

**U. S. NATIONAL ARBORETUM**  
**RESEARCH GREENHOUSE AND HEADHOUSE MODERNIZATION**  
3501 New York Avenue, NE

**Delegated Action of the Executive Director**

February 26, 2004

Pursuant to delegations of authority adopted by the Commission on October 3, 1996, I approve the preliminary and final site and building plans to construct a new headhouse and greenhouse for the U.S. National Arboretum, as shown on NCPC Map File No. 43.20(38.00)-41308.

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The Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service, has submitted preliminary and final site and building plans for a new greenhouse and its complementary headhouse for office space and research storage, in conformance with the November 2000 Commission approved master plan.

The submitted project site and building plans provide a new concrete foundation for the greenhouse, approximately 70 feet by 110 feet with partition walls to create 13 different research compartments and giving the combined appearance of two separate structures. A new headhouse structure will also be constructed which consists of approximately 3,500 square feet of office space and storage. An additional phase to the project would include modernization of the interior of the existing headhouse, Building 18. That work, however, is all interior renovation and does not impact the exterior except for replacement-in-kind maintenance activity.

The proposed site development would establish a new service drive alignment, along with new sidewalks, curbing, and a handicapped accessibility ramp. Accessibility would also be enhanced by a new sidewalk on the north side of the new combined greenhouse footprint. The project exterior finish materials, including exterior insulation wall finish and painted steel framed glass panels, are simple in forming the structures and are completely utilitarian in composition. The new headhouse is the same exterior finish (prefabricated exterior insulated wall finish) with a gray standing seam roof.

The proposed project plans are in conformance with the master plan location for the facility, which was approved by the Commission in November 2000. No new additional parking spaces are provided, except two handicapped accessible spaces.

The project, which involves less than 50,000 square feet of building floor area, would have no adverse impact on land uses or environmental resources of the general site.

The proposal is a portion of the master plan that involves land area of the arboretum that is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The D.C. State Historic Preservation Office concurred with the Department's determination that the project would have no adverse effect on historic properties. In conformance with its NEPA compliance procedures, the Department completed an environmental assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact for the project, as part of the master plan, in October 2000.

The Coordinating Committee reviewed the proposal on February 11, 2004, forwarding the proposal to the Commission with the statement that the project has been coordinated with all agencies except for the District of Columbia Office of Planning (DCOP). The representative for DCOP withheld coordination pending discussions with the Arboretum on the overall security needs for the facility. That office indicated its concern with issues of security at the National Arboretum in the context of the potential levels of security readiness identified by Arboretum management to DCOP, and the National Arboretum's need for a fully enclosed perimeter. NCPC staff, however, finds no change in any form of current security proposed by the submitted project preliminary and final site and building plans. The submitted project is an existing operational function of the USDA facility, at an existing location. The project is internal to the Arboretum campus and does not affect the Arboretum boundary perimeter and is not a facility available for public entry or use. Consequently, the concern of the Office of Planning is found to relate to an operational management issue, which is not in the limit or scope of this submission.

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Patricia E. Gallagher, AICP  
Executive Director