

NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION

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COMMISSION MEETING

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OPEN SESSION

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THURSDAY,
MARCH 3, 2011

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The meeting convened in Room 5115, Suite 500, 401 9th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20004, at 12:30 p.m., L. Preston Bryant, Jr., Chairman, presiding.

NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERSPRESENT:

L. PRESTON BRYANT, JR., Chairman, Presidential Appointee
 HOWARD A. DENIS, U.S. House of Representatives
 ELYSE GREENWALD, U.S. Senate
 JOHN M. HART, Presidential Appointee
 PETER MAY, Department of the Interior
 ROBERT E. MILLER, Mayoral Appointee
 BRADLEY PROVANCHA, Department of Defense
 HARRIET TREGONING, Office of the Mayor of the District of Columbia
 MEGAN VAHEY, Office of the Chairman of the D.C. City Council
 MINA WRIGHT, General Services Administration

NCPC STAFF PRESENT:

MARCEL C. ACOSTA, Executive Director
 ANNE SCHUYLER, General Counsel
 DEBORAH B. YOUNG, Secretary to the Commission

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

12:35 p.m.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Good Afternoon.
Let's call the meeting to order. Welcome to
the National Capital Planning Commission's
March 3rd, 2011 meeting.

Would you all please stand and
join me in the Pledge of Allegiance?

(Whereupon, the pledge of
allegiance was recited.)

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: We do have a
quorum. And so, without objection I would
like to proceed with the agenda that has been
advertised.

[INSERT - AGENDA]

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REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: And Item 1 on the agenda is a report of the Chairman. And I would have two items to report.

The first is on the George C. Marshall Visitors Program. A few months ago I was invited to participate in the 2011 George C. Marshall Visitors Program to Austria.

This invitation came from the Austrian Ambassador to the U.S. on behalf of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Austrian Trade Commission.

The program this year was to focus on energy efficiency technologies in buildings. And so, it was especially relevant to a lot of the work we do. And much of it was centered on - much of the discussion we had was centered on the President's Executive Order in terms of energy efficiencies.

I did travel to Austria February 12 to 19, and I was part of a ten-person delegation.

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Others included Representatives from the State Department, the Department of Energy, the California, Massachusetts and New York State energy departments, Chicago's Deputy Commissioner for the Environment, an official from the U.S. Green Building Council and a researcher from the University of Minnesota. So, it was a very broad delegation of largely federal, state and local representatives.

I learned a great deal, and I've shared some of what I learned with staff members, and I look forward to sharing more.

Second, I also want to thank my fellow commissioners for participating in yesterday's 2011 NCPC retreat.

It was a full day. It was a chance to look at our past year's successes and challenges, our current processes and many of the projects and opportunities and challenges that will face us in the coming year.

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We had a good deal of productive discussion, and I look forward to working with commission members and staff to contemplate moving forward on some of the items that we discussed yesterday.

That ends the Chair's report. And if there are no questions, I will turn to Agenda Item Number 2, which is the Report of the Executive Director, Mr. Acosta.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MR. ACOSTA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and good afternoon. I have two items that I'd like to call to the Commission's attention. You also have a written report in front of you.

On February 17th, more than 65 members of the public attended a Southwest Eco-District public scoping meeting hosted by NCPC and the District Office of Planning.

At that meeting, staff briefed the public on the project scope and provided an overview of key findings from our inventory of

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existing conditions.

We also had an open house before and after the meeting to work directly with the public to hear their ideas, comments and concerns.

The materials that were shared at the public meeting are now posted on the NCPC website, and we are now taking comments, public comments, on this phase of our work through April 4th.

The public is encouraged to post their comments, ideas, sketches, photos and even videos to our new interactive public comment forum web page.

Project news, meeting materials and links to our informational videos and public comment web page on the Southwest Eco-District can be found on our website.

In addition, the next Southwest Eco-District Task Force meeting is scheduled for March 10th from ten o'clock to noon.

At this meeting, the task force

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will review key findings from our existing conditions inventory, and also we'll begin discussing ideas, concepts and assumptions that will be used to form the range of development scenarios that we'll use to evaluate concepts later on in the project.

Finally, you'll see in front of you an invitation. It says "Meet RIC." Actually, as part of our ongoing speaker series, NCPC will bring together regional economic development experts and fellow agency leaders on the evening of March 29th at 6:30 p.m. to discuss Regional Innovation Clusters.

Regional Innovation Clusters are geographic concentrations of firms and industries that do business with each other and have common needs for talent, technology and infrastructure.

At this meeting, panelists will discuss how RICs are spurring regional economic growth and the opportunities presented by the new Department of Homeland

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Security headquarters at the St. Elizabeth's
Campus in southeast D.C.

The event will take place at the
Naval Heritage Center's Burke Theater at 701
Pennsylvania Avenue.

And with that, Mr. Chairman, that
concludes my presentation.

[INSERT - REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR]

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CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Thank you, Mr. Acosta.

I would encourage Commission members to consider attending this speaker series meeting. This one is concentrated on DHS.

We are working in partnership not only with DHS, but the Department of Commerce and their economic development agencies. So, this is a very good initiative I hope you will consider attending.

Agenda Item Number 3 is the legislative update. Ms. Schuyler.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

MS. SCHUYLER: I have nothing to report. I believe the Hill's been occupied on appropriations issues.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Indeed. And Agenda Item Number 4 is the Consent Calendar, and we have four items on the Consent Calendar.

CONSENT CALENDAR

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CHAIRMAN BRYANT: 4A is the West Potomac Park levy system improvements on the National Mall.

Project 4B is the Beaver Valley pathways improvements at the National Zoo.

4C is the new administration building and parking garage for the Office of the Chief of the Army Reserve North Post at Fort Belvoir.

And 4D is the new administration building and parking garage for the U.S. Army Legal Services Administration and Army Audit Agency.

Is there any questions on any item on the Consent Calendar?

Is there a motion to approve the items on the Consent Calendar?

COMMISSIONER HART: Motion to approve.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: It's been moved and -

COMMISSIONER MAY: Second.

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CHAIRMAN BRYANT: - seconded.

All in favor say "aye."

(Chorus of ayes.)

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Opposed, no?

The Consent Calendar is approved.

[INSERT - WEST POTOMAC PART LEVEE SYSTEM]

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[INSERT - SMITHSONIAN NATIONAL ZOOLOGICAL
PARK]

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[INSERT - FT. BELVOIR, NORTH POST]

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[INSERT - FT. BELVOIR, SOUTH POST]

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ACTION ITEMS

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Agenda Item Number 5A is the Pentagon Corridors 2 and 3 pedestrian screening facilities.

And from the staff, we have Mr. Hart.

ACTION ITEM NO. 5A

**PENTAGON RESERVATION, ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA -
PENTAGON CORRIDORS 2 and 3 PEDESTRIAN
SCREENING FACILITIES**

MR. HART: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman, and members of the Commission.

This proposal submitted by the Washington Headquarter Services is for the pedestrian screening facilities at Corridors 2 and 3 at the Pentagon reservation. And this is located in Arlington, Virginia.

While we are recommending approval of this project, we wanted to highlight a successful coordination process that included DoD, NCPC, CFA staff that have led to this approval.

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The security upgrades proposed in this project are part of a larger Pentagon Sentry Program which includes developing permanent upgrades for security at several sites in the Pentagon for both vehicular, as you see here with the black dots, and pedestrian screening facilities. And the pedestrian ones are the red dots.

The two projects that are before us today are Corridors 2 and 3, and they're located in the dotted area on this slide. The other projects will be submitted to the Commission for approval in the future.

I'm showing Corridor 2 specifically here partially because this is a - Corridors 2 and 3 are going to be really the same project and it's easier to see this project with a little more detail here, and I really didn't want to give a lot of duplication.

As you can see in this photo, the existing temporary security facility is

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located in the center of the image. It is a facility that was actually approved by the Commission as a temporary screening facility in 2007, and it's basically a metal shed.

And the employees will walk through the building before they are - and screened - and be screened before they actually get into the Pentagon itself.

There is a metal fence to the right of the screening facility to allow for controlling the access for this corridor.

This is just to give you a bird's eye view of the screening facility itself. It's located on a bridge that connects Corridor 2, which is here in the Pentagon on the upper right-hand part of the slide, with the employee parking area which is down here in the bottom left portion of the slide.

So, employees will walk up a set of stairs, and then across the bridge into the Pentagon first stopping at the screening facility.

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And, again, you can see that this is, you know, a small building, and then the fence that's located kind of toward the rear of the building.

When the Washington Headquarter Services met with NCPC and CFA staff, they submitted this early concept for the design. And this was supposed to be the permanent facility that they were showing us.

And what they had included was reusing the existing screening facility, and then adding onto that employee turnstiles, as well as the metal entry gate to that really using a lot of materials that are not seen with the Pentagon building.

After a site visit and several meetings, we raised concerns about the Virginia SHPO, the Virginia State Historic Preservation Office, that they may find that this has an adverse effect on the historic Pentagon building because it didn't really use the same materials as found at the Pentagon,

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and didn't look much better, really, than the temporary facility that's currently on the site.

We suggested that the Washington Headquarter Services simplify the design and use more materials that are really at the Pentagon itself to help to bring a little bit more cohesion to the design and make it look more within its setting.

The Washington Headquarter Services used these comments to refine their design and they've now submitted their final proposal which you'll see here.

This drawing shows several elements. The entry portal, much more significant-looking and it's got much more permanence, the employee turnstiles and the screening area located kind of toward the rear of the facility connected together with a shallow, curved roof for giving continuity and cohesion to the design.

And this is just an image - two

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images, I guess, looking at the existing condition versus the proposed design. And the existing condition is fairly cluttered-looking. This is much more simple-looking and also in keeping with the Pentagon architecture that is here.

The new structure will be clad with cast stone that will be colored to match the cladding of the Pentagon, which is actually limestone.

CFA has reviewed the project and supports the design. And they reviewed it as a concept and they are delegating their approval for the final design to their staff.

The Virginia State Historic Preservation Office, or SHPO, has reviewed the design as well and has found that there is no adverse affect to the Pentagon building.

The simple symmetric design and the use of similar building materials helped the Virginia SHPO to make that determination.

We wanted to say that we

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appreciated the cooperation and coordination that we experience throughout this process and hope to work with the DoD more with projects at the Pentagon in the future.

And with that, the Executive Director recommends that the Commission approve the preliminary and final site and building plans for Corridor 2 and 3 pedestrian screening facilities, commend the applicant for developing entrance screening facilities that respect and complement the historic nature of the Pentagon, incorporate state-of-the-art screening technology and allow for employees to efficiently enter and exit the building, and finally find that through the consultation with NCPC and CFA, the design for the Corridors 2 and 3 pedestrian screening facilities have improved, and appreciates the applicant's willingness to address concerns raised over the past few months.

With that, that concludes our presentation and I'd be happy to answer any

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questions.

[INSERT - PENTAGON RESERVATION]

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CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Thank you, Mr. Hart. Are there comments or questions on this item?

Mr. May.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Is it possible to bring up the aerial photo of the existing condition? That one, yes.

Just out of curiosity, I don't know, it's a four wide and then, I don't know, 12 wide or more? Goes on forever, it seems. Those are temporary buildings.

Do you know what they're for and how long they'll be there?

MR. HART: We've been told that they are part of the Pentagon renovation.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Is it swing space or is it actually offices for the renovation?

MR. HART: I think I'd ask the Pentagon folks to give a little bit more detail on there.

COMMISSIONER MAY: That's okay.

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I'm just -

MR. HART: As far as - the understanding was that it was swing space for it.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Not there anymore?

(Off-mic comments.)

COMMISSIONER MAY: Oh, they're being torn down. Okay.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: I can address part of that. This was what we called the Concourse 2.

When we renovated a portion of the Pentagon and we had to relocate some concessions and some retail operations, we put them out here. Those buildings no longer exist.

That's the short answer.

COMMISSIONER MAY: That's good. Thanks. That's fine. I was just curious about what it was and how long it was going to be there and all that sort of stuff, because

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it obviously doesn't quite fit with the setting.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: Like many things at the Pentagon, I was going to say ugly, but functional. Austere, but adequate, is the terminology. Austere, but adequate.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Other questions or comments? No?

CHAIRMAN PROVANCHA: Appreciate Mr. Hart's characterization of the good collaboration. The team at the Pentagon has been accepting and receptive and responsive to the inputs of Mr. Hart and his team. And I think that's reflected in the final design.

I only take mild exception to the characterization of the existing facility as "a shed." It is a temporary pre-engineered building painted to match the exterior of the building.

COMMISSIONER MAY: If you need advice on temporary buildings, you can turn to your colleague on the right.

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COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: We also have a lot of experience with temporary buildings that stay and so forth.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Thought I would get to it before Mr. Hart did.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: Appreciate the staff working closely with us.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Other questions or comments?

Hearing none, Mr. Provancha, do you have a motion on this item?

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: I think it's a foregone conclusion my motion would be placed to accept the recommendations of the Executive Director -

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: The EDR has been moved and seconded - or has been moved.

Is there a second?

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: Second.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: It's been moved and seconded. All in favor say "aye."

(Chorus of ayes.)

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CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Opposed, no?

Thank you. The motion passes.

Item 5B is the Child Development Center at the U.S. Marine Corps base in Quantico.

Mr. Weil.

ACTION ITEM NO. 5B

**UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS, QUANTICO - CHILD
DEVELOPMENT CENTER**

MR. WEIL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, member of the Commission.

This is a project submitted by the United States Department of the Navy for preliminary and final approval. It's for a Child Development Center and roadway realignment at the Marine Corps Base Quantico.

Quantico is located about approximately 35 miles to the south of the District along I-95. The installation is divided into two sections.

The portion of the base located to the west of 95 is known as west side. The

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portion of the base located to the east of 95 is known as main side. The project site is located on the main side portion of the base.

Here's a closeup of the main side.

As you will note, a lot of the administrative development located on the base is centered around a core area located close to the Potomac River.

