



National Building Museum (1.)



DHS, Resilience Plaza (2.)



National Zoological Park (3.)

## 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 National Building Museum Exterior Signage, 401 F Street, NW. (8488)
2. Preliminary and final site development plans for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Headquarters Resilience Plaza, 2701 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue, SE. (8490)
3. Preliminary and final site and building plans for the National Zoological Park Kudu and Hornbill Yard Renovation, 3001 Connecticut Avenue, NW. (8491)
4. Preliminary site and building plans for the Browne Education Campus Modernization, 850 26th Street, NE. (8492)
5. Preliminary and final building plans for the NOAA Antenna Array Modification, 1335 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, Maryland. (8486)
6. Report to the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia for the Map Amendment from RA-2 to RA-3, at Square 2947, Lots 808 and 815, 6634 Georgia Avenue, NW. (ZC 22-37)

During the past month, NCPC staff determined that the following project is exempt from Commission review, based on certain criteria. The project is in Washington, DC.

1. Preliminary and final building plans for the E. Barrett Prettyman U.S. Courthouse Egress Project, 333 Constitution Avenue, NW. (8487)

## Planning Updates

### *Beyond Granite: Pulling Together*

The pilot exhibition *Beyond Granite: Pulling Together* was displayed on the National Mall from August 18 – September 18, 2023. Welcome Stations opened daily from 12:00 pm – 7:00 pm and provided information about the exhibition and oriented the public to the artworks. In addition to the over two million people who saw the exhibition, NCPC staff led more than 20 tours (with over 300 people participating) to local planning and design groups, federal agencies, community members, and youth groups and school students from kindergarten to college. The exhibition received positive reviews from numerous media outlets. The partners (NCPC, the Trust for the National Mall, and the National Park Service) will develop a report on lessons learned from this pilot and look at how future iterations could take place. On September 28, the Executive Director presented *Beyond Granite's* outcome and next steps to the Trust for the National Mall Board of Directors on behalf of the partners. For information on *Beyond Granite* media exposure and interesting statistics, see the attached highlights sheet.





## Monumental Core Streetscape Guide and Construction Manual

In September, staff kicked-off work with a consultant team to finalize the draft Interagency Working Group (IWG) LED Streetlight Specifications. This work will be incorporated with other streetscape element updates, including pavements, trees, and vegetation details and specifications, as staff advances work on the Construction Manual. Staff is revising the draft Small-Scale Streetscape Element Guidelines to respond to public and IWG comments. Staff will finalize the guidelines before presenting them to the Commission and the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts in early 2024.



## Pennsylvania Avenue Initiative

In September, NCPC released the first of two Requests for Proposals (RFP). The first RFP focuses on program requirements, economic analysis, and stewardship. The second RFP, to be released later this year, will focus on design. Two highly qualified and experienced consultant teams will be selected to develop a New Pennsylvania Avenue Plan, obtain public input, and seek approvals through the required regulatory process. This work will build upon the vision, three early concepts released last year, and prior studies. The new plan will have two primary components, a Public Space Master Plan that addresses design, public spaces, street, and infrastructure modernization; and an Implementation Program with recommendations on stewardship and administration to ensure the Avenue's long-term success. For more information and to stay updated, please visit the Pennsylvania Avenue Initiative website:

<https://www.ncpc.gov/initiatives/pennave/>



## Funded Federal Capital Improvements Program Report

NCPC staff publicly released the Federal Capital Improvements Program FY 2023-2028 (FCIP) funded report, which includes projects that received funding in FY 2023. In FY 2023 there were 45 projects that received a total of over \$1.2 billion. The FCIP FY 2023-2028 Funded Report can be found here: <https://www.ncpc.gov/plans/fcip>



## Regional Plans

NCPC staff provided comments on the Public Release Draft of the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment, which includes Sligo Park, a Capper-Cramton parkland. NCPC staff supports the enhancements and improvements to improve the overall health of Sligo Creek as well as stream valley and park accessibility. Staff recommended that protection and preservation of the region's valuable watersheds and parklands be continued.



