

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

E. Keller

NCPC File No. 6361



AMERICAN PHARMACISTS ASSOCIATION
OFFICE BUILDING ADDITION
2215 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C.

Submitted by the American Pharmacists Association

September 1, 2005

Abstract

The American Pharmacists Association has submitted final site and building plans for an office building addition to its historic building designed by John Russell Pope. The Commission approved the preliminary design in May 2004 with direction for further design development. A 17-foot strip of land along the west side of the property is maintained in federal ownership to protect the viewshed from 23rd Street toward the Lincoln Memorial.

Commission Action Requested by the Applicant

Approval of final site and building plans pursuant to the Deed for the Exchange of Lands in Square 62 in the District of Columbia dated December 30, 1958, which requires approval by NCPC of all structures erected in the square.

Executive Director's Recommendation

The Commission:

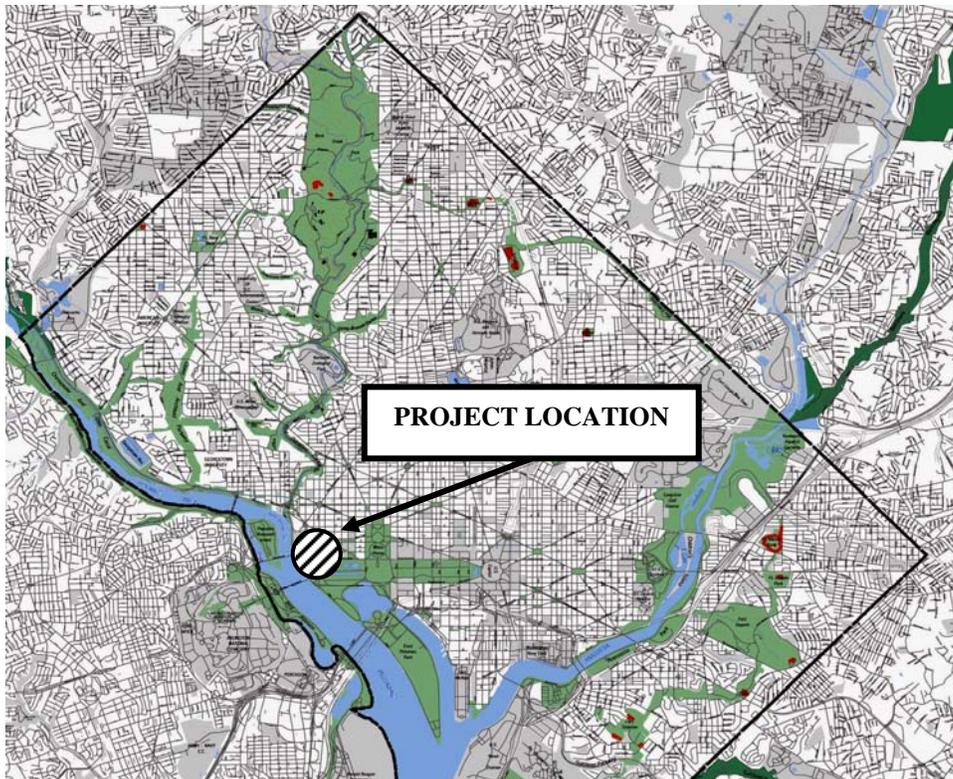
Approves the final site and building plans for an office building addition to the American Pharmacists Association headquarters pursuant to the Deed for Exchange of Lands in Square 62 in the District of Columbia dated December 30, 1958, as shown on NCPC Map File No. 1.24(38.00)-41663.

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PROJECT SUMMARY

Site Description

The American Pharmacists Association's (APhA) existing headquarters building is located on the north side of Constitution Avenue, NW between 22nd and 23rd Streets, NW and was designed by noted American architect John Russell Pope. The building is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and contributes significantly to the row of exemplary monumental, Beaux Arts-style buildings along Constitution Avenue, NW. The project site area added land that is adjacent to C street and is across from the U.S. Department of State, which is located directly behind the APhA building.

