

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

M. Marcus

NCPC File No. 6762



**NEBRASKA AVENUE COMPLEX
CAMPUS SECURITY UPGRADES**
Nebraska Avenue, NW at Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C.

Submitted by the General Services Administration

July 26, 2007

Abstract

The General Services Administration (GSA), on behalf of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), has submitted concept site and building plans for campus security upgrades to include new and replacement fencing, four new guard booths and two new screening facilities at the Nebraska Avenue Complex (NAC).

Commission Action Requested by Applicant

Review and comment on concept site and building plans for campus security upgrades to include new and replacement fencing, four new guard booths and two new screening facilities at the Nebraska Avenue Complex (NAC) pursuant to 40 U.S.C. § 8722 (a),(b)(1) and (d).

Executive Director's Recommendation

The Commission:

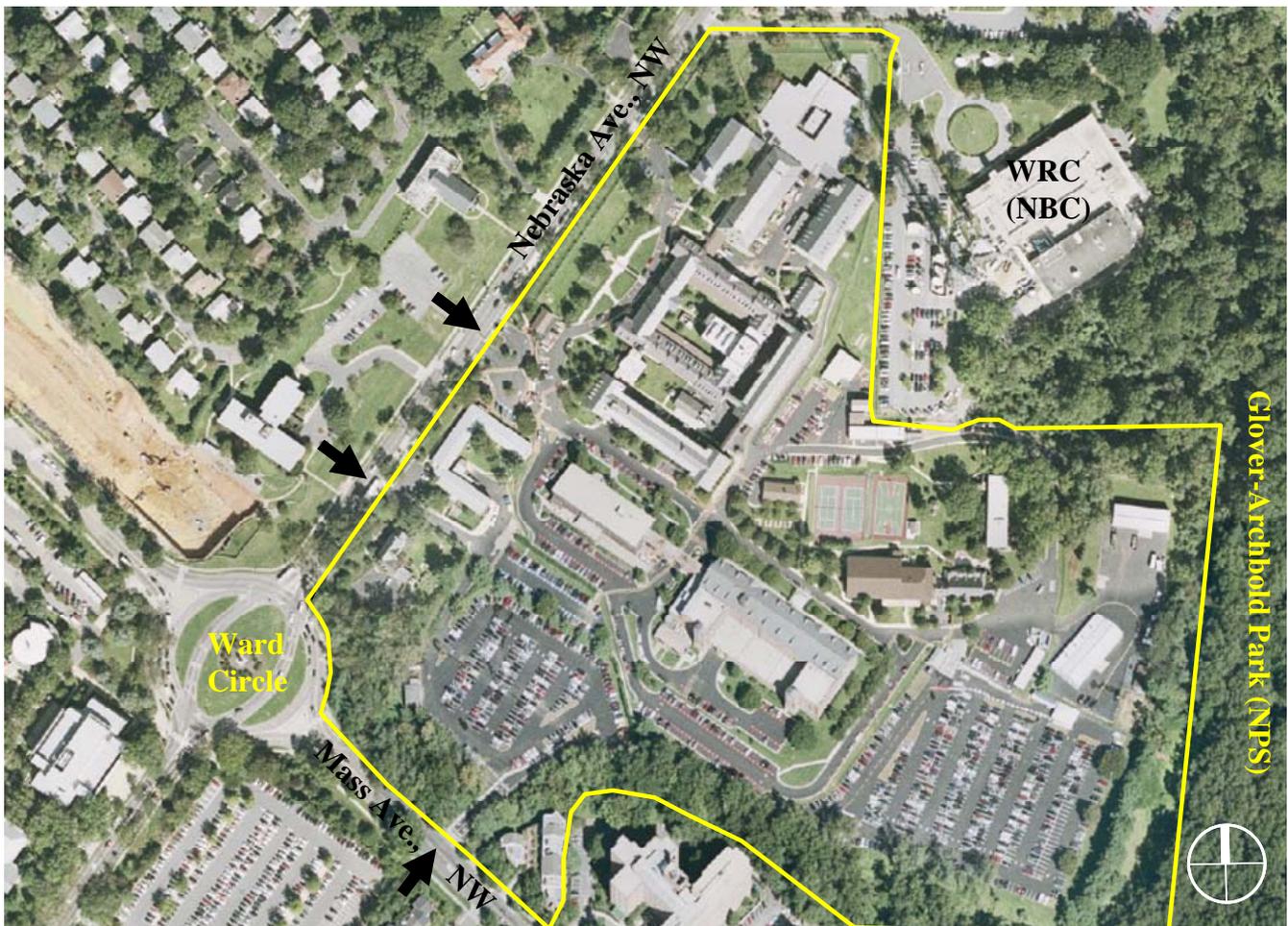
Regarding concept site and building plans for new and replacement fencing, four new guard booths and two new screening facilities at the Nebraska Avenue Complex (NAC) as shown on NCPC Map File No. 10.03(38.40)42301, requires that the applicant:

- Identify impacts of pole mounted cameras, site lighting, and lighting for the vehicle screening building, on Ward Circle and the Glover-Archbold Park in the preliminary submission package.

- Submit visual simulations or renderings as well as technical information expressed in lumens to demonstrate any lighting spill-over beyond the property line.
- Show shuttle bus routes, wayfinding signs, and drop-off locations as well as an overall vehicle circulation plan sufficient to clarify the intention and to demonstrate that shifting shuttle bus drop-off points will not adversely impact Ward Circle or the traffic pattern.

