Carnegie Library
Rehabilitation and Exterior Restoration
801 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20001
Mount Vernon Square (Reservation 8)

Concept Review Submission
National Capital Planning Commission
Filing Date: April 28, 2017
Meeting Date: June 1, 2017

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Carnegie Library Rehabilitation - NCPC Concept Submission

April 28, 2017 | 3

Figure 3: Carnegie Library, south and west elevations, facing northeast, 2017. EHT Traceries

Figure 2: Undated (circa 1902) view of south elevation, Library of Congress interior, including interior painting and expansion of the closed book stacks. From 1905 through 1962, DCPL undertook several additional changes, notably the reconfiguration of the Delivery Room and the addition of mezzanines in the east and west reading rooms. Carnegie Library operated as the Central Public Library for the District of Columbia until 1971, when those operations were transferred to the newly constructed Downtown Central Library, subsequently renamed the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Library.

The building’s two later tenants, the University of the District of Columbia (UDC) (1977-1990s) and HSW (1999-Present), each completed major rehabilitations. At the time UDC acquired the library in 1977, it had been vacant for six years and was suffering from neglect. UDC’s $4.2 million renovation included the reorientation of the building towards Mount Vernon Place, NW, with the construction of a new main entrance at the north elevation, the removal of book stacks, the addition of a large HVAC unit, new lighting, the conversion of the former stack room and Lecture Hall into office space, removal of the Delivery Room counter, alteration of the west stairway in the northern portion of the building, and an additional layer of plaster onto the existing decorative plasterwork.

In 1999, Congress designated the Carnegie Library as the site for a city museum. HSW, which would operate the museum and house its administrative and research facilities in the former library, entered into a 99-year lease for the building. A comprehensive rehabilitation was undertaken to accommodate the City Museum, which opened in the spring of 2003. The project included: a newly constructed 150-seat theater in the east wing of the building; a permanent exhibit in the former west reading room on the first floor; new egress stairs and elevators; community galleries focusing on D.C. neighborhoods; two galleries, a public reading room, and a library on the second floor; and an archaeology lab, with classrooms and workshops in the basement. Though the City Museum only remained operational through November 2004, HSW remains in the building and continues to operate the library on an appointment basis.

PROJECT NARRATIVE

Existing Conditions

Carnegie Library was listed in the District of Columbia Inventory of Historic Sites in 1964 and the National Register of Historic Places in 1969 as the Central Public Library. The nomination recognized the building’s significance as one of many buildings given to American cities by industrialist and philanthropist Andrew Carnegie to promote free library systems. It also reflects the growth of the D.C. Public Library (DCPL) system from humble beginnings in rented quarters to a Beaux-Arts edifice on Mount Vernon Square. Mount Vernon Square is a contributing resource to the Plan of the City of Washington (L’Enfant Plan; L’Enfant-McMillan Plan).

Since its completion, the Carnegie Library has undergone several small- and large-scale renovations. Shortly after the library’s dedication in 1903, Carnegie donated additional funds to complete the building’s then-unfinished interior, including interior painting and expansion of the closed book stacks. From 1905 through 1962, DCPL undertook several additional changes, notably the reconfiguration of the Delivery Room and the addition of mezzanines in the east and west reading rooms. Carnegie Library operated as the Central Public Library for the District of Columbia until 1971, when those operations were transferred to the newly constructed Downtown Central Library, subsequently renamed the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Library.

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Historical Overview

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Basic Design Concept
The proposed project will rehabilitate and modernize the Carnegie Library building to become a retail and education facility. The building will be leased jointly by HSW (which will continue to operate its research library, exhibit galleries, and administrative offices there) and a retail tenant (which will operate a retail, events, and educational facility in the building). The project will include a full restoration of the building exterior, including the repair and cleaning of the exterior stone, repair and retrofit of the original wood windows, repair and retrofit of the original skylight frames, and repair of the copper roof cladding. On the north side, the non-original stair and awning will be removed and replaced with a new stair that improves access to the building. Windows on this elevation—modified during the UDC and HSW rehabilitation projects—will be replaced or retrofitted.

The interior of the building will be rehabilitated, including removal of non-original infill construction throughout the building dating from the 2003 City Museum rehabilitation. The scope of this project included the enclosure of the central atrium with a museum gallery, offices, and clerestory extension with hipped roof. This addition will be removed, creating a central, skylit atrium space. The new atrium will be enclosed with a flat skylight, positioned below the existing roof line to obscure its visibility from the surrounding streetscape. Additionally, the MEP and other systems throughout the building will be upgraded or replaced.

Although the project is generally limited to the building itself, minor alterations may be made to site hardscape elements to comply with accessibility and other code requirements.

Historic Preservation Documentation
Because the Carnegie Library is a District of Columbia Government-owned building in the Central Area, the proposed project is subject to the review and approval of the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) under the National Capital Planning Act. NCPC’s approval of the project is considered a federal undertaking; therefore, the project must undergo review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the National Environmental Policy Act to consider its effects on historic and environmental resources.

NCPC initiated consultation with the D.C. Historic Preservation Office (DC SHPO) on April 21, 2017. The first consulting parties meeting will be held on May 11, 2017. The purpose of this meeting will be to define the undertaking, present the draft Area of Potential Effects and list of historic properties, and present additional information on the proposed design. Events DC and NCPC will continue to consult with DC SHPO and the consulting parties to identify, assess, and resolve adverse effects on historic properties.

Environmental Documentation
NCPC is preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) to consider the project's effects on environmental resources. NCPC will conduct a thirty-day public scoping period to invite the public to consider the range of environmental issues to be addressed in the EA. During that period, on May 9, 2017, NCPC will conduct a public scoping meeting.

Schedule
Construction is anticipated to begin in the fall of 2017 and continue for approximately one year, with occupancy in the fall of 2018.

Funding
The entirety of the project will be funded privately by the retail tenant.

Employment
Neither the existing nor the proposed employment on the site will exceed 500 employees over a twenty-year period.

Building Area and Site Coverage
The approximate, existing gross site and building areas are listed below. Under the proposed project, only the gross building area will change nominally; otherwise, these figures will not change.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gross building area</td>
<td>51,000 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross site area</td>
<td>117,000 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area of building footprint</td>
<td>17,000 sq ft</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Floodplain Management and Wetlands Protection
The project is not located within or near a floodplain or wetland.
Site Plan - Proposed

Carnegie Library Rehabilitation - NCPC Concept Submission

April 28, 2017 | 7
Site Plan - Proposed Planting
First Floor Plan - Proposed
Third Floor Plan - Proposed
Roof Plan - Proposed

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Existing South Elevation

South Elevation - Proposed
West Elevation - Proposed

Existing West Elevation
Transverse Section (Facing West) - Proposed
North Stair Details - Proposed
Elevation Renderings - Proposed