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 the installation of an interim fence around the Hollies and Creamery at St. Elizabeths West Campus, 2700 Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue, SE. (8045)
2. Preliminary and final site and building plans for an addition at the Building 51 Fire House, National Institutes of Health, Center Drive, Bethesda, MD. (8054)
3. Final site and building plans for rehabilitation of the Netherlands Carillon, Arlington Ridge Park, Arlington, VA. (7969)
4. Preliminary site and building plans for a Backwash Equalization Pumping Station at the McMillan Reservoir, 2500 1st Street, NW. (8042)
5. Approval of a report to the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia regarding a Map Amendment from PDR-1 to MU-4 and MU-5A, Ward 6, bounded by K, 2nd, I, and 3rd Streets, NE Square 750, Lots 128, 156-158. (ZC 18-07)
6. Approval of a report to the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia for a Text Amendment regarding community renewable energy facility definition and permitted use location. (ZC 19-04)

Planning Updates

Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital: Transportation, Workplace, and Parks & Open Space Elements

NCPC staff continues its policy development for the Transportation and Workplace Elements of the Comprehensive Plan. Staff is conducting analysis on existing policies, identifying new policy areas, and evaluating transportation and workplace trends. Staff anticipates submitting these two elements to the Commission in the third quarter of FY 2019.

On February 15, the policies in the revised Parks & Open Space Element became effective. Surina Singh, project manager for the Parks & Open Space Element, posted a blog that discussed the changes to the element since 2004 which included updates that reflect current issues and trends faced by parks and open space in the region and new guidance for federal agencies to administer these spaces. The blog highlighted new topics added and how public comments and stakeholder feedback helped shape the final element.

Monumental Core Streetscape and Lighting Frameworks

In collaboration with the Streetscape Interagency Working Group, staff is preparing a draft conceptual lighting framework for areas of federal interest. The working group is collaborating with the District Department of Transportation to coordinate the lighting framework with the city’s Smart Lighting program. Staff anticipates providing an information presentation on the lighting framework to the Commission in April.

Pennsylvania Avenue Initiative

The Initiative’s Executive Committee continues to coordinate on near-term activities as outlined in their Findings and Strategies Summary, released in May 2018 and available on the project website. The agencies are working on operational, maintenance, and programming improvements, including collecting and analyzing special event data to track trends in programming and activation along the Avenue. This work will support identifying and evaluating concept alternatives. The Executive Committee expects to begin identifying concepts for development in mid-2019.
Franklin School MOA

Pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Action, on December 10, 2018 a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was executed between NCPC, the DC State Historic Preservation Office, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the National Park Service, and Franklin School Development that included the process and steps necessary for further consultation regarding ongoing design review of the Franklin School project, including the new entrance plaza, signage, and exterior lighting, to avoid, minimize, and mitigate adverse effects to the historic school. NCPC will review preliminary and final site and building plans for the rehabilitation of the Franklin School into Planet Word at its Thursday, March 7 meeting.

Small Cell Infrastructure Guidelines Update

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) released an updated draft of the Small Cell Design Guidelines. The guidelines, which address the design and placement of this new infrastructure, will be reviewed by NCPC at its March 7 meeting and by the District’s Public Space Committee on March 21, 2019. The revised guidelines include a 50 percent reduction in allowable density of small cell installations per block face, as compared to the previous draft. In addition, DDOT will facilitate a design process to create a uniform design for new standalone poles and ground-level cabinetry. This process will include NCPC, the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts, the DC Office of Planning, and other community stakeholders over the next several months.

Public Outreach

Award Winning Website

Three prestigious organizations—the National Association of Government Communicators, the Horizon Interactive Awards, and the Davey Awards—honored NCPC for our website redesign work. We are thrilled to have our website recognized alongside the work of other outstanding agencies and organizations. If you have not seen it, a recent blog highlighted these honors. All of NCPC’s blogs may be found online at https://www.ncpc.gov/news/.

NCPC Launches Updated Newsletter

February marked the debut of NCPC’s redesigned monthly newsletter, which is now mobile-friendly and more graphically engaging. The newsletter features larger, high resolution images that are easier to view. The new design will automatically adjust images and text to the size of the device in which it is being viewed.