Advises the applicant that the additional information on lighting is required to determine whether the project would meet the Commission's criteria for categorical exclusion under the National Environmental Policy Act.

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NAC Site Aerial

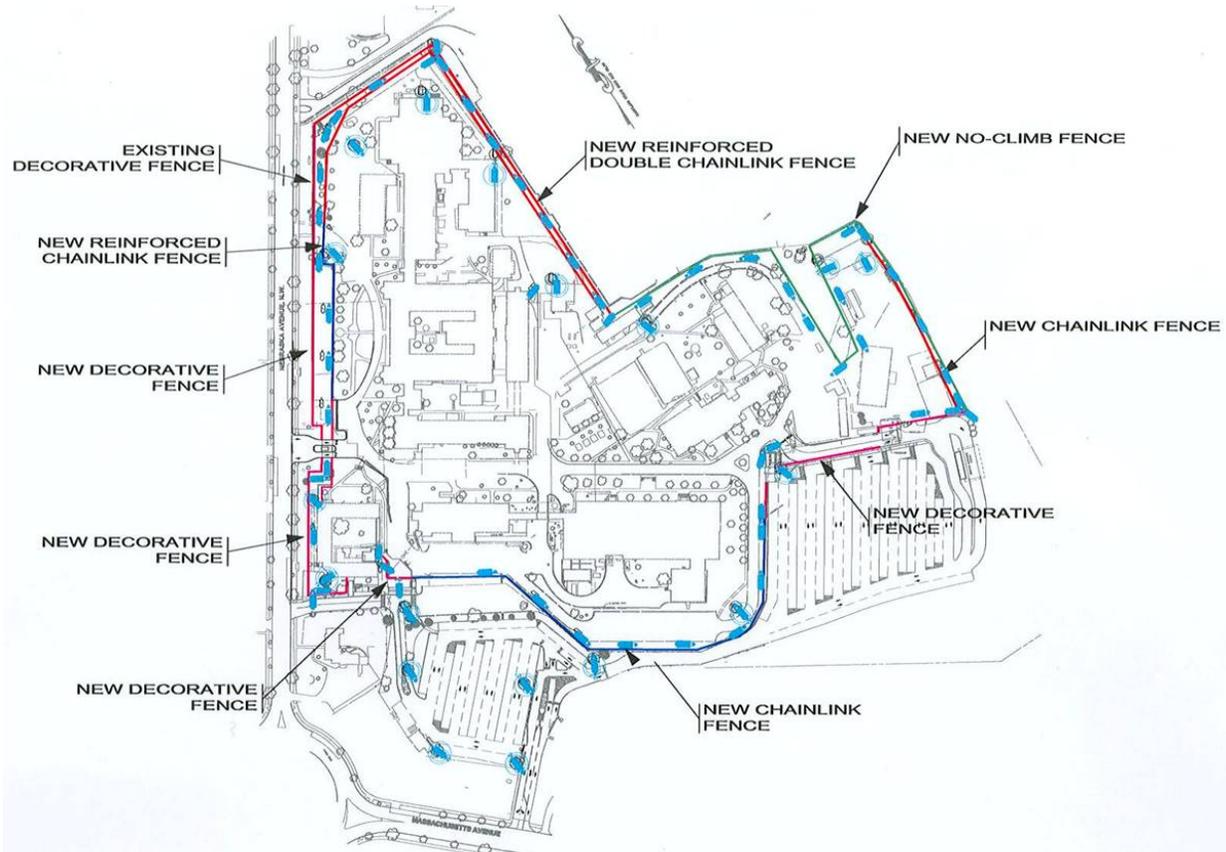
PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Site

The Nebraska Avenue Complex (NAC) is a 38-acre site located in the northwest quadrant of Washington, DC east of the intersection of Nebraska Avenue and Massachusetts Avenue. The site, a secure campus surrounded by fencing, is bounded by the WRC-NBC television station to the north and east, Glover-Archbold Park to the east, and residential communities to the south. American University is west of Nebraska Avenue. The site currently has three access points: a main visitors' entry on Nebraska Avenue also used by shuttle buses, and two entry roads leading to parking lots for employees; one from Nebraska and one from Massachusetts Avenue.