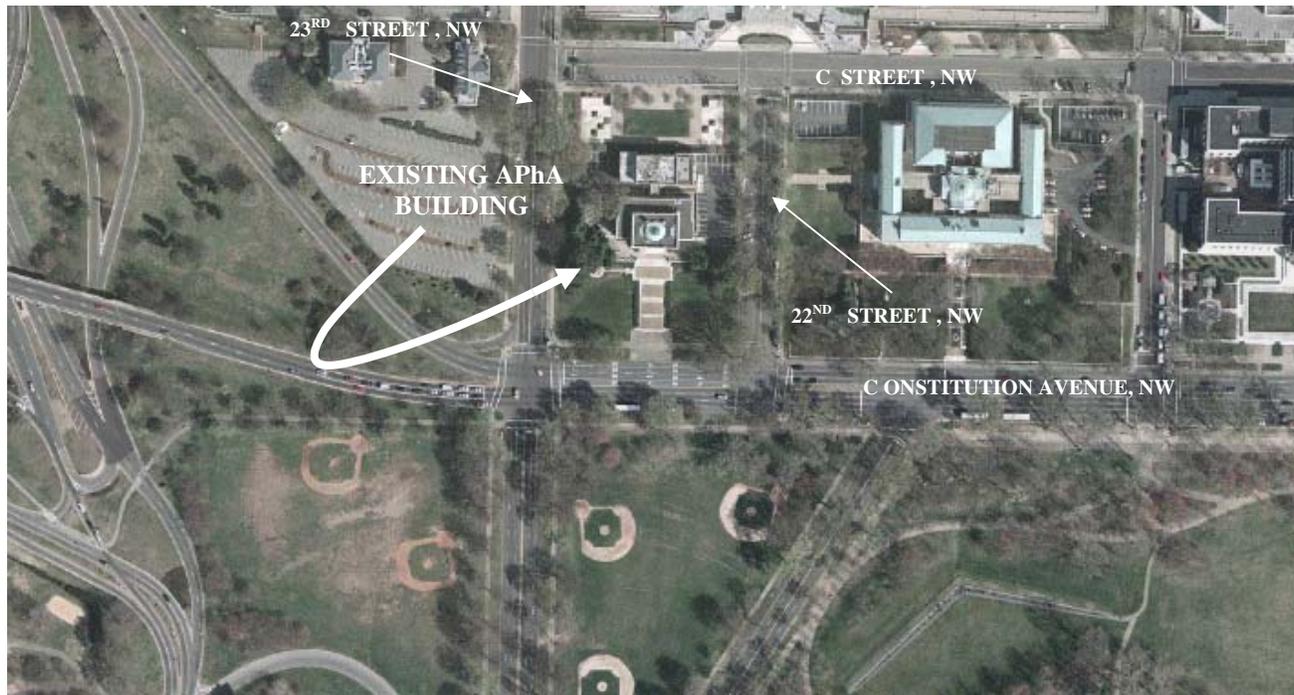


DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA VICINITY MAP

Background

At its May 2004 meeting, the Commission approved the preliminary site and building design with the direction that the applicant was to move the garage entrance farther north on 22nd Street, NW in order to minimize its visual effect on the Pope building.

At the July 2003 meeting, the Commission asked that a landscape plan and documentation for the protection of the 17-foot strip of land along 23rd Street be provided at the time of final site and building plan review.



AERIAL VIEW OF AMERICAN PHARMACISTS ASSOCIATION'S (APhA) EXISTING HEADQUARTERS BUILDING

Proposal

The APhA has submitted final site and building plans for a new office building addition which incorporate the requested revision of its plans. All other aspects of the preliminary design are essentially maintained except that an exterior retaining wall is now situated at the inside edge of the north/south sidewalk on the western side of the building addition along 23rd Street, NW. The additional site element is provided as an added security measure to the project design.

A slightly modified planting plan is also included in the final submission to accommodate the relocated parking garage entrance at 22nd Street, NW. This revised planting design minimizes the garage entrance's presence.

In all other respects, the submitted final site and building plans maintain the project's essential design elements as approved in the preliminary review by the Commission.