There are two main roadways that provide access between the main side core area and the I-95 corridor. One roadway is Fuller Road, which is accessed by the main gate. And the second road is called Russell Road, which is accessed by the back gate - excuse me, the south gate and also known as the back gate.

As you will note, the project location is located very close to Russell Road.

This is an existing condition air photo. The yellow line shows the project area, and it's located directly adjacent to a residential subdivision called Layman Park,

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and also some commercial development which includes a commissary/post exchange building, a mini-mart and restaurant.

The project area is also located next to an intersection with Russell Road and Purvis Road, which is a three-way intersection.

This shows the project alignment.

As you can see, this is the proposed Child Development Center building. And you can see the proposed roadway realignment for Purvis Road.

Right today, this is the existing alignment. And the proposal is to realign Purvis Road so that it swings to the east south of the CDC building, and reconnects with Russell Road a little further to the east than the existing intersection.

As part of this project, direct access from Purvis Road to Russell Road in this location will be blocked off. However, there will still be access provided to the

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adjacent commercial parking area through another driveway on the realigned portion of Russell Road.

So, this shows a closeup of the project site. Here is the proposed CDC building.

We have an emergency access delivery driveway that will be located to the west of the building. And here is a proposed 87-space parking lot.

There are two stormwater management ponds, and you can note that the parking will be accessible in two locations off of Purvis Road.

So, this shows the proposed Child Development Center. It's approximately 32,000 square feet. Single story. It will house 20 classrooms divided between two different wings.

And there is a main lobby, an administrative space section of the building that separates the two wings. The building

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will accommodate a maximum of 290 children and have 62 staff.

And as previously mentioned, the project consists of 87 total parking spaces. 62 of which are - will be reserved for employees.

So, just to provide a little planning context for the project, the current Quantico Master Plan was approved by the Commission in December 2002. However, the master plan proposed too many employee spaces that was inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan at the time.

So, the Commission excluded the proposed employee parking ratio that was a part of the Master Plan, and requested that the Department of the Navy return to the Commission within 18 months of the approval date, to report on the Quantico Transportation Management Plan and to evaluate the effectiveness of its goals. And to date, this request still has not been fulfilled.

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Now, over the past eight years there have been a total of 16 Quantico projects submitted to the Commission for review.

Six of those projects included some sort of additional parking. And four times the Commission reiterated its request for Quantico to return to the Commission to report on the TMP.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Mr. Weil, let me make sure I understand.

We asked for a TMP nine years ago and have asked for it for at least four additional times, and we still don't have the TMP?

MR. WEIL: Correct.

So, now when the Navy staff and NCPC staff first sat down to learn about this project in mid-October 2010, we had a project coordination meeting. And there were a number of issues that we discussed related to planning and the project at that meeting, and

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over the past few months.

And although the project was a hundred percent designed by this project coordination at the time of this project coordination meeting, we were able to resolve all of these planning issues, some of which are listed on this slide, with the exception of parking.

So, in trying to resolve this last remaining issue of parking, NCPC staff explored three different factors that could help us determine whether or not these extra 20 employee spaces were really needed as part of the project - oh, excuse me. Let me back up a little bit.

The main issue with the parking is that the proposed number of 62 employee spaces is inconsistent with the 2004 NCPC Comprehensive Plan employee parking ratio goal, which is one parking space for every one-and-a-half employees.

Which in the context of this

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project, would mean no more than 42 employee spaces.

Now, the facility was designed per the Department of Defense Unified Facilities Criteria which allows one space for each employee. So, again, this was designed per the UFC and the result is 62 employee spaces.

Now, just to back up, the UFC is a program of unified technical guidance criteria and standards pertaining to the planning, design, construction, operation and maintenance for Department of Defense facilities.

So, again, in trying to resolve this last issue of parking, NCPC staff explored three different factors that could help us determine, you know, whether or not these additional 20 spaces were actually needed as part of the project.

The first factor was whether or not the CDC building could have been located in a more accessible location in Quantico's

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more developed main side core area where there would have been a greater opportunity for shared parking, car and van pooling and transit usage.

And although the applicant did provide us with some additional helpful information about some other sites that were considered and reasons as to why these sites were eliminated, we, nevertheless, were not able to get the information that we needed to help us understand why the CDC was not able to be located closer to the main side core area during that particular phase of planning for the facility.

The second factor is the potential shared parking opportunity located directly across the street from the CDC site in the 650-space commissary lot.

In our experience, since these types of big-box retail facilities are usually designed with enough parking to accommodate the peak of the peak period such as paydays

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and major holidays, we suspected that if 20 sites were - excuse me - 20 spaces were to be eliminated from the CDC site, that parking spaces for these 20 parkers could be found in the lot located across the site - excuse me - across Purvis Road from the site.

However, the applicant did not provide us with information necessary to demonstrate whether or not this would be a viable measure or not.

And the third factor was consideration of the existing on-base traffic management services and to understand where the future CDC employees would be commuting from, either on base or off base, to try to understand whether or not these employees could travel to work at the proposed CDC location without driving alone.

And, again, the applicant was not able to provide us with enough information about these on-base transportation services to help us understand if any of the future CDC

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employees could utilize these services or not to reach the CDC site.

So, in light of the fact that the Commission did not approve the current Master Plan's parking ratio, we have no base-wide Transportation Management Plan to rely on, and the applicant was not able to provide us with the information necessary for NCPC staff to adequately explore these three potential factors in any detail, which would help us understand the need for this additional employee parking, we were not able to reach resolution on the parking issue.

And as such, the staff is only able to recommend preliminary approval to the Commission for the project. And I would like to note that we understand that the applicant does not concur with our finding and recommendation for preliminary approval.

So, as I stated earlier, the applicant has submitted the proposed CDC and roadway realignment for preliminary and final

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approval.

However, due to the unresolved parking issue I just described, staff is only able to recommend preliminary approval only for the CDC in accordance with the National Capital Planning Act.

The quote before you was taken from the Planning Act, which describes the two-phase process by which the Commission shall review projects.

And to paraphrase, it states that prior to preparing construction plans, applicants must consult with the Commission in preliminary and successive stages. And upon receipt of a submission, the Commission shall issue a preliminary report.

In those instances where the applicant does not agree with the preliminary report, applicant must submit a response describing why it disagrees, which would be followed by the Commission issuing a final report.

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So, therefore, in this instance if the Commission adopts staff's recommendation, the applicant will be required to resubmit the CDC for final approval after responding to this parking issue and justifying why it requires this additional parking over and above what the NCPC Comprehensive Plan recommends.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: And just to be clear even though we are advisory, they still must follow this procedure.

MR. WEIL: That is correct, Mr. Chairman.

So, it is the Executive Director's recommendation to the Commission to approve the preliminary site building plans for a new Child Development Center at the United States Marine Corps Base Quantico with no more than 42 employee parking spaces, in order to maintain consistency with the Comprehensive Plan's parking ratio.

I should note that the Commission

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action for the Child Development Center is for preliminary approval only. And that the applicant is required to resubmit the project for final approval prior to commencing construction, and approve the preliminary and final site development plans for the proposed Purvis Road realignment.

And that concludes my presentation. I'm available for any questions from the Commission.

And I'd also like to point out that the applicant agency, the United States Department of the Navy, as well as Quantico, also have representatives here as well to take any questions from the Commission.

[INSERT - USMC BASE QUANTICO]

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[INSERT - LETTER FROM CAPT. HEMSTREET]

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CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Thank you.

MR. WEIL: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Are there questions or comments? Mr. Hart.

COMMISSIONER HART: What county is this located in?

MR. WEIL: This specific project site is located in Prince William County.

COMMISSIONER HART: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Mr. May.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Yes, you mentioned the UFC as a source for the one-to-one parking ratio.

Can you tell me is that - does UFC define the one-to-one as a standard to be met for this particular type of facility or is it a maximum or is it a minimum?

I mean, how does it actually comply with UFC?

MR. WEIL: It meets the requirement. My understanding is that the UFC, first of all, is design guidance. That

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each facility does have the ability to not follow those guidance standards.

This facility in this case, does meet the UFC code for one space for each of the employees. Now, that code specifies that there should be a one-to-one ratio met for a project considering the maximum potential of number of staff on site at one time.

And in this case, there would be 61 full-time staff that work on site full time, and there would be one additional supervisory staff who would be on site part time and would be traveling around to this CDC and another CDC on the base.

So, in this case, this does meet the UFC parking ratio.

COMMISSIONER MAY: So, it sounds like it's a requirement for one-to-one parking as opposed to sort of a guideline, a recommendation.

MR. WEIL: Well, again, when I did further research on the UFC, it is described

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as design guidance. So, it is a guideline.

COMMISSIONER MAY: So, it's a guidance. Okay. So, generally the document is guidance, but -

MR. WEIL: Right.

COMMISSIONER MAY: - the guidance says it should be one-to-one for this type of facility. I think I understand.

If there were particular requirements in UFC for one-to-one parking in this circumstance, whatever defines the circumstance whether it's the use or the location or whatever, if there were an overall master plan which actually met the one-to-1.5 ratio and this particular site did not, but it was offset by fewer parking spaces somewhere else, then theoretically this could be approved within - is consistent with our guidelines; is that right?

MR. WEIL: I believe it could.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Right. So, a big part of the problem is that we simply

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don't have that broader document. The Master Plan doesn't have the parking ratio specified and they've never -

MR. WEIL: Right. That is correct.

It was submitted to the Commissioner, approved with too many spaces and, unfortunately, it was never amended. And a supporting Transportation Management Plan was never resubmitted to the agency stating goals for how parking was going to be reduced on the base over the years to come into compliance with our Comprehensive Plan.

So, unfortunately, we don't have that to rely on in this case, and I think that provides less flexibility, I think, in how much parking is required.

COMMISSIONER MAY: So, the Planning Act specifies what happens when there is this sort of disagreement between NCPD and an agency when it's an advisory situation.

How does that apply in the circumstances of a Master Plan that's not

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complete or not submitted or out of date or what have you?

Is there some further action that's actually dictated for the agency either for NCPC or for, you know, the base or the Navy to submit?

MR. WEIL: Right. I don't believe that the Planning Act does. However, the Comprehensive Plan does state that every five years, a maximum of five years, every federal agency shall review their Master Plan to see if it still is adequate or not for future proposed development.

And, you know, they're required to report their review findings to the Commission to make sure that it's still relevant or not.

So, I don't believe that the Planning Act does, but the Comprehensive Plan, I think, speaks more to the issue.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Okay.

MS. SCHUYLER: Excuse me. Let me interject here. Anne Schuyler, general

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counsel.

The standard for review for the Master Plan would be the same. The same process would apply.

In the event of a disagreement, we'd have this preliminary approval. Then, they'd have an opportunity to respond.

If we can't reach consensus after a final discussion, they are allowed to proceed in accordance with their own legal authorities.

COMMISSIONER MAY: So, in theory, they should have already responded to the previous Master Plan approval -

MS. SCHUYLER: Absolutely.

COMMISSIONER MAY: - except for the parking, but we don't even have that. And that's something that we could also request again at this moment.

Okay. The last question I had is the Purvis Road realignment, I'm not sure to the extent to which this is actually part of

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that project or a separate project, but it seems - yes, can you show sort of the before and after images?

Yes. Okay. And the one before that. There we go.

So, there's no roadway running along that edge at the bottom around the mini-mart right now.

MR. WEIL: Right.

COMMISSIONER MAY: And so all of that forested area would wind up being modified. There would be - the drainage pond that's on - do I understand correctly that you've reviewed that and you're okay with what they're proposing to do with Purvis Road?

MR. WEIL: Yes.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Okay. And can you tell me what the rationale is for taking out that much acreage and realigning the road?

Is there some inherent operational problem with the road continuing on its current alignment?

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MR. WEIL: Well, there is - there have been several studies done in the operation of Russell Road. There's a lot of traffic congestion now, and operationally I believe there are some safety issues with the current roadway alignment.

Realigning this road also to my understanding from the submission, that was planned a while ago. That's been in their plans for a while.

And the CDC is ARRA funded. So, the CDC was designed in conjunction with this planned Purvis Road realignment.

And the applicant simply stated when I asked him more about the reason for the realignment was safety and operational issues not only along Russell Road, but for, you know, the dropping off traffic for the CDC.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Okay.

MR. WEIL: Does that answer your question?

COMMISSIONER MAY: Well, I mean,

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it's not entirely satisfying, but it sounds like it's sort of an issue of the past. It's not really a current issue, because it seems like it's a pretty - I don't know. Just do we need that much more roadway, pavement, loss of trees? It's always a loss.

MR. WEIL: Yes, yes.

COMMISSIONER MAY: All right.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Ms. Tregoning.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: I appreciate your having asked the Marine Corps about other possible site locations. And I'm very disappointed that you didn't really get a response.

I find it somewhat ironic that a lot is being made that this is going to be a LEED-certified building when it's being located, it's being sited such that every trip that's made to this building is going to have to be taken by automobile even when there are other means that are available in other

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locations where it would be possible to make this trip on foot or make it as part of another, you know, another driving trip closer to the VRE Station more in that area that's immediately adjacent to the town of Quantico.

So, I'm disappointed about this and I guess this is a question maybe for my colleagues, you know: What's the definition of insanity? To keep doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different outcome.

So, we ask for this information on, you know, on transportation, a plan, and we haven't gotten it for nine years?

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: We could ask for it for a sixth time today.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: I know, but why would we do that? I mean, can we table this?

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Well, we could.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: What affect would it have on the Marines' ability

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to construct?

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Well, if you look at the letter that is before you, which I received about two hours ago, in the very last paragraph just above Captain Hemstreet's signature it basically says, thank you very much, we're going to proceed anyway.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: I mean, I think it's sort of a waste of our time.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Please, yes, there are two questions I heard. Ms. Wright and then your colleague.

COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: There's someone from the Navy here?

MR. WEIL: That is correct.

COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Can we just ask why we don't have the TMP from the Navy? Seems a reasonable question.

MR. ADAMS: Good morning to everyone - or afternoon. My name is Chris Adams. I'm the public works officer from Marine Corps Base Quantico.