Background

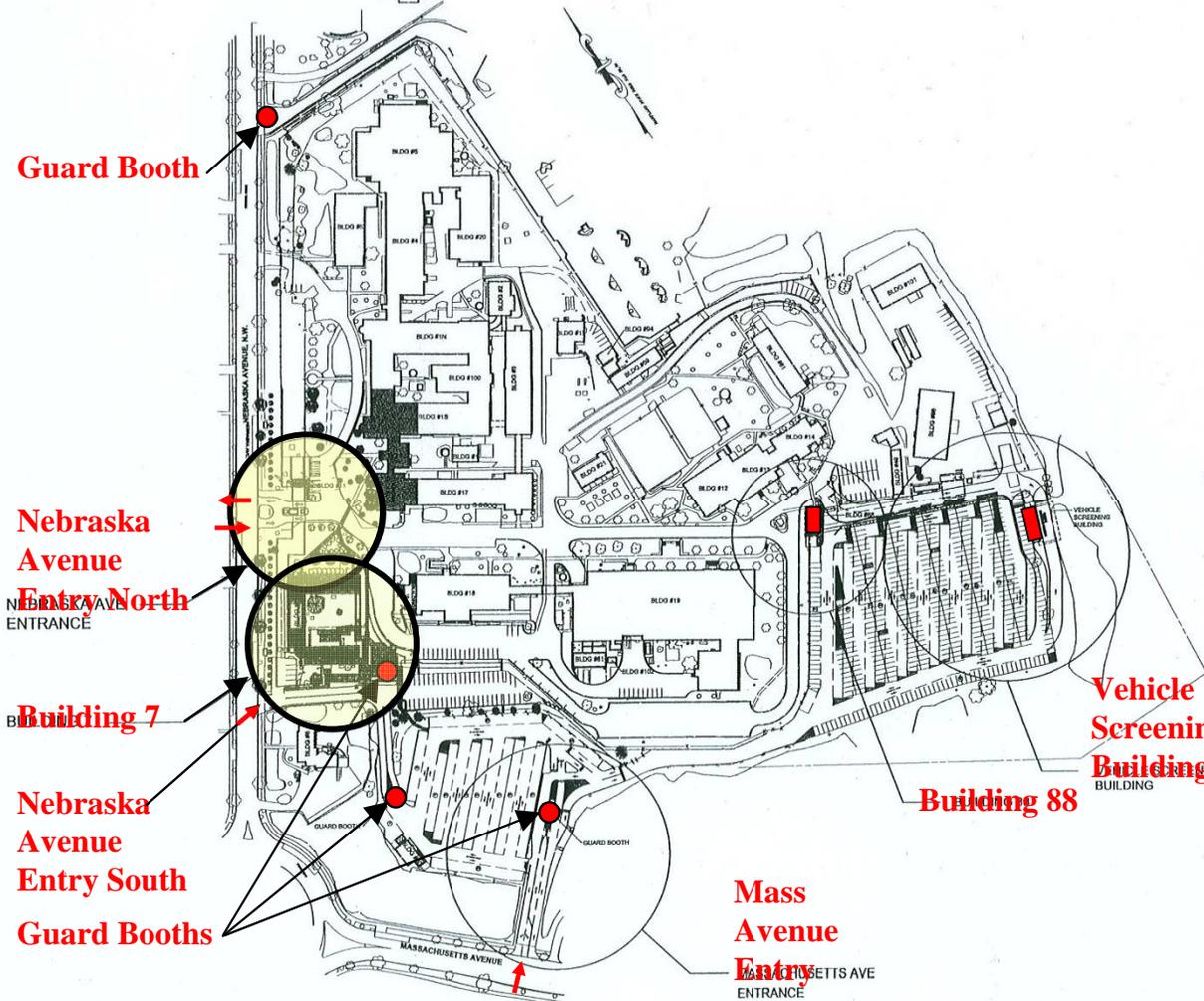
In April of 2005, the NAC was transferred from the Department of the Navy (DON) to the General Services Administration (GSA) to accommodate the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and "to allow the DHS to consolidate headquarters staff at the Complex for the foreseeable future". DHS is currently the sole tenant at the NAC. On February 1, 2007, the Commission approved preliminary and final site and building plans for replacement of Building 61, and concept site development plans for a Generator Enclosure Facility.