## Equity Action Plan 2023

NCPC submitted its final 2023 Equity Action Plan to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The plan responds to President Biden's Executive Order 13985, which calls on federal agencies to pursue a comprehensive approach to advancing equity for all. Building upon the agency's first Equity Action Plan, submitted in April 2022, the plan offers a message from the Executive Director; high-impact equity achievements over the past year; and strategies to ensure that the agency's guidance for the long-term development of the region, review of federal master plans and significant projects, and public engagement considers the diverse needs of impacted communities and advances equity. NCPC submitted the plan after OMB's review of the draft plan.



### Downtown Action Plan and Federal Focus Group

On September 20, the Executive Director attended a Downtown Action Plan Steering Committee meeting to discuss preliminary findings and potential interventions. On October 2, NCPC convened a focus group comprising federal agencies and cultural institutions to discuss opportunities to connect visitors at the National Mall and museums to Downtown's retail, restaurant, and entertainment assets.



### Foggy Bottom/Kennedy Center Area Technical Assistance Panel

On September 27 and 28, the Urban Land Institute Washington hosted a Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) co-sponsored by NCPC and the District of Columbia Office of Planning. The study area included portions of Foggy Bottom and the West End, generally extending from Constitution Avenue and the National Mall, along the Kennedy Center, up to near K Street, NW. The TAP's purpose was to gain guidance and help identify potential next steps for addressing the complex challenges created by the current highway network which limits access and connectivity between the Kennedy Center, National Mall and surrounding neighborhoods. The panel included local leaders and experts in planning, design, real estate, transportation and public-private partnerships. A report with recommendations and findings will be published later in the fall.



### Public Outreach

#### NCPC Presents at the APA National Capital Area Chapter's Fall Conference

On October 5, Senior Urban Planner **Angela Dupont** and Urban Planner **Melissa Lindsjo** will present at the American Planning Association National Capital Area Chapter's fall conference at the University of Maryland. The "Future of the Federal Workplace" session will focus on how NCPC, in partnership with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, is using scenario planning to better understand the cumulative impacts of federal telework and hybrid workplaces on the National Capital Region.



#### Harvard Graduate School of Design Lecture

On September 21, the Executive Director presented a lecture on, "Representation and Storytelling in the Nation's Capital" for the Harvard Graduate School of Design (GSD) course entitled, "Proseminar in PUBLICS." The lecture focused on the National Mall as a place for storytelling, who gets to tell their story, ways to tell stories in this space, and lessons learned from the *Beyond Granite* initiative. The lecture was in partnership with **Thomas Luebke**, U.S. Commission of Fine Arts Secretary, who discussed the history of the National Mall. The Harvard GSD Proseminar holds lectures, discussions, and debates that investigate what it means to be public, of the public, in the public, for the public, with the public, or by the public. The course draws from scholars, practitioners, and everyday people to build foundational intelligence and provocative interpretations of social and spatial publics, and their potential to advance the Just City.



#### Georgetown Urban and Regional Planning Program at 10

On September 8, Georgetown University's Urban and Regional Planning Program celebrated 10 years at an event held at their campus at 640 Massachusetts Avenue, NW. The Executive Director participated in a session entitled "Responsible Stewards: Special Guests Reflect on Responsible Community Development."



### Art and Spectacle Activating Public Spaces

As NCPC explores new approaches to telling stories in the nation's capital, as well as activating public streets and spaces, two recent events are noteworthy. Little Amal, a 12-foot puppet of a 10-year-old Syrian girl, brought together civic groups and the public to walk down Pennsylvania Avenue on September 19, highlighting the needs and stories of refugee children worldwide. Artist **Jenny Holzer** worked with the U.S. Department of State on a light projection called THE PEOPLE that celebrated the Art in Embassies program's 60th Anniversary and its Democracy Collection Initiative. The display was projected every night from September 17-21 onto the Hirshhorn Museum and Smithsonian's National Museum of American History.



