

PRESS RELEASE



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NCPC Reviews Plans for the National Law Enforcement Museum, Lincoln Memorial, and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Visitor Center

Washington, DC – The National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) today reviewed projects for the National Law Enforcement Museum, the Lincoln Memorial, and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Visitor Center.

The submission from the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund is for preliminary site and building plans for the National Law Enforcement Museum. The proposed plans involve the construction of an underground museum with two entrance pavilions located on the south side of the 400 block of E Street, NW. The plans include a plaza for the site that is to be shared by the Museum and the District of Columbia Courts.

The Museum project is located in Reservation 7 at Judiciary Square. The design includes two 25-foot pavilions, landscaping, and retaining walls and bollards at the north side of the plaza. The pavilions will be covered in a transparent low iron glass, complementing the opaque glazing on the interior museum walls. The design of the plaza incorporates flush translucent pavers to provide daylight to the primarily underground facility. The Museum is authorized by Public Law 106-492.

The Commission today also approved a National Park Service (NPS) submission for final site development plans for the location and design of a vehicle security barrier on the east side of the Lincoln Memorial. The applicant sought final approval for the bollards around the northeast and southeast portions of Lincoln Circle, as well as the associated repaving and improvements to Lincoln Circle. The Commission approved preliminary plans for the location and design of the east side security barrier in October 2005.

The submission is a component of a larger improvement project at the Lincoln Memorial that includes roadway and sidewalk reconstruction, vehicle barriers, a retaining wall, and the construction of two concession buildings to improve visitor services. NPS will return to the Commission at a later date to seek its approval of temporary security elements that will complete the barrier line across the east/west axis of the National Mall.

In its approval of the plans today, the Commission rescinded a previous Commission action approving bollards down either side of the lower stairs of the Lincoln Memorial and across the edge of the reflecting pool.

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The Park Service hopes to complete improvements to Lincoln Circle prior to the bicentennial of President Lincoln's birth in February 2009.

The Commission concluded its meeting with comments on concept design plans for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Visitor Center, also submitted by the National Park Service (NPS). The Center is authorized by Public Law 108-126.

The 5.2-acre site is on the grounds of the Lincoln Memorial at the west end of the National Mall. It is situated at the northern end of the Lincoln Memorial and west of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. The site is an open grass panel surrounded by mature elm trees. Currently the site contains two softball fields and a National Park Service concession facility. The central portion of the site will be used to construct the Center, which according to the National Park Service will be 34,100 gross square feet with a building footprint of 26,642 square feet.

According to the National Park Service, the Center will reflect three themes: Making the Names Visible, The Wall Collection, and the History Timeline. The NPS expects the Center to serve more than 1.5 million visitors annually.

In its action today, the Commission commented on the various design elements of the proposed Visitor Center, noting the following:

- The project design met six of the 15 mandatory design guidelines established by the Commission during site approval;
- The project design did not meet two of the 15 mandatory design guidelines and required the applicant to modify the project design to meet them;
- The applicant must provide further information and analysis before the Commission can determine whether the project meets seven of the mandatory design guidelines prior to or during the preliminary design phase.

The Commission noted in its comments the importance of the Commission's consultation process and recommended that the applicant continue to consult with staff during the development of preliminary and final design phases.

This month's agenda also included four consent calendar items (no presentations given): preliminary and final site and building plans for the Northeast Parking Garage and Tunnel Extension at the Food and Drug Administration's White Oak Federal Research Center; preliminary and final site and building plans for the East Access Road, also at the Food and Drug Administration's White Oak Federal Research Center; final site and building plans for the H.D. Cooke Elementary School modernization and expansion; and the preliminary and final building plans for the Department of Commerce Phase 1 Building Modernization. Information about actions taken at today's Commission meeting can be accessed on www.ncpc.gov.

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.