



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Exterior Sign Program
810 VERMONT AVENUE, NW
Washington, D.C.

Delegated Action of the Executive Director
October 6, 2005

Pursuant to delegations of authority adopted by the Commission on October 3, 1996, I approve the final site and building plans for the installation of seven signs (one freestanding and six wall-mounted) at the Department of Veterans Affairs Building, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, as shown on NCPC Map File No. 21.00(38.00)41588.

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The General Services Administration has submitted plans for the installation of seven signs at the Veterans Affairs Building, located with frontage along Vermont Avenue, H, and I Streets, NW. The VA site is the second pilot project for GSA's First Impression Sign Program, a system-wide sign and graphics program intended to achieve consistent identification of federal facilities in the National Capital Region. The Commission granted preliminary approval to this project in June, 2005. The current submission is consistent with that approval.

The freestanding site identification sign at the corner of Vermont Avenue and H Street will be located in the building yard, while the one at the corner of Vermont Avenue and I Street will be wall-mounted adjacent to an opening that allows light and air into the McPherson Square Metro station entrance. The freestanding monument sign panel would be finished with brass veneer with an inset bronze painted steel base, and would replace a slightly larger brown ribbon sign. Site identification signs would feature the Great Seal, with the agency and building name subordinate to the building address and intended to be visible to pedestrians. The smaller wall-mounted site identification sign is sized to fit within the rusticated stone coursing to allow the window sized opening to the Metro station to remain unobstructed.

Five entrance signs are recommended for wall attachment near building entrances to replace five wall mounted plaques. Replacing these signs from a previous era would establish a consistent appearance with the new smaller site identification sign. These two-foot high by three-foot four-inch wide signs are intended to fit within the rusticated stone courses of the facades as well.

The single panel signs reflect simplicity of design suitable for identifying federal buildings. Staff commends GSA for adapting the standard sign system to fit the specific VA Building site conditions. The project was coordinated by all agencies attending the April 13, 2005 Coordinating Committee meeting. The building is located across H Street from Lafayette Park and is part of the Lafayette Square Historic District. It faces other elements of the L'Enfant Plan, as well, including adjacent streets and McPherson Square. In consultation with the District of Columbia State Historic Preservation Office, GSA has determined that there will be no adverse effect from the sign undertaking. The project meets environmental criteria to qualify for a Categorical Exclusion.

Patricia E. Gallagher, AICP
Executive Director