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 building plans for accessibility improvements at the National Park Service’s National Capital Area Office, 1100 Ohio Drive, SW. (8189)

2. Final site and building plans for phase 1 of building envelope repairs at the Martin V.B. Bostetter, Jr. United States Courthouse, 200 South Washington Street, Alexandria, Virginia. (8190)

3. Final site and building plans for relocation of an aircraft hazardous cargo pad, taxiway, and explosive ordnance disposal range at Joint Base Andrews, Camp Springs, Maryland. (8112)

4. Approval of comments to the Council of the District of Columbia regarding a proposed street dedication application and approval of a Highway Plan elimination amendment in Square 5097 - S.O. 20-49332, Minnesota Avenue at Sheriff Road, NE. (8178)

5. Preliminary and final site development plans for renovation and park improvements to the Southwest Duck Pond, 500 I Street, SW. (8191)

6. Preliminary and final site development plans for the Carolina Park Playground, Macomb Street & Carolina Place, NW. (8208)

7. Preliminary site and building plans for revitalization of the Stead Park and Community Center, 1625 P Street, NW. (8209)


9. A report to the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia for a map amendment at Square 6070, 3703-3715 Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue, SE. (ZC 19-17)

10. A report to the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia for text & map amendments to Subtitle K, Ch. 9, Square 2950, Lots 820-828, 1416 Aspen Street, NW, (ZC 19-24(19-24A)

11. A report to the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia for a map amendment at Square 417, 1840 7th Street, NW (Square 417, Lots 53 and 54). (ZC 19-28)

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. Preliminary and final site development plans for Washington-style bench modifications. (8210)

2. Preliminary and final site development plans for renovation of Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling’s Building 168, 20 MacDill Boulevard, SE. (8195)

3. Approval of comments to the Council of the District of Columbia regarding a proposed street dedication and establishment of a building restriction line in Square 2873, W Street, between 9th and 8th Streets, NW (8194)
Planning Updates

Comprehensive Plan: Transportation and Federal Workplace Elements

Staff continues coordinating with federal and District agencies and other stakeholders to refine the polices in the draft Transportation and Federal Workplace Elements. Following adoption of the Transportation Element at the July meeting, staff developed the Transportation Management Plan (TMP) monitoring form in the Submission Portal and communicated with stakeholders on when the new element’s policies will go into effect. They are also working with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments and General Services Administration to update the comprehensive TMP Handbook. Staff will submit the final Federal Workplace Element for Commission adoption at the November 5 meeting.

Funded Federal Capital Improvements Program

The Funded Federal Capital Improvements Program for the National Capital Region FY 2020-2025 report will be posted on NCPC’s website in September at https://www.ncpc.gov/plans/fcip/.

Memorandum of Understanding Signed for Armed Forces Retirement Home Redevelopment

On July 28, 2020, the Executive Director, DC Office of Planning Director Andrew Trueblood, and Armed Forces Retirement Home (AFRH) Chief Operating Officer James M. Branham signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that identifies the process for redevelopment of an underutilized 80-acre parcel of land (Zone A) on the AFRH campus by a private developer. The document outlines the shared review and development process for the parcel and allows the project to move forward. The MOU recognizes the respective interests of NCPC and the District of Columbia in the planning of this important site and ensures a single, clear set of land-use regulations and building code standards. Under the MOU’s terms, DCOP will recommend zoning consistent with the AFRH Master Plan and the District of Columbia’s Comprehensive Plan, which will serve as guides for the DC Zoning Commission in zoning the AFRH site. NCPC will review any future amendments to the campus’ master plan and all projects outside of Zone A in accordance with the National Capital Planning Act.

Pennsylvania Avenue Initiative

On August 27 staff met with the Pennsylvania Avenue Initiative Executive Committee to discuss a range of preliminary concepts that propose ways to elevate the Avenue’s role as a cultural stage and a beautiful and lively capital city destination.

Pennsylvania Avenue’s location, symbolic role, and generous public space network position it as an iconic stage for demonstrations and special events. The Women’s Suffrage Parade in March 1913 was the first use of the Avenue as a venue to assemble and advocate for policy change. This led to the ratification of the 19th Amendment in August 1920, which gave women the right to vote. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, grand plans to celebrate the 100th anniversary on the Avenue were underway. In the absence of public gatherings, the National Archives and the Smithsonian Institution are streaming films and exhibits to celebrate this significant accomplishment.
Monumental Core Streetscape Guide and Manual

The Interagency Working Group reviewed and commented on the first draft of the stormwater management guidelines in early August. The draft provides guidance on the appropriateness and applicability of a range of stormwater management best practices within the monumental core. The working group’s comments focused on urban design considerations and the importance of maintenance. Based on the group’s input, the guidelines will be refined for further review. Guideline development is expected to continue into the fall of 2020.

NCPC Releases Its 2020 Sustainability Report and Implementation Plan

Executive Order 13834: Executive Order Regarding Efficient Federal Operations requires federal agencies to annually report on and set new efficiency performance goals, and NCPC incorporates its directives into our operations, core functions, and special project initiatives. In FY2020, accelerated by COVID-19, the agency transitioned all agency business online and increased staff telework participation to nearly 100 percent. This resulted in streamlined and electronic distribution of materials; adoption of new communication and information sharing methods; less paper and printed materials; reduced staff and visitor commutes; and decreased in-office energy use. For FY2021-2022 NCPC anticipates reducing leased office space by about 30 percent, cutting the number of on-site copiers and fax machines, and increasing use of ENERGY STAR and Federal Energy Management Program electronics. Further details are available in the full plan, available online at https://www.ncpc.gov/policies/sustainability/.

Public Engagement

NCPC Policy Guidelines Out for Public Comment

Through September 14, 2020 people can view materials and submit official comments regarding updates to NCPC policy guidelines that are now out for 60-day public comment periods. Proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan’s Federal Environment Element propose changing Section G: Policies Related to Tree Canopy and Vegetation at federal development sites, as well as corresponding changes to the agency’s Submission Guidelines. Proposed updates to the agency’s Antenna Submission Guidelines address the impacts of new telecommunication infrastructure on federal buildings and land. Materials and a comment submission portal are available on NCPC’s website. The agency hosted online public meetings for the Tree Policies on July 29 and Antenna Submission Guidelines on August 4.

Personnel

DC Board of Zoning Adjustment Representative

Urban Planner Chrishaun Smith was appointed as NCPC’s staff representative to the DC Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA). He will assume these responsibilities from Urban Planner Carlton Hart who served admirably in this capacity for several years. Chrishaun will be officially sworn in during the first BZA meeting in September.