uniformity of the background actually helped the pictograms and the lettering read better. And also it looked very handsome with the granite base which is the dark ebony granite.

In addition, the staff members -- excuse me, the Commissioners points out at our May site visit that the colors of the tile or the way the destinations were coded did not match in many cases the colors depicted on the map. And so for those who would be looking for that kind of coordination it didn't exist.

So, for those reasons, the Park Service has affirmatively submitted the grey scheme this month for your review and the staff recommends approval of it.

I do want to describe some of the changes that have taken place with the map art over the past couple of months thanks to a lot of consultation on the part of many people.

There were 39 off Mall destinations,

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not counting the Metro Stations and split about half between Federal and non-Federal using those terms loosely. Some of the Federal locations include the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, certainly the Capitol. The Kennedy Center is shown by an arrow off in this direction.

Off Mall, Smithsonian Museum such as the Portrait Gallery and non-Federal entities would include the National Museum of Women in the Arts Museum, Spy Museum and so forth.

Also you'll note the neighborhoods and this has been added thanks to the consultation that has occurred this summer. So, those are the six neighborhoods.

The twelve pylons that say Dining and Shopping. It's always in conjunction with the neighborhood name. So, for example, the pylon at 23rd and Constitution says Foggy Bottom Dining and Shopping.

There are several Capitol Hill

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Dining and Shopping pylons to the northeast and southeast corners of the Mall. You saw here that this one says Chinatown. The one on 9th says Penn Quarters. The other ones say downtown and the one for the Southwest Waterfront is at 7th Street and this location going southward.

There will be a pylon. It wasn't shown on our earlier map. There will be a pylon here, the site of the future African/American Museum of History and Culture and that's an arrangement that won't be worked out for several years. And that also says Pennsylvania Avenue on it. Also, the D.C. Visitor's Center is specifically called that on one of the pylons.

The situation with the Circulator is the same as it was at the July meeting. The Circulator route is not shown on the map. The tourmobile and Metro Stations are shown on the map.

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I'll just remind you that the Park Service is working now on making a decision about its transportation plan and they do anticipate that that will come out before the end of this calendar year.

For conformance, the proposed project is not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital since it will improve efficiency and visitor experience as well as the appearance and image of the National Mall and the monumental core. And applicable policies are found in the preservation and historic features element and also in the transportation element.

The Comprehensive Wayfinding and Sign Program to appear the appearance of and visitor experience in the Mall is included and all alternatives in the National Mall Plan which is currently in development.

The Park Service earlier determined that the installation was categorically

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excluded under its regulations and the Park Service also used a categorical exclusion.

For the Section 106 Review, the D.C. Shipo determined no adverse effects back in March with the condition that the Park Service continue to consult with the staff on the citing of signs, especially near major memorials and that has occurred. And NCPC concurred with the determination as well with the same condition and so review and consultation have been concluded.

And, therefore, it's the Executive Director's recommendation that the Commission commend the Park Service for proposing a comprehensive sign program that includes Wayfinding, the sign function that had not heretofore been implemented on the Mall and approves the monochrome color scheme for the pylons.

We also note that the content on location of the pylon panels and masses

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developed by the National Park Service in consultation with staff, D.C. Office of Planning, stakeholders and consulting parties according to earlier conditions placed on the sign program by the Commission and by the D.C. Shipo.

The Commission of Fine Arts approves the monochrome grey panel scheme for the pylons, characterizing it as dignified, elegant and timeless and did not approve the four-color panel scheme.

CHAIR BRYANT: Did they specifically say why? Zero in on four colors and say why?

MS. WITHERELL: Yes.

CHAIR BRYANT: There is a flip side of what they say there but --

MS. WITHERELL: Oh, why they did not approve the four color?

CHAIR BRYANT: Yes. Yes.

MS. WITHERELL: Yes. They -- they were not happy with the appearance of it. They

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thought it had a checkerboard appearance. They used the word "commercial" in talking about it.

