

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

NCPC File No. 6479



SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
PATENT OFFICE BUILDING
COURTYARD LANDSCAPE
G, F, 7th, and 9th Streets, NW

Submitted by the Smithsonian Institution

March 30, 2006

Abstract

The Smithsonian Institution has submitted preliminary site development plans for a courtyard landscape at the Patent Office Building. The Commission reviewed the proposed elements of a courtyard landscape concept at its September 8, 2005 meeting, commenting favorably on the Smithsonian's acknowledgement that the courtyard be designed and function as a "public amenity" and that the "design character and setting" of the original courtyard be retained in the new courtyard. The current courtyard landscape submission has responded to the Commission's comments, although the Executive Director recommends disapproving the proposed catering accommodations as currently developed, and restudying the character of the water element--the water scrim--as the design is developed further. The Commission's action to approve the canopy at the September 2005 meeting stipulated specific mitigation measures. These included the reinstallation to working order of the historic fountains, which the Smithsonian and Commission staff and other consulting parties have concluded after further study is unfeasible. The Smithsonian has proposed an alternative, which should be developed prior to the Commission's final review. The mitigation measures also included the reconstruction of the F Street stairs and the reestablishment of the reservation's exterior landscape, informed by the research and analysis of a Cultural Landscape Report. The proposed F Street stair and reservation landscape are the subject of a separate concept submission and a favorable Executive Director's Recommendation to the Commission this month.

Commission Action Requested by Applicant

Approval of preliminary site development plans pursuant to 40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1) and (d).

Executive Director's Recommendation

The Commission:

Approves the preliminary site development plans for the reconstruction of the courtyard landscape, with the exception of the catering benches and the configuration of the water scrim, as shown on NCPC Map File No. 21.00(38.00)41998.

Disapproves the catering benches as designed and located, and recommends that the primary catering utilities and storage be removed from the courtyard.

Recommends that the water scrim be redesigned to be more responsive to the “design character and setting” of the courtyard as a central gathering space, softening the scrim’s dominant linearity across the courtyard floor in order to improve its compatibility with the courtyard facades and spatial proportions.

Concurs with the Smithsonian that the historic courtyard fountains are in fair to poor condition, that they will not be restored and reinstalled to working order either in the courtyard or in the lawn as Secretary Small committed to doing in June 2005, and that, in partial mitigation for the loss of the historic courtyard, they instead be treated as artifacts and interpreted in the permanent exhibit on the history of the building in a gallery inside the F Street entrance.

Requires that, prior to final submission of the courtyard landscape, the Smithsonian develop a plan for the introduction and interpretation of the historic fountains in the museum exhibit and related publications.

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PROJECT SUMMARY

Site Description

The Patent Office Building occupies Reservation 8 in the L’Enfant Plan, situated on the 8th Street cross-axis in the L’Enfant Plan between F and G Streets, NW. The courtyard is in the center of the building, which was constructed in the Greek Revival style in four phases over three decades, beginning in 1836 and concluding in 1867 shortly after the Civil War. It is recognized by historians as one of the most significant Greek Revival-style buildings in the nation.

Background

At its September 8, 2005 meeting, the Commission approved the installation of a canopy over the courtyard, with conditions for mitigation measures to which the Smithsonian committed. These measures included the reconstruction of a courtyard landscape and the restoration to working order and installation of the two original courtyard fountains, as well as the reconstruction of the F Street staircase and the installation of a landscape and streetscape plan for the Patent Office Building reservation that would restore its extent and character. The Commission accepted the Smithsonian’s commitment to use trust funds and donated funds to complete all mitigation measures for which appropriated funds were unavailable.

The Smithsonian is now completing the rehabilitation of the Patent Office Building in time for the museums to reopen to the public in July 2006. Many of the proposed courtyard elements will need to be installed in the courtyard prior to the installation of the canopy in 2007. The

Smithsonian anticipates returning to the Commission with final courtyard landscape plans at the July 6, 2006 Commission meeting.