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I think the answer is that it just is we haven't updated it yet. And we haven't updated it recently because of the substantial growth that has occurred on Quantico.

We have achieved a point where after some growth, as well as some other missions that have moved from the D.C. area to Quantico where we have put together a master planning process, that process is already underway and we're expecting to have an executive session at the end of this month to try to continue that master planning effort so that we have something to present.

A key factor, as you note, is the Transportation Management Plan to make sure we can better understand that. And that is the next phase. It's already in concept and we're waiting for proposals to be able to push that forward.

Transportation planning has been a large concern of ours and we have actively been working with the three adjacent counties,

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Prince William, Stafford, as well as Fauquier County, as well as VDOT to address those issues because our interaction of the people who work and live on base with the adjacent roadways certainly is - there is a lot of concerns with that along the I-95 and Route 1 thoroughfares.

And we've been underway for a couple years now looking at ways where we can partner together for projects to alleviate those issues.

In conjunction with that, as we stated previously, we have several projects that are on the dockets to try to improve our internal base transportation so that we can avoid the impact that the base traffic does have off of the base.

As was pointed out, the Purvis Road realignment is one of those phases to try to improve traffic flow, as well as improve traffic safety within the base. And we have several other phases that would follow

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afterwards.

COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: That doesn't make sense to me that you would put off the TMP to well into the master planning phase, really.

That's kind of - what would preclude a concurrent development of both?

MR. ADAMS: I may have misspoken, ma'am. I mean, they're parallel efforts. And because of the importance of our work with the local communities, we have pushed that up in the plan to make sure that we have the transportation data not only internally, but externally as a part of our planning effort so we can consider that.

COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: So, you've spent a lot of time, it sounds like, working with local jurisdictions to make sure that you've thought about traffic to get here; is that fair? To get to the base.

MR. ADAMS: Generally on and off base, yes, ma'am.

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COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: So, this is a big facility you're planning with a lot of transportation implications just on the base.

And it seems odd to me that it would take nine years at least, right, I mean, to think about these things.

I don't know. It just strikes me - a lot of what Harriet's talking about is just from a - just pretend for a second that this is a town. The transportation ramifications of putting the child care center as far away from things as you have, are pretty significant.

So, I guess I'm sort of mystified by your answer.

MR. ADAMS: Ma'am, we went through several pieces in planning this project. And when we went through to look at who the customers were for the Child Development Center, a large number of them are in the housing area that's immediately adjacent to where people are.

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So, the primary idea was we wanted to put the center near where people were going to be working on a regular basis - or not where they're working, but where they were living.

So, primarily we had the issue of people on base, and its immediately adjacent to housing.

The secondary piece if we have - there's capacity. We have people who are off base who may be dropping children off.

And so, having that access closer to a gate to mitigate some of the additional traffic coming all the way into the gate and then needing to leave, was looked at as beneficial.

COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: I'll leave it to someone else.

COMMISSIONER HART: Commander, as part of your master planning process and the transportation planning you're undertaking, do you have as an objective to meet the NCPC

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Transportation Management Plan targets for reduction of parking overall?

MR. ADAMS: I would say that our goal is to meet all of the guidelines and specifications out there.

Part of the master planning effort is to figure out how do we get there and we're kind of paralleled the challenge of meeting those with trying to meet the growth that we're required to take into the base and doing those in parallel and it - we're trying to do them in consideration for both at the same time.

COMMISSIONER HART: Thank you. We'd encourage you to take the guidance seriously.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Ms. Vahey.

COMMISSIONER VAHEY: Thank you. I just had a question about Captain Hemstreet's letter.

On Page 2, he states that they responded to the questions regarding parking,

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but that their responses perhaps were not adequate for NCPC, and that NCPC requested further justification for the 1.1 parking ratio and suggested that staff should carpool.

I was just wondering what more we were looking for regarding their responses on the parking. It seems as though there has been a conversation about it.

MR. WEIL: Well, you know, the - right. We had asked about the parking. We had asked, you know, repeatedly about the potential for the commissary lot shared parking, which, I mean, they told us over the phone that, you know, that wasn't - that wasn't suitable for a shared use parking situation.

We did request, you know, some information about their current transportation management services. I think what we were looking for was we were looking for, you know, much more detailed information about, you know, why this was - what the process is for

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siting the location, you know, projects like this.

They did respond. They said, you know, these were two or three other sites that we looked at and here's why they were eliminated.

But, for example, in the context of the siting, the information we needed to know was, was it possible to locate the CDC in the more urban core? And we never got that information.

The relevance to that information is if they had said, well, yes, we could have, it would have been possible to locate it there, you know, I think that lends to a little less flexibility on, you know, accepting these 20 additional spaces.

If they said, you know, no, there was absolutely no way that we could have located it in the downtown core, this is the best we can do relative to the VRE station and all these other facilities, well, you know,

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maybe that helps us determine, you know, how flexible these, you know, how flexible to be on these 20 additional spaces.

In terms of the transportation services, you know, we asked where would employees be coming from commuting in the morning? Would there be any on base? Would they all be coming off base?

Again, that helps us make the determination whether, you know, the transit services provided, you know, it's realistic to depend on that for some or all of their employees to reach the proposed site.

And, again, I think the thing we were looking for in terms of the commissary lot shared parking opportunity was utilization rates, you know. Demonstrate to us that that's not a feasible shared parking opportunity.

And if they had demonstrated to us that, you know, 90 percent of the year it's, you know, 90 percent occupied or whatever, you

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know, again that helps us make the determination about, you know, are these additional 20 spaces that are over and above the Comprehensive Plan goal absolutely necessary or not.

That's what we were looking for.

MR. ADAMS: Well, I may be able to answer a couple of those questions that you had. And I'll apologize for not necessarily having the detailed answer to the three point questions that were there.

One, we talked about the accessibility in location to mass transit. And currently, the VRE and the bus that goes to the VRE are the primary means of mass transit locally.

I think that it was looked at as reducing the amount of traffic flow was best by co-locating in housing where you would have the opportunity for pedestrian traffic to come and go from the CDC, as well as minimizing the amount of traffic that would come all the way

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through the base to try to get to the CDC.

And so, having 290 parents coming to the CDC on the main part of the base was considerably more traffic than it would be for the people who would work there.

As far as the adjacent planning for the commissary and exchange, can you pull up an overview?

I would just like to point out if you look at the commissary and the exchange, the exchange is on the right-hand side. And if you see, it's a - there's a main section, and then there's some change of shape sections that continue on down to Purvis Road.

The original exchange was designed for that small section up front with the parking out front. And we have since added to it without adding parking, because there's limited areas to do so. And so, we've tried to do our best to really minimize that.

On top of that, we're in the process of having an expansion on the

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commissary. And we are doing that by only adding, I think, 25 parking spaces for an expected increase in floor space by 20 to 25 percent for sales.

So, in terms of this complex, we're confined by space where we could put parking, but we're also trying to use what we have as opposed to trying to increase it in this particular area.

And, really, there has been maybe 20 spaces added over the past ten years for a place that's grown by sales considerably more than that.

The third question, I think, that was asked was additional questions on base traffic management services. And that's one of the things we want to look for more in our Traffic Management Plan.

We do have some base services and shuttles and things like that that are starting up, but mostly they are focused just like you've asked of taking people from the

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VRE to their places of work.

And that route hasn't been that well established, but it does take several hundred people every day from the VRE to their work, and increased VRE ridership in doing so.

COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Do you have any idea - see, the lack of a TMP sort of betrays the fact that, I mean, that you don't have one, you've obviously, you know, done more analysis than meets the eye. So, that's a good thing.

What's the percentage - do you know out of the families, what's the percentage that lives on the base?

In that, I mean, you've probably said this before, but I missed it: What's the percentage of people or just a rough number of families that live right next to the center, to the site?

I mean, do you have any idea of what you're looking at in terms of people who would be bringing kids from off base? Anyone?

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Is that done?

MR. ADAMS: I don't know exactly the number of people who are coming on base versus off base.

The last study that I saw showed that we had over 290 people who were on our wait list to try to get services. And that we expected that we had more than that who are people who are just using the services out in town because they didn't feel like they could get services on base.

In terms of the split of those people between on base and off base, I don't know specifically, but I know more of those were on base than off base.

COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: So, the lion's share of kids are coming from the adjacent housing?

MR. ADAMS: Yes, ma'am.

COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: That's a safe thing to say?

MR. ADAMS: Yes, ma'am. And the

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other Child Development Center that's on base is located at the far end of the housing area.

I think it's - the Thomason Park Housing Area is not shown in green up at the top of the map, but it is a housing area that's immediately adjacent.

And that was located immediately next to the school so that parents coming to drop off kids for schools could use the CDC at the same time.

Thought process for the other CDC site was you do have people coming in the Russell Road gate, and so not to push more traffic to another place, but to keep it where people were coming in and try to keep traffic flow coming smoothly.

COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Mr. Denis.

COMMISSIONER DENIS: Yes, could you all help me clarify the nature of the dispute?

The staff recommendation is for preliminary approval. Does that mean

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preliminary approval for the location?

MR. WEIL: Preliminary design approval for the Child Development Center.

COMMISSIONER DENIS: Is the nature of the dispute over 20 parking spaces?

MR. WEIL: 20 spaces. 20 employee spaces.

COMMISSIONER DENIS: That's the heart of the dispute?

MR. WEIL: Correct.

COMMISSIONER DENIS: So, if the applicant is required to submit for final approval, what would you all do?

MR. ADAMS: I think it's our intention to do so. We are going with accordance to the UFC planning guidance. Which as we talked to before, you know, it provides the guidance just like it does for the rest of the facility construction to have one space for every person who works there at a regular time.

COMMISSIONER DENIS: And when would

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that information be provided to us?

MR. ADAMS: When would that request be made, sir?

COMMISSIONER DENIS: When would we then be - when would the final approval come back to the NCPC?

MR. ADAMS: I believe that as soon as we find out what the decision of the council is here, that we would proceed probably with that if it was a recommendation to disapprove.

COMMISSIONER DENIS: Okay. Thanks.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Let me, if I can, ask a couple of questions to Mr. Weil for clarification -

MR. WEIL: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: - because I think this is a bit more than just about 20 parking spaces.

It's about the lack of responding to this Commission for nearly a decade on something very central to what we do,

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transportation planning. It's about, I would suggest, failure to follow the National Planning Act.

Early consultation is voluntary. An applicant does not necessarily have to consult with us early on.

MR. WEIL: That is correct.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: However, it is required under the law, under the Planning Act, that you don't proceed - let me rephrase.

They brought to us for the first time, construction drawings that were 100 percent pretty much.

MR. WEIL: Correct.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: And that's a violation. And with this letter that we received perhaps in the mail just yesterday advising us that they're going to go ahead and proceed prior to Commission's actions, that's another violation of the Planning Act.

MR. WEIL: That's correct.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: So, this is a

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pretty significant issue, I would suggest. My understanding of the process is - I'm on point, right?

MR. WEIL: Correct.

MS. SCHUYLER: Excuse me. Could I clarify something?

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Please.

MS. SCHUYLER: There are two forms of consultation, and I think it's important that you keep them separate here.

One is with staff. The consultation that is referenced that they have evaded or not participated in under the Planning Act, is consultation with the Commission.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Right, right, right. Yes, "Consultation Between Agencies And Commission," is the title of the section.

MS. SCHUYLER: Correct.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: I may have an amendment to the EDR at the appropriate time.

Let me see if there's other comments.

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COMMISSIONER TREGONING: I just want to say for 20 parking spaces, I don't think we care that much.

What we do care about is that you keep - you mention a problem that you have growing traffic problems, you have growth problems, you have more and more population coming to the base.

These are problems that with appropriate planning and transportation investment, you could have that growth and actually lower the amount of traffic congestion that you have, but not if you proceed as you're going.

And if you even were to look at the plan that was shown earlier, the housing is being built on cul-de-sacs that are unconnected. Every trip that has to be taken on your base virtually has to be an auto trip.

It doesn't have to be that way. You're doing it by design.

So, the fact that you don't have a

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TMP, you know, isn't incidental. It's why you have a traffic problem.

So, I sort of feel like let us help you with the Master Plan for your facility so that you can reduce your traffic problems, or I sort of feel like let's, you know, if you don't want to hear from the Commission, you know, I feel like we're kind of wasting our time.

And I feel it's particularly tragic because you are our servicemen. Why are you - you are the citizens of our country who are most in harm's way, and the biggest reason is energy security, you know?

That is the reason we're in conflict all around the world, and I feel like it's particularly appropriate in our Washington region that we show leadership in energy efficiency.

And I feel like we're, you know, great, there's a LEED building, but every trip that's taken here is an auto trip. And I

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think that's incredibly energy inefficient.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: I'd like to put an amendment on the table for discussion.

We've very mindful that Quantico is a very important facility. It's very important in the security of our nation and the men and women and families who live there. We're very mindful of their circumstances.

And as Ms. Tregoning said, we want to help you. We very much do. We want - are you Mr. Montgomery?

MR. MONTGOMERY: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: I'm advised that you have been very good to work with, very cooperative, very collegial. Staff has very much enjoyed working with you. So, I wanted to thank you for your partnership with us.

It's a little unfortunate that we're a little bit in this situation despite that very good collaboration from you, Mr. Montgomery.

We are advisory. And the EDR, I

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would like to insert some language that advises our partners at the Navy of something pretty critical, and that is you're in violation of law.

And so, I would like to pass out - because it's a long amendment, I made copies. I'd like to pass out the proposed amendment. I'll keep a copy for myself.

The amendment that I would like to put on the table is the last paragraph at the bottom that starts, the Commission advises the applicant that it has violated the requirements of the National Capital Planning Act 40 USC Section 8722(b)(1), by preparing construction plans for proposed developments and projects that affect the plan and development of the national capital prior to advising and consulting with the National Capital Planning Commission in preliminary and successive stages. And further, that the construction of the proposed project prior to the applicant fulfilling the statute's

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procedural requirements to provide a response to this action constitutes an additional violation of the requirements of the act.

And that language is almost taken verbatim out of the code. And so with that, I would like to put that proposed amendment to the EDR on the table.

