

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

C. Hart

NCPC File No. 0180



**ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY**  
COLUMBARIUM COURT NINE, PHASE FIVE  
Arlington County, Virginia

Submitted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

October 30, 2008

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**Abstract**

The Columbarium complex is located in the southeast quadrant of Arlington National Cemetery (ANC). The complex is on axis with the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the Memorial Amphitheater. The Columbarium Court Nine, Phase Five site is three acres and will be bordered to the north by York Drive, to the south by Bradley Drive, to the east by Patton Drive, and to the west by Nimitz Drive. Siting was done in accordance with an approved master plan for ANC. According to ANC's master plan the Columbarium Court Nine, Phase Five is to be a larger single court Columbarium and the last built on that site. There are 44 interior niche walls that form east-west aisles and are divided by the entry axis from the street side main entrance to the fountain. The total number of proposed niches is 19,864.

**Commission Action Requested by Applicant**

Approval of concept design of Arlington National Cemetery Columbarium Court Nine, Phase Five, pursuant to 40 U.S.C. § 8722 (a) and (b)(1).

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**Executive Director's Recommendation**

The Commission:

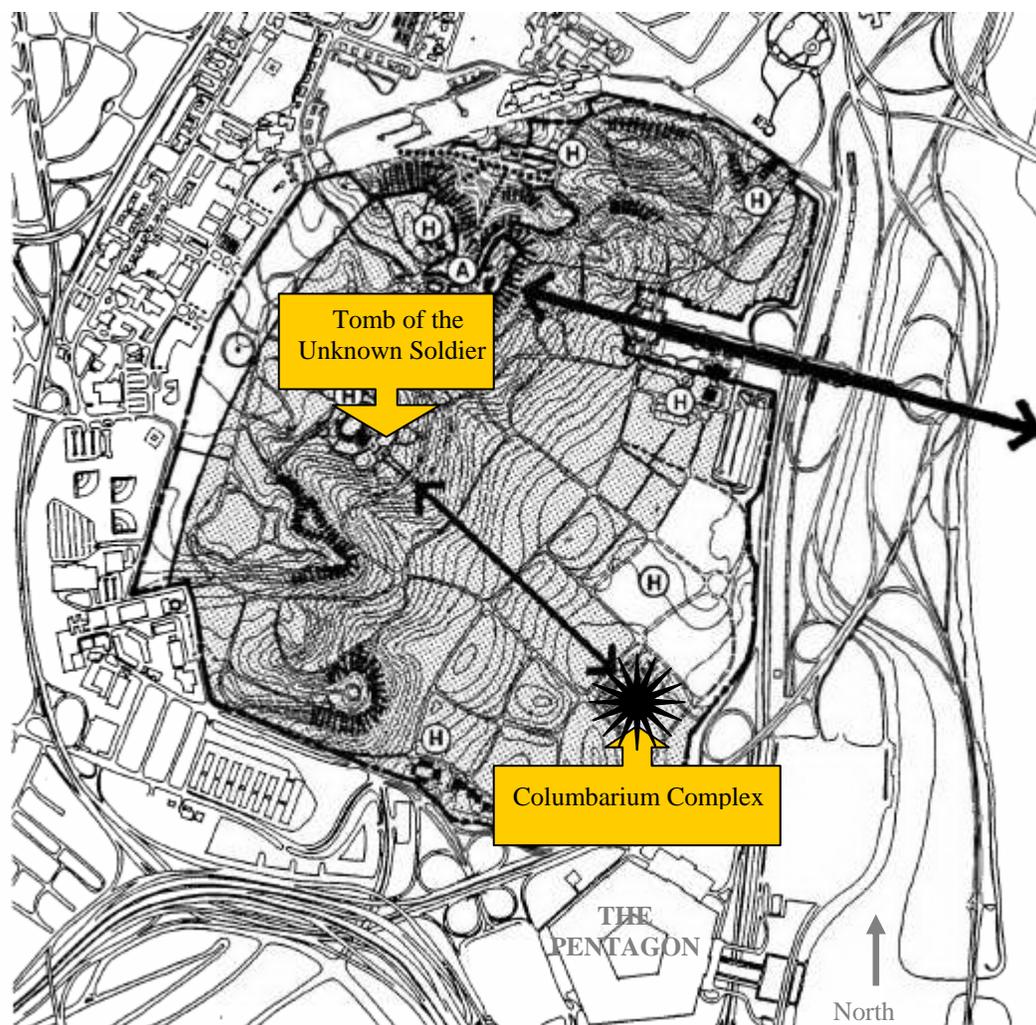
**Commends Favorably on** the concept design for Arlington National Cemetery Columbarium Court Nine, Phase Five as shown on NCPC Map File No. 31.30(38.00)42427.

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**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

**Site**

The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers is proposing the construction of Columbarium Court Nine, Phase Five in the southeast quadrant of Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Virginia as sited in the approved ANC 1998 master plan. The 14-acre Columbarium site is located just west of the Jefferson Davis Highway and Washington Boulevard interchange. The complex is on axis with the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the Memorial Amphitheater. The Columbarium Court Nine, Phase Five site is located east of Phase Four. The Columbarium Court Nine, Phase Five site will be bordered to the north by York Drive, to the south by Bradley Drive, to the east by Patton Drive, and to the west by Nimitz Drive.