Prior Commission Action

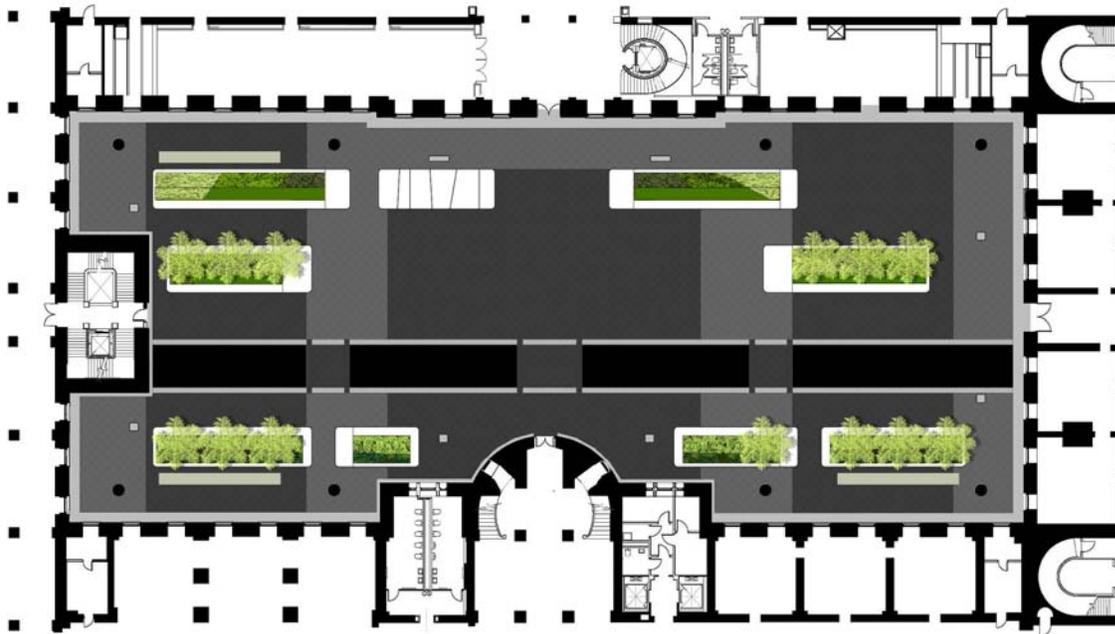
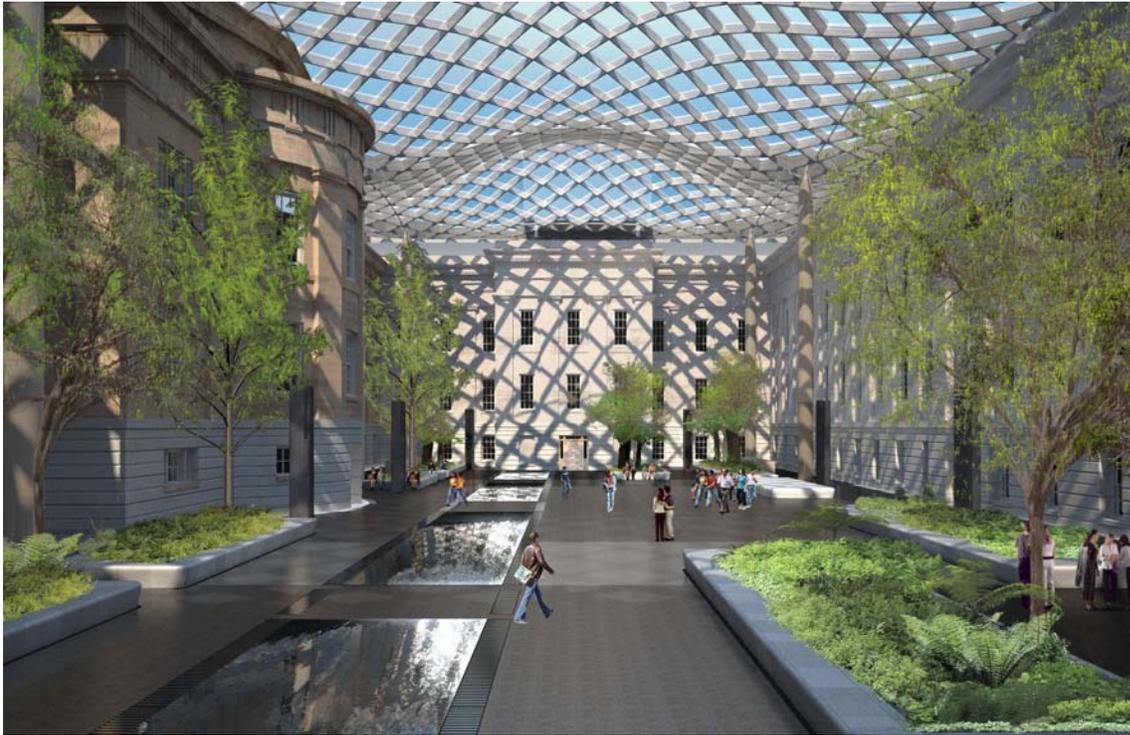
The courtyard design by Gustafson Guthrie Nichol has been reviewed once previously by the Commission, at its September 2005 meeting. At that meeting, the Commission commented “*favorably on the concept of a contemporary landscape design for the courtyard that seeks to recreate a public amenity at the heart of the Patent Office for all visitors. The staff noted that “the elements are consistent with the June Commission order to rehabilitate its ‘design character and setting.’”* The Commission also commented that the Smithsonian “should continue to develop design options with the historic fountains installed both inside and outside the courtyard until the Patent Office Reservation landscape plan is submitted and until the courtyard water features are further developed.” The Commission commented “unfavorably on the glass balcony and the plant material applied in front of the south façade and recommends that they be removed from the plans.”

Proposal

The current proposal contains elements commented on favorably by the Commission at its September 2005 meeting and eliminates the balcony and plant material in front of the south courtyard façade on which the Commission commented unfavorably. The proposal includes:

Courtyard Composition and Palette:

A palette of two shades of black granite is envisioned for the floor. White marble planters with seating along the edges are proposed. Material samples will be presented at the next Commission meeting. Three of the exterior facades of the building are white marble, and three of the interior courtyard facades are light gray granite. Further, the black granite will not compete directly with the warm sandstone of the south courtyard façade. In comparison with the September 2005 concept, a reference to the tripartite plan of the building façades, or to the canopy, is now reflected in the floor pattern. A water scrim runs the entire length of the courtyard in an east-west band to the south of the east and west entrances to the courtyard. The axial east-west and north-south pedestrian paths remain unobstructed. Nine seating areas, eight of them in combination with planting beds, are placed parallel to each other in order to underscore the strongly linear east-west composition. The planters have been pulled away from the courtyard facades since the concept plan at the staff’s recommendation to improve circulation and provide improved views of the courtyard facades. The center two-thirds of the courtyard is open for circulation during museum hours and also for programmed activities of the museums, including the placement of up to 1200 chairs for lectures or up to 800 chairs at tables for banquets. Three “catering benches”, for catering equipment, tableware storage, and food reheating and plating, are proposed for three corners of the courtyard. Almost as long as the marble planters and in close proximity to them, the stainless steel catering benches are more like bars than benches, as they are at bar height when closed and not being used by caterers. A daytime museum café is still planned for the northeast corner of the courtyard, with moveable seating for 176 to 192 people at 48 café tables.



