

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Ellyn Goldkind, 11/25/08

NCPC File No. 6868



NATIONAL NAVAL MEDICAL CENTER PATIENT PARKING GARAGE

8901 Rockville Pike
Bethesda, Montgomery County, Maryland

Submitted by the United States Department of the Navy

November 25, 2008

Abstract

The United States Department of the Navy has submitted preliminary and final site and building plans for a new patient parking garage at the National Naval Medical Center, located at 8901 Rockville Pike in Bethesda, Maryland. The project will include construction of a new eight-level parking garage for patients and visitors, and related site/utility work to serve the expanded Medical Center. The new structure has been designed in a similar style and with the same materials as the new Medical Facility Additions (Buildings A and B), and is related to the campus expansion required by the 2005 BRAC action.

Commission Action Requested by Applicant

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

Executive Director's Recommendation

The Commission:

Approves the preliminary and final site and building plans for the new Patient Parking Garage at the National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, as shown on NCPC Map File No. 3101.30(49.00)42609.

Commends the applicant and their development team for a sophisticated parking garage design that will be well-integrated into the overall image of the expanded Medical Center.

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Background

As a result of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) recommendations, the existing Walter Reed Army Medical Center (WRAMC) located in Washington, D.C. will be closed and military medical services in the National Capital Area (NCA) will be realigned between two primary facilities serving the northern and southern portions of the NCA. The southern NCA will be served by a new hospital at Ft. Belvoir, Virginia, and the existing National Naval Medical Center (NNMC) in Bethesda, Maryland will be expanded and renovated to serve the northern NCA. All existing tertiary (sub-specialty and complex care) medical services currently provided at WRAMC will be relocated to Bethesda. The expanded NNMC will be renamed the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, Bethesda (WRNMMC) and is the location of the current project. As a funded project associated with BRAC, work is required to be completed by September 2011.

The Navy has completed an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the expansion, and has submitted a Master Plan update, including a Transportation Management Plan (TMP), for the campus. Due to the ambitious timeline to implement BRAC recommendations, the project site and building plans have been referred to affected agencies through the Maryland State Clearinghouse ahead of the Master Plan; all of the affected agencies have identified the proposed project as generally consistent with their plans, programs, and objectives. The Master Plan for the WRNMMC has been submitted by the Navy to NCPC, and forwarded to the Maryland State Clearinghouse; the Plan is expected to be reviewed by the Commission at its February 5, 2009 meeting.

Prior Commission Action

The Commission approved the preliminary and final site and building plans for the Medical Facility Additions – Buildings A and B at its June 5, 2008 meeting (NCPC File No. 6759). These two new buildings, the first building phases related to the BRAC action, will create 638,000 square feet of medical space; the proposed parking garage is needed to accommodate the increased number of patients and visitors resulting from the BRAC expansion of the Medical Center.

