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 an Indiana Plaza temporary installation, Indiana Plaza. (8144)
2. Approval of a report to the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia regarding a Text Amendment to Subtitles C, D, E, and X - Nonconforming Structures. (ZC 19-14)

Planning Updates

Rethinking Security and Public Access

Over the past few months, NCPC crafted a proceedings report that shares big ideas and key takeaways from the Open to the Public colloquium held in September 2019. It highlights the range of threats to people occupying public spaces, how the threat environment has evolved in recent years, and strategies and best practices to consider when addressing security needs for events and public gatherings. NCPC will continue this work through workshops and case study research, and will incorporate the findings in future policy work. The report, and a video of the evening public event, are available on the NCPC website.

Federal Elements of the Comprehensive Plan: Transportation and Workplace Elements

Staff is revising the draft narrative and policies for the Federal Workplace and Transportation Elements, and expect to bring final drafts to the Commission this spring. Staff is coordinating with interested federal and District agencies in refining the Transportation and Workplace Elements' policies.

Comprehensive Plan: District Elements

On January 10, 2020, staff provided comments and recommendations on the draft District Elements of the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital during the public review period. In the past year, NCPC and District of Columbia Office of Planning (DCOP) staff have worked together to address issues related to both federal and local interests. NCPC staff will continue to work collaboratively with DCOP to identify and resolve areas of concern prior to the Commission’s formal federal interest review, in accordance with the National Capital Planning Act, later this year.

Digital Submissions

The agency has opened an online submission portal to more efficiently receive project applications and materials. Several applicant agencies tested the new portal over the last two Commission meeting cycles, and NCPC is now rolling out the portal to a larger audience. While some projects will still be submitted in a hard copy format for a variety of reasons, this new submission portal is anticipated to work for most projects. Many thanks to Webmaster Steve Morgan, Senior Urban Designer Matthew Flis, and the test agencies, the National Park Service, the Smithsonian Institution, and the General Services Administration.
Public Outreach

NCPC Department of Defense Master Plan Workshop

On Thursday, January 23, NCPC staff hosted a day-long master planning workshop with more than 50 Department of Defense staff and Urban Collaborative, an urban planning firm with expertise in installation planning. Attendees learned about best practices in preparing military installation plans through practical, hands-on exercises, small group discussion, and short lectures. They expanded their understanding of federal master planning policies, specific service guidance, and the master planning process and products used by the Department of Defense and other federal agencies. This ongoing collaboration is part of a broader effort to create a master planning process that meets both Department of Defense and NCPC needs. The next step will be the development of a specific resource guide for NCPC’s review of installation plans.

Monumental Core Streetscape Framework and Lighting Policy

NCPC held public meetings on the Monumental Core Streetscape Framework and Lighting Policy on Tuesday, January 14 and Wednesday, January 15. The 60-day public comment period opened on January 14 and closes on March 14. Public input will help inform development of federal streetscape design guidelines and specifications. A video of the public meeting presentation and a link to the comment page are available on NCPC’s website.

Personnel

NCPC Says Farewell

Architect-Urban Designer Ken Walton has accepted a position with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. His last day with NCPC was January 31, 2020. We would like to thank Ken for his 20 years of service to NCPC and wish him well in his new position.

Staffer Promoted to Senior Urban Planner

Congratulations to Angela Dupont who was promoted to senior urban planner in the Policy and Research Division. Angela has been at NCPC for seven years and previously served as an urban planner in the same division.

ULI Technical Assistance Panel

Executive Director Marcel Acosta and Commissioner Beth White, in her capacity as CEO of the Houston Parks Board, participated in an Urban Land Institute (ULI) panel in Memphis, Tennessee from January 27 - 31, 2020. The three day session focused on exploring an underutilized system of existing parks located in southwest Memphis. The panel provided insights and innovative solutions to the systems’ complex land use and real estate development challenges.