

NCPC File No. 6838

TRANSFER OF JURISDICTION

Between the National Park Service and the District of Columbia

A Part of Reservation 495
9th Street Bridge at New York Avenue and the AMTRAK/CSX Railroad Yard
Northeast Washington, D.C.

Finding of No Significant Impact

AUG 28 2009

Pursuant to the Commission's Environmental Policies and Procedures to implement the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act, I have evaluated the transfer of jurisdiction between the National Park Service and the District of Columbia for transportation purposes at the 9th Street Bridge and New York Avenue in Northeast Washington, D.C., as shown on NCPC Map File No. 43.10(63.00)42527. After reviewing the environmental assessment, I have determined that the project will not have a significant impact on the human environment.

NCPC and the District of Columbia State Historic Preservation Officer have reviewed the project plans in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106 requirements and concur that the project will not have an adverse effect on the historic property.

Consequently, after review of the environmental assessment, I have determined pursuant to Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act, the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR, Parts 1500-1508), and NCPC's Environmental and Historic Preservation Policies and Procedures that the project would not significantly affect the quality of the human environment.



Marcel C. Acosta
Executive Director

Background

The National Park Service proposes to transfer jurisdiction of two portions of Reservation 495: one for transportation purposes and the other for conservation purposes. The reservation is located on the south side of the 9th Street Bridge at New York Avenue in Northeast, Washington D.C. The purpose of the transfer is to facilitate the construction of the new 9th Street Bridge over the AMTRAK/CSX railroad yard next to the existing bridge. The change of alignment to the west will allow the existing bridge to remain open during the 30 months of construction activity for the new bridge.

The proposed area to be transferred for transportation purposes is 22,551 square feet and is already under the jurisdiction of the District of Columbia, but for reservoir purposes. Thus, the change in use requires a new plat. As part of this transfer, NPS also proposes to transfer 23,087 square feet of Reservation 495 to the District of Columbia for conservation purposes.

The existing 9th Street Bridge was built in the 1940s and is in very poor condition. Temporary supporting braces are in place to allow vehicles to continue using the bridge, and weight restrictions limit the size of vehicles allowed to use it. Pedestrian access to and across the bridge is also unsafe. The new bridge will carry four lanes of traffic (the same as the existing bridge) and will provide two, nine-foot wide sidewalks.

NCPC has approval authority and independent responsibility under the National Environmental Policy Act and the National Historic Preservation Act for Federal projects in the District of Columbia. The District, in coordination with NPS, developed a substantial amount of environmental information as part of a categorical exclusion determination and NCPC used this information as an environmental assessment (EA) to analyze whether the proposal would significantly affect the environment. The EA was posted on the NCPC website for a 30-day public review period. No comments were received.

This environmental documentation is consistent with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA [40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1500-1508], and NCPC's Environmental and Historic Preservation Policies and Procedures (adopted April 1, 2004).

The District of Columbia State Historic Preservation Officer (DC-SHPO) has determined that the undertaking will not adversely affect historic resources. NCPC concurs.

The proposed action

The proposed action is to transfer jurisdiction of land from the National Park Service to the District for transportation and conservation purposes. The project includes:

- Demolition of the existing bridge after the new bridge is completed.
- Realignment and reconfiguration of access roadways to and from the bridge, including elimination of the sub-standard on/off ramps connecting westbound New York Avenue and 9th Street. All movements between New York Avenue and 9th Street will be

controlled via a signalized intersection at New York Avenue and the ramp from Brentwood Parkway/Mt. Olivet Road. The existing signalized intersection of Mt. Olivet Road, Brentwood Parkway, and 9th Street will be reconfigured. The substandard vertical profile of 9th Street will be improved to provide additional stopping sight distance for vehicles. The narrow sidewalks and difficult pedestrian crossing along 9th Street will be also be upgraded.

- Construction of a new bridge.

Potential impacts analyzed

NCPC staff has found that the proposed action will not significantly affect the human environment. The proposed action will have no negative impacts on the social and economic conditions of the local or broader communities. No homes, businesses, or public or private facilities will be relocated. Construction of the new bridge and demolition of the existing bridge will have no effect on the alignment or use of the Amtrak and CSX railroad tracks and yard space. The proposed action will have a positive effect on use of the bridge and adjacent roadways by both bicyclists and pedestrians. It will provide ADA-compliant sidewalks and realign the approaches to the bridge on an urban grid-like pattern, improving connections to the surrounding city sidewalk network.

The capacity of the proposed bridge will be the same as the existing bridge, and therefore no long-term impacts on traffic are expected to result from the replacement. Finally, the current bridge is visually unattractive because it is deteriorating. The proposed action would have a positive impact on the visual quality of the area by constructing a more aesthetically-attractive, modern bridge and reconfiguring the bridge's approaches in a manner more compatible with its urban setting and its location on New York Avenue, one of the city's major entrance routes.