

**THE CARNEGIE LIBRARY AT MOUNT VERNON SQUARE
REHABILITATION AND RENOVATION**

801 K Street NW
Washington, DC 20001

Finding of No Significant Impact

OCT 11 2017

Pursuant to Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations (40 CFR, Parts 1500-1508), and the National Capital Planning Commission's (NCPC) Environmental and Historic Preservation Policies and Procedures, I have evaluated the preliminary and final site and building plans for the Rehabilitation and Renovation of the Carnegie Library at Mount Vernon Square as shown on NCPC Map File No. 21.00(38.00)44553; the Rehabilitation and Renovation of the Carnegie Library at Mount Vernon Square Environmental Assessment (EA) prepared by the National Capital Planning Commission; and the comments NCPC received on the EA. The EA is incorporated into this Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) by reference. Based on the foregoing, I have determined that the Action Alternative (Alternative A) will not have a significant impact on the human environment and therefore an Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared.

Purpose and Need

The purpose of the proposed action is to rehabilitate and modernize the Carnegie Library to serve as a new city square for Washington, DC, where the community can come to learn, be entertained, and collaborate.

The project is needed to address the deteriorating condition of the Carnegie Library and to expand the city's cultural offerings.

Proposed Action

Events DC, the official convention and sports authority for the District of Columbia (DC), is proposing to rehabilitate the interior of the Carnegie Library and restore the exterior of the Library, located at Mount Vernon Square in Washington, DC. The building would be leased jointly by the Historical Society of Washington, DC (HSW), which would continue to operate its research library, exhibit galleries, and administrative offices in the building; and a retail tenant who would operate a retail, events, and educational facility in the building.

Alternatives

Two alternatives were considered in the EA, including a No-Action Alternative and one Action Alternative (Alternative A). The Action Alternative (Alternative A) is identified as the selected alternative and is the alternative on which NCPC is issuing this Finding of No Significant Impact. The alternatives are described in Chapter 2 of the EA and the selected alternative is summarized below.

Action Alternative (Alternative A)

Alternative A 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 would be removed and replaced with a new stair that improves access to the building. Windows on this elevation—modified during the University of the District of Columbia and HSW rehabilitation projects— would be replaced or retrofitted.

The interior of the building would 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 would be removed, creating a central, skylit atrium space. The new atrium would be enclosed with a flat skylight, positioned below the existing roof line to obscure its visibility from the surrounding streetscape. Additionally, the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing (MEP) systems and other systems throughout the building would be upgraded or replaced.

Standard for Evaluation

Under NEPA, the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations, and NCPC Environmental and Historic Preservation Policies and Procedures, an EA is sufficient and an Environmental Impact Statement need not be prepared if the EA supports the finding that the major federal action will not significantly affect the human environment. The EA for this project was prepared in accordance with this standard.

Potential Impacts

No significant impacts were identified that will require analysis in an Environmental Impact Statement. Alternative A will result in either beneficial or adverse impacts to cultural resources; transportation; economy, employment, and income; community facilities and services; and environmental contamination and hazardous materials. Impacts on affected resources are summarized below along with proposed mitigation.

Cultural Resources:

The Carnegie Library is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and the District of Columbia Inventory of Historic Sites. Alternative A will result in direct, long-term, adverse impacts to the Carnegie Library, as character-defining features of the building will be altered or

removed which will reduce the integrity of the property. The creation of a central atrium in the building will also alter the character of the building and cause adverse impacts. Alternative A would also add to the overall long-term, adverse cumulative impacts on historic resources. Pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), NCPC has consulted with the District of Columbia State Historic Preservation Officer (DCSHPO) and other Consulting Parties regarding the proposed project. For purposes of Section 106 of the NHPA, there will be an adverse effect on the Carnegie Library. As part of the Section 106 process, NCPC, EventsDC, Apple, Historical Society of Washington, and DCSHPO will enter into a Memorandum of Agreement that seeks to avoid, minimize, and mitigate the adverse impacts.

Transportation: Alternative A will have a negligible, adverse impact on the surrounding roadway network due to the small increase in traffic associated with the addition of retail space. Alternative A will contribute slightly to the long-term, adverse cumulative transportation impacts by including a retail establishment in the Carnegie Library. In response to the District Department of Transportation's (DDOT) letter dated August 9, 2017, the retail tenant will submit a loading management plan to DDOT, work to implement a geofence, construct an ADA-accessible route from all four corners of Mount Vernon Square including ramps that are not directly adjacent to the square, provide funding for one-year for a Capital BikeShare station in the proximity of the Carnegie Library, implement a transportation demand management (TDM) plan, and conduct post-development monitoring including traffic, pedestrian and bicycle counts.

Economy, Employment, and Income: Alternative A will have minor, short- and long-term, beneficial impacts to economy, employment, and income in the surrounding area. The addition of a retail tenant in the Carnegie Library will contribute to economic growth in the Mount Vernon Square and Shaw neighborhoods and create approximately 100 permanent jobs. Sales taxes will also be generated as a result of retail sales. The proposed action will result in a short-term need for construction workers. The new tenant will provide some compensation to Events DC at the beginning of the lease to offset the estimated lost revenue from special events. The rehabilitation and modernization of the Carnegie Library will add to the long-term beneficial cumulative impacts to the economy from the introduction of a retail tenant.