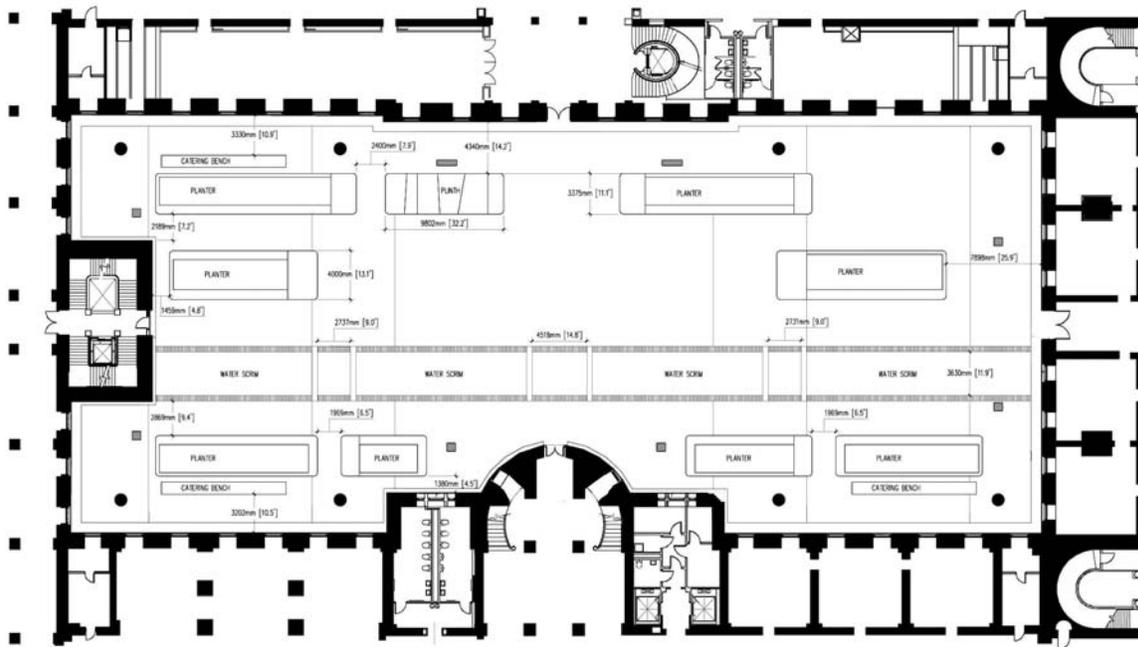
Above, a rendering of the courtyard landscape, looking west. Below, the courtyard landscape plan, which includes the use of two types of granite in the floor, a water scrim across the southern half of the courtyard, planters with seating areas at some edges, the museum café in the northeast corner, mechanical pylons, and three catering benches.

Planters/Benches: The planters constitute the major compositional element in the courtyard. The designer envisions them as large and low rectangles of white marble. Laid out in an east-

west orientation, the planters along the south side of the courtyard are arranged symmetrically in relation to the rounded apse in the south courtyard facade. Planters in the north half of the courtyard are arranged asymmetrically, with an intended emphasis on lateral, east-west movement and in order to accommodate space for the museum café in the northeast corner, whose location was established by other decisions made by the Smithsonian several years ago. The planters are fixed, vary in width and length to contain planting materials including trees, are approximately 1.7 feet in height to create a comfortable seating level, and are designed with edges of varying depths to provide seating for individuals or for groups. The planting beds are constructed on an existing concrete slab. The Smithsonian notes that tree planters are normally about one meter in depth in order to accommodate tree roots, but because of the low window sills in the courtyard façades, the planters have been designed to be half that height in order to maintain open sight lines (500 mm, or 1.64 feet, above the floor surface, with almost another foot of soil below the finished floor surface). For that reason, the planters are wide to allow roots to expand laterally—at least 8.2 feet in width. One marble seating bench near the north courtyard door would remain unplanted; it is envisioned as a popular meeting spot in the courtyard.