They didn't think it was attractive with the base. They were concerned -- one of the points that I mentioned that things such as rest rooms or book stores vis-a-vis the small number of them over on the pylons actually was emphasized inadvertently. They were concerned with the use of blue or a distinction with off-Mall locations because they felt the point of the framework plan was to have less -- less of a division between on-Mall and off-Mall locations.

And they spoke very strongly about the esthetics superiority of the overall grey scheme as being timeless for the Mall.

One of the other -- the jurisdictional issue also has come up repeatedly at meetings. And, in fact, the selection of the grey in addition to any esthetics characteristics for it is that it

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doesn't represent any particular entity that's on the Mall. So, it's the opposite of the original intention to sort and part by jurisdiction or by entity.

The -- just a reminder to Commissioners that the Commission has already approved the fabrication/installation of the pedestrian guide pylons and the maps, although not the tiles which will move forward if you give a positive vote. And as well as the insulation, the operation signs on the National Mall which the Commission reviewed and approved in the spring.

There is a third component to the sign program which is the National Park Service has not yet submitted monument identification signs and these will be specific signs in front of monuments and memorials to identify for people who are unfamiliar with them.

And finally we advised the Park Service that at the July 9th, 2009, meeting the

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Commission recommended that the D.C. Circulator's national mall routes be included in the sign program.

And that concludes this presentation. I'd be happy to answer any questions and the Park Service is here as well -- is here to answer questions.

[INSERT - PEDESTRIAN PYLON]

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CHAIR BRYANT: Questions for Ms. Witherell?

COMMISSIONER TURNER: Question on the research.

While I can see the benefit of the simplicity of the monochrome grey, and that the color panel is an extrained departure from that.

Did you look at any other ways to differentiate between the actual monument and sites and the ancillary functions such as the rest room and food that -- that people may want to see visibly? So, did you investigate different color print just for that that could be uniform or were there other things that were explored just besides the color block?

MS. WITHERELL: I think -- I think the lettering. I see Jennifer nodding her head. The versions I saw always had white text and I don't know if you want to add anything further. We looked at various combinations

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between four color and one color over the summer as well and whether to pick them out. But I always saw them distinguished by background color.

Did you look at pictograms as well?

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

We looked at a lot of different options. We tried two colors, three colors. We tried different combinations of colors and different combinations of colors and the fonts.

And it got a little confusing when you started playing with the font color at a distance. And once we got out of the multi-color, a lot of the need -- it kind of disappeared.

Originally we started this with the idea of different colors so the tourists would be trained. You see blue, you think this. You see green, you think that. In the end, we think the monochromatic. Our visitor is clever

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enough. He'll still get the information. It might take an extra half second but the advantage of the monochromatic for us is it does tend to disappear more in the landscape also.

And on the Mall itself, this is a valuable item for us.

CHAIR BRYANT: Mr. May.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Yes. I don't so much have questions, but I just wanted to follow up on the excellent presentation with a few comments on behalf of the Park Service.

First of all, I want to thank Nancy for all the hard work that she's done and the rest of the staff at NCPC not just for the presentation but all of the work in planning this sign program. She's been joined at the hip with our staff at the National Mall to try to figure out the right decisions all through this process. And it's been a long process. It's been quite a saga.

This project was originally funded

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through the centennial program which is a special program that was set up in the Park Service. We actually had to compete for this money against other parks to be able to fund the project and we were very pleased when we got the money to be able to do this because it's going to have a very significant impact for the Mall.

Through the process of the design the many reviews that we've had with this Commission and with the Commission of Fine Arts, the design of the whole program has evolved and improved I think significantly. Some people think I'm crazy for saying this but I always have argued with people when they balk at the complications of doing all these Commission reviews, whether they're, you know, required or not. Every project gets better when it goes through this review process. And I think frankly that the fact that we have to go through two Commissions I think is actually

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helpful. Because you learn things along the way that you wouldn't have expected and I think that's certainly the case here. The design of the pylons, the base change, the height was reduced, the placement was very carefully discussed and modified and also through this process we did a lot of work with the Office of Planning to try to make improvements to the system so that it worked not just for the Park Service's objectives but for the objectives of the city. And I want to thank the Office of Planning for everything that they did as well.