Mr. Denis.

COMMISSIONER DENIS: Yes, could I hear if there's any response from you all to what's being urged?

MR. ADAMS: I think that we realize particularly through the planning process on this one, that we need to improve our communication relationship.

I know that we are in the process of sending a letter to try to have some meetings directly so that we can approve that particularly with Quantico, because we are working so closely with a lot of the other local organizations to try to improve that planning and development. And I would expect

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to see some of that communication come from the base here very shortly to try to bridge that gap that's there.

This is a project and I would not like to use it as an excuse, but it came up as noted as an ARRA project.

They looked through the bases that had a deficiency for child care services. We were in the top three in the Marine Corps and had a very short fuse to provide a solution to possibly bridge that gap for the families that live on Quantico.

That is why this project was - came through so quickly in particular to try to achieve those goals. And it is not an excuse for not doing consultation, but for awareness of that's how quickly some of this came for us.

And it was a very good benefit and, you know, many late-night hours for myself personally to try to walk through, work through the alternatives and come up with a

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solution that not only met the needs of the families, but also tried to consider traffic transportation. And those were heavily looked at when we went through the process.

That that communication did not effectively happen up front was likely just the shortness of time. But going back to my first comment, we realize we need to improve our communication back and forth.

And it's our full intent to make sure we have the communication to do so, and have that open communication between Quantico and the NCPC.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: And I will say, Mr. Denis, that this is - we've had a lot of conversation. Probably a little less than a year ago we had a very good meeting at the Pentagon with the undersecretary of defense who is in charge of these processes.

And then Mr. Provancha was very kind to organize a terrific meeting with various parts of the Pentagon and the branches

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on NCPC, our process and all of that.

So, this amendment is simply just one more attempt to advise - again, it's advice that we still need to have more collaboration. Especially advising what I may refer to as a sister agency, a sister federal agency when they are in violation of the law, I think we perhaps have a duty to do that.

Mr. Miller.

COMMISSIONER MILLER: Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to second your motion - your amendment and ask you - and associate myself with Commissioner Tregoning's remarks.

But I wanted to ask you, did you intend to remove the notes paragraph which I don't see on the - I assume you did not intend to remove the notes paragraph.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: No, I did not intend it.

COMMISSIONER MILLER: And is there - let me just ask you the question is -

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: I did not intend

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to remove that.

COMMISSIONER MILLER: So, that's part of the - so, that's still there.

And is there any - would it serve any useful purpose to ask for the sixth time for the Transportation Management Plan?

I mean, we don't reference it in the recommendations. Is there a way we somehow could without seeming insane?

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: There is additional language that we could perhaps put in there as well.

COMMISSIONER GREENWALD: I just have sort of a - I don't disagree that that might not be helpful, but also as a thought that it may undermine - the Commission has already said it, you know.

We try not to repeat ourselves in law because we've already said it. So, it's not that it's necessarily insane, but does it undermine our actions when we repeat it time after time? Just a thought.

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COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: Concur with the observation, Ms. Greenwald. I think we've asked and asked, and because things like flogging, the stocks and the pillory are not options.

What I did hear, though, was a verbal commitment, let me clarify that, from the Quantico folks, to provide at least a formal documented interim progress report.

Did I hear that type of -

MR. ADAMS: For the Transportation Management Plan?

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: And the Installation Master Plan. Both.

MR. ADAMS: We can provide those. At this point, you will find that our Transportation Management Plan is still in the development phase.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: I understand.

MR. ADAMS: We can provide it to you, but -

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COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: Well, we're disappointed that that's where it is.

Could we at least get a documentation where we are, an interim progress report for both?

MR. ADAMS: Yes, sir.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: On the issue of the parking, too, I applaud your efforts. I thought the example of the commissary was a good one where you've got substantive growth in the size of that facility, but very little growth in parking.

Could perhaps also that communication say that while we may have some difficulty meeting the established parking ratios for the Child Development Center project, we will continue to make very effort going forward as an installation, to meet those ratios?

Would that be agreeable?

MR. ADAMS: Sure. We can do that.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: Okay.

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There were some other issues raised about Purvis Road. It was referred to by Mr. Weil as a previously planned project.

By previously planned project, does that mean perhaps in the 2002 Installation Master Plan?

Say "yes" if that's accurate. Please don't say "yes" if it's a plan that's just developed in the last few years and was not in the '02 Master Plan.

I would prefer that it was in the '02 Master Plan in fulfillment, but -

MS. SCHUYLER: Are you leading the witness?

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: I'm attempting to lead the witness, but within ethical boundaries.

(Laughter.)

MR. ADAMS: Sir, I honestly can say I don't know. And I can provide that response as well.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: It's not a

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critical issue at this point.

There was another point about tree loss. From the level of plan that's been provided to us, I can't tell if there's going to be any offsets through this project with the vegetation planning, landscape planning for this project.

Clearly, it's probably impossible to get a one for one. But if we would have some assurance that some landscaping would include some replacement trees, is that the plan?

MR. ADAMS: There are some replacement trees included, sir, as well as the RFP documents were specifically written to try to retain as much of the existing trees as possible.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: Good. Very good. Okay.

MR. ADAMS: The area that was being used for the Child Development Center was a former housing area.

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Part of the path for where the road is going to go is in alignment with an old road area.

And so, the goal is to try to if you match that bend, you reduce the number of trees that you would end up impacting.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: Right. Okay.

Question about mass transit is I can't tell from the concepts that have been presented to us today, if the realignment of Purvis Road would actually include some bus stop so we can get away from single-occupancy vehicles for either folks dropping off their children or staff that are working at the CDC.

Is there any plan to include a bus stop approximate or adjacent to the facility so that folks could use mass transit?

MR. ADAMS: Sir, I'm not aware currently that we have one there.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: Okay.

MR. ADAMS: But we do not have a

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bus route, a mass transit route currently that services that area.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: Okay.
Thank you.

MR. ADAMS: The main route for the mass transit comes down Fuller Road currently, sir.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: Fuller.
Okay. All right. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: We got sidetracked a little bit. The motion on the floor is the proposed amendment. It's been moved and seconded.

Is there further discussion on the amendment, before we get back to other issues?

PARTICIPANT: Are we adding the notes back in?

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Yes, we're adding the notes back in. I think that was inadvertently taken -

MS. YOUNG: I have a question about the notes.

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CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Hang on just a second.

MS. YOUNG: Language.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: We're going to add the notes back in. Was that inadvertently taken out?

MS. SCHUYLER: I think the question is whether they're redundant.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: So, the question is whether the notes and the new piece is redundant.

Well, I guess putting the paragraph back in is at least very up front and clarifying. So, there's no harm in putting the notes section back in. Just make sure that the notes section is back in if everyone is okay with it.

COMMISSIONER HART: I don't see the point of leaving the note in, which requires another appearance here if we're not making any changes between now and then.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Does it require

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another appearance?

COMMISSIONER HART: The note that I read, it says, note that the Commission actions for the Child Development Center is for preliminary approval only. And that pursuant to Section 5A of the National Capital Planning Act, the applicant is required to resubmit the project for final approval prior to commencing construction.

What I understand is we have a fully developed set of construction documents that are not really going to change between now and any time in the future.

Our focus here is really on the application of a Transportation Management Plan that will not be completed for a year. And, therefore, why are we putting this note in?

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Let me turn to -

MR. LEVY: I'll try to clarify. The Planning Act requires this action and response, and then final approval. And that's

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how the original language in the Executive Director's recommendation was crafted.

The chairman's proposed amendment language simply further states that we're advising the applicant that they're in violation of the law. Basically, both the new language and the old language referenced the same procedure, which is further requirement of a response prior to final approval.

Doesn't look like I clarified it.

The Planning Act says that the Commission takes a preliminary approval. And if the applicant disagrees, they have the opportunity to respond, in this case, for advisory. They could respond that they're either taking the advice or not.

And only after such time as the Commission then opines and takes a final action can they move to construct a project under the Planning Act.

COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: So, the language that says "required" is only applied

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- the applicant is required to resubmit, only applies inasmuch as fulfillment of the requirements of the Act.

MR. LEVY: Correct.

COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Which they can still say, thank you very much for your advice.

MR. LEVY: That's correct. The response is required -

COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Got it.

MR. LEVY: Yes.

COMMISSIONER HART: Do we expect any different response than that, thank you very much, we'd like to proceed as planned?

MR. LEVY: I would defer to the applicant.

MR. ADAMS: Sir, at this time we would like to move forward and construct the facility as designed.

We believe we've done our best to fulfill the construction design within all the current codes and guidelines as far as

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possible.

This is one where it's a challenge to meet both what the USC allows us to do to support the facility, and the NCPC parking space guidelines.

COMMISSIONER HART: I think we just heard the response.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: So, law notwithstanding, they're going to proceed.

COMMISSIONER HART: They've come, they've made an application, they're asking for preliminary and final approval. We have a response to what we're seeing. And what I'm hearing is whether it's a minute or a month, they intend to proceed as shown.

COMMISSIONER MAY: I think there's a procedural issue here. The way we're supposed to work in this circumstance is that we take the preliminary action. And if they disagree, then they have to explain why, and then there's a final action.

It's just going through those -

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it's another set of steps. I'm not sure that we get to shortcut that by doing anything differently.

COMMISSIONER HART: I was looking at, you know, the request for preliminary and final approval in the application thinking that that could be rolled together.

MR. LEVY: Well, oftentimes we'll recommend preliminary and final approval, but that's in the majority of the cases where we bring to you projects where all the issues have been resolved through consultation.

COMMISSIONER HART: Okay.

MR. LEVY: It's a little bit different.

COMMISSIONER HART: Well, maybe this is a lesson in point that we would like to see a project before it gets to a hundred percent documentation.

MR. ADAMS: Sir, I don't think our intent would be to go around the process. If we were requested to come back and go final,

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our intent would be to follow that, but our intention still would be to move forward with the project.

COMMISSIONER HART: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: So, with that, was the pleasure to leave out the notes section or to leave it in being slightly redundant or not?

David.

MR. LEVY: I don't think there would be any harm in leaving it in. I think ultimately they both refer to the same requirement for the response, you know. We've just added the additional language advising that they violated the Planning Act.

So, I think you could if you leave it out, it would have basically the same - the only difference is that the substitute language that you propose doesn't spell out what the specific procedural requirement is. It just references it.

COMMISSIONER HART: So, the notes

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further clarifies that. So, recommendation the note has value.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Yes, let's leave it in. So, the amendment would be to also include leaving the notes section in.

Is that understood? Any further discussion?

All in favor of the amendment say "aye."

(Chorus of Ayes.)

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Opposed, no?

COMMISSIONER DENIS: No.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: No.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Okay. Two no's. Mr. Provancha and Mr. Denis vote no. Okay. Thank you very much.

Is there further discussion on the EDR as amended?

Hearing none, is there a motion on the EDR as amended?

COMMISSIONER HART: Motion to accept the EDR as submitted.

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CHAIRMAN BRYANT: It's been moved and seconded that we approve the EDR as amended.

All in favor say "aye."

(Chorus of ayes.)

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Opposed, no?

Two no's. Thank you very much.

Item 5C on the agenda is the North Road retaining wall at the National Zoo.

We have Ms. Kelly. Welcome.

ACTION ITEM NO. 5C

**SMITHSONIAN NATIONAL ZOOLOGICAL PARK,
WASHINGTON, D.C. - NORTH ROAD RETAINING WALL**

MS. KELLY: Good afternoon. The Smithsonian Institution has submitted a retaining wall at the National Zoological Park in Washington, D.C.

This retaining wall would stabilize the hillside for which North Road is atop, and reduce loads on the General Services Building, a building that was built into the hillside in 1976.

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Here, you can see the National Zoo outlined in red. The proposed project site would be between North - or this is the National Zoo outlined in red, and the proposed retaining wall would be between the General Services Building and the North Road.

As the name suggests, North Road traverses the northern section of the zoo from Connecticut Avenue down to Harvard Street.

Also meandering its way through the zoo is Rock Creek outlined here in blue. And it's just north of the General Services Building.

Here, you can see a closer view of the project area. And you can see North Road and the General Services Building.

The building is an underground facility that houses support offices and maintenance for the zoo. And you can see some of the outdoor maintenance here.

On the roof deck of the building is parking for approximately 266 parking - or

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cars. Excuse me.

The site slopes from west to east. And at the project site you can - approximately where the red dot is down to the drive aisle for the parking area, the site slopes 50 feet.

The site also slopes towards Rock Creek and Beach Drive, and then opposite on the other side of the valley it slopes back up to Kringle Road and Adams Mill Road.

Here in the bottom left corner of this slide you can see an existing photo of the area approximately where the red dot is located. And you can see the General Services Building elevator, bank, and then the stairs up to North Road. And you can see how the parking is down the hill off of North Road and the building is tucked into the hillside.

The Commission approved the General Services Building in 1975. And at that time, the final approval included parking on top of the General Services Building for

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three levels. It would accommodate approximately 946 parking spaces.

At the time, the Commission also commended the Smithsonian for an environmentally sensitive design that allowed for a facility that provided office and parking for the zoo, but also minimized its visual impact to Rock Creek Parkway.

And to achieve this, the Smithsonian added an earthen berm to the design, as well as intensified vegetation.

This is a view from Rock Creek Trail, and you can see the corner of the General Services Building, and the earthen berm on the northern section of the building.

Due to budgetary constraints, the Smithsonian was only able to build the General Services Facility and was unable to build the additional levels of parking.

In order to maintain the hillside loads until the additional parking levels could be constructed, the Smithsonian

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constructed temporary timber shoring and sheeting walls, which you can see here.

These temporary measures are now failing, causing the hillside to push into the General Services Building and causing the building to become structurally unstable.

The Smithsonian is proposing to build the permanent retaining wall to support the hillside permanently.

Please note the vegetation on the hillside. This will be lost due to the construction of the retaining wall.

Here, you can see the plans for the retaining wall. It will follow the alignment and slope of North Road for 940 feet.

There will also be an extension north westward off of the west section of the site for about 85 feet. And this is to protect the western side of the General Services Building.