2.6 Interior Courtyard Landscaping

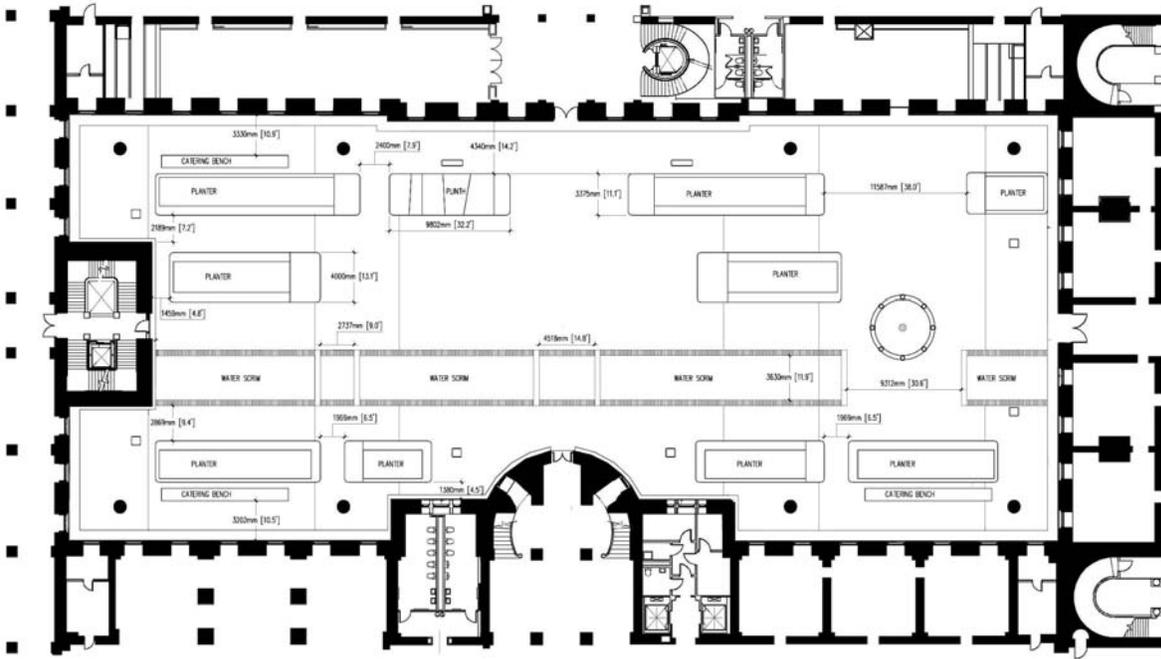
Layout - no historical fountain



The Smithsonian Institution’s preferred landscape plan, without reinstatement of the historic cast iron fountains.

2.7 Interior Courtyard Landscaping

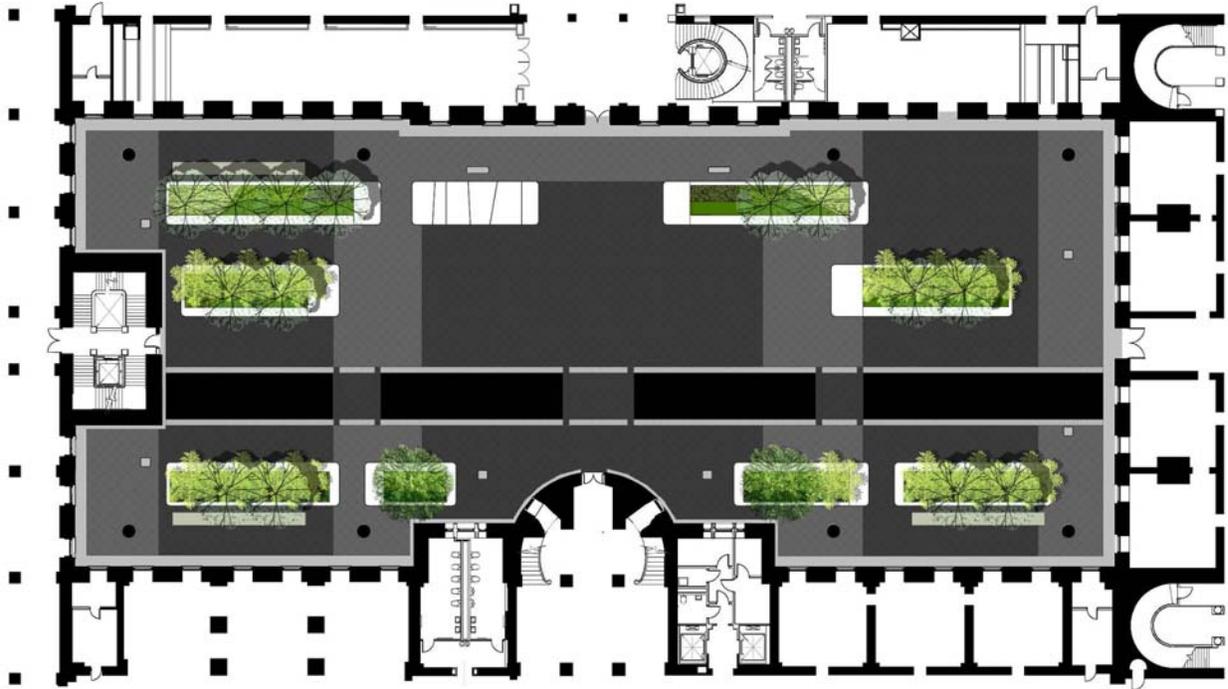
Layout - one historical fountain



The Smithsonian Institution's alternative plan, showing one historic fountain installed near the east door.

Plant materials: The submission includes many species of canopy trees, sub-canopy trees, and shrubs that are under consideration for the three layers of plant material that are proposed. The design team is consulting with the Smithsonian Horticulture Division in the selection of the plant palette. Two large specimen trees flank the central apse of the south courtyard façade. Otherwise, the highest canopy level will be roughly uniform across the courtyard, with a proposed height of 25 feet at regular intervals for the trees. As a sub-canopy layer, smaller trees will be planted in the middle and southern rows of planters. The shrub layer is focused in the central and northern planters, and is composed of varied ground covers and shrubs, two feet or less in height and “tightly controlled.” To this mix, ferns and perennials will add seasonal color and texture.

2.8 Interior Courtyard Landscaping
Plants - potential canopy layer



Plant palette under consideration for canopy and subcanopy trees and for shrubs in the planters

Pylons: Eight mechanical pylons, 16'5" in height and rectilinear with rounded corners to distinguish them from the round canopy columns, are proposed. Six of the pylons would measure 2' 2" by 2'6" while the two pylons installed near the center of the north courtyard façade would be 5'3" by 1'10", the wider dimension needed in order to accommodate speakers and possible future plasma screens. The surface material is anticipated to be stainless steel with a medium to dark matt finish. The screens would be installed behind black glass panels, which would also be

used as a surface material in the lower half of the other pylons. All of the pylons would have louvers in the top half. The pylon color is still under consideration but will be different than the color of the canopy columns.