In the course of this back and forth in the design, we really did, I think, come up with an unexpected result.

When we submitted the design in July for the Commission of Fine Arts review and this Commission's review, when the Commission of Fine Arts came down very strongly on the side of monochrome and for the reasons that Nancy stated that it was dignified and elegant and

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had that permanent character of the Mall. We understood all that and agree with it in large part, but we still believe that at that point that color was very important.

So, when we -- when the review came before this Commission, we worked with the staff to try to leave the door open for that decision to be made in the future because we though -- we still wanted to discuss this. We weren't ready to simply accept that from the Commission of Fine Arts.

But I think that what happened since then in looking at this more carefully is that we became convinced that actually the grey scheme is superior for, I think, substantial reasons.

First of all, I think the contrast and the clarity of these symbols and text is-- is clearer with the monochromatic scheme than it is with the other schemes that where the color scheme is not quite as dark. And I think

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that that was very apparent in the photographs that we saw in the presentation. Even from a distance you could really pick out the symbols and see them very clearly.

But also when we got into the inner aspects of where the different colored signs would go on the pylons and tried to, you know, actually place them and say okay. This is where the blue ones will go and they will point you in this direction or that direction or what have you. What we wound up with and I think it kind of shoed up in the analysis slide that nancy showed. Is that there was not that -- we didn't have very many circumstance where we had multiple colors on a single face of a pylon. You might wind up with sort of a monochromatic blue because they're all pointing you north towards shopping and the -- dining, those districts. Or they were all brown because they're all heading all towards the memorials and so it really didn't give you that layer of

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sorting that you might have expected or at least what we expected when we first looked at it.

We also think that the attempt at classifying different types of attractions or facilities kind of got muddied in the process as well. And so you know why would the Smithsonian museum that's right in front of you get the tan colored tile but the museum which is two blocks north get a blue tile? So, those sorts of distinctions didn't really make sense.

And so I think it's not -- we're not coming back here for asking this Commission to simply accept the judgment of the Commission of Fine Arts. This is what we really think is the superior scheme.

And with that I would move that we adopt the Executive Director's recommendation.

CHAIR BRYANT: It's been moved and seconded that we adopt the --

COMMISSIONER STEINGASSER: I had

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some questions of the staff.

CHAIR BRYANT: Hang on just a second. It's been moved and seconded. that we accept Executive Director's report for discussion -- well, it's on the table so go ahead.

COMMISSIONER STEINGASSER: I was just wondering. When the Commission advised of the D.C. Circulator route how -- what are our next steps on that? How will the Commission follow up on whether these Circulator signs get added to the pylons?

MR. LORENZETTI: My sense is that this is a continuing discussion with the Park Service. The next step is for the Park Service to release its transportation plan and to provide an update on its transit and interpreted tour component. And the Park Service has stated at previous meetings that both the maps and the pylons would be updated as appropriate and our designs changed out.

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COMMISSIONER STEINGASSER: Okay.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Can I add one thing on the Circulator point which is that we -- in another session the Park Service agreed to make Circulator maps available at our information desks and such and we have requested that information from the Circulator.

I don't know that it's actually been executed yet, but we plan to make that information available and we're taking steps in that direction.

COMMISSIONER STEINGASSER: Is it your sense that the Park Service will put the Circulator panels on the sign? On the pylons?

That's what I'm trying to get at. We as a Commission has advised NPS but it's not a condition of the approval. So, how does that -- how does that advice translate into action? At what point will the Commission have an opportunity --

COMMISSIONER MAY: I think that

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further action on the Circulator front will result from the decisionmaking on the transportation EA which again will be issued before the end of the year, we hope. And we'll be able to move forward in the direction of a new circulation or a new transportation system for the Mall and we will be able to eliminate some of this conflict that we have between our concession arrangement and the Circulator. And that's what's --

COMMISSIONER STEINGASSER: That's one thing that I really want to make clear is that the Circulator is public transit. It is not a concession tour and that's what I was noticing. The Metro is noted on here which is also public transit.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Right. We understand that and we acknowledge that.