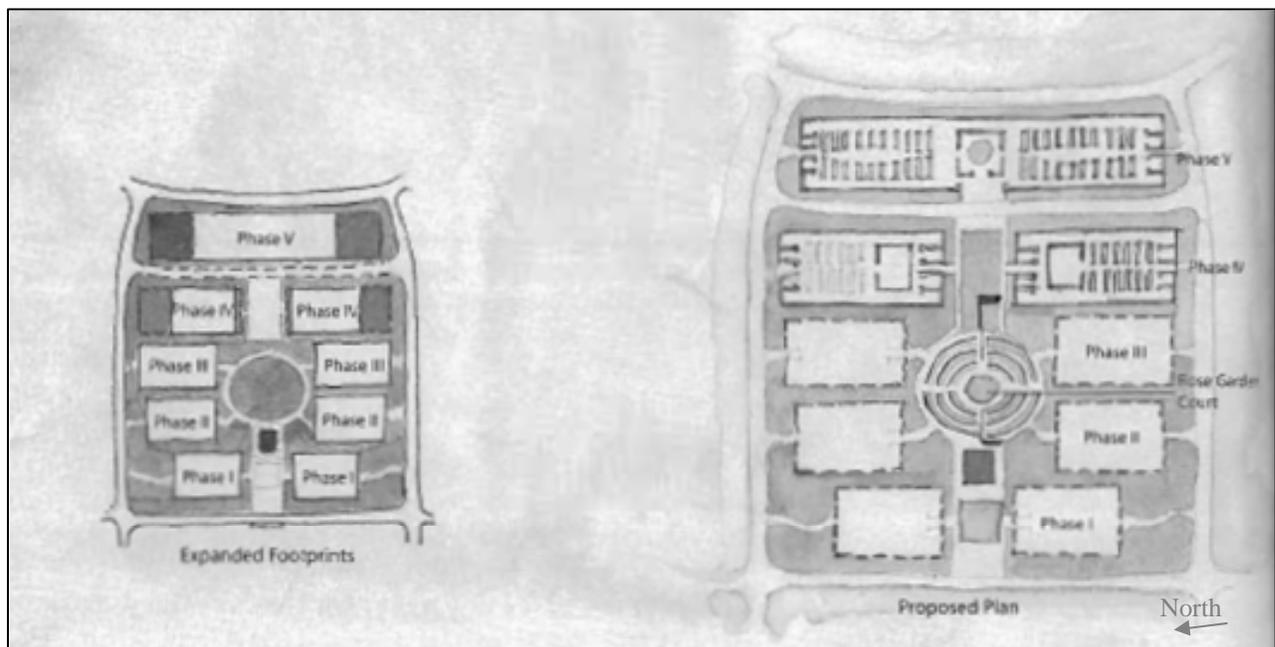
**ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY**

**View shed from Tomb of the Unknown Solider to Columbarium Complex**

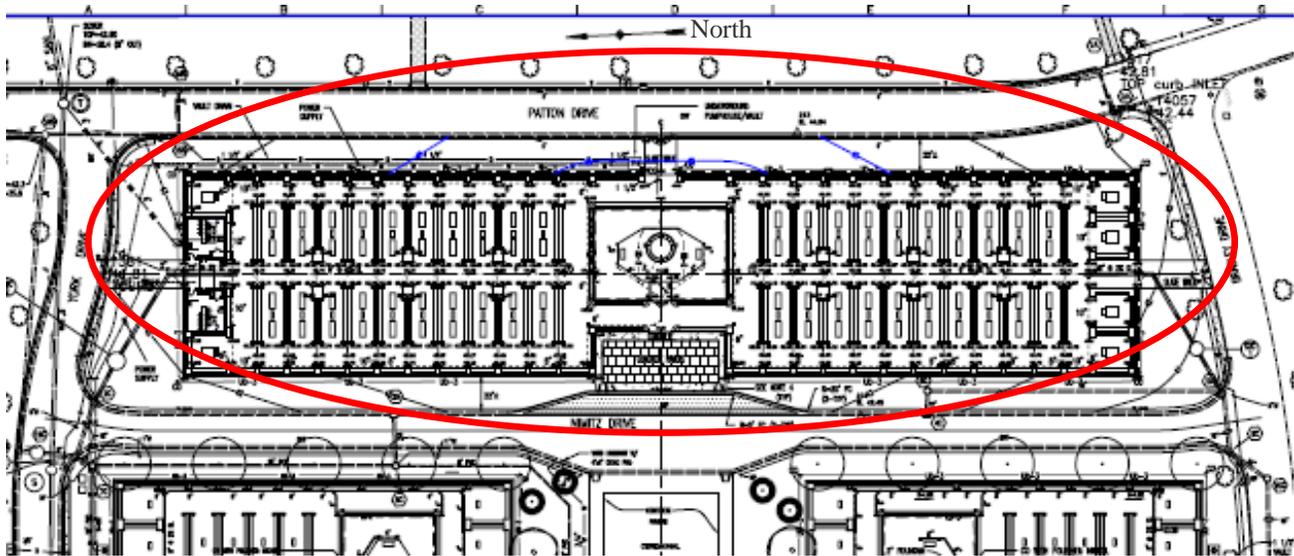
The 14-acre, rectangular-shaped Columbarium Complex site measures approximately 700 feet from north to south and 800 feet from east to west. The site is divided in the east-west direction by Nimitz Drive, the main access to the newly constructed columbarium complex. Columbarium Phases One through Four have been constructed west of Nimitz drive; the eastern portion of the site is an open turf area reserved for Phase Five. The topography of the site is gentle with elevations ranging from 51 feet at the center and elevation 41 feet at the northwest and southwest corners of the project site.