Proposed Layout: Fence line and Pole-Mounted Cameras

Proposal

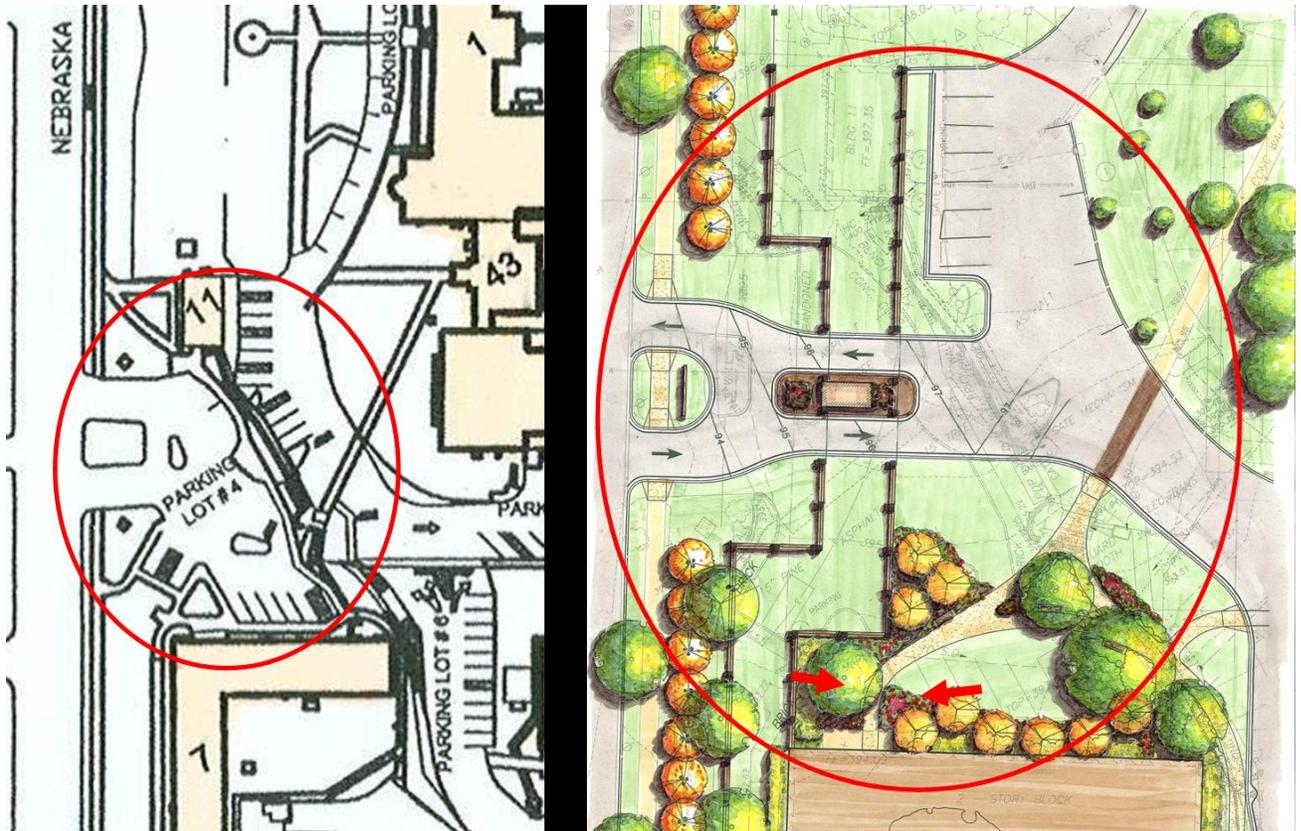
- Perimeter Fencing
 - Decorative - New perimeter fencing will replace all fencing along Nebraska Avenue except for the decorative iron fence. New decorative fencing will extend in front of Building 7 and the entire length of the NAC along Nebraska Avenue, as well as at the entrance to the Visitor Center at Building 7 and at Building 88.
 - No Climb and Chain link fencing will be used at the remainder of the perimeter including the back side of the property in various combinations of double fencing with an open space between the two, and single fencing. The single fence lines and the inner fence adjacent to the decorative fence will be reinforced with cable.
 - New cameras will be mounted at a height of 15 feet on 17 foot high poles would be added along the fences, at gates, and at the perimeter where needed.



Key Plan Showing Locations of Proposed Upgrades

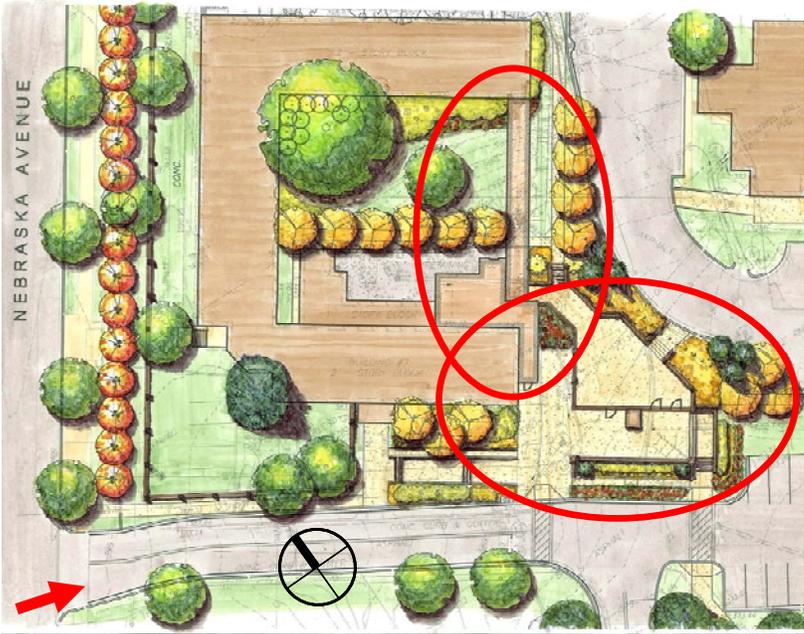
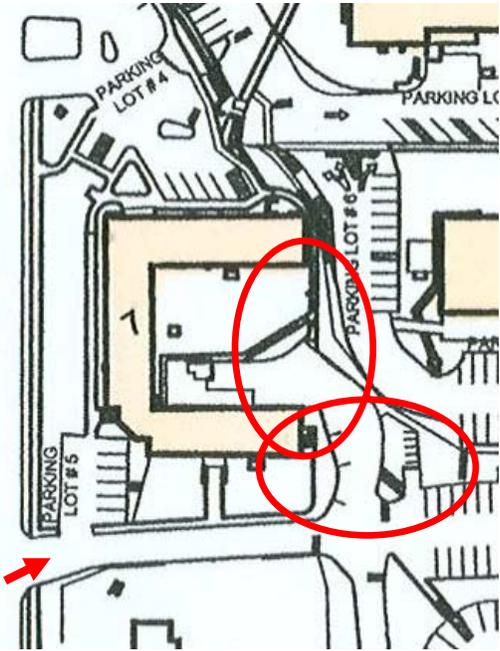
- Modification of the Nebraska Avenue entrance configuration including the demolition of Building 11 and realignment of the fence.