COMMISSIONER STEINGASSER: So, there will be a second bite at this issue. Is that what I'm hearing?

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COMMISSIONER MAY: There is going to be significant discussion of the transportation system -- the new system when it gets put in place and I think that we'll wind up with -- well, I don't know what the whole process will be when that occurs because I'm not sure what the decision is at this moment myself. But I think there's going to be further opportunity to discuss this and ultimately our objective is to -- is common with yours. We want people to know about their transportation options and we want to encourage people to use public transit through the Mall area.

COMMISSIONER STEINGASSER: Okay.
Thank you very much.

CHAIR BRYANT: Mr. Miller, Mr. Ames have comments on this and then I'll go to Mr. -
-

Mr. Miller.

COMMISSIONER MILLER: I'm glad that this screen stayed up so that we could

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emphasize the Commission's reiteration of its recommendation that the Circulator bus routes be included in the sign program and our disappointment that they are currently not included.

I just wanted to just for the record make just a few points about the Circulator bus route -- bus service which many of you are aware of but just for the record.

It was launched in July 2005 and has transported more than 8 million workers, residents and visitors conveniently and inexpensively around central Washington since its inception.

The Circulator has five routes connecting through the District's commercial core including the Smithsonian, National Gallery of Art route which travels around the National Mall and has stops providing convening access to many of the monuments and museums.

The Mall route carried an average of

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more than 800 residents and visitors per weekend during this past summer of 2009. However, the lack of signage on the mall and the fact that the stops are technically off the internal streets of the Mall because the Park Service doesn't permit them to go on those streets, has made the Mall route the poorest performing in the system.

The District has in fact discontinued service on this route temporarily until the spring. But we believe that the closer coordination and supportive signage would greatly boost route ridership and give Mall visitors the basic information that they need to conveniently move around the Mall.

I just wanted to put that on the record, Mr. Chairman. I thank you for that opportunity.

CHAIR BRYANT: Mr. Miller. Mr. Ames.

COMMISSIONER AMES: Ms. Steingasser,

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thank you first of all for bringing that back up. We had quite a discussion about that before.

Let me go right to the point. The point is that the Park Service has a contract with a provider. It is a firm contract. The people at the Park Service are not the ones that didn't do it. It's got a crazy out to get out of it because they have to pay a lot of money to get out of it. And we expressed in a very firm voice that we wanted the Circulator system included in that. This Commission played a part in the establishment of the Circulator system.

I think the Park Service heard loud and clear that when they are in a position which they are not right now to include that signage program, I would be awfully surprised if they were not, you know, inclined to do that.

I think they recognize it as a small

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-- one of the things that came up with us is the cost of taking the tourmobile versus the Circulator is a lot different. But we also have to understand that you have a private firm doing the tourmobile service and it has been renewed like four years or something in a row because the Park Service hasn't come up with a better system. But I think I heard the last time they were here that you're looking for a better system and warned it would not restrict the Circulator system from being able to come through.

So, does that kind of clear it up a little bit. I mean, there's a little bit more to it than just --

COMMISSIONER STEINGASSER: Well, I understand. Make sure it's still on the record.

COMMISSIONER AMES: Well, let me say this. I was pretty boisterous about it before and I've laid low on it now because it was

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explained to me there is not a whole lot they can do about it. But rest assured if I'm still here they'll hear about it again.

COMMISSIONER STEINGASSER: Thank you for that.

Thanks.

CHAIR BRYANT: Mr. Newton.

COMMISSIONER NEWTON: Echo and reinforce the initial comments of Mr. May with the commendation for the staff with their thorough analysis of this -- of this study.

Also, commend the Park Service for generating this project. The signage on the mall has had gaps and has been inconsistent in the past and this is a wonderful way to provide a functional, attractive system that does not in any way detract from the decorum of the special place.

My comments are mostly in the area of the illities, I call them. I was going to apologize. Thirty of my forth years in Federal

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service has been as operations and maintenance so I'm life cycle focused. But I withdraw that apology. I'm unapologetic about having that perspective. Focus on the maintainability, sustainability, accessibility, that type of thing.