### Preparing for the Centennial

As part of the agency's Centennial activities for 2024, NCPC staff are developing an exhibit sharing the agency's early work through 1974 that considers how planning activities have shaped our city. The exhibit will be displayed at the Martin Luther King Jr. Library in early 2024. Oral history interviews were recently conducted with former Chair **Beth White** and former Commissioner **Harriet Tregoning**.



### Construct Integrated Bezos Learning Center

The Smithsonian Institution and the National Capital Planning Commission announced the public scoping period from September 29 to November 16, 2023 for preparation of an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Construct Integrated Bezos Learning Center project: an addition to the east end of the National Air and Space Museum, on the National Mall. An online public scoping meeting will be held on November 1, 2023, from 3:00 – 5:00 pm A public site tour will be held on Monday, November 6, 2023, from 9:30 am – 10:30 am. More information is available at <https://www.ncpc.gov/projects/8351/>.

## Personnel

### NCPC Bids Farewell to Senior Planner



Meghan Dowker

**Meghan Dowker**, Senior Planner in the Physical Planning Division has moved on from NCPC. Meghan's many contributions to NCPC during her 10-year stay made an indelible mark on the betterment of the urban form and quality of public spaces in the monumental core. She had instrumental and influential roles in planning the SW Ecodistrict and the Pennsylvania Avenue Initiative, including the square guidelines for the future site redevelopment of the Federal Bureau of Investigation Headquarters. Most recently, her leadership and work on the Monumental Core Streetscape Guide and Construction Manual will influence the beauty and function of streetscapes that will elevate the identity, character, comfort, experience, and memory of public life in the nation's capital into the coming decades. We will miss Meghan and wish her all the best in her next chapter and future endeavors.

# Beyond Granite Snapshot

## Elevating New Stories on the National Mall

### About the Initiative

From August through September 2023, the Trust for the National Mall led the first installation of the *Beyond Granite* initiative, entitled *Pulling Together* in partnership with the National Capital Planning Commission and the National Park Service. The exhibition, curated by Monument Lab, is the first-of-its-kind on the National Mall bringing a dynamic series of art sharing new stories and perspectives on the nation's most iconic commemorative space. The initiative tested the National Mall as a platform for creating powerful and lasting memories, breathing new life into the commemorative landscape.

### BEYOND GRANITE BY THE NUMBERS:

**6 WORKS OF ART**  
**2 MILLION VISITORS (ESTIMATED)**  
**15,000 EXHIBIT NEWSPAPERS DISTRIBUTED**  
**20,000 RINGS OF THE BELL (ESTIMATED)**  
**20,000 SOCIAL MEDIA INTERACTIONS**  
**72 MILLION REACHED ON SOCIAL MEDIA**

### In the News...

*Beyond Granite* has garnered media attention from network television to major newspapers to prestigious trade publications.

- **158 articles** have been featured in print and digital publications
- **764 million total potential impressions** via print and digital publications
- **259 broadcast news clips** have aired on television and radio programs
- **91 million total potential impressions** via television and radio programs
- Featured social posts on [New York Times](#) Instagram (**17.6 M followers**), [CBS Sunday Morning](#) Twitter (**268.3K followers**) and Secretary of Smithsonian [Lonnie G. Bunch III](#) (**21.1K followers**)

### Key Headlines

- **CBS NEWS Sunday Morning:** Art on the Mall / American Diversity on Display (September 10, 2023)
- **The Washington Post:** Art on the Mall! They put art on the Mall! (August 19, 2023)
- **The New York Times:** On Our National Mall, New Monuments Tell New Stories (August 17, 2023)
- **NPR Weekend Edition:** A groundbreaking exhibition on the National Mall shows monuments aren't set in stone (August 28, 2023)
- **AXIOS News:** New must-see art breaks barriers on the Mall (August 20, 2023)
- **Wall Street Journal:** Mark of History (August 25, 2023)
- **Washington Post:** New exhibit at National Mall shows how we can coalesce around shared history (August 22, 2023)