- The entrance for visitors including those in shuttle buses and cars will shift from the main entry on Nebraska Avenue to south of Building 7 (converted to an entry plaza), entered from the south entry road on Nebraska Avenue. The Nebraska Avenue entrance will be modified with a new central island and guard booth and sliding gates for use by VIP's and emergency vehicles only. Building 11 will be demolished and buffer space will be delineated between a double fence line. Some parking spaces will be converted to green space. A line of crepe myrtles will be added in front of Building 7 to continue those existing northwest of the main entry.



(Main) Nebraska Avenue Entry (North)

- Two buildings, Building 7 and Building 43 will be renovated.
 - Building 7's entrance will be renovated and a stair/elevator core and bridge added to connect the two wings to serve as Visitors' Center. Currently the two levels are not connected. A new entry plaza will be created at the lower level with a new guard booth. The new fence line, guard booth, and Building 7 itself, will all become part of the secure perimeter. A stucco metal panel and glass facade is proposed for the building.



Existing Entrance
Proposed Realignment
(Main) Nebraska Avenue Entry (North)



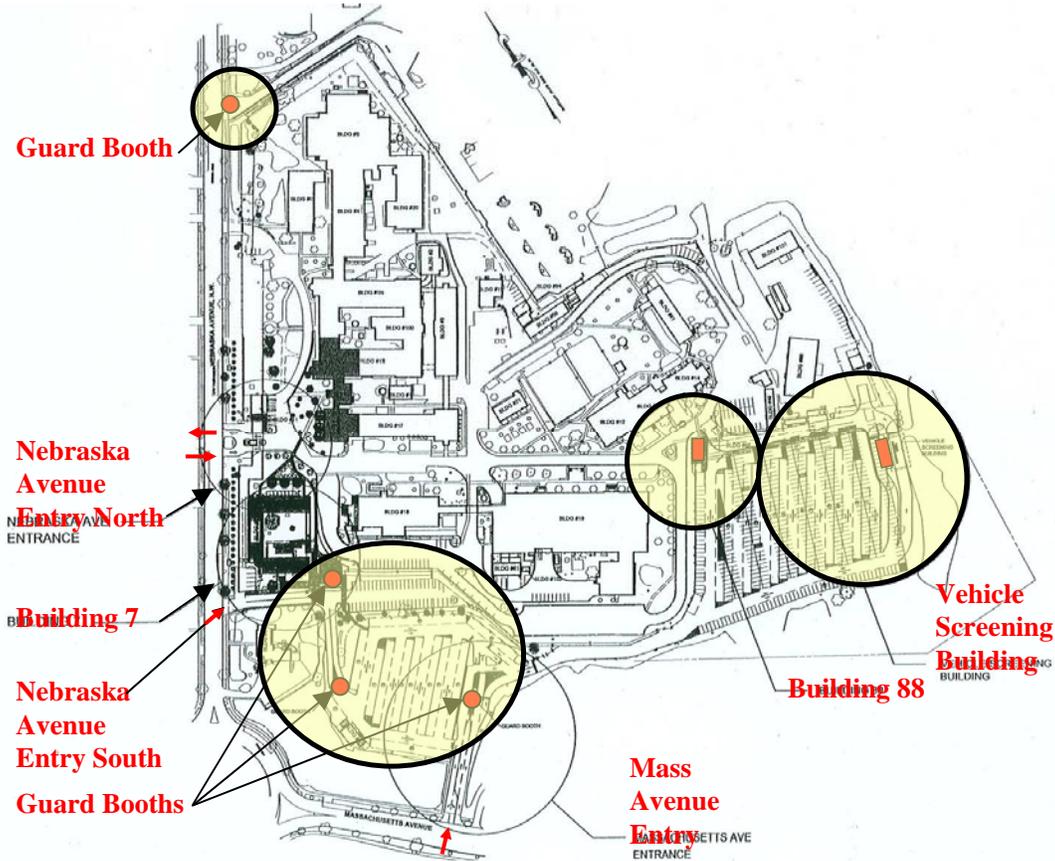
Existing Building 7 Elevations
Proposed Southwest Elevation