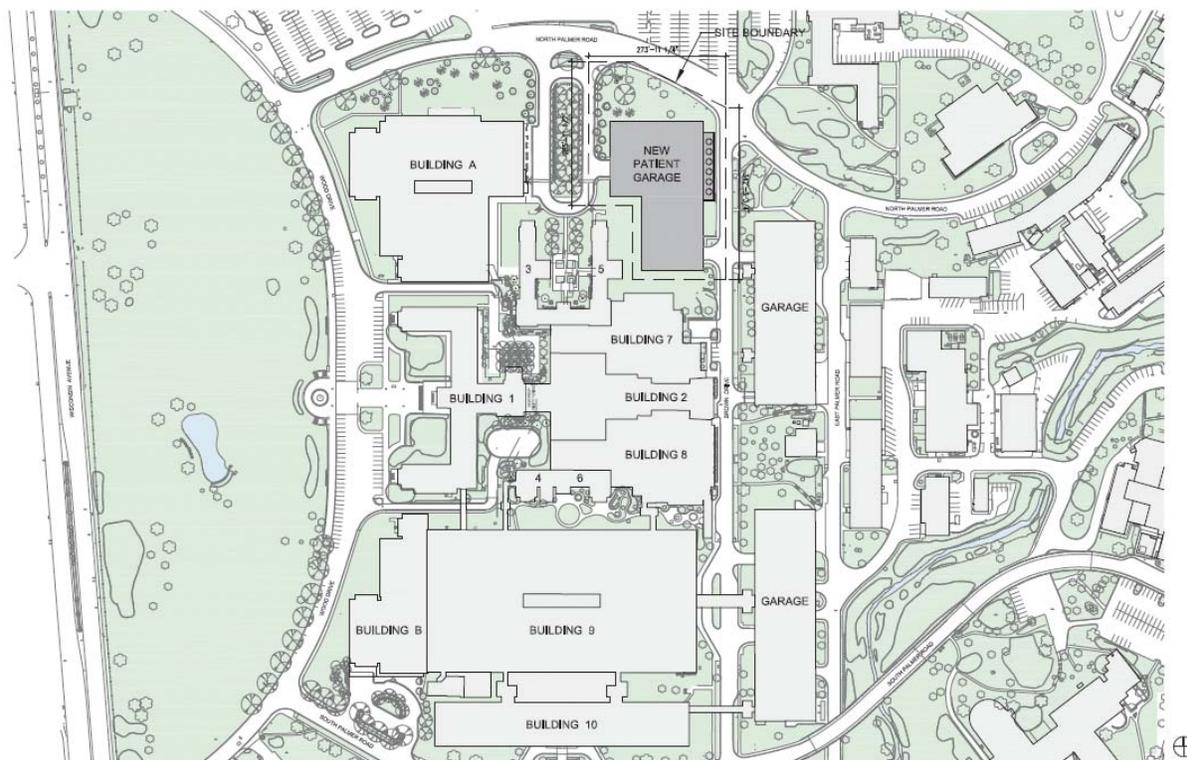
Proposal

The United States Department of the Navy has submitted preliminary and final site and building plans for a new Patient Parking Garage at the National Naval Medical Center (NNMC) in Bethesda, Montgomery County, Maryland. The proposal is the result of the Navy's assessment of the BRAC requirements and master planning.

The Patient Parking Garage will serve patients and visitors to Buildings A and B. The new garage will be located immediately to the east of the new Building A on land that is currently vacant. The garage will provide 939 parking spaces on eight levels above grade, and will have a total area of 321,150 gross square feet. The building footprint is 188' x 298'. The overall roof height is approximately 80'-2" above grade and the top of the elevator shafts is 106'-8" above grade. The garage is expected to achieve a LEED Silver rating.

Constructed of pre-cast structural concrete panels, the new garage is responsive to the design existing buildings as well as the designs for the new Medical Facility Additions (Buildings A and B). The exterior material will match that of Buildings A and B, and the design of the proposed garage respects the significance of the surrounding historic buildings and courtyards. An alternating rhythm of vertical solids and voids surrounds the garage on all sides. Continuous vertical panels will rise from grade to the top of the structure, and will support the garage floor slabs; the voids between panels will allow air flow through the garage. The vertical panels are given visual scale by a regular pattern of reveals that relates to the appearance of Buildings 1, 3, and 5.

In addition to providing parking for the patients, the ground floor of the garage contains several mechanical spaces relating to the garage functions, as well as a cooling tower well to house mechanical equipment that serves the new Buildings A and B. The cooling tower well is screened with the same pre-cast material as the garage to make it as inconspicuous as possible. A generator room, located at the northwest corner of the first level, has exterior grills that have been designed to minimize the visual impact of this space; and landscaping will be used to further screen this area from passersby.



SITE PLAN



SITE SECTION

The parking garage will be entirely above grade due to the presence of bedrock on the site; the need for blasting in close proximity to sensitive and active medical facilities was determined infeasible by the applicant. The building has been massed accordingly with a four-level section on the west, which is adjacent to the planned main entry drive to the campus and directly across from the entrance to Building A. The garage will not be visible from Wisconsin Avenue (see Site Section above).



PERSPECTIVE – ARCHITECT’S RENDERING

PROJECT ANALYSIS

Staff finds that the proposed parking garage is sophisticated in its design and will be well-integrated into the overall image of the expanded Medical Center. The effective variations in massing, the use of compatible materials, and the integration of vertical openings (where typical garage design would use horizontal strip openings) combined to result in an exceptional building design that camouflages the utilitarian function of the structure. The applicant and development team should be commended for their ongoing consultation and responsiveness to NCPC and Maryland Historical Trust staffs.

In response to staff comments, the applicant has included the use of landscaping to screen mechanical elements and to provide a more inviting pedestrian experience around the garage. Additionally, the building will not have any exterior accent lighting and will not detract from the nighttime appearance of Building One or the other nearby historic campus buildings.

