



401 9th Street, NW
North Lobby, Suite 500
Washington, DC 20004
Tel: 202 482-7200
Fax: 202 482-7272
www.ncpc.gov

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Contact: Roland McElroy
202-482-7298 or roland@ncpc.gov

NCPC Studying RFK Stadium Site

Washington, DC – At its regular June meeting, the National Capital Planning Commission announced its intention to conduct an in-depth exploration of multiple uses for the RFK Stadium site once the baseball and soccer teams currently using the stadium have relocated.

“The East Capitol Street area can be a dramatic gateway to the city, but it will require careful planning to realize the full potential of the site – respecting its historical significance as well as its prominence at the east end of the monumental core,” said John V. Cogbill, III, NCPC Commission Chairman.

Cogbill emphasized the critical role public input will have in the planning process. “Federal planners will be exploring a responsible mix of federal and public uses for the site,” said Cogbill. “Of course, public opinion will be solicited, too, and we will coordinate with the District government as well.”

“NCPC’s 1997 *Legacy Plan* broadly re-envisioned the site with a major memorial surrounded by new housing and commercial development,” said Patricia Gallagher, NCPC Executive Director.” The *Legacy Plan* also described an East Capitol Street that “links the traditional monumental core and the Anacostia River.”

The RFK site is one of more than 100 sites for future memorials identified in NCPC’s *Memorials and Museums Master Plan* released in 2001. The site is on a list to receive major focus this year as the *National Capital Framework Plan* is developed. The *Framework Plan* will encourage the selection of sites off the National Mall for future memorials, museums, cultural and civic events. Details of the *Framework Plan* are expected later this year.

“The vision of previous plans was to reserve the RFK site for a major memorial that is commensurate with those at the other end of the Monumental Core,” said Cogbill. “An urban design for the entire area that focuses more on recreation, open space, and some private development will be important to restoring East Capitol, Independence and Pennsylvania Avenues as major thoroughfares through east and Southeast Washington.”

NCPC expects to begin work this year on a concept analysis for the RFK site. The Commission has begun the process of soliciting input on the RFK site from several key stakeholders, including the D.C. Office of Planning, District Department of Transportation, National Park Service and others.

“Throughout the summer, we will gather information from all interested parties on potential uses for the site,” said Gallagher. “An open house to receive public input is planned for mid-summer.”

Gallagher believes the Commission should be able to make a formal recommendation for future use of the land in early fall. “Our goal is to be as pro-active as possible in planning the best future use of the RFK site,” said Gallagher.

RFK Stadium (built in 1961) is owned by the city and sits on land leased from the federal government. Altogether, the stadium site and surrounding federal lands and buildings occupy 190 acres.

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The National Capital Planning Commission is the federal government’s central planning agency in the District of Columbia and surrounding counties in Maryland and Virginia. The Commission provides overall planning guidance for federal land and buildings in the region. It also reviews the design of federal projects and memorials, oversees long-range planning for future development, and monitors capital investment by federal agencies.