To orient you, this western

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section is located here in the elevation so that the highest point of the retaining wall will be 52 feet, and will slope down to about one foot.

You can also see here the proposed landscaping between the General Services Building and the retaining wall. The Smithsonian proposes to plant ornamental trees that vary in height, as well as use a cable system that will encourage vine growth on the retaining wall.

Here is the view as if you're looking from North Road. And you'll see a wall establishes the same grade along North Road. The wall will be approximately one foot tall above the North Road grade, and then will have an additional 48 inches of guardrail for safety.

The placement of the retaining wall will allow for the future expansion of North Road from two lanes to three lanes as recommended in the Master Plan. And the

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Smithsonian proposes to use stabilized turf in this location until that is completed.

Here, you can see the existing section through the site, as well as the proposed section. And you can see the hillside and then the General Services Building.

Here, you can see the existing earthen berm that minimizes the views of the General Services Building from the north. And here, you can see the section of the retaining wall when it is about 42 feet high.

And there is also a proposed bioswale in between the retaining wall and the General Services Building to collect and filter water, and then discharge this water to Rock Creek.

The proposed retaining wall will be a cast-in-place concrete with an architectural finish. The Smithsonian is proposing a stone pattern. They are currently undergoing what the stone pattern could look

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like and evaluating different retaining walls throughout the Rock Creek Park for examples.

Staff has evaluated the project and has determined three items that need to be addressed as the project moves forward.

Due to the project's location adjacent to Rock Creek Park, staff is concerned about visual impacts of the proposed project on this natural quality.

The next couple of slides will show views of the park from - or, excuse me, of the existing facility from adjacent locations along Adams Mill Road, Kringle Road and the Rock Creek Trail.

And you can see here the proposed - or the existing facility. This is the existing parking on top of the facility. Here's the corner of the facility on the Rock Creek Trail.

Here's the view of the facility from Adams Mill Road. And the proposed retaining wall would be above this parking

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area that is existing here.

And then not only would there be the retaining wall, but also the loss of vegetation in this area.

Staff is requesting that the Smithsonian submit photo simulations of the retaining wall in these locations so that the full impact of the retaining wall can be analyzed.

Here, you can see the existing vegetation on the hillside that will be lost due to construction.

The federal and district elements of the Comprehensive Plan encourage the preservation of the existing tree canopy throughout the District. And we encourage the Smithsonian to look at placing this tree canopy within the - or replacing this tree canopy in the project area.

Staff also analyzed the project against the National Zoo Master Plan, and here you can see the general landscape plan that's

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in the Master Plan.

And it acknowledges the need to screen or add additional vegetation in the area around the General Services Building if the General Services Building is added onto.

And we see the retaining wall as an addition to the General Services Building, and the Smithsonian will need to evaluate this as they move forward.

Also on this plan, you can see the access points of the zoo. You can see the existing Connecticut Avenue and the one down near the petting zoo.

And this zoo is proposing to have enhancements to a midpoint access that would be access off of the General Services Building and the proposed parking for this area. And you can see that in this artist's rendering.

The General Services Building is still planned to have parking on top of it as part of the Master Plan. And you can see that in the western section here.

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And also proposes a new pedestrian bridge over North Road with a new visitors facility located in this area.

The Master Plan had included the retaining wall for the hillside within the construction of the parking garage.

However, due to the immediate concern of the hillside loads on the General Services Building, the Smithsonian has determined to make this two separate projects.

However, they have submitted images of what the relationship between the parking garage and the retaining wall could be in the future.

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act, the Smithsonian has completed an environmental assessment in 2008 for the National Zoo Master Plan for which the Executive Director wrote a finding of no significant impact. And they are currently preparing a supplemental EA to evaluate the impacts of the retaining wall itself.

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Regarding Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, the Smithsonian initiated consultation with the D.C. SHPO in August of 2010, and conducted a site visit in December of 2010.

They are currently undergoing an archaeological investigation, and both will need to be completed before the project is submitted for final.

It is with that that the Executive Director recommends that the Commission comment as follows on the proposed retaining wall at the zoo: Recommends that in the continued development of the project, the Smithsonian evaluate ways to replace the tree canopy lost due to the construction; evaluate opportunities to screen views of the retaining wall from Rock Creek Park; and continue consultation with the National Park Service to ensure preservation of the natural quality of Rock Creek Park; request that for the next submission, the Smithsonian Institution submit

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detailed landscaping plans and massing views of the proposed retaining wall from Beach Drive, points along Adams Mill Road and Rock Creek Trail.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my presentation.

[INSERT - NATIONAL ZOOLOGICAL PARK]

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CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Thank you, Ms. Kelly. Questions or comments from Commission members?

Mr. Hart.

COMMISSIONER HART: In the Master Plan, the parking garage that is shown in these sections, as I understand it, would completely cover the retaining wall at some point in the future with the new parking garage structure?

MS. KELLY: The parking garage hasn't been fully developed. It's not - the Smithsonian doesn't intend to put in funding for the parking garage until FY2017 or 2018. So, this is just a proposed massing of what it could look like.

We've also seen layout in that there is the potential to have a bridge structure over the retaining wall and into the parking garage.

COMMISSIONER HART: The concept is that the parking garage would just cover up

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that retaining wall. The retaining wall would become part of the parking garage?

MS. KELLY: No, the concept I've seen is that there is spacing in between.

COMMISSIONER HART: Okay. So, any trees you plant in the meantime in that bioswale, would remain even after the parking garage was built?

MS. KELLY: Right.

COMMISSIONER HART: Thank you.

If we're ready to start talking about the specifics of the EDR, I don't really have questions, but I have comments about this at this point.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Any other questions before we get to that?

Ms. Wright, and then Mr. Provancha.

COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: What's the quality of the vegetation that's going to be lost?

I mean, is it original species or

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is it just -

MS. KELLY: No, it just grew up since the construction of the facility since 1976.

COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: So, it's scrub.

MS. KELLY: Yes.

COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Okay. And the second question is you said, I think, that the water from the bioswale is going to go into Rock Creek Park?

Do you know if there was any exploration of using the water, the filtered water in the zoo?

I'm just curious if it was -

MS. KELLY: Maybe the Smithsonian knows that answer. I don't.

MS. TROWBRIDGE: I'm Ann Trowbridge, associate director for planning at the Smithsonian.

We have here Debra-Nauta Rodriguez from the zoo, and she can perhaps address the

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stormwater question that you have.

MS. RODRIGUEZ: The stormwater management strategy for the zoo was described in the Master Plan in 2008.

I don't know the particulars of the technical intent of stormwater management at this site yet. We just started developing it, but the concept is to do a filtering bioswale.

I do have an architect here. He might be able to answer more of the technical questions. But, again, we are just at the concept and we intend to follow the intention of the Master Plan in terms of best management practices for stormwater quality and runoff.

COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Mr. Provancha.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: Couple of questions. What about the requirement or the strong recommendation to do additional landscaping?

As previously demonstrated, this

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is almost invisible as is from Rock Creek and some of the other adjacent roads. I'm struggling with the value of putting additional landscaping in. Appreciate trying to offset the loss of some trees.

Is the guardrail that would be on top of the proposed retaining wall, is that required?

There's not a sidewalk along there, right? There's a vehicle barrier, and then some distance, and then a guardrail?

Is there a requirement to have that guardrail? I'm just looking at the additional expense.

MS. TROWBRIDGE: Yes, the one rail is a typical vehicular guardrail. The other railing is a higher rail that would prevent somebody from accidentally falling over the wall.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: Well, are folks transiting the ornamental grass patch so that they would be immediately adjacent to the

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top of the retaining wall?

MS. KELLY: There's no sidewalk in this location currently. So, if they may be walking -

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: If it's required, my suggestion is just to extend the height of the vehicular guardrail.

Couple of other thoughts. This current timber shoring/retaining wall looks like it's lasted at least 35 years, which is remarkable.

In our experience, typically what causes these things to fail is water infiltration if appropriate dewatering on the load side of the wall is not maintained.

I doubt that this was a sprinklered area. I'm sure it's naturally irrigated.

MS. TROWBRIDGE: Yes, it's just a scrub landscape area.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: Right. So, we didn't have any kind of a drainage

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system to pull that water away.

What our experience has been, that's what causes walls to fail is the additional load not only from the soil, but once the soil is moistened, you know, there's additional lateral loads.

MS. TROWBRIDGE: Yes, I mean, there is runoff, I'm sure, from the road. It was never meant to be there for anywhere near this long. So, it wasn't built as a normal -

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: I'm struggling also with expense.

Why would we want to put something permanent that does not then become incorporated into the structure of the garage?

It sounds like - it seems like an unnecessary and additional expense especially with the garage being so far out, unfunded.

Is the garage in the Master Plan?

MS. TROWBRIDGE: The garage is in the Master Plan. And in the Master Plan, it was assumed that the garage and the wall would

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be built at the same time.

We didn't have any detail of whether there were two walls or one. But because of the failing conditions of the GSB and the critical nature of that building, it is where we feed our animals.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: I understand and respect that.

Is a temporary - is a temporary repair of the -

MS. TROWBRIDGE: Temporary repairs have been made. We really need to now make a permanent repair.

Let me introduce Don Pruitt from Quinn Evans Architects, who is the design architect for this project.

MR. PRUITT: Good afternoon. I'm going to go back and answer your - see if I can add some additional information to your temporary shoring question.

There are two failures in the temporary shoring walls. The first failure is

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the temporary wood lagging. The second is the tendons. The rock anchors are now failing.

And that has allowed for the earth loads to push against the general structure and causing a slight tipping and overturning.

We've had to do an emergency structural repair to the building already.

The intent of the - moving forward with the retaining wall now, is to remove the entire earth load off the general structures - General Services Building structure so that we can stabilize it and then go into the structure itself and do a structural repair so we can stop the damage.

Hopefully, that answers that question.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: Okay. It does.

MR. PRUITT: Okay.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: The setting for the zoo in the Rock Creek Park, I think, is unique perhaps in the nation. Rock

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Creek is the fourth oldest national park in the nation and really has a valued and historic ecosystem.

I would hope that the preservation of that ecosystem to the maximum extent is also part of the planning for this project.

MR. PRUITT: We're currently and consistently moving forward with exploring our options for that.

One of them is the aesthetic quality of the wall and how to have it integrate into that Rock Creek Basin.

The other is with the hillside gone and the vegetation gone, introducing more native vegetation and allowing it to percolate and filter water returning back into the Rock Creek.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: Good. Commend the idea to put cast-in-place concrete that then would simulate the natural stone, but still wrestling with the idea that perhaps by '17 or '18 it will be completely concealed.

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Thank you.

MR. PRUITT: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Can I ask a follow-up question, Mr. Pruitt?

Is the areas where there is this pressure, the loads are overcoming the temporary shoring, is that along the entire length of the building?

MR. PRUITT: It's along the entire length of the building.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Okay. And is there currently shoring along the entire length?

MR. PRUITT: There is currently three primary locations of shoring. Two timber, one concrete. All three are failing.

To clarify, I would say 70 percent of the length is being retained with temporary or the one concrete retaining wall that you saw the painted mural on.

The other is natural earth, which is allowing for stormwater runoff to go down

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into the south retaining wall of the General Services Building causing water infiltration into the building, and deterioration of existing reinforcement steel.

COMMISSIONER MAY: I don't have any more questions, but I'm ready to start talking about the EDR and make some comments.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: You have the floor.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Okay. First of all, I understand completely the structural issues and the need to undertake repairs or a permanent fix in this circumstance, but I am very, very concerned about the prospect of erecting a maximum 52 foot, or roughly, high retaining wall in this circumstance with no sense of how things are going to turn out in the end.

I mean, at this moment - well, first of all, going back to the Master Plan, the Park Service reviewed the Master Plan and we understood the need for the parking garage

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and understood that this area would be dealt with and that there would be a design process having to do with the parking garage, much like I think there was in 1975 when the original General Services Building and parking garage were proposed.

But not, as I understand it, I mean, there was more to happen with that parking garage that was never built, and I'm just concerned that we don't have any greater certainty at this point that the parking garage will ever be built.

I mean, it's six or seven years into the future in terms of the Smithsonian's planning. And attitudes toward vehicle parking in public sites like this are changing. And I'm just not totally convinced that the need is going to be the same and that the demand will be the same or that the money will be there when we get to that point.

This does not put aside the fact that it has to be fixed. I understand that it

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has to be fixed, but we are creating an unsightly and very large retaining wall in a circumstance where we just don't know how long it's going to be there.

And, you know, as nice as you can make a retaining wall look, it's still going to be a retaining wall.

And it's retaining on the north side of the hill. So, you're going to have a 50-foot wall with trees and a swale trying to grow below that with limited sunlight.

It's far from an ideal circumstance, and it still makes me very concerned.

Now, fortunately, I also understand that we are at the concept stage. I think the staff has made appropriate comments about this. I know that the Commission of Fine Arts and the State Historic Preservation Office are also involved and are looking at this very carefully. And there are concerns about what's planted there and how we

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will address this.

I just, you know, I support the EDR, but I just want to register that ongoing concern that we're going to have a large, unsightly retaining wall.

And contrary to Commissioner Provancha's comment, I do think it will be very, very visible.

I think that photo views like this where you're looking through trees and the lighting isn't great and the lights all are up here, yes, it's hard to see through that to see what layer of trees constitute that slope.

But, you know what? When there's a retaining wall there, you're going to see it bright as day. And if you go out on site, I think you'll get an appreciation of that.

And so, I'm just very, very concerned about what this is going to look like particularly if it could wind up being there 30 years before it gets addressed.

So, those are my comments.

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COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: I concur with Commissioner May on a couple of things.

It's my understanding that this retaining wall is significantly larger and longer than the existing retaining wall. So, the size and the scope is one issue.

On the issue of visibility, some of my staff transit this road every day going back and forth to work in a variety of conditions. And based on their testimony, the visibility is almost nil, with all due respect to the photos and the lighting here.

COMMISSIONER MAY: And our staff has gone out and photographed it themselves and looked at it and they believe it will be very visible.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: And these appear to be winter, fairly recent with denuded trees, as opposed to full foliage.