### Selected Outlets



The Architect's Newspaper  
 ArtDaily  
 Axios  
 Baltimore Sun  
 Bloomberg News

El Tiempo Latino  
 Forbes  
 Wall Street Journal  
 NPR  
 Philadelphia Inquirer

Preservation Magazine  
 Smithsonian Magazine  
 The New York Times  
 Washington Post

Washingtonian Magazine  
 WTOP  
 Yahoo News  
 Washington City Paper

Presented by:



Curated by:

Paul Farber and  
 Salamishah Tillet for  
 Monument  
 Lab

## Media Excerpts

### The Washington Post

#### Art on the Mall! They put art on the Mall!

Philip Kennicott, *The Washington Post* / Aug. 19, 2023

*Beyond Granite* is smart and well produced...it proves something that has been obvious for decades: The Mall is overstuffed with monuments and memorials, but it is in no way a substantially completed work of public art. Exhibitions like this one should be an annual endeavor.

### The New York Times

#### On Our National Mall, New Monuments Tell New Stories

Blake Gopnik, *The New York Times* / Aug. 17, 2023

What I found compelling about the whole project is the way a work might succeed on one dimension (maybe by undermining traditional, Guy-on-a-Horse ideas about monumentality) in the very act of failing on another (say, to achieve the visceral power of an old-fashioned monument)...That gives "Pulling Together," as a whole, the flexible meaning we want from good art.

## Bloomberg

#### 6 Ways to Make New Monuments for the National Mall

Kriston Capps, *Bloomberg* / Sep. 2, 2023

It's a striking exhibit that reconsiders the histories that the Mall commemorates and the form that monuments can take. Moreover, this collection reimagines how the Mall should work: less for history, more for people.

### The Washington Informer

#### New Exhibit Features Unknown Narratives of the National Mall, D.C.

Andrew S. Jacobson, *The Washington Informer* / Aug. 14, 2023

As the National Mall becomes a canvas for stories that long deserved recognition, "*Beyond Granite: Pulling Together*," etches its own indelible mark on the fabric of American memory.

## CBS NEWS

#### Art on the Mall/ American Diversity on Display

Faith Salie, *CBS NEWS Sunday Morning* / Sept. 10, 2023

For over a century, monuments on the National Mall in Washington D.C. have inspired us to witness, remember, revere. Now we are invited to ring, swing, and sing...what better gallery of art than one that is of the people, by the people and for the people.

### The Washington Post

#### New Exhibit at National Mall shows how we can coalesce around shared history

Elise Labott, *The Washington Post* / Aug. 22, 2023

The Mall, often dubbed America's Front Yard, is home to symbols of the most important moments in our history. But it's running out of space...The *Beyond Granite* pilot, too, could inspire a movement in D.C. that transcends the National Mall. Imagine a city where temporary memorials dot the landscape, infusing every neighborhood with a revolving tapestry of stories...

## HYPERALLERGIC

#### Reimagined Monuments Take Over DC's National Mall

Maya Pontone, *Hyperallergic* / Aug. 18, 2023

The gathering grounds for protest and dissent — such as Marian Anderson's 1939 Easter Sunday performance, the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, the 1968 Poor People's Campaign, the American Indian Movement's Longest Walk in 1978, and the 1996 display of the AIDS Memorial Quilt — the National Mall has and continues to be a space where people envision and catalyze change.

## APA

#### Using Public Space to Expand Storytelling on the National Mall

Dina Walters, American Planning Association - *Planning.org* / Aug. 28, 2023

The result is a unique achievement in planning with a goal to usher in a new era of curated exhibitions, and thereby a more diverse collection of stories from American history, at the National Mall.