The calculation of visitor parking spaces, per the UFC, is appropriate and consistent with similar federal facilities in the region. The need for these spaces is calculated by using the Military's Unified Facilities Criteria (UFC), which applies the following formula for calculating the number of parking spaces at Department of Defense Medical Treatment Facilities:

(0.4) * (#outpatient/day) ¹	=	852
+ Inpatients, number of new beds ²	=	126
Subtotal	=	978
* Surge ³	=	1,077
TOTAL UFC ALLOWANCE	=	1,053

¹ Outpatients/day calculation: 484,000 additional patient visits per year, divided by 250 (the number of work-days per year) multiplied by 1.1: $484,000/250 \times 1.1 = 2130$.

² Inpatients, number of new hospital beds: 345 future - 219 current = 126.

³ Surge, based on additional patient loading during the Fallujah Surge: ~7.7%.

The Patient Parking Garage will provide 939 spaces, approximately 89% of the total UFC allowance.

CONFORMANCE

Master Plan for the National Naval Medical Center

The proposed garage is consistent with the recent Master Plan update for the Medical Center, currently under NCPC review. Since the Master Plan is not expected to be reviewed by the Commission until February, 2009, this project has been referred to affected agencies for review; the need to meet the established BRAC timeline necessitated this alternate approach (*see "Consultation" section, page 6*). Although patient/visitor parking quantities are not subject to the Comprehensive Plan ratios, staff notes that preliminary review of the submitted Master Plan does identify staff parking numbers that do not exceed the Comprehensive Plan ratio of one vehicle for every three employees (1:3). The application of the Unified Facilities Criteria (UFC), which has been applied to calculate parking for the Patient Parking Garage, is a typical approach for determining parking that is not subject to the Comprehensive Plan ratios.

Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital

Staff has determined that the proposed project is not inconsistent with the *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital: Federal Elements*.

Federal Capital Improvements Program

This project is not included in the current list of projects included in the FCIP for the United States Department of the Navy. The applicant is requested to include this project in the 2010-2015 version of the FCIP.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) has recently been completed for the WRNMMC campus. There are anticipated adverse impacts related to increased traffic resulting from the Campus expansion. These impacts are expected to be mitigated with the implementation of the Transportation Management Plan, currently under review as part of the ongoing Master Plan update. NCPC does not have independent NEPA responsibility for federal projects outside of the District of Columbia.

National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)

The Navy has consulted extensively with Commission staff and the staff of the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT), resulting in a determination of no adverse effect by the Navy and concurrence by the MHT. The MHT finding are conditional, with the stipulations that material finishes are darker than Building One and that the alterations to the courtyards and north elevations of Buildings 3 and 5 will conform to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. NCPC does not have independent Section 106 responsibility for federal projects outside of the District of Columbia.

Building One was listed in the National Register of Historic places in 1977. Constructed during the administration of President Roosevelt and based on a design concept originated by the president (he sketched a rough plan and elevation for the new Naval hospital on White House stationery), it is significant for its association with Roosevelt, World War II era military development, and the association with architect Paul Philippe Cret and the Navy architectural staff under Fredrick W. Southworth. The proposed building does not detract from the primary views of the Building One tower, which remains intact as a highly visible landmark and the key defining element of the campus.

CONSULTATION

The project site and building plans have been referred to affected agencies through the Maryland State Clearinghouse. The Maryland Department of Transportation, the Maryland Department of Planning, and the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development determined the proposed project to be generally consistent with their plans, programs, and objectives.

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) found the proposed project to be generally consistent with their plans, programs, and objectives; the MDE noted requirements that must be adhered to with regard to underground tanks and handling of construction debris.

The Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission did not have any comments related to the project.

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources did not provide a response to the Clearinghouse.

Montgomery County BRAC Committee

The Montgomery County BRAC Committee did not have any objections to the Patient Parking Garage, noting that it is “necessary and consistent with plans described in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) construction at NNMC.”

The Committee also provided comments related to the Navy’s and Department of Defense’s involvement with improving Metro access to the site as well as other transportation-related improvements that are expected to result from the 2005 BRAC action. The County anticipates improvements to include increased shuttle service to/from the Metro station; encouragement of personnel to use alternative modes of transportation; and turn lane, traffic flow, and public safety improvements related to increased usage of entrances along MD 355 (Wisconsin Avenue).