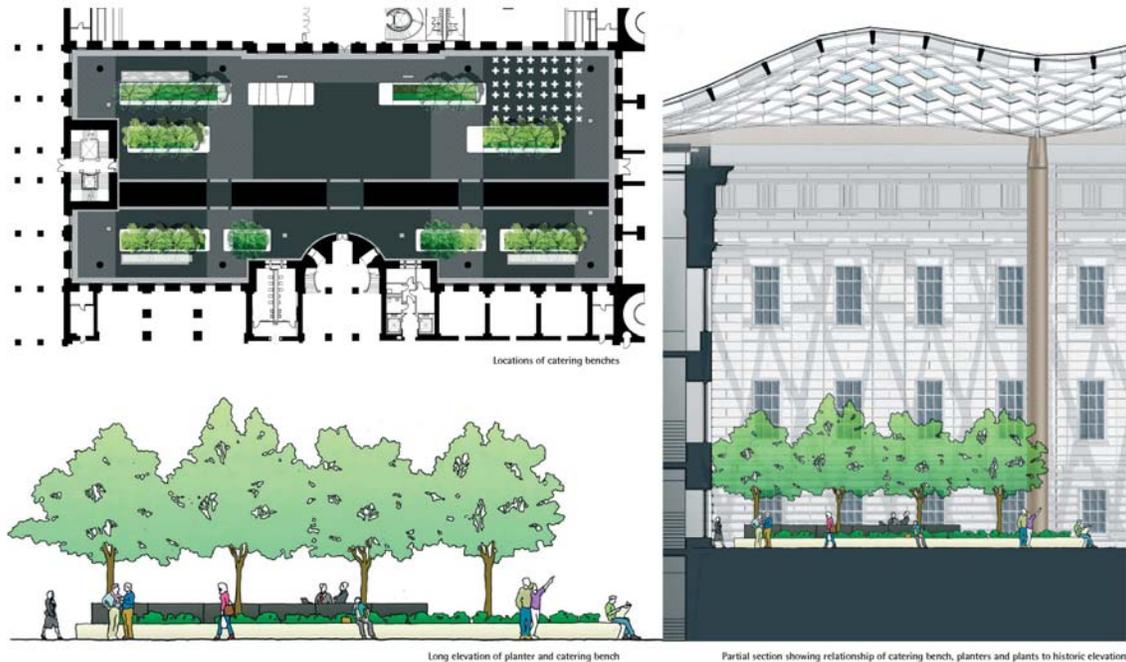


Rendering of the mechanical pylons—the top image shows the typical pylon and the bottom image shows the wider pylon that could accommodate a video screen. It would be installed as a pair flanking the north door of the courtyard.

Catering benches: The Smithsonian is continuing to study how caterers will work during events. In the current proposal, not seen in the concept design, three “catering benches” will be installed near the northwest, southwest, and southeast corners of the courtyard. These benches are long and narrow, dark-colored stainless steel-clad boxes. They measure one meter (39 inches) in width and are bar height when closed and not in use. They run nearly the length of the adjacent planters and are placed about 1.6 feet from their edges. They are set about eleven feet away from the courtyard facades. The Smithsonian proposes that these catering benches serve as bars one can lean against or stand in front of to eat lunch during the day. During catered functions, the lids of the boxes will be opened and raised to create a work surface for caterers. The equipment will contain sinks and a zone for power, ventilation and drainage for warming stoves, and an area into which other catering units can be plugged. The raised box lid will act as a screen between the caterers and the guests. When open, the visible surfaces will be stainless steel and white ceramic tile. The northwest and southwest catering benches are “fully equipped” for dinner, including the storage of tableware and other items needed for dinner events. The southeast catering bench is equipped with power and is intended as a screen for pre-event equipment storage and to serve as a staging area for pre-dinner cocktails.

2.5 Interior Courtyard Landscaping

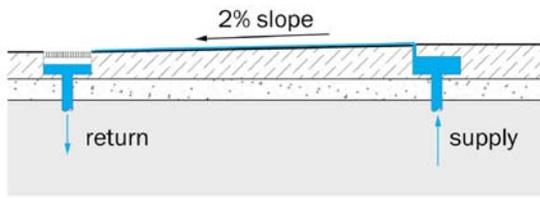
Elements - catering benches



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The proposed catering benches are located at the northwest, southwest, and southeast corners of the courtyard, adjacent to planters/benches. They are shown as light-colored rectangles in the plan, and as dark-colored, bar-height rectangles in the elevations. They are shown in the lower, closed position. During catered events, the lids would be raised to open up work surfaces for warming and plating food.

Water scrim: The scrim is a prominent and active feature of the courtyard landscape, and forms a strongly linear east-west element of the courtyard composition measuring approximately 12 feet in width and running the length of the courtyard. The water scrim will reflect the canopy grid above and also the south courtyard façade. In the concept design, the scrim was composed of two sections, divided on the center pedestrian axis. It now is composed of four sections, all of which can be operated independently so that they can be turned off and on depending on the programmed use of the courtyard. Three north-south pathways cross and divide the scrim, which extends to the edges of the east and west courtyard facades. The Smithsonian staff has studied the proposed water scrim and is satisfied that it meets the functional requirements for the museum. The Smithsonian staff also visited the Marion Oliver McCaw Hall at the Seattle Opera this past winter to study the function and appearance of its water scrim. The scrim is a thin, moving sheet of water, about one-quarter of an inch in depth, flowing from north to south on a shallow 2% slope. The scrim has a narrow trench (covered with a grate) on each side. The water is supplied on the north side and returned to the south side and re-circulated. The texture of the stone courtyard floor and the placement of walk-off mats inside each courtyard doorway will minimize the chance that water will be tracked into the galleries.