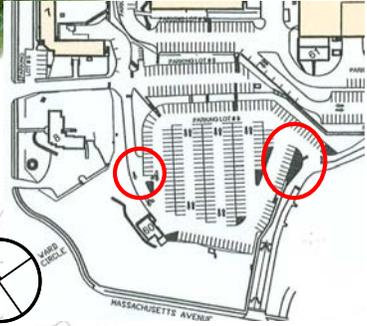
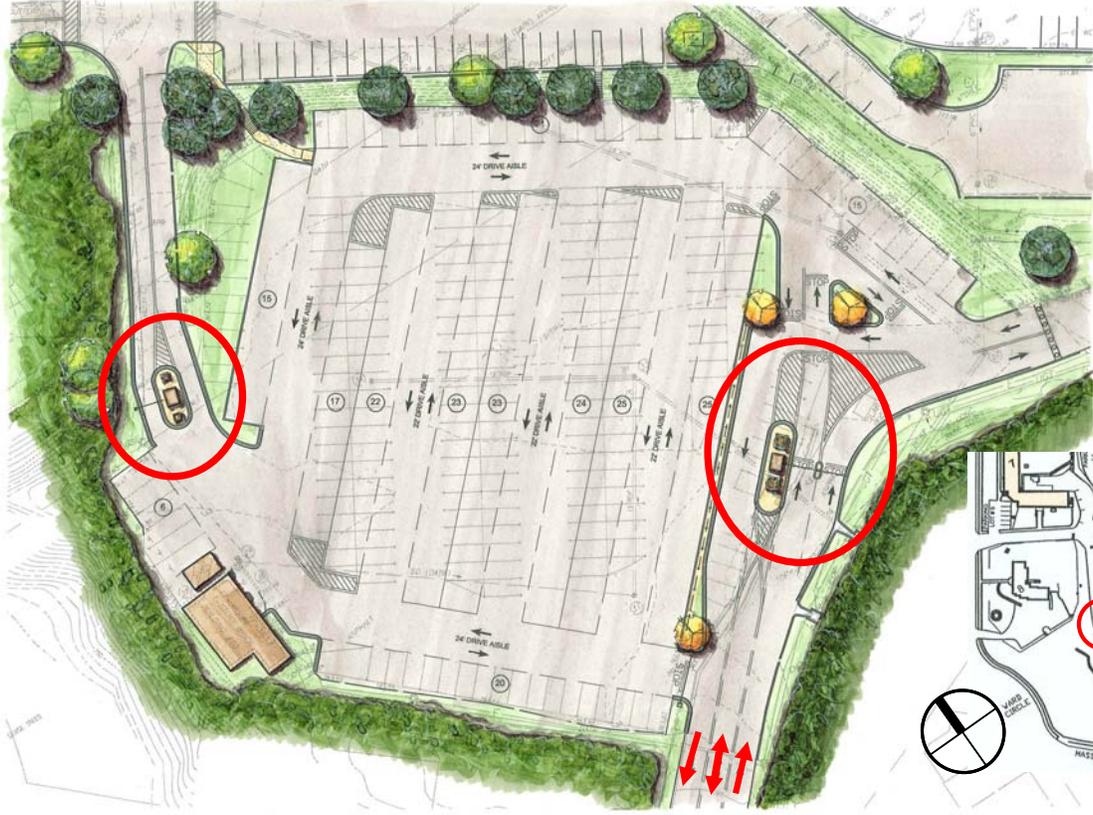
Building 7: Proposed Entry / Bridge Elevation (Southeast)

- Building 43 will have no changes evident from the exterior, but will be renovated on the interior for an electronic command center.

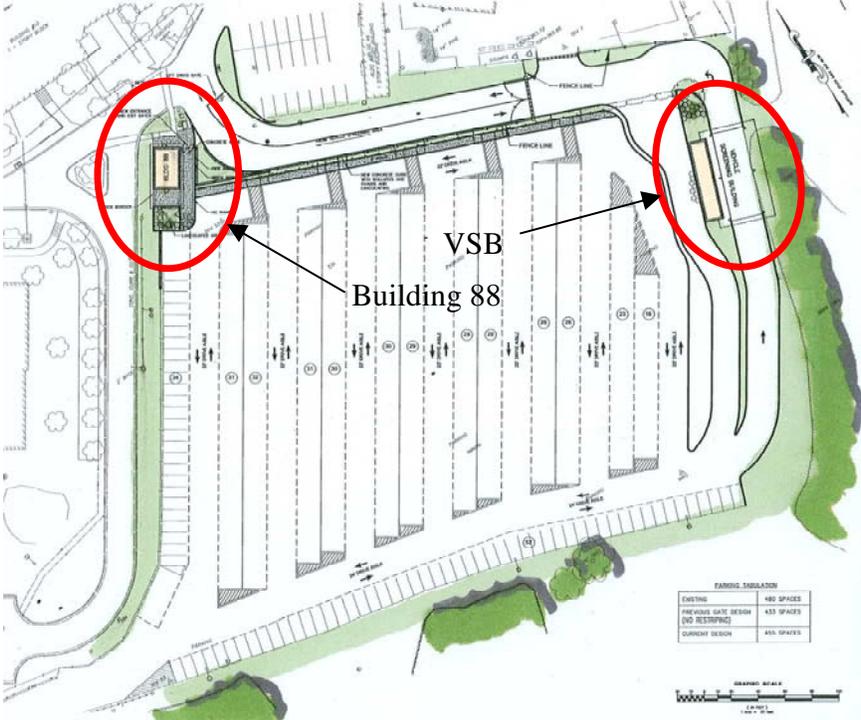
- Four New prefabricated guard booths, each six feet by eight feet, will be designed to be compatible with the existing architecture of the campus:
 - Two will flank the parking lot between Massachusetts and Nebraska Avenues;
 - One will be at the rear of Building 51 behind Bldg 5 to monitor fence line;
 - One (mentioned above) will be located at the Building 7 Plaza perimeter for badging.
- Two new screening buildings: a replacement for Building 88 to screen staff and contractors during heightened security, and a vehicle screening building (VSB), are proposed.
 - Existing Building 88, with 280 square foot (SF), will be replaced with a 1,093 GSF facility that will accommodate new equipment and processing and have a covered exterior waiting area for weather protection. The brick pavilion with synthetic slate roof will also become part of the secure perimeter with fencing attached.
 - The new VSB will replace a tent where vehicle screening is now performed, and where delivery trucks, staff and contractors who park inside the secure perimeter will be screened as warranted by the threat level. The VSB will include an exterior covered area for vehicle screening beneath a 20-foot high “floating” metal canopy “suspended” above round concrete columns supporting angled metal struts. Below, but not engaged by the canopy, an enclosed structure with a high point of 15 feet will have a metal facade and contain a guards’ office and a kennel for two dogs