MS. KELLY: It was yesterday.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: That's current enough. Commend the staff for their

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timely information.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Mr. Hart.

MR. HART: I understand Mr. May's concern about the appearance of this however long it takes before something else comes up in front of it, but I did hear that one of the notions was to put screening on the face of this retaining wall in order to provide a trellis for vines or some other kind of vegetation to cover it up.

And I've seen that happen on some sound barriers around the various beltways. So, I'm not quite as concerned that it's going to be a permanent eyesore.

It's going to be a big structure, no doubt. But I think since this is a preliminary concept, these kinds of comments can be taken into consideration.

MR. PRUITT: And what I'd like to add is the 50-foot point is at the very - where the wall turns. And by the time you get to the east edge or the east side of the

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elevator tower, you're down into the lower 40/upper 30-foot in height.

Associated with this in our ongoing efforts to try and minimize some of this verticality, we've looked at in some areas depending upon where the rock profiles do come out, it's not a flat line at the base of the wall. There is going to be some undulation going on.

Where the undulation occurs and where we have good soil, that's where our tree clusters will be planted. It's difficult to plant a tree on top rock.

So, we're trying to also determine where we have deep soil locations so we can put good cluster trees in those locations.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Mr. Miller.

COMMISSIONER MILLER: Yes, I just wanted to ask the staff what were the Fine Arts Commission's comments? They met last week on this?

MS. KELLY: They did meet. They

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kind of took a no-action on it. They want to go out to the site and see the site.

They did have questions on the patterning on whether or not that will look very natural.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: Question mostly to council on how to vote, if we concur with, say, two out of the three recommendations, how would you issue a vote on that?

MS. SCHUYLER: We would amend the EDR.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: Amend?

MS. SCHUYLER: Would amend the EDR.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: Either amend or say "no" to all.

MS. SCHUYLER: Yes.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Mr. Chairman, I would just move the EDR.

COMMISSIONER HART: Second.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: It's been moved and seconded. Discussion on the motion?

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Hearing none, all in favor of approving the EDR as presented, say "aye."

(Chorus of ayes.)

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Opposed, no?

The EDR is approved. Thank you very much.

The last item on the agenda, Item Number 5D, is the Master Plan amendment and north parking garage at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

We have Mr. Hart. Welcome.

ACTION ITEM NO. 5D

**VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTER, WASHINGTON,
D.C. - MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT - NORTH PARKING
GARAGE AND WELLNESS CENTER UPDATES**

MR. HART: Thank you. Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman, and members of the Commission.

The Department of Veterans Affairs has submitted a Master Plan modification and preliminary and final site and building plans for Phase 1 of the visitor parking garage at

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the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in northwest D.C.

The modification to the 2010 Master Plan is to reconfigure the proposed parking garage in the northwest quadrant of the site. And this proposed parking garage is along Irving and First Streets.

The proposed parking garage would require, as you see in this drawing, would require a change in the footprint of the Wellness Center, which is to the east, and also require a change to the setting of the Fisher House. And the Fisher House is located here in the center.

The VA has submitted the first phase of the visitors parking garage, and they will be submitting subsequent phases of the parking garage in the future.

The parking garage is part of a larger plan to add structured parking to the campus and remove surface parking from the campus.

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There is another parking garage, the southern parking garage, which is down at the corner of Michigan and First Street. And that is a long-term project in the Master Plan that's not expected to be realized for 15 to 20 years.

This is a bird's eye view looking at the VA Medical Center. The Medical Center is here in the right-hand portion of the slide.

The Fisher House, which actually isn't shown on this slide, but is under construction, is to the left of the main building and located in the parking lot.

The parking garage that's proposed in front of us today, is outlined here in the red line on the image. The surface parking to the south or to the right would remain.

The proposal is - the Phase 1 of the proposal is this portion down here. 357 parking spaces for visitors on three floors. One above ground. Two underground. The

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materials used are precast concrete panels with brick insets.

The future phases are shown in this slide with a total of 1,012 total visitor parking spaces, and six floors above ground. Again, two floors below ground.

You also see in this slide, one of the two vertical towers for circulation for visitors as they're walking out of the parking garage and into the Medical Center itself.

Staff has identified planning concerns that you see here. The Wellness Center Building massing, Fisher House setting and the Irving Street retail, as well as views from the Armed Forces Retirement Home as the main issues.

Here, we have the side-by-side images of the 2010 Master Plan with the 2011 Master Plan modification that's before you.

You'll notice that the change in the configuration of the parking garage in the modification, again, would require a change in

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the Wellness Center footprint.

The Wellness Center itself in the 2010 Master Plan was actually a long-range element in the Master Plan. And as such, there was no real programming that was associated with it.

A change in the footprint would not require - would not be a really negative affect or impact.

The setting of the Fisher House would change, and there would be also views to the west from the Fisher House after the reconfigured parking garage was built.

Because the - I also talked about retail in the 2010 Master Plan. The VA stated in the plan that there was an opportunity for retail along Irving Street. That will still remain in the 2011 modification.

And this would be done through an enhanced use lease that the VA would have to - a leasing process the VA would have to go through.

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Under both of the master plans, the amount of green space would actually increase from the existing condition. And this is primarily because the surface parking generally is being removed and then replaced with the structured parking that you see here.

This slide shows the images from the Armed Forces Retirement Home. This plan in the lower left of the slide shows View A, which is from here.

This is the parking garage at the VA Medical Center and where Irving Street is.

And this is the Armed Forces Retirement Home site, and View A is from up here looking down.

View B is from an area that's a little south of that first image.

The arrows that you see on the photographs show where the parking garage would be located.

The D.C. State Historic Preservation Office stated a concern about being able to see the top levels of the

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parking garage. Because of the topography and the tree line, those would be the only levels that would be visible.

As these top levels are not part of this proposal that's before you today, staff finds that this issue is not a concern yet. But as the subsequent phases of the project are submitted, that they need to be addressed at that time.

For the National Environmental Policy Act, the VA issued a FONSI dated January 28th, 2011. And after staff reviewed the materials, the Executive Director issued a FONSI dated February 24th of this year.

Under the National Historic Preservation Act, the D.C. State Historic Preservation Office determined that the project would not have an adverse affect on the historic Armed Forces Retirement Home if the top level of the parking garage would be screened. And the VA is willing to look at the types of screening for the top floor.

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And with that, the Executive Director recommends that the Commission approve the Master Plan modification for the Veterans Affairs Medical Center, approve the preliminary and final site and building plans for Phase 1 of the North Parking Garage at the VA Medical Center, and require that as the VA submit future phases for the parking garage, it addresses concerns raised by the District of Columbia State Historic Preservation Office regarding minimizing the effect of building height and views of the top of the parking garage level from the Armed Forces Retirement Home site by including a screen on the top level of the parking garage.

That concludes my presentation.
I'd be happy to answer any questions.

[INSERT - VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTER]

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COMMISSIONER TREGONING: Mr. Hart, you mentioned three concerns in your initial analysis. One of them was Irving Street retail, but there's nothing about it in the actual EDR or the report, and I missed maybe where you spoke about it.

What was your concern and what's your conclusion about this submittal?

MR. HART: Just that there is still - as they reconfigure the building, that there's still an ability to have retail along Irving Street.

And including a footprint is such that the 2010 Master Plan had the ability to have retail along Irving Street, and this retains that ability to do that.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: And remind me was there a commitment in the Master Plan to have the retail there and was it for both the Wellness Center and the garage, or was it the garage alone?

MR. HART: It was for both, and it

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was - it wasn't a commitment. They were saying that they'd have to go through this enhanced use lease process, and that required them to go through a process of getting rid of the - of surplus. Excuse me. I was trying to think of the word. Accessing the land prior to doing that.

And so, what they've said that they would do would at least allow the space to be able to do that if that opportunity came in the future.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: And that's the process by which the garage is going to be constructed?

MR. HART: No, no. The garage is there on their property. And this would be - the retail would be something that would be a -

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: In front of the garage between Irving Street and the garage.

MR. HART: Yes.

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COMMISSIONER TREGONING: Okay.

MR. HART: And they said that they would allow the, I guess, the wall of the garage to be their security fence on that side of the parking garage.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: And you concluded that this change does no violence to that idea. Okay.

Another question that I - or maybe it's more of a comment. We went through considerable pain to approve the Armed Forces Retirement Home Master Plan some time ago. And Irving Street was a big discussion, what happened to activate it.

So, I do recall in the approval of this Master Plan, we had a similar conversation.

For the city maybe for reasons that are obvious, some larger concentration of university and medical facilities in this area and our focus on employment has become a real area of renewed interest for the city.

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We have south of this site on Michigan Avenue, the - I don't know. Is that actually south or is that west?

MR. HART: It's south.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: It is south. The McMillan Reservoir redevelopment that's happening where we're also fronting retail on Michigan Avenue.

So, I think it ends up just being very important that, you know, that we work cooperatively with all the different components of this facility to try to get a more live/work environment that has amenities particularly since the city is now considering possibly accelerating its transit investment, moving up the transit investment in this area and improving transit services on Irving and Michigan, you know, in particular.

So, I'll just kind of make that comment and I'm trying to decide if there's anything else we want to say in the approval that reiterates our support for future retail

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along Irving Street.

So, let me ponder that while others see if they have any other comments.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Mr. Hart.

COMMISSIONER HART: I share the same kind of observation with Commissioner Tregoning regarding my recollection of the prior approval of the Master Plan, including a provision for retail along Irving Street at the base of the garage.

What I'm hearing now is that the retail is not incorporated in the garage footprint. It would be outside the garage footprint.

MR. HART: That's correct.

COMMISSIONER HART: And when I look at these plans, as an architect I know that there are certain dimensions you really need in order to have a certain type of building work, and the dimension looks awfully small.

My suspicion is that we'll never see retail given that configuration. It's

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just too narrow. There's no place for servicing. It looks like it's 20 feet, maybe 25 feet deep at best.

MR. HART: They have from the edge of the face of the curb, they have 70 feet. From the edge of the inside of the sidewalk, you know, to this building is 60 feet.

COMMISSIONER HART: What is the dimension between the building line and the face of the garage?

MR. HART: I can't give you the exact. I know it's about 40 feet or so. I don't know exactly.

COMMISSIONER HART: That's getting down to a dimension that's unworkable for normal retail.

I'm looking at the Master Plan approved in 2010 and this new one, and I have some other observations.

The previous Master Plan showed a parking garage with a bridge connection into the main hospital complex.

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This new proposal pushes the parking garage as far to the north as possible showing no bridges whatsoever and big surface parking in between.

What was the rationale for not locating the parking garage closer to where the people are going and maintaining a bridge connection for an all-weather access?

Was that ever discussed?

MR. HART: The connection is - it is true that there was a connection, albeit a fairly long connection, that you're seeing here.

You know, the parking is part for the Fisher House, part for the main building.

And there is a, you know, I guess the sidewalk that is being developed, I guess, along in front west of the Fisher House.

Yes, I don't think that the - I think that really it's about trying to bring the edge of the buildings out to the, you know, to the - closer to the street as opposed

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to pulling this in.

I think it's been a hard design process to think about where is the best location for this, because it is such a - one of the pieces of the plan that - it's difficult to locate.

I mean, there's not a lot of back doors to this site. And I think they were having a hard time with -

COMMISSIONER HART: Yes, I'm reacting to some of the design decisions. And if I were to modify the Master Plan, I probably would have brought that parking garage and spanned the entry drive into the site so that you brought the parking garage as close as possible minimizing the bridge length, and making it that much more proximate to the primary requirements, which I would assume is the main hospital complex.

I think that pushing the buildings out as far as you can to the outside building line compromises the potential for future use

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of that extra area for retail.

I think that if retail is a true consideration for the future, then additional work needs to be done to properly dimension that reserve and make sure that we're not boxing ourselves into an unworkable solution.

Thank you.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: Can I add to that a little bit?

I would be the first to acknowledge that we don't have the enhanced transit on Irving Street. There is nothing going on across the street at Armed Forces.

If you put retail in today, it would be highly unlikely to be successful. So, you know, I understand that's kind of a difficult situation. But I also with Commissioner Hart, agree that we might be making decisions now that absolutely preclude it from being successful in the future. And I'm wondering if that's a good move.

I don't know where people who work

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here or who visit here go to eat, go to have dinner, go to, you know, I'm sure they do have a cafeteria. But, I mean, I know having visited a patient here, you know, walking under the cloverleaf and down to, I mean, you know, sometimes you feel like you need to get off the hospital campus or the feeling that you're in the hospital, you know.

I think more choices would probably be appreciated by the people who work there and who visit there. That being said, I don't know that we're doing ourselves any favor right now with this.

Can we maybe hear from the applicant about the urgency of this approval and see if there's anything that might be able to be done that would not preclude some of these choices in the future?

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Hi. Welcome. Please identify yourself.

MR. MOORE: Anthony Moore with the Veterans Administration.

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CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Welcome.

MR. MOORE: Some of the critical, I guess, needs for the parking garage, right now we, as you know, the Fisher House is under construction right now. And that's actually eliminating some existing parking for our patients and visitors.

We also have the domiciliary, which is Building G in the corner there. And that's actually eliminating some additional parking spaces now also.

So, parking is critical on the campus beyond the additional growth that's going to occur as far as the Master Plan activity, but we have an immediate need or immediate deficit in parking. So, it's critical that we have the parking there and in place.

The retail, it's a beneficial element for, you know, the residence, the visitors at the hospital. It's not part of our primary mission.

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So, you know, we obviously want to accommodate it as development along Irving Street does occur. So, we've provided that zone.

The primary, you know, the development that is, I guess, closer on the forefront would be the McMillan development and Armed Forces, because that's part of their primary development, what they're looking for in their planning.

Maintaining the strip along Irving Street provides an opportunity for, you know, us to respond once that actually occurs.

And actually the portico kind of between the Wellness Center and the garage itself, that was designed - if you can kind of identify that, that was - part of the element or part of the reason what was designed was to actually provide an entrance point for the retail as it occurred.