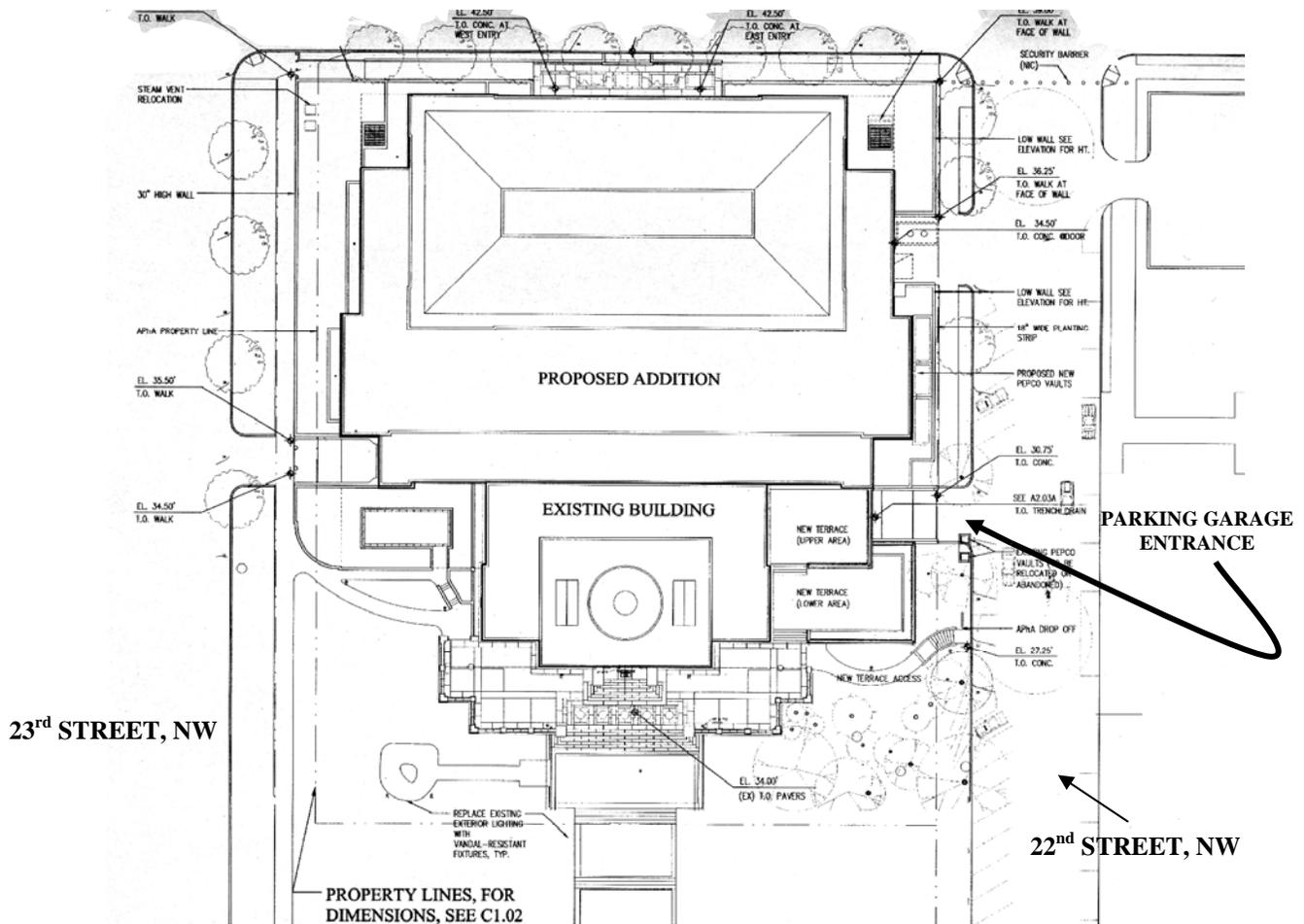
PROJECT ANALYSIS

Executive Summary

The **staff recommends approval** of the final site and building plans. NCPC staff notes the relocation of the parking garage entrance toward the north, in its final configuration, allows the terraces that were designed to enhance the Pope building to be visually dominate. The garage entry area, moreover, becomes visually distinct but is diminished in its appearance adjacent to the original Pope building.

