

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

D. Hamilton

NCPC File No. 6334



**UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS BASE, QUANTICO
NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE MARINE CORPS
PRELIMINARY AND FINAL SITE AND BUILDING PLANS
Quantico, Prince William County, Virginia**

Submission by the Department of the Navy

October 30, 2003

Abstract

The Department of the Navy has submitted preliminary and final site and building plans for the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Quantico, Virginia. The proposed museum is intended to inspire, memorialize, educate, and inform a wide variety of visitors. The museum would house a variety of exhibits including large artifacts. The proposed museum is included in the Quantico Master Plan, which is the first part of an overall Marine Corps educational complex (Marine Corps Heritage Center) that would include outdoor exhibits, memorials, and ceremonial and demonstration areas.

Commission Action Requested by Applicant

Approval of preliminary and final site and building plans pursuant to Section 5 of the National Capital Planning Act (40 U.S.C. § 8722(b) (1)).

Executive Director's Recommendation

The Commission **approves** the preliminary and final site and building plans for the National Museum of the Marine Corps, Marine Corps Base Quantico, Prince William County, Virginia, as shown on NCPC Map File No. 2402.10(38.00)41251.

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BACKGROUND AND STAFF EVALUATION

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Department of the Navy (Navy) has submitted preliminary and final site and building plans for a National Museum of the Marine Corps (NMMC). The museum would be located at the Quantico Marine Base in Prince William County, Virginia. The installation is located on the west bank of the Potomac River and has access from Interstate Route 95 (I-95) in Virginia. Approximately 40 percent of the installation's land area is in Prince William County, 55 percent in Stafford County, and 5 percent in Fauquier County. Bound on the east by the Potomac River, the majority of the land surrounding the base consists of rural residential land uses with varying degrees of suburban development.

The site of the museum is between I-95 and U.S. Route 1, immediately south of Joplin Road. The building is sited on the high ground adjacent to I-95 and access is provided from Jefferson Davis Highway (U.S. Route 1). The site is currently undeveloped parkland. The entry road rises up and curves in a manner that leads to a turnaround that marks the access end of an axial roadway leading to the museum. This roadway is oriented to provide a focus for the museum and its entry and the entry plaza. Parking for 368 vehicles (including 14 handicapped spaces) is provided from the axial entry road. Visitor drop-off is provided with a drop-off area adjacent to a grand public plaza leading to the building's entry. Bus parking is provided along the outbound lane and can accommodate approximately seven tour buses.

The building is located at the north end of the site in close proximity to adjacent utilities and roadways. The design of the museum integrates the building into the earth by incorporating berms against the perimeter walls and by the use of "green" roof systems over significant portions of the building. The building would be comprised of two major portions—a Central Gallery skylight and the base of the building.

The Central Gallery Skylight

- The Central Gallery Skylight would be the dominant visual feature of the building and rise to a height of approximately 152 feet from the top of the base of the building. From grade, this element would rise approximately 200 feet.
- The finish material of this element would be glass and metal. The extending "mast" portion of this element would be a stainless steel clad structural box beam. Other structural members of the skylight would be metal panel cladding.
- The glass would be a green tinted high performance low-emission, insulating glass. It would be silicon glazed into an aluminum skylight framing system.

Base of Building

- The base of the building would primarily consist of cast-in-place concrete and metal wall panels. The exposed portions of the cast-in-place concrete walls would have an architectural finish above grade. The radial walls that extend outward define large emergency egress and artifact access points. The museum will house large artifacts.
- The entry façade would consist of a metal panel and glass storefront entry system. A portion of this system will be demountable to create a large opening for macro-artifacts. The macro-artifact path would travel over the entry plaza area so the proposal provides for plaza paving that would accommodate the vehicle loading of large vehicles.

Internal Organization

- The Central Gallery is designed to be the focal area of the two-level structure. Within this area, displays of marines and their equipment would honor the individual marine. This central space would be the organizing point from which visitors move to other gallery spaces and guest amenities such as a bookstore and restaurant. Meeting and classroom spaces for marine, community, and fraternal organizations would be located on the second level overlooking the Central Gallery. An administrative office area would also be located on this second level.

PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTIONS

At its April 3, 2003 meeting, the Commission approved the design concept for the proposed NMMC. At that time, the Commission requested that additional landscaping be provided in the parking area.

At its November 27, 2002 meeting, the Commission approved the revised master plan for the Marine Corps Base, Quantico. The proposal for a NMMC was included in the revised master plan.

On September 7, 2000, the Commission commented favorably on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Marine Corps Heritage Center, of which, the proposed NMMC was included.

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Applicant: Department of the Navy
Architect: Fentress Badburn Architects LTD
Cost: \$23,000,000
Schedule: Anticipate starting construction in December 2003 and completion in Fall of 2005.

EVALUATION

Staff recommends approval of the proposal:

- The approach of providing the museum as the central element of an overall cultural, research, and educational complex is comprehensive and desirable because it would consolidate these features into a campus-type development that is consistent with the future development plans for the installation.
- The parking area has been enhanced by the provision of additional trees along its southern perimeter. The northern perimeter will have additional trees and plantings when the future parade grounds and demonstration area is developed adjacent to the north of the parking area. Internally, additional shrub plantings have been provided to the east in the bio-retention area, which further screens and softens the parking area.
- The Navy advises that initial public introduction and display information about the NMMC will be located at the Washington Navy Yard so as to alert the public of this new cultural resource.
- The extensive use of earth berms and the green roof system should effectively and visually integrate the structure into the overall landscape. The signature skylight element creates a strong symbolic presence that can be seen from nearby roads (U.S. Route 1, I-95, and Joplin Road).

CONFORMANCE

Comprehensive Plan

The proposal for the NMMC is consistent with policies contained in the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital. The Federal Facilities Element designates the installation as a National Defense facility. The Quantico Marine Base occupies large acreage and is capable of accommodating future development needs including campus-type developments and educational and cultural activities. The Comprehensive Plan policy states that such developments locate:

In areas where there is adequate acreage for immediate and long-term needs and campus-type developments, and where geographical and land formations are uniquely suited to these operations...

Additionally, the Visitors Element of the Comprehensive Plan states that:

Pursue the development of additional museums in the Monumental Core, the District of Columbia, and federal facilities in the National Capital Region.

Further, a policy in the Location Criteria of the Comprehensive Plan states under Cultural, Memorial, and Information facilities that:

Special exhibition spaces, libraries and information centers should also be located at federal installations in the Region to provide information to the public; for example, the U.S. Marine Corps Museum, the U.S. Navy Museum, the National Agricultural Research Library, and the National Medical Library.

National Historic Preservation Act

The Navy has determined that there are no cultural resources in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places within the project's area of potential effect.

National Environmental Policy Act

Pursuant to the regulations implementing the National Environmental Policy Act, the Department of the Navy and the Marine Corps completed an Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision on the proposed museum on September 18, 2001.