From a life cycle perspective, some of the things I would be interested in. I have learned how insidious water is over the years. Water is our enemy. I assume that this design of these pylons have things like that would prevent water intrusion. For example, a top cap that's sloped and doesn't allow water to intrude behind the panels, if that's correct.

I noticed in one of the details it talks about a hardware fastening system. Is there some way to -- because obviously these panels will be changed out from time to time. Take that as a yes.

COMMISSIONER MAY: We may want to have the Park staff give you an affirmative

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yesses on these.

COMMISSIONER NEWTON: Good, thank you.

MR. LORENZETTI: I can say yes on the microphone.

COMMISSIONER NEWTON: Good.

MR. LORENZETTI: Yes to both of those so far.

COMMISSIONER NEWTON: Understand.

Lighting. There's no lighting required. No up lighting. No --

MR. LORENZETTI: We tried to put them in place --

COMMISSIONER NEWTON: Very good.

MR. LORENZETTI: -- where the ambient lighting for street.

COMMISSIONER NEWTON: All right.

It appeared that from the photos in the report, pages 6, 7 and 8 those were all the large, the 9 foot, 2 pylons at the major sidewalk and road intersections as opposed to

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the smaller 5 foot 6.

MR. LORENZETTI: Yes.

COMMISSIONER NEWTON: Okay. Good.
All right.

Is this a commercially available pylon system? Sometimes we get in the business of having something that's custom fabricated that's difficult to repair and maintain and find replacement parts?

COMMISSIONER NEWTON: It's custom design because of where it's going. But we are getting extra pieces.

COMMISSIONER NEWTON: Okay.

One of the lessons learned at the Pentagon was to buy the signed lettering system so that you have -- for the templates would use that as a --

MR. LORENZETTI: Yes.

COMMISSIONER NEWTON: -- as an advisory. Okay.

Also, reiterate the importance of

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adding the Circulator as soon as you're contractually able to do that. We implemented a Circulator at the Pentagon. It was very successful once we implemented it and provided the proper signage.

Just to reinforce. The signage will include dining and shopping, Metros, rest rooms, museums, that kind of thing.

MR. LORENZETTI: Yes.

COMMISSIONER NEWTON: But no commercial activities. For example, we don't anticipate a sign that would direct you to the nearest McCormick & Schmidt's for seafood or anything like that?

MR. LORENZETTI: No.

COMMISSIONER NEWTON: And in the future no commercialization of this system in that commercial ventures would not be able to rent panels and advertise there commercially?

MR. LORENZETTI: Definitely not.

COMMISSIONER NEWTON: Very good.

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Appreciate that.

Rough, what's your government estimate this time for the -- 100 signs? Is that --

MR. LORENZETTI: For the entire project --

COMMISSIONER NEWTON: Ballpark?

MR. LORENZETTI: -- I think we're at 1.9 million.

COMMISSIONER NEWTON: 1.9.

All right. That concludes my questions.

Thank you.

CHAIR BRYANT: Mr. Hart, did you have --

COMMISSIONER HART: I think that while my personal preference was for the multi-colored signs, the presentation and the rationale that's has been presented here makes me willing to accept this and more forward. And I really applaud the Park Service for

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coming up with a comprehensive approach to signage in the Mall. It's a big improvement.

Thank you.

CHAIR BRYANT: Thank you.

Ms. Greenwald?

COMMISSIONER GREENWALD: Mr. Chairman, if I could just add one comment for the record.

We did double check with the Smithsonian and they accepted the loss of their color and directed the Park Service to proceed. They were concerned primarily with the pictograms and they were pleased with those.

VOTE ON EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

CHAIR BRYANT: Further discussion?

Hearing none, it's been moved and seconded that we accept the Executive Director report of this item.

All in favor say aye.

(AYES)

CHAIR BRYANT: Opposed, no.

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The ayes have it.

I think that is all that is on our agenda today.

Are there any other items from Commission members to be brought up?

Hearing none, the Commission will rise.

(Whereupon, the above matter was concluded at 1:39 p.m.)

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