Building addition and site design

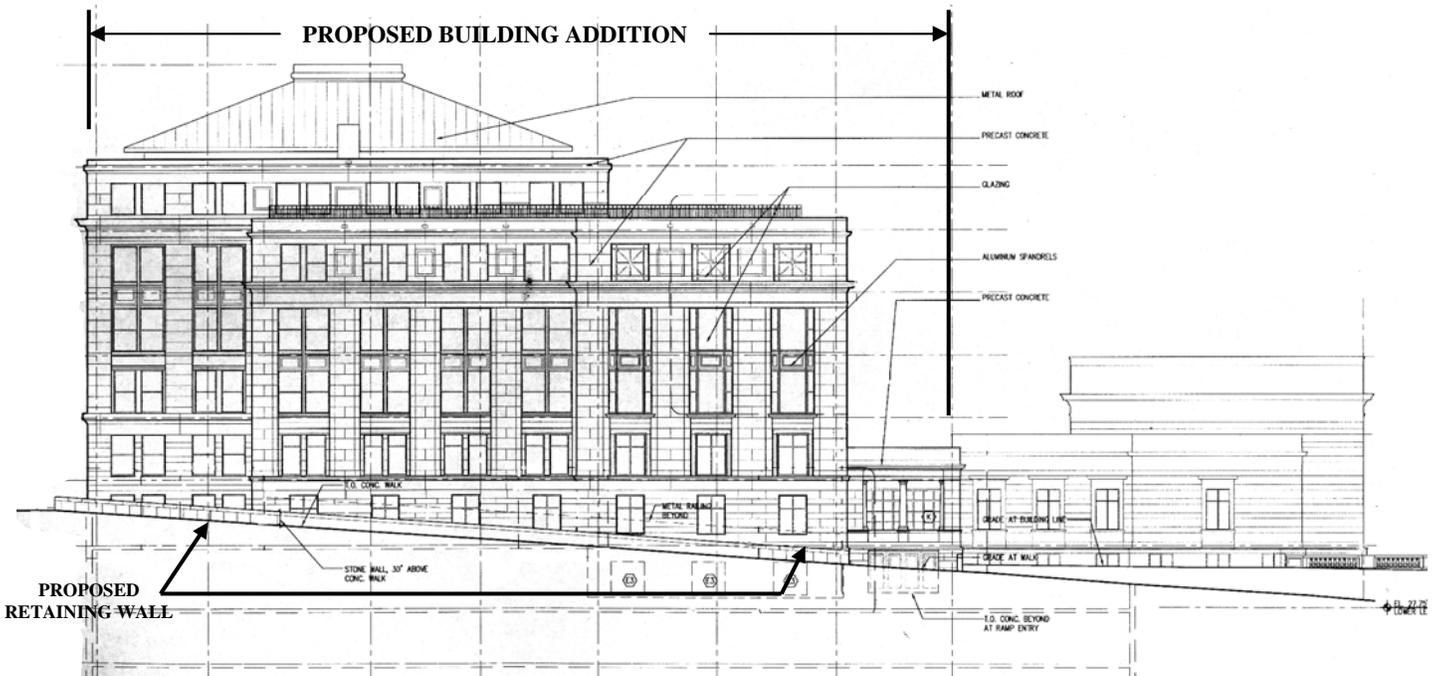
The design of the office building addition essentially remains as before with only minor changes that are of minimal consequence. The office addition appropriately reflects a neoclassical balance of solid to void while conveying the appearance of a modern office building. The final interior office plan has allowed opportunities for the improvement of the exterior fenestration.



APha PROPOSED BUILDING ADDITION SITE PLAN

The APhA design team has also continued to maintain the handsome C Street pedestrian entrance of the building addition. Furthermore, the final planting plan shows the retention of the mature trees in front of the building, the addition of street trees, and additionally shrubbery at the base of the terrace areas where the garage entrance previously was situated.

Finally, at the western side of the site at 23rd Street, NW, a 2'-6" retaining wall has been introduced into the project site along the inside of the sidewalk. The wall would serve as a security barrier for the building perimeter. The U.S. State Department requested this modification of the project site since it will become a major tenant of the structure in the near future. The Department believes the barrier is necessary to meet its federal security criteria. The barrier wall's exterior finish is compatible with the building design and is augmented by additional landscaping at the west side of the structure (see page six). Because the wall technically resides on federal property under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service the staff requested APhA demonstrate that the Park Service approves of the site modification. APhA submitted a signed letter, with Park Service review and agreement, regarding maintenance conditions involving the revision (see attachment).



APhA BUILDING ADDITION FINAL WEST ELEVATION ALONG 23rd STREET, NW

COORDINATION

Coordinating Committee

This project was coordinated at the Coordinating Committee's June 18, 2003 meeting.

Commission of Fine Arts

The Commission of Fine Arts (CFA) approved the present design in February 24, 2005, with no additional concerns expressed.