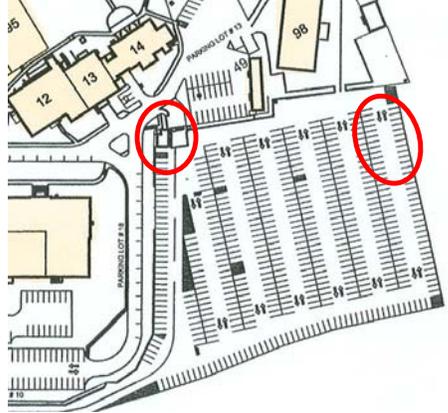
Key Plan Showing Locations of Proposed Upgrades



Proposed Guard Booths



PARKING TABULATION	
EXISTING	480 SPACES
PARKING GATE DESIGN (NO RESTROOMS)	433 SPACES
CURRENT DESIGN	455 SPACES



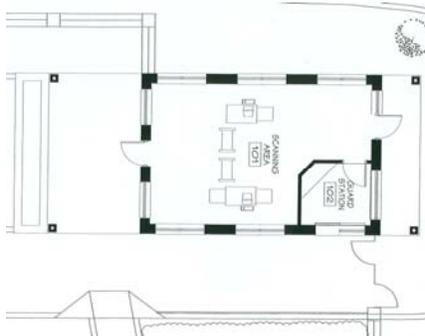
Proposed Screening Buildings



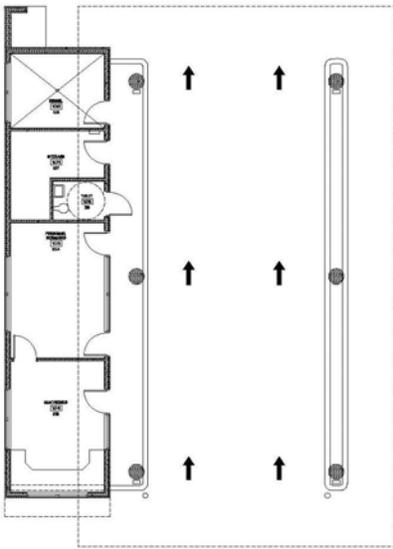
Front Elevation



Side Elevation



Building 88



Floor Plan

Vehicle Screening Building



Elevation from Parking Lot



Elevation under Canopy

Currently, the NAC has 1,129 existing parking spaces. The proposed work will reduce the number of parking spaces to 1,059. The number of employees is proposed to increase by 200 (from 1,600 to 1,800) within five years, and to remain constant at that level for the next 15 years.

Development Program

Applicant:	General Services Administration		
Architects:	The Lukemire Partnership, Inc		
Estimated Cost:	\$13.2 M (Includes Building 43 Interior Renovation)		
Schedule:	Building 43	2007 - 2008	
	Building 88	2007 - 2008	
	Massachusetts Avenue Guard Booths	2008	
	Bldg 7	2008 - 2009	
	Nebraska Ave enhancements	2009	

PROJECT ANALYSIS

Executive Summary

Overall, staff believes the proposals to upgrade campus security at the NAC represent a reasonable approach for the campus. The various projects propose reuse, repair and renovation where possible and only resort to new facilities where reuse is not feasible. The approach covers the landscape elements such as fencing, as well as buildings. Since the number of employees is proposed to increase, but by less than 500, and the number of parking spaces will be reduced, staff does not believe a transportation management plan is required with this submittal. However, staff notes that although the parking ratio will improve slightly due to the project, it will fall far short of the parking ratio required for its location within the District.

- Perimeter Fencing

Staff supports the continuation and extension of the decorative fencing along Nebraska Avenue to unify the appearance along Nebraska Avenue. Staff commends the applicant for converting from chain link to decorative fencing at other personnel entrance points, as recommended in consultation. Staff further supports the use of more industrial types of fencing at the back of the NAC, as well as the use of no-climb fencing where there will be no visual observation of the fence line by guards. Staff understands and notes that all perimeter fencing will occur inside the property line, and not in public space.

- Modification of Nebraska Avenue entrance configuration

The applicant has indicated that the project will improve the circulation at entrances and throughout the campus. Streamlining both vehicle and pedestrian circulation (roads, sidewalks and plazas), and earmarking various entry points for use by various types of users will improve its legibility. The main (north) entrance on Nebraska will no longer be cluttered by various users or by unclear circulation such as shuttle buses that must turn around. A new traffic island will streamline one-way traffic on either side. In addition, its users will be streamlined to VIPs and emergency vehicles only. Staff supports the conversion of miscellaneous parking lots, as well as Building 11 to be demolished, into green space and plaza, which will also increase the buffer space between double fence lines. The submission includes insufficient information on wayfinding signs and shuttle bus movements. The applicant must submit this information at the preliminary submission stage.

- Renovation of Buildings 7 and 43

Staff views the proposed design for additions and exterior renovations to or Building 7 as appropriate for the purpose and function the building will serve, and reiterates support for converting cluttered asphalt parking areas to a plaza that would serve as queuing space for visitor badging and have a green planted edge, as well as green space with new trees.