So, kind of instead of going around Irving Street from First Street and

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looping around, it actually provides kind of a connection point to the retail.

So, we're definitely, you know, responding to the need for retail on that side of the facility.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: Could you elaborate when you say connection point for retail, what are you -

MR. HART: Well, I think what he was looking at is the - currently the main entry or main lobby is here for the building.

And there's a sidewalk that leads to a plaza.

And the issue is whether or not there'd be a connection because of the road that's coming here -

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: I see.

MR. HART: - would there be a connection possible -

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: And it's a pedestrian pathway, in any event, that could lead people to Irving-fronted retail that occurs adjacent to your garage.

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MR. HART: Correct. In this case, we don't really have that really straight, you know, connection that's there.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: Agreed. I think that is a better design from that perspective.

Do you recall what's the retail frontage? What's the lot that's left to build on in front of your garage between -

MR. MOORE: I don't have the exact, but I think Carlton was correct. So, about 40 feet deep. And then we've got - I'm not sure of the exact span. I know it would cover the span of the garage, as well as the span of the wellness and retail center.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: So, what's your plan south of the structured parking on what is now the rest of that surface parking lot? What's that going to be?

MR. MOORE: That will be surface parking. And later in the future, we'd be able to actually eliminate some of that

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surface parking, you know, use it as green space.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: But what would you say to pushing your garage back on the site a little bit? Back maybe, I don't know, another 20 feet. So, instead of 40 feet, you had a 60-foot depth for retail in the front.

MR. MOORE: Some of the concerns would be immediately - the way the project is actually phased, for the first two phases we will - the first phase we'll have the surface parking that's critical to the actual parking overall count as is on the second phase.

So, pushing the building over, we'd actually lose at least a full row of parking in that process.

Also, we're trying to, you know, maintain the visibility. We didn't want to kind of create a closed in entrance, so to speak, to the main hospital.

Fisher House is placed there, you

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know. By closing that in and bringing that in, you kind of block the views. And the intent of the Fisher House was actually to, you know, a place that's kind of like home. As you had mentioned, a place to get away from the, quote/unquote, hospital environment.

But by bringing the building in, you kind of, you know, encompass into the Fisher House and -

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: What's the height of your parking levels?

MR. MOORE: The current height - well, the final height, I believe, is 60 feet, and the existing building is -

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: Each level.

MR. MOORE: Oh, each level? I believe it's ten. I don't have the figures right in front of me - oh, 11 feet. Excuse me.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: 11 feet. I'm wondering if you could redesign the

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parking garage maybe to give yourself - maybe you cantilever over the top.

Let's say you had a 12 or 14-foot first level cantilevered over. Maybe that doesn't change the footprint, so we only - your retail on Irving Street isn't going to be multilevel. It's just going to be on the first floor.

MR. MOORE: It depends on how a developer wants to - would develop it, yes.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: Unlikely, though, especially at 40 feet in depth. Unlikely to be, you know, something multistory. Just the circulation alone within that 40 feet is not going to be so great.

But, anyway, you can see where I'm going, right? Are there other ways to address your parking issues, but also make sure that a more standard lot depth would remain that would be attractive to future retail?

MR. MOORE: I don't know that we could move it to, I mean, we could perhaps

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look at, you know, a general shift. Once again, it really impacts the number of parking.

And with parking being a critical concern in that section of the campus, that's the primary entrance where we have our visitors and our patients. So, any reduction in parking on that side of the campus is a major impact.

MR. HART: There's also an issue of just slope. I mean, you're sloping down from the intersection here down towards this space. So, it's going to be, again, the slope is going to be hard to make the - the retail is going to be hard to put in on that slope as it is in general.

I'm not sure if it's going to be - how difficult it would be to actually make the retail fit into the parking garage and it may be actually - it may have actually happened on two levels, but I think that that's going to be something to look at in the future.

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COMMISSIONER TREGONING: I don't know. I mean, I feel like we haven't really kind of looked at it. And I do think if it's only 40 feet, I don't know of a retail frontage, you know, that could be in a - unless it was like a pushcart or something like that.

MR. MOORE: Well, typical retail down around Georgetown is a relatively old area. So, you're kind of working with existing depths. But a lot of the retail in that particular area is - it's a shorter duration. Shorter, you know, footprint.

You know, with creativity once you have the second level opportunities, in urban setting, typically a second level in a building or in a, you know, if it's retail being sales or restaurants, multiple-level retail isn't uncommon in the city. So, it would be an opportunity to do that.

I understand it creates the need for additional creativity, but that's some of

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what we're looking for.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: Many retailers would not consider this Georgetown equivalent.

MR. MOORE: True, true.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: You know, and -

MR. MOORE: Although, that would - I would hope that would be the goal in the planning for it to be that popular.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: You know, I like how you're setting the bar high. I like that, you know. I don't know what to tell you.

I hate to not give you an approval that you need to have. I suppose I could suggest that we defer this item a month, give us a chance to talk and see what we might be able to do.

Maybe it would even be on the Consent Calendar in a month, but give us the opportunity to see what we can do to maybe try

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to not have you lose any parking, but also accommodate a little bit more of a conventional development footprint for retail.

MR. MOORE: Right. Now, one thing we can look at is the Wellness Center, because that - because of the programming, where we are in the programming for that building, there's a lot of opportunities there.

So, you know, reconfiguring that particular building - and what Carlton was saying with the slope on the - at the parking garage at Irving Street side, it actually makes that area, I guess, less favorable for retail.

But the Wellness Center is on a flatter section of Irving Street, so it does, you know, provide greater opportunity for, you know, retail or to reconfigure the depth, you know, in that particular section and provide balance.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: I totally hear you, but the problem is that you've kind

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of - you've expanded the frontage that's parking relative to the Wellness Center.

So, you know, so we might be missing the chance for half the retail that we might have hoped to have if we can't kind of figure this out, but your point is a good one.

We haven't precluded that for the Wellness Center.

But as I understand it because this part is the VA part - or not?

MR. MOORE: What is?

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: Is the Wellness Center run by the VA?

MR. MOORE: Yes.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: You know, so you have your security issues; is that right?

MR. MOORE: Yes, security issues would come in with all the other projects just the same.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: So, it's not really like it could actually be

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incorporated in the Wellness Center. It would be more like there would be -

MR. MOORE: There would be a separation between the two, yes.

The Wellness Center would allow - it would allow us to bring the Wellness Center further away from Irving Street to provide a larger footprint for retail.

But, yes, the retail would be developed under enhanced use lease where it would be, you know, a different - or it would be an entity that would develop it as retail.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: All right. Well, even if that was the case, that's not shown in this Master Plan modification. So, I mean, I'm just saying if we wanted to give a greater lot depth for retail in the Wellness Center relative to the garage, that we're kind of not calling that out.

But let me ask you do you think we could get any further in some conversations over the next month?

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MR. MOORE: I know timeline wise with our funding, it's kind of critical that we -

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: Are you ARRA funded?

MR. MOORE: What is that?

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: Are you ARRA funded?

MR. MOORE: It isn't ARRA funded.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: No?

MS. SCOTT-BEDFORD: Hi. Odeal Scott from the VA. We are not ARRA funded. However, this is a prior approved project from 2009. If we do not obligate the money by September 30th of this fiscal year, we lose the project.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: And what does a month delay do to your ability to obligate?

MS. SCOTT-BEDFORD: Well, before I address the month delay, I want to address some of your concerns you had about retail.

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So, Carlton, as well as Anthony, alluded to the enhanced use lease process. We cannot - we do not have authority to pre-access land.

In order for you to go through the enhanced use process, enhanced use lease associated with retail space or selling or giving away of your land, you have to first determine you have additional or excess land.

When you make the determination you have excess land, you are no longer allowed to pursue any leasing opportunities with anyone.

That would cause us problems as we continue to expand our outpatient clinics throughout the community.

That basically says we have enough space on campus to provide all the services we need to our patient, and we no longer need to go into the community and provide space.

That's the first part of it from enhanced use leasing. Again, we are not

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allowed to pre-access space.

If we show retail space in our Master Plan as you see it depicted in a box - how we're boxing space here - excuse me - blocking space to show the VA buildings, we would then say, again, we have excess land. Our primary mission is not to provide retail space.

We do want to be a partner with the community. We do understand the need to involve the community on campus. But, again, we cannot make retail space a larger priority than we have for patient care.

What would another month do to this project? It's going to; one, delay us from a contractual standpoint. It takes us about four to five months to get through a contractual process.

We are not completed on this project because we do not have approval from NCPC, and it would, again, cause severe delay.

It would continue to have delays for parking

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for our patients, which mean it would be one more month where we could not deliver parking to the patients.

But, again, it would seriously jeopardize our ability to get this project from a long-term standpoint.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: Let me understand what you said in your very first statement, which sounded like you were saying as long as you have any kind of treatment programs in the community, that you would never be able to declare any part of this site excess space.

MS. SCOTT-BEDFORD: So, what I'm saying is you're asking why can't we show retail space on the Master Plan.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: I didn't actually ask that, but I just wanted to make sure that you had sufficient lot depths with what was left over, that it would accommodate a conventional retail -

MS. SCOTT-BEDFORD: We can't - go

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ahead. Excuse me.

As long as we say, again, talking about a community standpoint, from a community standpoint and services, we cannot go in and say we are going to set aside land for retail purposes only. We cannot do that. And that's part of the VA directives as it relates to enhanced use leasing.

We can do enhanced use leasing if we can show it has a benefit, the primary benefit is the Medical Center, and our secondary benefit is the community.

So, we can say as Anthony said before, in the Wellness Center we can say, okay, we can modify the Wellness Center, perhaps maybe have some retail space in there that may not be open at night, but could be open to the community during the day for lunchtime, for breakfast purposes.

But, again, we cannot - it's difficult for us to declare retail space that will be used not necessarily around the clock,

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but would be used after normal business hours at the Medical Center. That will present a problem.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: Because you don't have any employees who are there, you don't have a hospital and employees that are there in the evening?

MS. SCOTT-BEDFORD: We do have employees that are there in the evening, but there's access - there's an access issue after hours.

We do not allow - most of our services are not open 24 hours at our medical center. Our canteen, our cafeteria are not open 24 hours.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: Wouldn't the retail be outside the security barrier?

MS. SCOTT-BEDFORD: Well, it would depend. If retail is in the security barrier, then there's a time frame associated with that as far as closing.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: Right, but

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I think it is intended to front Irving Street and be outside the security barrier.

MS. SCOTT-BEDFORD: If it's outside the security barrier and it does not impede us closing our fence, then the retail developer would then have the option of store hours.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: Okay. I don't want to delay your project, but I'm still kind of confused about whether or not, you know, I'm not asking you to show it on your plans, but whether or not your Master Plan modification that you're proposing can be reconfigured in any way to give more potential lot depth to future retail without necessarily losing parking.

MS. SCOTT-BEDFORD: I would say we do have some opportunities as it relates to the Wellness Center, but we do not have further opportunities associated with the parking garage.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: So, you're saying it's 40 feet, take it or leave it, on

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the parking garage, but perhaps something better in the Wellness Center area?

MS. SCOTT-BEDFORD: We do have opportunities in the Wellness Center.

COMMISSIONER HART: When this came before us in 2010, I was hearing what I thought was a firm commitment to incorporating retail. And what I'm hearing now is, well, we're not going to do retail unless we can excess that property, and we can't really excess the property unless we do these other things.

And so, I'm getting the feeling that we were a little bit misled.

MS. SCOTT-BEDFORD: We've always maintained that we have to follow the VA process for leasing. That is the VA's process for leasing.

So, we've always maintained in our Master Plan, we had to follow their process. We could not, not follow their process.

COMMISSIONER HART: So, on a scale

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of one to ten, how likely is it that we would have retail in the future?

MS. SCOTT-BEDFORD: I would say from the Wellness Center, I would say above five. And the only reason I can say above five, again, because of the VA leasing process.

Locally at the Medical Center, we do not control leases. That lease will be delegated to central office, and they will make a determination on the lease. But, again, there is flexibility at the Wellness Center site.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: But at the garage you're saying -

MS. SCOTT-BEDFORD: Not at this time.

COMMISSIONER HART: If I were a retail developer, I wouldn't necessarily like the Wellness Center site more than the parking garage site that you're showing now, but I would like that even less than a First Street

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site as shown on the Master Plan, where you would have bus and cars going past you, a lot slower traffic.

If I were to have designated a location for retail, it would have been on the west side of the campus on First Street, and I'm not sure why you've reconfigured the parking garage to phase it and put it so far to the north.

But if you had kept with the original footprint and layout as it was conceptually indicated in the Master Plan, I could see you phasing that parking garage in leaving the western most bay out. And that would be 60 plus feet deep, which would be ample depth for retail development as standalone development.

Now, I would imagine that a creative designer could allow for enhanced use lease as a footprint within a garage as lease space. You could define it legally and I'm sure the lawyers who are very good at these

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things, could figure out a way to make it an enhanced lease component.

I don't understand what's caused this change of configuration. And as a matter of refining the Master Plan, I would have encouraged you to look not so much on Irving Street, but on First Street.

Harriet?

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: Yes, like I say, I'm not happy. In some ways I like how you're better aligning with the proposal for the Armed Forces plan across the street, but I have no idea when and if that's going to be constructed. And this garage seems to have less potential to accommodate the retail that we talked about being highly desirable, isn't a step forward. It's a step backward.

COMMISSIONER HART: Could I ask is design already underway for the garage?

MS. SCOTT-BEDFORD: Yes, design is about 95 percent complete.

COMMISSIONER HART: Well.

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CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Elyse

COMMISSIONER GREENWALD: Ms.

Tregoning was trying to re-figure the garage's location on the campus.

Can you turn it the other direction so the length changes and so that the long side is not along Irving?

MS. SCOTT-BEDFORD: Not at this time.

COMMISSIONER GREENWALD: Okay.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: I mean, I don't know what the point is. If it's already designed, why even bring it to us if there's no chance for our comments to affect the outcome?

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Well, it is. I mean, they would just have to squander the design, I guess. But it's 95 percent designed, they say.