### Background

Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) developed a master plan to build a complex of Columbariums. Phases One, Two, Three, and Four are complete. The most recent, Phase Four, was approved by the Commission in 2001, as shown on NCPC Map File No. 1.61(38.00)-40965. According to ANC's master plan, the Columbarium Court Nine, Phase Five is to be a larger single court Columbarium and the last built on the site.



## **ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY 1998 MASTER PLAN Columbarium Development Plan**



**ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY**  
**Columbarium Court Nine, Phase Five Proposal**

Proposal

Due to increasing need for burial plots and finite cemetery space, Phases Three and Four Columbariums were increased in size to maximize the number of niches. Columbarium Court Nine, Phase Five will also be larger than the original concept in the 1998 Master Plan and hence the applicant is submitting this design to NCPC and the CFA for approval.

The size of the columbarium increased in length while maintaining its original width. The east and west setbacks will be approximately 22 feet. Setbacks from York and Bradley drives will be greater than previous structures which will allow for increased landscaping opportunities. To ensure the setbacks were sufficient, the columbarium corners, plaza and restrooms were staked out in the field for inspection and were approved by cemetery staff.

A larger entrance is oriented toward the center of site. The smaller two entrances provide a functional street side entry for visitors. The landscaped courtyard and fountain area, developed as an 'island' within the court, provides an area for quiet meditation and is considered the focal point of the columbarium. The courtyard area will be centered on the existing ceremonial shelter and the entry will be surrounded with low walls so the fountain can be seen from the road and shelter. Its plaza area will be constructed with an architectural type concrete paver to match those used in Phase Four.

Niches comprise the low wall that surrounds the fountain courtyard as well as east and west exterior walls. Eight courtyards comprise the north and south walls. Among them six accommodate niches and two accommodate toilet & utility areas. There are 44 interior niche walls that form east-west aisles and are divided by the entry axis from the street side main entrance to the fountain. The total number of proposed niches is 19,864.



**ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY  
Existing Columbarium Phase Four, Wall and Niches**

Restroom facilities will be incorporated into the north side of the columbarium. All supporting utilities will also enter/exit this side. A 12 foot wide drop off lane will be provided along Nimitz Drive in front of the Columbarium Court Nine, Phase Five plaza, long enough to hold three to four vehicles, mirroring the existing drop off zone. The facility is accessible to the physically disabled. The depth of the drop off will be slightly shallower in order to maintain a 10-foot setback from the west face of the building.

The structure is composed of poured in place concrete. Surface treatment is limestone cladding with granite base. Niches are composed of precast concrete grid with marble covers. The walkways are flagstone.

#### *PROJECT ANALYSIS*

Staff finds that the proposed Columbarium Court Nine, Phase Five meets the design parameters that were formulated in the 1998 Arlington National Cemetery master plan with regard to footprint, columbarium frontage/setbacks, symmetry, heights, and preservation of view sheds and historic landscapes.

## *CONFORMANCE*

### Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital

Staff has determined that the proposed project is not inconsistent with the policies established in the *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital: Federal Elements* with regard to protecting the capital image and providing stewardship of historic properties.

### Federal Capital Improvements Plan

The 2008-2013 Federal Capital Improvements (FCIP) program identified the proposed Columbarium Court Nine, Phase Five construction at Arlington National Cemetery.

### Arlington National Cemetery Master Plan

The Columbarium site was identified in the Cemetery's first Master Plan dating from 1967 and remains consistent with the Revised Master Plan for the Arlington National Cemetery, approved by the Commission on March 5, 1998, as shown on NCPC Map File No. 1.61(05.12)-40486.

### National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA)

In conformance with its NEPA compliance procedures, the U.S. Army completed an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Master Plan, with the final EIS issued November 2007. NCPC staff has reviewed the EIS. The project is a proposal in the environs outside the District of Columbia and because the Commission has an advisory role, it does not have an independent NEPA review for the project.

### National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)

Review of the proposed project, per Section 106 of the NHPA, is not required at the concept design stage.

## *CONSULTATION*

### Commission on Fine Arts

At its October 16, 2008 meeting the Commission of Fine Arts reviewed and approved the concept design for the Columbarium Court Nine, Phase Five.