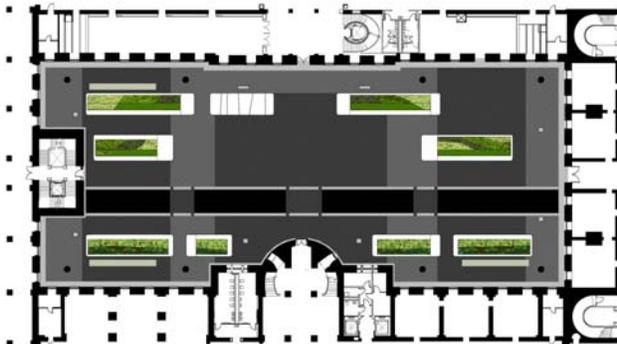


Section at water scrim

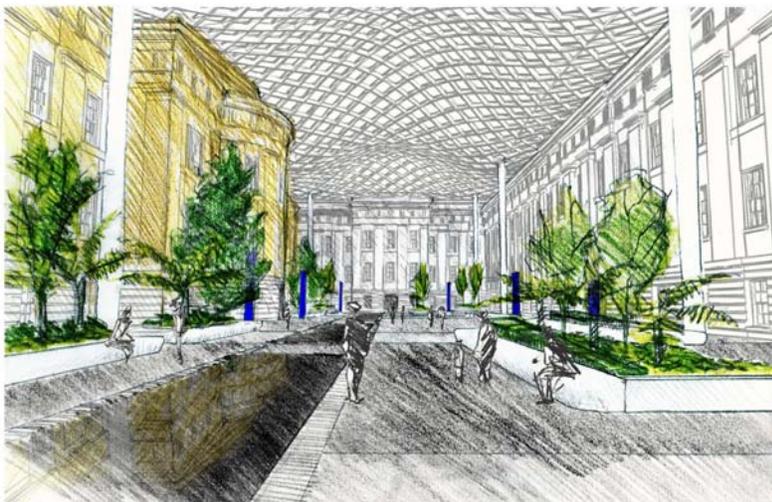


Wet footprints made faint from the rough texture of the ground

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The water scrim would extend the length of the courtyard (shown at left in the plan as the dark band running east-west to the south of the east and west courtyard doors). The scrim would have three paths across it; the four sections could be operated independently. The water would flow from north to south at a depth of ¼ inch.



Proposed water scrim and planters, looking toward west stair tower in the courtyard.

Disposition of historic cast iron fountains: The Smithsonian intends the scrim to be the element that will reintroduce water to the courtyard. The cast iron fountains were features of the courtyard from their installation shortly after the building was completed until after the museum was closed in 2000 for renovation. However, inspection and analysis by an architect and a conservationist of the physical fabric of the historic fountains, now broken into sections and crated at the Smithsonian's storage facility at Suitland, determined that the physical condition of the two cast iron fountains is fair to poor. It is thought that paint and previous repairs hide additional structural damage and that by removing the rust and surface damage, up to 25% of the depth of the fountain walls could be lost.

The Smithsonian has submitted an alternative courtyard landscape plan with one historic fountain reinstalled, as required by the Commission, near the east courtyard door. It is not the Smithsonian's preferred alternative.

The staff notes that the proposed reservation landscape plan does not include the reinstallation of the fountains, either, due primarily to their physical condition and secondarily to the fact that the fountains were never placed historically in the building's lawn. The Secretary of the Smithsonian committed in writing to restoring to working order and reinstalling the fountains, and the Commission accepted the reuse of the fountains as partial mitigation for the loss of the historic courtyard. At the staff's request, the Smithsonian proposes to treat the fountains as artifacts and record their former presence in the building in the permanent exhibit on the Patent Office Building to be contained within the building. *Staff requests that the Smithsonian provide sufficient information about how the fountains will be shown and interpreted prior to the submission of final site development plans for the courtyard landscape to the Commission.*

PROJECT ANALYSIS

The Smithsonian states in its current submission that "the new courtyard landscape is the link between the historic building and the new roof. The design creates a contemporary complement to the new roof, while reflecting the character and spirit of the historic building." The staff agrees with the Smithsonian that a principal goal of the new courtyard landscape is to complete the integration of the new and historic elements within the courtyard.

With respect to the new canopy and the new interior conditions for the courtyard, the submission responds to the changed nature of the light and to the common desire for trees, plants, and water within the courtyard. A water scrim will reflect the canopy and sky, and extensive plantings will soften the broad extent of the granite floor where previously there was lawn, and create vertical scale-giving elements in the courtyard that should provide a welcome tree canopy for some courtyard activities and complement the two courtyard facade architectural projections (the southern apse and the western stair tower). The staff concurs that the materials, finishes, and colors under consideration complement both the Patent Office Building and the enclosed courtyard.

With respect to compatibility with the historic building, however, the staff finds that while the current submission is responsive to the Commission's major points in its previous comments and to comments made subsequently by staff, further design development is necessary to improve the

compatibility of the proposed landscape elements to the architectural and spatial character of the historic courtyard. In particular, the location of the catering equipment and storage is not recommended for approval in this report. And while the staff looks favorably on the use of a water scrim in the courtyard, its character and extent should be revised in the context of the overall circulation, composition of new elements, and scale and character of the courtyard. The staff looks forward to further discussion with the Smithsonian prior to the submission of final site development plans.

The material palette is both elegant and appropriately complementary to the historic fabric. The low and uniform height of the planters and seats retain open views across the courtyard. In the staff's opinion, this is a welcome improvement on the stepped planters shown in the concept submission. Trees will be reintroduced into the courtyard. Additional planting areas have been designed since the concept submission. The planters have been moved away from the courtyard facades, as suggested, and they have been made somewhat smaller in response to concerns about the relative scale of the new elements. The mechanical pylons will be relatively unobtrusive and will be distinguished from the architectural elements of the courtyard. *The staff finds that the technical solutions to the use of the courtyard as an interior room have been well-considered. Further, the staff commends the designers for the proposed palette of architectural and plant materials.*

The catering functions and locations have still not been resolved satisfactorily, although the staff appreciates the Smithsonian's continuing efforts in this regard. The Smithsonian made an early decision to accommodate the catering function and storage completely in the courtyard (considered more as an event space) rather than in the building itself. With the subsequent attention of the Commission and other review agencies to the necessity of restoring the courtyard as a public amenity for all visitors, with landscape characteristics more similar to those of the historic courtyard, the Smithsonian's early programming decision has become problematic.

