Report of the Executive Director

During the past month, the Executive Director (1-5) or the Vice Chair (6) 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 Brentwood Reservoir Community Solar Installation, 1450 Brentwood Parkway, NE. (8319)
2. Preliminary and final site development plans for a Utility Equipment Pad and Ground Mounted Solar Array at the National Institutes of Health, 16701 Elmer School Road, Dickerson, Maryland (8322)
3. Report to the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia for a Text Amendment to Create New MU Zones and to Rename Certain MU Zones. (ZC 21-08)
4. Report to the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia for a Text Amendment to Subtitle K to Increase Maximum Building Height in the Ste-2 Zone. (ZC 12-08D)
5. Report to the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia for a Text Amendment to Subtitle C - Inclusionary Zoning XL, Phase 2. (ZC 21-05)
6. Transfer of jurisdiction for Reservation 405 - a Portion of Fort Dupont Park Transfer of Jurisdiction, 3030 G Street, SE. (8324)

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. Comments to the Council of the District of Columbia for an Alley Closing in Square 5612 - S.O. 21-06924, 1710 Good Hope Road, SE. (8317)
2. Preliminary site and building plans for the Anacostia Recreation Center, 1929 15th Street, SE. (8320)
3. Report to the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia for a Map Amendment from Unzoned to NHR - Square 5860, Lots 1039-1041, 822 Howard Road, SE. (ZC 20-22)

Planning Updates

Federal Capital Improvements Program

Staff completed the FY 2021 – 2026 Federal Capital Improvements Program (FCIP) Funded Report. It is composed of a list of funded FCIP projects reported by agencies within the National Capital Region for public dissemination. The report is released by NCPC after Congress passes the budget. This year’s program included 37 projects with a total investment of $756 million. The Funded Report can be viewed online at: https://www.ncpc.gov/plans/FCIP/.

Monumental Core Streetscape Guide and Manual

The Interagency Working Group met in late October to review the second draft of the Pedestrian Circulation guidelines. Staff continues to coordinate with the District of Columbia on development of streetscape guidelines for streets of high federal importance, such as 16th Street, NW, and South Capitol Street. Staff expects to present the vertical and surface element streetscape guidelines to the Commission in early 2022.
Pennsylvania Avenue Initiative

The NCPC project team is preparing sketches to illustrate the three concept visions for Executive Committee approval to present to the Commission in February. NCPC, the General Services Administration, the Federal Highway Administration, the National Park Service, and the District Department of Transportation have formed a working partnership to prepare a survey for the Avenue; work will kick off this fall. Consistent with the Executive Committee's 2018 Strategic Plan to increase programming, Events DC announced the Red Eye Night Market, an open-air night market paying homage to the foods and cultures of the Asian diaspora, that will be held on the Avenue on November 6, 2021. Please come and enjoy!

Regional Plans and Projects

Staff reviewed and provided advisory comments on the Draft 2025 DC Historic Preservation Plan and Preliminary Bowie-Mitchellville and Vicinity Plan. Both are consistent with federal Comprehensive Plan polices. Staff provided advisory federal interest comments to the Arlington County Community Planning, Housing, & Development Department on the Marbella Apartments Redevelopment. The site is subject to a 1982 County Board resolution on views from the National Mall. NCPC staff comments addressed potential impacts on views from the primary east-west vista from the National Mall to the western horizon as identified in the Technical Addendum to the Urban Design Element.

Updated TMP Guide

The General Services Administration, Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, and NCPC formally released an updated Transportation Management Program (TMP) guide. The guide is intended to provide information and examples to federal agencies and organizations preparing TMPs for facilities. The document is available online.

Public Outreach

Rail-Volution 2021 Virtual Conference

On October 21, as part of the Rail-Volution 2021 Virtual Conference, Urban Planner Johanna McCrehan joined Timothy Canan, Planning Data and Research Program Director, Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments; Donald Emerson, Senior Vice President, WSP USA; and Herbert Higginbotham, National Director of Transit + Shared Mobility, Cambridge Systematics, Inc. in a deep dive discussion on travel patterns and the lasting impacts of COVID. They provided an overview of different strategies and tools that can be used, such as data, scenario planning, and partnerships to improve transit in an uncertain future.

APA-NCAC Virtual Conference

The local American Planning Association National Capital Area chapter accepted a staff proposal to present at their annual conference on the role of commemoration and public art play in recognizing leaders, events, and groups. The session will demonstrate through examples how federal and local governments are exploring new models for temporary commemorative works that expand, celebrate, and connect national and local stories in Washington, DC. The conference takes place from November 15-17, 2021.
Strengthening Resiliency

Office of Public Engagement Director Julia Koster attended a convening meeting for the Military Installation Resiliency Review, an effort led by Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. This effort is working with four military installations in Washington, DC, to assess risks and hazards, including flooding and climate, and will then work with the military installations, surrounding communities, and infrastructure and service providers to strengthen resiliency.

Staff Participates in Expert Interview

On October 13, Chuyan Cheng and Averie Thomas, master’s students at John Hopkins SAIS, interviewed Policy & Research Division Director Michael Sherman and Senior Urban Planner Angela Dupont to support their practicum project which is working with the D.C. Department of Energy and Environment to identify ways that the District government can partner with the federal government to promote decarbonization through improving energy efficiency, deploying more solar PV power, and expanding EVs in the city.

Beyond Granite Discussion

On October 13, Larissa Hugentobler, a social scientist at the University of Zürich, interviewed Policy & Research Division Director Michael Sherman, Urban Planner Johanna McCrehan, and Senior Urban Planner Angela Dupont about the existing commemoration process for her PhD project on the memorialization of Dr. Martin Luther King in the digital age. NCPC staff talked about the new Beyond Granite project and the opportunity to create a new model for temporary commemorative works in Washington that fully engage the community in conversation and reflect and honor the diversity of the American people.

Personnel

October Outdoor Outings

On October 14, Policy & Research Division (PRD) staff met at Studio Outdoors located outside of International Square along 19th Street, between K and I Streets and within the Golden Triangle BID. Studio Outdoors is a free outdoor workspace, designed by No Kings Collective, with several seating configuration options including for a single seat and up to a 6-person table, and only requires a reservation to access. PRD enjoyed seeing each other in person and experiencing a COVID-19 workplace solution.

On October 27, Office of Public Engagement staff met for lunch and then took a self-guided tour of the recently renovated Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library. There they viewed a local history exhibit and talked to research staff to learn about opportunities ahead of NCPC’s Centennial in 2024. It was a good opportunity to catch up and, for those that had not done so, to meet Communications & Research Support Specialist Bsrat Mezghebe in person.