If we got final approval before us, we could not approve it.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: Well, I

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guess we could defer/deny.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Yes.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: Do you have a preference?

COMMISSIONER HART: I would deny it at this point.

COMMISSIONER GREENWALD: I just have a question. Just to understand, I mean, you guys are bumping up against the timeline and putting us in a position that I don't really think we should be in to do this last minute.

Can I get an understanding of a little bit of how long you guys have been working together to bring this to our attention?

MS. SCOTT-BEDFORD: We've been working two years, probably a year-and-a-half, two years on the Master Plan. And probably been working probably nine months on the parking garage.

MR. HART: Well, they were looking

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at the, I mean, this parking garage along with several other projects that were in the process.

And part of this, there was a concern that if this was moved in this configuration and moved down, then it would be in front of the Fisher House, which didn't seem like a really good way to go.

There is an existing surface parking lot that's there. Understanding what the issues are with the parking difficulties, I guess, that visitors have now, it seemed you would kind of lose all of this parking, as well as this parking for visitors once this construction started. That would be problematic, I guess, for the project.

And because we have gone through the kind of 2010 Master Planning process because of where this was already kind of located, it seemed like there was an approval from the Commission that that was the location for this; one, for this parking garage to be

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in. And it seemed like a better idea to have it closer to the street than closer to the - than inside the building away from the property line.

I understand what you're saying. It's - this seems like that it was the direction to go in as they were kind of moving forward with it.

And it's a parking garage. So, it wasn't like it would have, I guess, taken a long time to go through the actual design itself. And so they've, you know, submitted it for preliminary and final approval now.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: So, its location and its orientation is intended to maximize the surface parking that remains available during construction; is that correct?

MS. SCOTT-BEDFORD: Yes.

MR. MOORE: Actually, the orientation, we looked at a couple different scenarios. One actually provided a wider

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garage, but as we - the project's going to phased just because of the availability of funding.

This design actually provides the most spaces per phase as we progress, than any of the other options, you know.

Initially, I think we end up with a net gain of a hundred spaces if we design the garage a different way with, you know, a different footprint.

This footprint actually maximized - I think we end up with 220 additional spaces at the end of the day once we actually build it. So, that was one of the considerations that was, you know, put into the design, you know, placement of the garage in that location.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: In some ways, what you're asking us to do is kind of pit the parking and the need to especially in the short term, accommodate cars against the long-term viability of Irving Street as a good

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transit and pedestrian street.

MR. MOORE: Not necessarily. Actually, if you look at the current Master Plan and you look at this Master Plan as far as the depth, it doesn't change.

The current -

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: We have that it was 50 feet. We had that the buildable lots were 50 feet.

MR. MOORE: It didn't change. We basically just, you know, we aligned it basically at the same location.

The Wellness Center would have been in the footprint of where the garage is now. So, the depth has not changed from this master plan to the modification.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: Can you verify what that buildable lot depth is? 40 feet is less than what we had talked about during the Master Plan approval. It was at least 50 feet.

So, if it's 40 feet, then it has

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changed.

MR. MOORE: Let me check.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Let me ask while we're waiting, before us is preliminary and final.

Is there a reason the preliminary didn't come to us earlier?

MR. HART: No, there was no - sometimes we do have projects that come in as concept and preliminary and final, and there is no particular reason.

They're working on their Master Plan. They call it the Master Plan Amendment for the project because it didn't show this and there were some impacts to -

MR. MOORE: Yes, the footprint available for the retail is 55, and that's - with that, it's still giving about a ten-foot buffer between actual - let's see. Yes, it gives a ten-foot buffer - or, excuse me, a 20-foot buffer between the sidewalk - or between the lot and the actual street.

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COMMISSIONER TREGONING: Between the lot and the - so, that would include a sidewalk and anything else that would be there?

MR. MOORE: Right.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: But it's 55 feet from the back of the garage to the -

MR. MOORE: To the retail space footprint, yes.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: All right. To the building line. I think that's -

COMMISSIONER MAY: Do we even know that that's the building line? I mean, I'm a little uncertain.

That's the measurement to the actual street right-of-way, because the street right-of-way includes sidewalk and tree box and -

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: 75 feet to the curb.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Yes, 75 feet to the curb, but, I mean, what's the width of the

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right-of-way of Irving Street?

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: Don't know.

MS. SCOTT-BEDFORD: According to the Master Plan, we're showing - it's showing ten feet, then the street. It's showing a multilevel pedestrian and bike path. It's coordinated with the topography and retail space.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Yes, that doesn't give me total faith that the right-of-way has been properly measured, because the right-of-way might well go beyond that.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: All the way to the -

COMMISSIONER MAY: Beyond that. I mean, I understand the - when we look at this more closely than we maybe did during the Master Plan phase, that, yes, there's some serious things to question about it.

I mean, the placement of the building, you know, now, I mean, even the

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placement of the original parking garage and that long bridge and, you know, the - how it seems to foreclose any reasonable expectation of retail development around the north or the west perimeter, I mean, that seems pretty apparent now as we look at it.

And what you're doing now may comply with the Master Plan, which is probably why I think staff thought that doing preliminary and final was a sensible thing to do.

But I think the idea that we would actually some day get reasonably performing retail backed up against the parking garage there along Irving Street, I think that's - I don't think that's at all viable.

Now, whether it's something we, you know, we really need to hold up this project over at this moment, I don't know. I mean, I don't know how long it will be before there's enough economic vitality along Irving Street to be concerned about a parking garage.

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It could be 20 years and who knows how long, I mean, is this being built as a hundred-year parking garage or a 20-year parking garage, because sometimes there are only 20-year parking garages, you know.

So, I guess I'm not too troubled by the prospect of simply going ahead with this as it is. Although, it's far from the best in the way of planning and I would think that it would have been - it would have been good to see this in more detail sooner so we could have had some discussion on this and helped guide the development without derailing the project, which it seems that we are at the risk of doing. I don't know.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Ms. Greenwald.

COMMISSIONER GREENWALD: If I can move the conversation slightly away from the retail space, I also recall during the Master Plan conversation there was a discussion about how it would look to pedestrians on Irving Street as they walked. And the parking

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garage, I think we all agreed, is not fairly attractive.

Is there any work to be done to sort of maybe emulate - not to toot DHS' horn, but their Coast Guard parking garage has a lot of green growing off of it.

Has there been any thought into that?

MS. SCOTT-BEDFORD: As we move up the phases, what Carlton showed you all, I think, in one of the renderings -

COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Is there an elevation - do we have one that shows the Irving Street -

MS. SCOTT-BEDFORD: Carlton, could you go back one more slide to put it in perspective?

COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Right, but there's no full elevation.

MS. SCOTT-BEDFORD: Because this is showing the full parking garage, and this is where we actually - that's where we're

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actually building now.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: Doesn't look like there's much space. I mean, that's Irving in front, right?

MS. SCOTT-BEDFORD: Yes.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: From the sidewalk to the garage just based on the car length, doesn't look like 55 feet.

That could be architectural license -

MR. MOORE: It was designed to emphasize, you know, how it basically would look, you know, what the verticality is, the demonstration model.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: I mean, we could see a dimensional drive or we could put into our approval that it's conditioned on, you know, on having it 55 feet from the, you know, to the building line, you know, reserved.

And we don't have to say for what or we could say reserved for potential future

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retail or part of, you know, the Irving Street retail streetscape or whatever we would want to say.

PARTICIPANT: Sounds good.

(Laughter.)

COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: But then it could sit there. No, but then it - but if they have no intent to develop it, then it sits there as a would-be boulevard that is too wide and has a parking garage on it kind of, you know.

COMMISSIONER MAY: But if they don't build the retail, then you could plant a few more trees in front of the parking garage.

COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Well, there is that, yes.

(Laughter.)

COMMISSIONER MAY: Sycamores, maybe. I don't know.

COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: This is a mystery to me. I don't understand how this happened, how it gets here like this with so

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much that is unclear.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: The Chair will soon be open to a motion. But in the meantime, Mr. Acosta, did you have something?

MR. ACOSTA: Well, perhaps we should just verify a three-dimension drawing the depth that is going - since it's 95 percent designed, there is actual dimension that we could measure.

So, can we pull that just to verify for the record what's on the table today from the setback from Irving Street?

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: And as you're doing that, I can propose, if you'd like, how we would modify the EDR.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Hold off on that for a moment to see what Mr. Provancha has.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: Okay.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: Couple of questions. One is compliments to the VA for doing master planning and having a clear Master Plan. You stand out today. I'll leave

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it at that.

Modifying the Master Plan as circumstances change, I thought I heard the staff characterize the modifications as an improvement to the Master Plan, which is a good thing.

I'm concerned, though, about where the garage is ultimately going. Did I understand Phase 1, two levels below grade, one above?

MS. SCOTT-BEDFORD: Yes.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: Phase 2 is a couple more levels above. Phase 3 a couple more levels above ultimately ending with a six-story above-grade parking garage?

MS. SCOTT-BEDFORD: Yes.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: That's where the issue of view sheds, particularly the vehicles on the top if it's not covered, reflections from windshields and so forth back to the -

MS. SCOTT-BEDFORD: Yes.

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COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: -

retirement home. Again, I'm trying to calculate the numbers.

357 spaces in Phase 1, which I thought I heard was a net increase of 220. So, there's 137 surface parking spaces under the footprint of - okay.

I was concerned and surprised to hear that the leadership at the VA values parking higher than patient care areas.

I saw the shrinking footprint of the Wellness Center without compensating growth.

Can we go to the slide that shows the footprint of the Wellness Center? Looks like to me just visually it shrinks by 20 percent or so.

That's another issue. I'm concerned about the heights of the garage and the Fisher House and the domiciliary and the Wellness Center, to see if the Fisher House ends up in a canyon or a valley.

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Could you comment on the height of all those proposed buildings? Two floors probably for the Fisher House.

MR. MOORE: Yes, two floors for the Fisher House.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: Wellness Center is?

MR. MOORE: I think the Wellness Center is two to three floors.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: Two to three.

MR. MOORE: Yes.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: Domiciliary is?

MR. MOORE: Domiciliary is three floors total.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: Three floors. Okay. So, of the surrounding structures, ultimately the Fisher House will be the lowest?

MR. MOORE: Yes. And that's why we kind of wanted to maintain some distance in

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the front of it so it doesn't become in a canyon.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: Okay. Just struggling again with the size of the garage - oh, and this is also something - we haven't talked about parking ratios.

This is assuming that the VA stays within NCPC-approved parking ratios?

MR. MOORE: Yes, our overall law and goal with the Master Plan, is to achieve the - I believe it's the four-to-one ratio mandated by the NCPC.

It's achieved in our overall plan. It's not an initial - well, it's achieved in the phases after the -

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: Okay. So, by Phase 3 we will have achieved the four-to-one ratio?

MR. MOORE: Yes, that's the intent.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: But the visitor spaces are not included in that parking ratio.

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MR. MOORE: That four-to-one, I think, is relative to employees, if I'm not mistaken.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: Employees, right.

And the last thing on the award, why could we not still have an FY11 award with construction in `12 and `13?

MS. SCOTT-BEDFORD: Why could we not have an `11?

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: Sure.

MS. SCOTT-BEDFORD: For one, we do not have a complete design to send to contracting. That's one piece.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: Right, but you're at 95 percent of -

MS. SCOTT-BEDFORD: We're at 95 percent.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: Okay.

MS. SCOTT BEDFORD: And they are asking for once we get approval, they're still asking for four to six weeks to finalize the

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package.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: Right.

MS. SCOTT-BEDFORD: Once we finalize the package and send to contracting, that is roughly a 90 to 120-day process.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: Okay.

MS. SCOTT-BEDFORD: So, it starts to make it really tight to get toward a September 30th award.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: Tight, but not impossible.

MS. SCOTT-BEDFORD: Also, they take into account any protests we have and any additional review we have from legal and technical, because we have a legal review on the front end, and a legal review on the back end.

COMMISSIONER PROVANCHA: Sure. Understand. Okay. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: While we've been discussing it, I think they were trying to verify the dimensions for setback purposes

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should there be an amendment along those lines, and I would inquire as to where we are with that.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: Do you want to adjourn for a second?

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Yes, I don't know if we needed to or not. I mean, I'm assuming also the way its phased in its position, the adjacent surface parking, that's your laydown area during the construction period?

MR. MOORE: I believe we take one lane of surface parking.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: A portion of it. Okay. Mr. Hart, have you verified the dimensions?

Was that what you were doing or - do we need five minutes? Not that the Chair wants to prolong this, but -

MR. ACOSTA: Let's take five minutes to verify it.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Five minutes to verify that we may have an amendment. Then we

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can move on.

So, the Commission is at ease for five minutes.

(Whereupon, the proceedings went off the record at 3:23 p.m. and resumed at 3:32 p.m.)

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: We will resume discussion, and the floor belongs to Ms. Tregoning.

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: According to the Master Plan approval that we've located, what's specified in the drawings is a 65-foot setback from the property line.

So, I'd be willing to approve this preliminary and final site plan kind of as described on the second page of the EDR with the following amendment: With the 65-foot setback from the property line as specified in the approved Master Plan.

I could say that as a motion. I would like to move this amendment to the EDR.

COMMISSIONER HART: Seconded.

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CHAIRMAN BRYANT: It's been moved and seconded.

Any questions, any clarification needed on the proposed amendment?

Hearing none, all in favor of the amendment, say "aye."

(Chorus of ayes.)

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Opposed?

Now, before us is the EDR as amended. Further discussion on that? Any further discussion on the EDR as amended?

Is there a motion?

COMMISSIONER HART: Motion.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: It's been moved and -

COMMISSIONER TREGONING: Second.

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: - seconded that the EDR as amended be approved.

All in favor say "aye."

(Chorus of ayes.)

CHAIRMAN BRYANT: Opposed, no?

It's unanimous as amended. And

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that is the last item on our proposed two-hour meeting.

Anything else to come before the Commission?

Hearing none, the Commission is adjourned and we will rise.

(Whereupon, the meeting was adjourned at 3:33 p.m.)

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