The Smithsonian has submitted several iterations of catering structures to the Commission in the past two years. The three "catering benches"—long, bar-height stainless steel boxes when closed and not in use and taller warming and plating stations when open and in use—are an improvement on the original concept, but they are still significant elements inserted in the courtyard landscape. They are almost as long as the planters and are placed 1.6 feet away from the edges of the planters—too close for easy circulation and for comfortable spacing in a courtyard of this size. Aside from concerns about the attractiveness of their appearance and function when raised open and in use for evening functions, they have very limited utility as courtyard elements during the day when the museum is open to public visitors. It is unfortunate that they will detract from the new courtyard setting and ambience that the Smithsonian and the Commission seek to achieve. As functional objects, they are awkwardly located, affect circulation, eliminate the ability to design seating areas for the planters against which they are placed, detract from the nearby plant materials, and are too visible to be compatible with the character and setting of the courtyard. *The staff recommends that the catering benches as designed and located in the current submission be disapproved, and recommends that the primary catering utilities and storage be removed from the courtyard.*

The composition of the courtyard elements is very strongly linear in the east-west direction, with a noticeably large open space in center for setting up chairs and tables for events. The proposed

composition reflects the new uses for the courtyard, but makes it more difficult to recreate the overall character of the historic courtyard's spatial composition. The new composition is a result of several earlier decisions, including the construction of a solid floor surface for the courtyard and the location of the museum café in the northeast corner. For example, the planters must be fixed in order to accommodate a sufficient depth and width of soil for the trees; therefore the center of the courtyard must be left open for programmed events. Further, the establishment of the museum café in the corner requires a more random (and perhaps too complex) placement of planters in the northern half of the courtyard that seems at odds with the classical clarity and axial formality of the courtyard façade windows and doors.

The water scrim is a good solution because it does not add weight to the floor and allows children (and adults) to experience the water without splashing. It will become a popular feature of the courtyard. But it is a dominant feature and extends wall to wall, which divides the space awkwardly when the scrim is turned on. The pedestrian path is door to door through the courtyard (primarily north-south, but also east-west). The water scrim is off-axis, as it needs to be to accommodate pedestrian circulation. However, as a result, its off-axis location is emphasized by the boldness of its wall-to-wall length, which is a contemporary conception and not compatible with the historic facades or spatial character of the courtyard. As the water scrim has been developed since concept, the Smithsonian has divided it into four sections, with greater emphasis on the north-south paths and on the tri-partite composition of the courtyard floor. In comparing the Patent Office courtyard with the one at the Seattle Opera, one obvious difference is that the Seattle building's lobby is contemporary in its spatial proportions and has great transparency, so the scrim is entirely compatible in that context since it seems to extend into infinity.

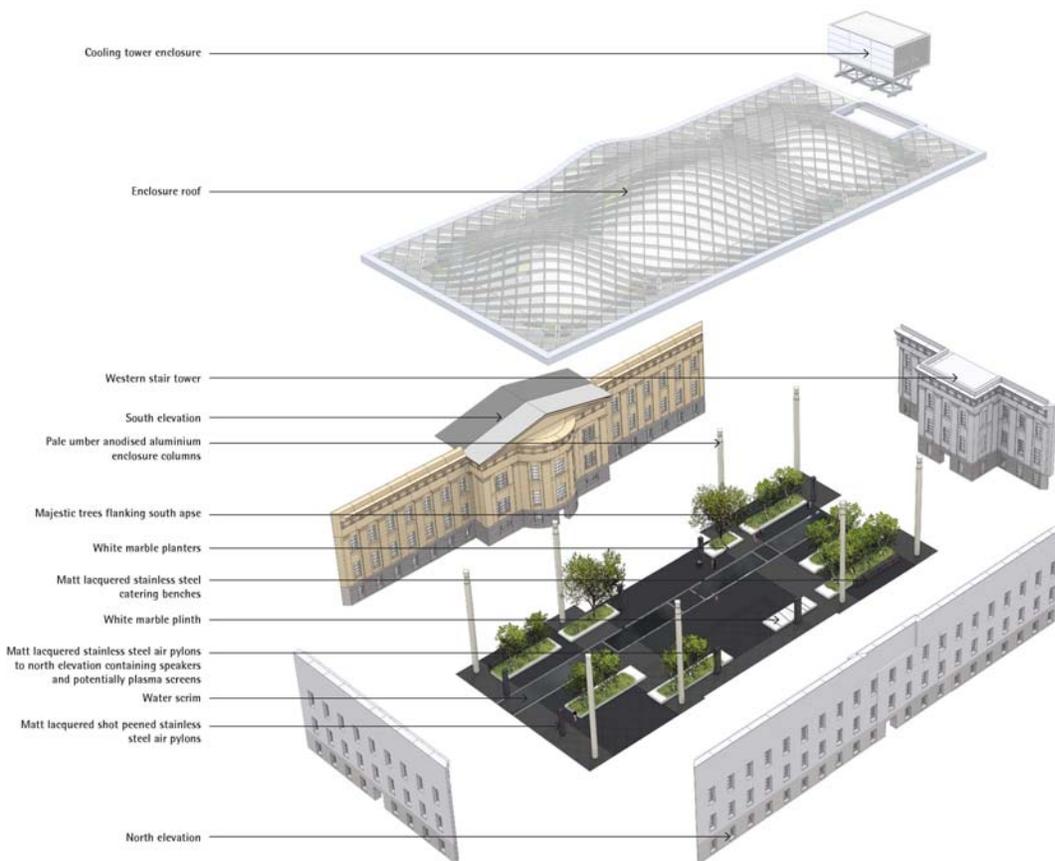
The staff recommends that the extent and proportion of the scrim in relation to the Patent Office Building courtyard facades and plan needs further study as it is developed further. Perhaps its strong linearity would be relieved by not extending the scrim all the way to the east and west facades. The staff also suggests that removing the metal grates in the north-south paths (where water is not designed to flow) would also allow this proposed element to be more complementary of the courtyard facades and proportions. *The Executive Director's Recommendation directs the Smithsonian to restudy the design of the water scrim to be more responsive to the "design character and setting" of the courtyard as a central gathering space, softening the scrim's dominant linearity across the courtyard floor in order to improve its compatibility with the courtyard facades and spatial proportions.*

