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 and building plans for security upgrades and tenant improvements at the Department of Justice Patrick Henry Building, 601 D Street, NW. (P8068)

2. Preliminary site and building plans for phase II expansion at the Joint Air Defense Operations Center, 20 MacDill Boulevard SE. (8217).

3. Preliminary and final site development plans for a Capital Bikeshare Station at the Anacostia Park - Skating Pavilion, 1500 Anacostia Drive, SE. (8218)

4. Preliminary site development plans for the renovation and rehabilitation of Fort Lincoln Park, Fort Lincoln Drive, NE. (8223)

5. Preliminary site and building plans for the Fort Lincoln Park Community Center, 3100 Fort Lincoln Drive, NE. (8224)

6. Preliminary and final site and building plans for a parking garage on the St. Elizabeths East Campus’ Parcel 6, 2700 Martin Luther King Jr Avenue, SE. (8226)

7. Preliminary and final site and building plans for replacement of the Smithsonian Institution’s Botany Greenhouse, 4222 Silver Hill Road, Suitland, Maryland. (8221)

8. Approval of a report to the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia for a Text Amendment to Subtitles B, C, H, K, and U to require certain ground floor uses in self-service storage establishments, city-wide. (ZC 20-03)

9. Approval of a report to the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia for a 1st-Stage and Consolidated Planned Unit Development and Related Map Amendment in Squares 1025-E & 1048-S and Reservations 129 & 299 - 1333 M Street, LLC, 1333 M Street, SE. (ZC 20-06)

10. Approval of a report to the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia for a Map Amendment in Square 442, Lot 106, 1707 7th Street, NW. (ZC 20-16).

During the past month, NCPC staff determined that the following projects are exempt from Commission review, based on certain criteria. Unless otherwise noted, all projects are in Washington, DC.

1. Approval of a report to the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia for a Consolidated Planned Unit Development and Related Map Amendment in Square 5740, Lot 337 - Wagner, LLC, 2419 25th Street, SE. (ZC 20-09)

Planning Updates

Comprehensive Plan Federal Elements

Staff will ask the Commission to approve updates to the Federal Environment Element’s Tree Replacement Policies and Submission Guidelines at November’s meeting. Once approved, the updated policies and guidelines would go into effect 60-days after publication of the Federal Register notice announcing their adoption by the Commission. NCPC continues to work with federal and District agencies and other stakeholders to refine the Federal Workplace Element’s policies and anticipates submitting the updated element for review in December 2020. Staff is also working with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments and General Services Administration to update the comprehensive Transportation Management Plan (TMP) Handbook.

Agency’s Antenna Submission Guidelines Update

Staff will ask the Commission to approve updates to the agency’s Antenna Submission Guidelines at its December 3, 2020 meeting. Last updated in 2001, the proposed updates address the impacts of new telecommunication infrastructure on federal buildings and land. The agency received comments from the General Services Administration and the Committee of 100 on the Federal City that were addressed in the update that will be presented to the Commission.

Federal Capital Improvements Program

Staff completed the 2020-2025 Federal Capital Improvement Program (FCIP) funded report, and it is now available on the agency’s website. The FCIP has a total of 23 projects in the National Capital Region with a total estimated cost of $994,696,011. Funded projects include the Armed Forces Retirement Home Master Plan Implementation, General Services Administration Regional Office Building Modernization, and the National Air and Space Museum Building Envelope and Infrastructure Revitalization.

Monumental Core Streetscape Guide and Manual

On October 28, NCPC staff met with the Interagency Working Group to discuss an updated draft of stormwater management guidelines and address questions regarding specific maintenance practices for green infrastructure. Guideline development will continue during fall of 2020. Staff will provide the Commission with an information presentation on vertical element guidelines for street lights and street trees this winter.

