Report of the Executive Director

During the past month, the Executive Director took the following actions under the Commission’s delegation authority. Unless otherwise noted, all projects are in Washington, DC.

1. Preliminary and final site development plans for proposed circulation and security enhancements at the U.S Food & Drug Administration, 10903 New Hampshire Avenue, Silver Spring, Maryland. (8132)
2. Preliminary and final site development plans for exterior signage at the Carnegie Library, 801 Mount Vernon Avenue, NW. (7532)
3. Final site and building plans for a multi-purpose field at the Friendship Public Charter Schools Collegiate Academy, 4095 Minnesota Avenue, NE. (7882)
4. Approval of a report to the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia for a text amendment regarding short-term rentals at One Judiciary Square, 441 4th Street, NW. (ZC 19-15)

Planning Updates

Newseum on Pennsylvania Avenue

This month NCPC will review plans to transform the Newseum building on Pennsylvania Avenue into a state-of-the-art academic facility for Johns Hopkins University. As a result, December is the final month to visit the Newseum, where approximately 10 million visitors toured the exhibits and experienced the building’s spectacular Pennsylvania Avenue and U.S. Capitol views. First reviewed by the National Capital Planning Commission in 2003, the Newseum brought the First Amendment to life along a street where people regularly exercise these rights. Beginning in early 2020, the Freedom Forum will continue their work and host events at a temporary headquarters at 300 New Jersey Avenue, NW, just five blocks from the Newseum site. NCPC thanks the Freedom Forum for eleven years of programming and activation of the Avenue and looks forward to hearing about the Newseum’s future endeavors.

Comprehensive Plan: Transportation Element

At its October 3, 2019 meeting, the Commission approved release of the draft update of the Comprehensive Plan’s Federal Transportation Element for a 60-day public comment period which closed on November 12. NCPC received comments from six federal agencies, five local/regional agencies, one interest group, and four individuals. Staff is currently working to address or incorporate these comments into the revised element and anticipates submitting the final Transportation Element to the Commission for adoption in early 2020.

Comprehensive Plan: Federal Workplace Element

Staff continues to work with federal and district agencies to refine the polices in the draft Federal Workplace Element. On November 5, 2019 staff met with representatives from the General Services Administration and the District of Columbia Office of Planning to discuss policies related to the 60/40 federal employment distribution and the Central Employment Area. Staff expect to bring the final element to the Commission for adoption in early 2020.
Comprehensive Plan: District Elements

On October 15, 2019 the District of Columbia released the Comprehensive Plan’s District Elements for a 60-day public comment period which closes on December 20, 2019. The Comprehensive Plan is a high-level guiding document and its District Elements set a positive, long-term vision for the District through the lens of its physical growth and change. It is divided into 25 elements and two maps, the Future Land Use Map and the Generalized Policy Map. NCPC staff is currently conducting an informal initial federal interest and federal element consistency review. The first section of the District Elements, the Framework Element, was released earlier and is anticipated for NCPC review early in 2020.

Environmental Assessment Open for Public Comment

NCPC is accepting comments through December 16 on an Environmental Assessment for a master plan modification for the Meadowbrook Stables Riding Ring Canopy submitted by the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission. The modification would allow for the construction of a new riding ring canopy for the facility located in Rock Creek Park. NCPC approved the original plan for the stables facility in 2003, which included a riding ring canopy in a different location (Ring D), compared to the current proposal over Ring C.

Public Outreach

Public Program: Space and Memory

As part of NCPC’s ongoing discussion on commemoration, on Monday, December 9 at 6:30 pm the agency will host Michael Murphy, Founding Principal and Executive Director of MASS Design Group. He will showcase a series of projects that utilize the MASS practice model that harnesses the power of architecture and wrestles with our most difficult truths, reveals hidden narratives of our social structure, and seeks to reconstruct the systems that perpetuate injustice.

Blog: Planning for the Future of the Region’s Economy

In NCPC’s most recent blog Urban Planner Angela Dupont wrote about the role of the Federal Workplace Element and the panel she moderated at the 2019 American Planning Association’s National Capital Area Chapter Planning Conference. Panelists in the session discussed the future of the region’s economy and how to continue to plan for growth and diversification. All blogs are available online at https://www.ncpc.gov/news/.

NCPC to Host Australian Planner

Rebecca Sorensen, Director, Strategic Planning for Australia’s National Capital Authority (NCA), will be in Washington as NCPC’s guest from December 2-13, 2019. At the NCA Rebecca is responsible for strategic planning, leasing, and GIS functions, and her upcoming work will include a review of the NCA’s Guidelines for Commemorative Works. She will discuss current NCA and NCPC initiatives with staff as well as meet with representatives from other federal and local agencies.
NCPC Hosts Planning Students

On Friday, November 15 NCPC hosted the Pathways in Planning career event. More than 20 graduate and undergraduate students from Georgetown University and the University of Maryland urban planning programs met with NCPC and other planning professionals in small, informal, and timed “speed-dating esque” interviews where planning professionals shared their experiences and advice in the planning, preservation, and architecture fields. NCPC participants included Directors Elizabeth Miller, Michael Sherman, and Diane Sullivan, and Urban Planners Kael Anderson, Carlton Hart, Johanna McCrehan, and Garret Wolf. Also joining was the District Department of Transportation's Renan Snowden.