Community Facilities and Services: Alternative A will result in minor, long-term, direct, beneficial impacts to community facilities and services by introducing new community services and events in the proposed retail space. The rehabilitation and renovation of the Carnegie Library would remove several event spaces. However, Events DC would still have rights to use non-retail areas of the Library for special events and meetings. HSW would continue to lease their existing spaces and provide research and education opportunities for the duration of their 99-year lease. No impacts to police or fire and rescue response times are anticipated. The proposed project will not result in the removal or alteration of any adjacent properties or facilities. Alternative A will result in minor, short-term, direct, adverse impacts to community facilities and services because construction activities will result in the temporary relocation of HSW and the Kiplinger Research Library, construction noise, and sidewalk and road closures. The temporary location of HSW and the Kiplinger Research Library is to be determined. The new tenant will provide some compensation to Events DC at the beginning of the lease to offset the estimated lost revenue from special events. The rehabilitation and rehabilitation of the Carnegie Library will occur during normal construction hours set by Department of Commerce and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) –

Monday through Friday, 7 am – 7 pm. Directional signs will be provided during road and sidewalk closures to direct pedestrians to alternate paths of travel in accordance with District Department of Transportation (DDOT) pedestrian safety and work zone standards. The rehabilitation and modernization of the Carnegie Library will beneficially contribute to the long-term cumulative impacts to community facilities and services from the creation of opportunities for cultural events, education, and entertainment, as well as a retail store.

Environmental Contamination and Hazardous Materials: Hazardous building materials including lead, asbestos, and mold, will be removed from the building to the standards set by DC and federal regulations to safeguard the health of building occupants. Because of the disturbance to hazardous building materials and the potential to generate other hazardous wastes during demolition, the rehabilitation and modernization of the Carnegie Library would have a minor, short-term, direct, adverse impact during construction. However, the removal of hazardous building materials from the Carnegie Library would overall result in a moderate, long-term, direct, and beneficial impact related to environmental contamination and hazardous materials. Remediation and cleanup required as a result of the rehabilitation and renovation of the Carnegie Library will result in beneficial cumulative impacts.

The asbestos abatement activities will be conducted by a DC licensed asbestos abatement contractor using properly trained and licensed workers in accordance with District, US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations. Asbestos containing materials that may be impacted by the renovations would be removed prior to renovation activities that would dislodge, disturb or otherwise affect these materials. Any materials assumed to contain asbestos would be sampled and analyzed to determine asbestos content prior to abatement.

Demolition of lead-based paint components will be completed in accordance with the requirements of the OSHA Lead in Construction standard. The demolition contractor will conduct an additional assessment for employee exposure to lead prior to demolition. Items treated with lead-based paint will be segregated from other wastes to be tested separately. Disposal of lead wastes determined to be hazardous will be disposed of according to EPA regulations (40 CFR 261(c)).

The project would be registered with DOEE as a Hazardous Waste Generator prior to construction, and all hazardous materials used during construction would be stored onsite in a designated area and disposed of in accordance with DCMR Title 20, Chapters 42-43.

// Original Signed //

Marcel Acosta
Executive Director

ATTACHMENT X: NCPD RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

Rehabilitation and Renovation of the Carnegie Library at Mount Vernon Square

Name	Association	Comments	Response
Jamie Henson District Department of Transportation (DDOT)		Submit a loading management plan.	Will comply. A loading management plan will be provided in a revised CTR document.
		Relocate the streetlight in public space that conflicts with truck turning movements.	Will comply. The streetlight has been moved to avoid conflicts with trucks.
		Investigate appropriate ridership zones.	Will comply. The project team is currently coordinating with ridesharing agencies to identify appropriate ridership zones and to establish a geofence to the extent possible. Once a ridership zone and geofence have been established we will revise the CTR document.
		Work with TNC companies to implement a geofence.	Will comply. The project team is currently ridesharing agencies to identify appropriate ridership zones and to establish a geofence to the extent possible. Once a ridership zone and geofence have been established we will revise the CTR document.
		Do not provide free or discounted parking to employees or retail customers.	The tenant will not provide free or discounted parking for employees or patrons. This will be reflected in the revised CTR.
		Construct an ADA-accessible route from all four corners of Mt. Vernon Square including ramps that are not directly adjacent to the square.	Will comply. The project team is currently coordinating with DDOT to identify substandard curb ramps that will be upgraded.
		Provide short- and long-term bicycle parking.	The retail establishment will provide 48 bicycle parking for visitors and 32 for employees.
		Install a Capital Bikeshare station with at least 19 docks on site.	An onsite bikeshare station is not feasible given the historic nature of the site and the lack of control the tenant has on Mt. Vernon Square. However, the tenant has agreed to provide funding for a bikeshare station in proximity to the site, and the project team is currently coordinating with DDOT's bikeshare coordinator to identify an appropriate location. Once an appropriate location has been identified, we will update the CTR document.
		Implement a TDM plan (as outline on Page 5).	Will comply. The CTR document will be updated to include strategies recommended on Page 5 of the review letter.
		Coordinate with DDOT and MPD prior to large events and product releases.	Will comply.
		Conduct post-development monitoring including traffic, pedestrian and bicycle counts.	Will comply.
		Continue coordination with public space committee.	Will comply. Coordination is ongoing.