Pennsylvania Avenue Initiative

The Initiative’s Executive Committee is building on the strengths and challenges of the Avenue’s physical character as they explore early concepts on how to potentially transform the Avenue. Two of its greatest strengths are the iconic vista of the U.S. Capitol and the Avenue’s position between the executive and legislative branches of government, symbolizing the separation of power between their integral roles. One of the greatest challenges is the limited physical and visual access to the large block-size buildings that face the Avenue, which divides two of Washington’s most active national and local destinations, the National Mall and downtown. The Executive Committee Findings and Strategies Summary provides an overview of the Avenue’s strengths and challenges informing the concepts work.
Transportation Element and Monitoring Program Update

Part of the adoption of the Federal Transportation Element in July 2020 included a new Transportation Management Plan (TMP) monitoring program intended to collect data on a biennial basis to evaluate how federal facilities are progressing towards meeting parking ratios and the goals defined in the TMP. NCPC staff developed this monitoring program as a digital form available through the online Submission Portal starting in November. Staff will reach out to specific agencies individually to discuss participation in this program.

Modernizing Internal Operations

To allow staff to access resources from anywhere, NCPC’s IT Department updated the agency’s intranet, moving many files and functions to a cloud-based solution. In concert with this update, NCPC’s web developer introduced a new suite of applications at a recent brown bag event. The Apps Suite is a collection of web-based applications in one convenient location that will make certain tasks more efficient and effective.

Public Outreach

Executive Director to Participate in Federal City Council Focus Group

The Federal City Council is partnering with the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning & Economic Development and the Washington DC Economic Partnership to conduct an economic analysis of Washington, DC’s key industries. The Federal City Council requested that the executive director participate in a Public Administration focus group. The group’s efforts will support an economic recovery strategy and provide the District government and economic development partners crucial insights into supporting and sustaining key industries and realizing new economic growth opportunities.

NCPC Division Director Presents Deep Foundation Institute Hal Hunt Lecture

On October 28, Policy and Research Division Director Michael Sherman gave the Hall Hunt Lecture on “An Overview of the Federal Commemorative Works Process in Washington, DC” to the Deep Foundation Institute (DFI) at its 45th annual conference, held virtually. DFI is an international association of contractors, engineers, manufacturers, suppliers, academics, and owners involved in deep foundation construction and earth retention systems technologies. Established in 1989, the Hal Hunt Lecture, named in honor of one of the organization’s founders, recognizes notable communicators in the deep foundations industry.

The Legacy Plan and Its Impacts

On October 27, at an internal program, Physical Planning Division Director Elizabeth Miller presented an introduction of the historic plans of Washington, DC followed by an overview of NCPC’s Legacy Plan and the multi-agency planning efforts built upon its foundations. These include the Monumental Core Framework Plan which focused on four predominantly federal precincts around the National Mall, and the SW Ecodistrict Plan that focused on the precinct between the Mall and the southwest waterfront.
Recent Blogs: Tree Replacement Policy and Foreign Mission Center

Urban Planner Stephanie Free wrote about the update of NCPC’s Tree Preservation and Replacement Policies and Submission Guidelines. The agency received 75 total comments used to update the draft and prepare it for Commission consideration and adoption on November 5. Comments predominantly related to strengthening the policies and clarifying exceptions and the process to receive one. General Counsel Anne Schuyler discussed NCPC’s upcoming first-ever review of a new project, the Libyan Chancery, under the auspices of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the agency and the Department of State’s Office of Foreign Missions. The MOA defined NCPC’s review authority and process for project reviews at the Foreign Missions Center, located in Northwest Washington, DC on the former Walter Reed National Military Medical Center.

Personnel

NCPC Names Liaison to District Commission

Policy & Research Division Director Community Planner Melissa Lindsjo was named as NCPC’s liaison to the District of Columbia Commission on Climate Change & Resiliency. Established in 2016 by an act of the Council of the District of Columbia, it assess the impacts of the changing climate, the District's ability to mitigate and adapt to climate change, and the District's ability to prepare, plan for, absorb, recover from, and adapt to adverse events. It is currently working on its second report to the Mayor and Council and collaborates closely with the District Department of Energy and Environment to monitor climate-change related activities across public and private sectors.

NCPC Welcomes Financial Management Specialist

We are pleased to welcome Cristin Sanders to the Office of Administration team as a financial management specialist. Cristin brings several years of accounting and budget experience to her role. As the agency’s financial management specialist, she will contribute to maintaining a sound financial management program for the agency. Cristin has a Bachelor’s Degree from Trinity Washington University.