Building 43, a contributing resource to the historic district, will be treated so that the exterior will not be altered and the façade will have no changes, which staff finds appropriate.

- Four New prefabricated guard booths

The design for the prefabricated guard booths has not been included with the concept submittal. Staff expects to review designs including facade materials and heights as well as information about lighting levels at the fence line included with the next submittal. Staff would support the use of as much additional planting around the guard booths as possible to soften these areas, as well as to screen the edges of parking lot areas.

- Two new screening buildings, Building 88 and VSB

Staff views the proposed designs for both buildings as appropriate to each context. Building 88, closer to the brick structures on the campus, has taken its cues from those buildings. The façade of the VSB will relate to the new façade on Building 7, also metal and glass. As the pedestrian and vehicular entrances into the NAC, the use of similar materials and detailing will reflect a uniformly “hi-tech” image upon entering the DHS campus. Staff would support the use of as much additional planting at parking lot edges as possible to soften and screen these areas.

CONFORMANCE

Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital

Staff has determined that proposed projects are consistent with the *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital; Federal Elements*; in particular the Federal Workplace Element policies for Locating Federal Workplaces under Existing Facilities and Resources and Regional Distribution.

Relevant Federal Facility Master Plan

Although NCPC has not reviewed a master plan for the site from the current submitting agency, NCPC did review and approve a master plan for it under the Department of the Navy, on May 31, 1990. At this time, GSA has not adopted the Navy's master plan.

A DHS National Capital Region Housing Master Plan dated October 2006 acknowledges that over the longer term it is likely that the NAC can serve as a site for certain "back-office" support functions that can utilize facility improvements. However, until DHS determines the type and percentage of its overall facility space needs within the region that should be backfilled at the NAC, GSA believes that it would be premature to develop a NAC master plan. Until that time, DHS does not plan to add permanent facilities to house employees at the NAC, but only to provide necessary power and utility infrastructure to sustain current operating capability.

According to NCPC's Submission Guidelines for Master Plan Submission Requirements, "Ordinarily, the Commission will not approve, or recommend favorably on, project plans for an installation for which there is no approved master plan unless the agency provides an explanation satisfactory to the Commission as to the agency's reasons for not submitting a current master plan, or modification thereto, for the installation." Furthermore, "the Executive Director of the Commission may extend, modify, or waive any requirement pertaining to the scope and content of a master plan on sites where such requirements cannot be met because of the unique or special character or quality of the installation affected." Based on the prematurity of developing a master plan for the NAC site prior to finalizing the specific component distribution of space requiring backfill in the region, staff recommends approval of the Campus Security Upgrades subject to certain conditions the Commission requires.

National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA)

GSA has determined that the action to upgrade perimeter security for the NAC campus meets requirements for its agency's categorical exclusion 5.4 (b). Although GSA's category 5.4(b) generally equates to NCPC's categorical exclusion as specified at § 8 (21) of the Commission's Environmental and Historic Preservation Policies and Procedures, staff does not believe that sufficient information is included in the concept submittal to determine whether this or another one of NCPC's categorical exclusions will cover the proposed security upgrades.

Therefore, staff advises that additional information on lighting needs to be submitted to determine whether light pollution from the new screening facilities (Vehicle Screening Building and Building 88) would spill over onto adjacent properties with federal interests or communities to such an extent that the project would not to meet any of the Commission's criteria for categorical exclusion under the National Environmental Policy Act, in which case an environmental assessment may be required to accompany the preliminary submission. Further, graphic information showing shuttle bus routes and drop-off locations is needed to demonstrate that shifting shuttle bus drop-off points from inside the north Main Entry to the visitor's entry drive to Building 7, will not adversely impact Ward Circle or its traffic. The applicant has stated

that at each location opportunities for stormwater quality management will be evaluated , but has not yet provided drawings or designs to address specific sites.

National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)

The NAC is a historic district with National Register eligibility. Based on a 1994 Architectural Survey Report prepared for the Navy which assessed each building at the NAC which the applicant has attached, Building 43 is the only building included in the campus security upgrade that was recommended eligible under National Register Criteria as a component of the historic Naval Communications Annex. In the report, Buildings 7, 11 and 88 are recommended as not eligible for listing in the National Register, because Building 88 was built after the period of significance and Buildings 7 and 11 lack historical or architectural integrity. As a result, none of Buildings 7, 11 or 88 could become a contributing structure in the eligible NAC Historic District. In a letter to the DC SHPO dated June 29, 2007, GSA stated that the results of the proposed actions will not compromise those qualities allowing the site to be eligible for inclusion in the National Register, and has concluded that no adverse effects will result from the undertaking.

CONSULTATION

Coordinating Committee

The Coordinating Committee at its July 11, 2007 meeting reviewed the proposals for the NAC Campus Security Upgrades and forwarded them to the Commission with the statement that the project has been coordinated with all agencies represented.

Commission of Fine Arts

The Commission of Fine Arts reviewed the proposed concept at its July 19, 2007 Commission Meeting, at which time they voted to approve the concept, but have not filed an official action yet. However, during the meeting, commissioners strongly recommended that the applicant study further the design and selection of materials for the fence line at the rear perimeters of the campus to unify its appearance not only along Nebraska Avenue, but for its entirety.