



**SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
NATIONAL POSTAL MUSEUM
EXTERIOR SIGN INSTALLATION
2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE
Washington, D.C.**

Delegated Action of the Executive Director

September 27, 2007

Pursuant to delegations of authority adopted by the Commission on October 3, 1996 and 40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1) and (d), I approve the preliminary and final site development plans for the installation of two building identification signs at the National Postal Museum, located in the Postal Square Building at 2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE, as shown on NCPC Map File No. 1.11.(38.00)42372.

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The Smithsonian Institution has submitted plans for the installation of two building identification signs at the National Postal Museum, located in the Postal Square Building at 2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE, next to Union Station. The purpose of this project is to raise awareness of the National Postal Museum. The project is part of the Smithsonian's efforts to extend their recognizable family of signs along the National Mall to their near-Mall museums. The General Services Administration (GSA) manages the Postal Square Building, and concurs with the Smithsonian's project plans pending approval of the National Capital Planning Commission.

The proposal calls for the installation of two building identification signs in the lawn panel located along the Massachusetts Avenue, NE side of the Postal Square Building. The signs are made of bronze with an oxidized finish and will measure 80 inches in length, 36 inches in height, and 8 inches in depth. They will rest on a five-inch high black granite base with a slight reveal between the sign and base. The signs will be placed approximately 16 inches inside the outer-edge, and 60 inches inside the side-edge, of the lawn panel. Each sign will display the Smithsonian logo as well as the words "Smithsonian Institution" and "National Postal Museum" along two lines of text.

The use of the building identification signs is a suitable way to attract public attention to the location and existence of the museum. The bronze signs themselves are of an appropriate design

and scale for the Postal Square Building, a monumental Beaux Arts-style building designed by Daniel Burnham and completed in 1914 after his death.

The Smithsonian Institution has indicated that the temporary banners, currently used to identify the location of the National Postal Museum, and located on the Massachusetts Avenue and First Street sides of the Postal Square Building, will be removed and that temporary signs in these locations will only be used to advertise special events, exhibit openings, and symposia associated with the museum. Staff concurs that this is an appropriate action. Staff suggests that the Smithsonian Institution work with GSA to improve the condition of the signs indicating existing building tenants and accessible handicapped routes, located on either side of the Postal Square Building along Massachusetts Avenue.

This project was coordinated with all agencies attending the September 12, 2007 Coordinating Committee meeting. The Smithsonian Institution has concluded its Section 106 consultation with the D.C. State Historic Preservation Office with a concurrence of its determination of no adverse effect. NCPC has an independent obligation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and staff has determined that the project meets the agency's criteria for qualifying as a categorical exclusion. The project is in conformance with the NCPC Categorical Exclusion requirements under §8(C)(2) of the Commission's Environmental and Historic Preservation Policies.

Marcel C. Acosta
Acting Executive Director