One of the historic cast iron fountains is included in an alternate landscape plan. The physical condition of the fountains is described earlier in this report. The Smithsonian's designer does not favor a landscape scheme that includes the fountains. Given the signature style of the landscape architect selected by the Smithsonian, the staff concurs that the historic fountain is an awkward element in the alternate composition as presented and finds that it has not been well integrated with the new elements to be introduced to the courtyard.

Secretary Small committed in writing in June 2005 to repair to working order and reinstall the fountains. The reinstallation of the fountains was partial mitigation of the courtyard enclosure and a condition for its approval by the Commission at its September 2005 meeting.

The staff has suggested that the fountains be properly treated as artifacts and interpreted in the permanent exhibit on the history of the Patent Office to be installed in a room near the F Street entrance of the building. *The Executive Director’s recommendation includes the condition that, prior to final submission of the courtyard landscape, the Smithsonian develop a plan for the introduction and interpretation of the historic fountains in the museum exhibit and related publications.*

The stated goal of the Commission in its previous approvals, conditions, and recommendations is to ensure that the reconstructed courtyard landscape remain as compatible with the historic building as it is with the new canopy enclosure. The Commission envisions the new courtyard elements as being contemporary in vocabulary and design. *The current submission reflects the continuing constructive efforts of the Smithsonian Institution to achieve a desirable, compatible balance between new intervention and historic integrity in its enclosed courtyard at the heart of the Patent Office Building. The staff’s assessment of the current submission is that the proposed design remains unbalanced in favor of contemporary intervention, especially in concert with the new canopy but not solely as a result of the canopy. Greater consideration of the established historic architectural context of the courtyard is required. The staff recommends that further study of the major compositional courtyard elements during the final phase of design development lead to a final courtyard landscape submission that is fully commensurate with the best qualities – historic and contemporary—of the Patent Office Building.*



The historic and contemporary architectural and landscape elements that will constitute the composition of the enclosed courtyard of the Patent Office Building, as currently proposed in the preliminary submission.

CONFORMANCE

Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital

Relevant policies in the Preservation and Historic Features element include:

1. Express the dignity befitting the image of the federal government in the national capital. Federal development should adhere to the high aesthetic standards already established by the planning and design legacy of the nation's capital. This legacy encompasses both the old and the new – the capital's rich architectural heritage, continually augmented by the design contributions of each generation.
5. Protect and enhance the vistas and views, both natural and designed, that are an integral part of the national capital's image. .
9. Sustain exemplary standards of historic property stewardship.
14. 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.
19. Ensure that new construction is distinguishable from historic structures but also compatible with the qualities and character of the setting, in accordance with the *Secretary of the Interiors' Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines*.
28. Protect the reservations that contain historic landscapes and features from incompatible changes or incursions.

National Environmental Policy Act

NCPC staff has analyzed, in conformance with the requirements of NEPA, the current submission for adherence to the evaluation of the previously prepared Supplemental Environmental Assessment (EA) submitted by the Smithsonian Institution for planning and construction of improvements at the POB and include the courtyard.

Staff prepared a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) on October 8, 2004 based on adoption of that EA with mitigation requirements. The 2004 Supplemental EA addressed long-term effects from the implementation of a proposed courtyard roof design as it related to historic and visual resources.

The NCPC staff's current independent review finds that the EA conclusions and FONSI mitigation requirements remain valid and represent an acceptable analysis of the potential environmental impacts of the submitted plans, and effectively respond to the mitigation conditioned by the Commission in its approval of the courtyard canopy in September 2005.

National Historic Preservation Act

Although the Smithsonian Institution terminated Section 106 consultation in March 2005, NCPC continues to review the project under its Section 106 responsibilities, including the terms of mitigation required by the Commission and accepted by the Smithsonian Institution, some of it at the recommendation of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation in its final comments to the Commission. The D.C. State Historic Preservation Officer (as well as the staff of the Commission of Fine Arts) has participated in consultation meetings with the Smithsonian Institution and its design team during the ongoing development of the courtyard landscape.

CONSULTATION

Coordinating Committee

The Coordinating Committee reviewed this item at its August 2005 meeting, with all agencies in attendance coordinating. The participating agencies were: NCPC, the District of Columbia's Office of Planning and Department of Housing and Community Development, the General Services Administration, and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.

Commission of Fine Arts

The Commission of Fine Arts (CFA) reviewed this submission as a revised concept submission at its meeting on September 16, 2006 and released its letter on March 24, 2006. The letter is attached.

CFA did not approve the revised concept design for the courtyard landscape and asked that the revised design be submitted. They recommended further simplification of the landscape given the character of the historic building and the dramatic proposed roof, suggesting that there were too many objects in the courtyard and that the landscape design be more subordinate to the architectural setting. They recommended that the catering stations be omitted. They recommended that the water scrim and planters be reevaluated for their scale and composition in the context of the courtyard.