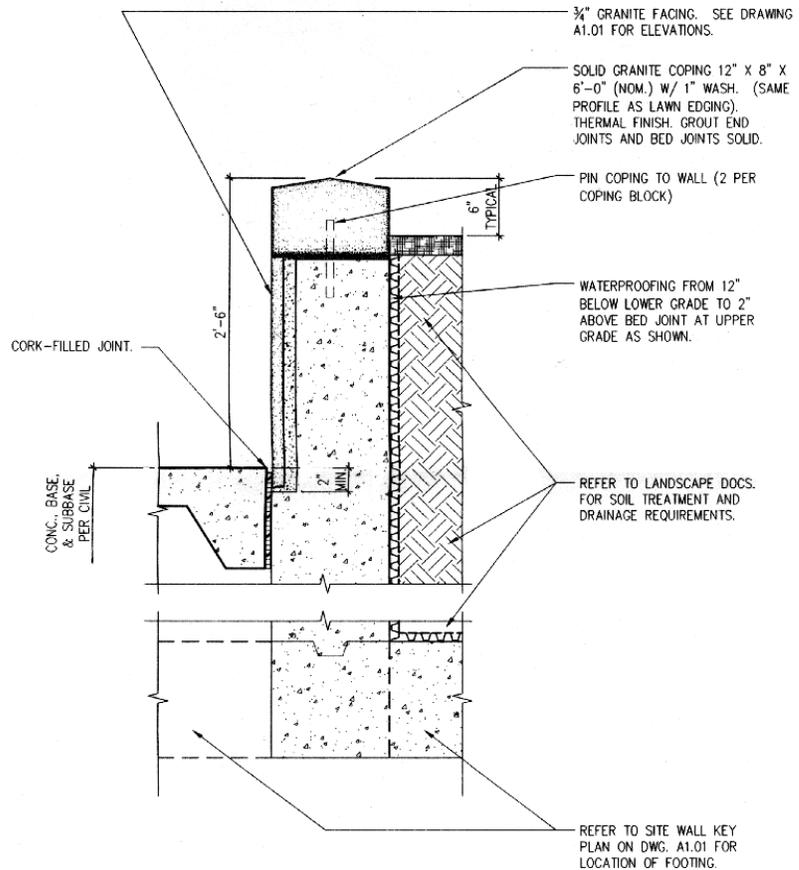
CONFORMANCE

National Historic Preservation Act

GSA is serving as lead federal agency for the purposes of consultation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The D.C. State Historic Preservation Office (DC SHPO) has been consulting since Spring 2002 to minimize the adverse effects of the office addition on the Pope building and its setting. The D.C. Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB) approved the current proposal at its April 22, 2004 meeting. The HPRB is advisory to the DC SHPO in Section 106 matters. Section 106 consultation with staff and with HPRB has culminated with a final Memorandum of Agreement signed by all consulting parties, including NCPC, on August 18, 2005.

National Environmental Policy Act

NCPC staff had analyzed, in conformance with the requirements of NEPA, a prepared Environmental Assessment (EA) completed by the General Services Administration for both the final disposition of the property and a proposed building addition. Staff prepared a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) based on adoption of the EA in April 2004.



DETAIL SECTION OF BARRIER RETAINING WALL AT 23rd STREET, NW

Comprehensive Plan

The final site and building plans for the building addition adhere to the following goals of the Commission's 2004 Federal Workplace Element, which because the project would serve as tenant space for federal workers, would include:

In workplaces within the Central Employment Area and the Capitol Complex, and surrounding areas, the federal government should maintain the planned form and framework of the monumental core established through precedent and in the *Legacy Plan*.

(Federal Workplace Element: Locating Federal Workplaces Policies; page 35)

Development of Workplaces with Communities, security policies in the Comprehensive Plan for the Design and Review of Physical Perimeter Security Improvements (adopted by the Commission on January 9, 2003) that include:

1. Agencies requiring physical perimeter security improvements should design such improvements in accordance with guidance included in *The National Capital Urban Design and Security Plan*, as adopted by the Commission on October 3, 2002.
8. When building new construction and when making improvements to existing buildings, integrate security threat counter measures, such as building hardening and blast-resistant glazing, into the physical design of the structure and the site to minimize the impact of perimeter building security on the public realm.

(Federal Workplace Element: Development of Workplaces with Communities; pages 55 and 56)

As a designated historic feature, the building addition proposal maintains objectives of the policies in the Preservation and Historic Features Element that apply and include:

The federal government should:

6. Protect the settings of historic properties, including views to and from the sites where significant, as integral parts of the historic character of the property.
9. Use historic properties for their original purpose or, if no longer feasible, for an adaptive use that is appropriate for the context and consistent with the significance and character of the property.
11. Ensure that new construction is compatible with the qualities and character of historic buildings and their settings, in accordance with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* and the *Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*.

(Federal Preservation and Historic Features Element; page 161)

Federal Capital Improvements Program

The project was not included in the Federal Capital Improvements Program (FCIP), Fiscal Years 2005-2010 as adopted by the Commission, because the APhA is not a government function.