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 replacement of the antenna at the Naval Support Facility Carderock Building 145 Water Tower, 9500 MacArthur Boulevard, West Bethesda, MD. (8293)
2. Preliminary and final site development plans for the Department of Education Lyndon B. Johnson Building Beam Barrier Project, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW. (8297)
3. Preliminary and final site development plans for an Immigrant Food Sign at the Franklin School, 925 13th Street, NW. (8300)
4. Final site and building plans for the Army Family Housing Renovation Program at Fort McNair and Fort Myer, Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, Washington, DC and Arlington, VA. (8166)
5. Report to the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia for a Text Amendment to Create the Barry Farm Zones. (ZC 20-21)

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 Naval Observatory Helicopter Landing Zone Improvements, 3450 Massachusetts Avenue, NW. (8292)
2. Preliminary and final site development plans for hazardous tree removal and replacement at the Naval Support Facility Carderock, 9500 MacArthur Boulevard, West Bethesda, MD. (8295)
3. Comments to the Council of the District of Columbia for Proposed Closing of a Portion of Moreland Street, NW - S.O. 21-05063. (8299)

Planning Updates

Funded Federal Capital Improvements Program

The Funded Federal Capital Improvements Program for the National Capital Region FY 2021-2026 report will be posted in September. This report contains publicly accessible information on capital improvement projects that have received funding within the FY21 fiscal year. The report will be accessed on NCPC’s website at https://www.ncpc.gov/plans/fcip/.

Interagency Security Annual Membership Meeting

On August 9, 2021, the Executive Director and NCPC staff met with representatives from the Interagency Security Committee (ISC) as part of the ISC’s annual outreach to member organizations. The discussion focused on NCPC’s conformance to the ISC’s Standards Compliance. The ISC’s representatives also reconfirmed their commitment and ongoing cooperation on the NCPC’s security-specific initiatives.
Public Space and Security - Farragut Square Working Group

On July 16, 2021, the Policy and Research Division met with stakeholders including the Golden Triangle BID, National Park Service, DC Office of Planning, DC Department of Transportation, Department of Homeland Security, and Federal Emergency Management Agency to discuss funding and implementation strategies for security interventions at Farragut Square.

Monumental Core Streetscape Guide and Manual

The Interagency Working Group met on July 29, 2021 to initiate Pedestrian Walking Space design guidelines. Staff will advance guideline development through the fall. After these design guidelines are complete, staff will return to the Commission for preliminary Streetscape Guideline review. Staff are continuing to work closely with the District of Columbia to coordinate streetscape guidelines within important transition areas between the monumental core and surrounding neighborhoods.

Transportation Management Plan Handbook

In September 2021, NCPC, the General Services Administration, and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments will release an updated Federal Employee Transportation Coordinator’s Transportation Management Plan (TMP) Handbook. The handbook provides federal agencies with procedures and guidelines to prepare a TMP that documents their program to foster more efficient employee commuting patterns. The handbook is designed to serve as a “bridging” document between NCPC’s recently adopted Transportation Element and Addendum, with more detail related to preparing, monitoring, and evaluating a TMP. The report will be accessed on NCPC’s website at https://www.ncpc.gov/topics/transportation/.

Commemoration

On August 9, the Trust for the National Mall (with guidance and assistance from NCPC staff) submitted a grant proposal to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for a demonstration of temporary commemorative works in the nation’s capital. The proposal is intended to elevate underrepresented stories in the commemorative landscape, and will bring together expert historians, multidisciplinary artists, designers, curators, and federal and city agencies to achieve this vision. If selected, NCPC staff will use the key findings from the demonstration project to inform updates to the Memorials and Museums Master Plan and develop new policies within the Comprehensive Plan. This proposal will be reviewed by the Mellon Foundation Board in September 2021 and notification of award (if selected) will follow.

Pennsylvania Avenue Initiative

On June 29, 2021 NCPC hosted a public panel event, America’s Civic Stage: A Vision to Celebrate Pennsylvania Avenue. A short highlights video and its full-length format are now available at https://www.ncpc.gov/initiatives/pennave. An expert panel shared their big ideas to transform the Avenue into a more equitable, beautiful, and economically healthy corridor. This event was the kickoff to encourage public participation on the Avenue’s future. Three concept visions exploring a range of physical and programming improvements will be released in winter 2021/2022 for input. The visions include: Urban Capital Street, a vibrant local street with mobile commerce and strong multi-modal transportation connections; Civic Stage, an arts, culture and entertainment destination; and Green Street, an urban linear park.
North Capitol/Irving Street Cloverleaf Workshop

On August 12 NCPC staff, in coordination with the District Office of Planning (DCOP), hosted a virtual workshop for stakeholders adjacent to the North Capitol and Irving Street intersection facilitated by the National Charrette Institute. Building off the workshop that NCPC hosted in 2019, staff reconvened representatives from the Armed Forces Retirement Home (AFRH), General Services Administration, Veterans Affair Medical Center, Catholic University, DCOP, and District Department of Transportation to exchange updates on planning work underway in the area. DCOP also presented an overview of their recent study of potential improvements to the North Capitol and Irving Street intersection. Attendees had a productive discussion regarding potential changes to the cloverleaf intersection and possible impacts/benefits to adjacent campuses and the overall area. NCPC and District staff will continue to convene this group of local and federal stakeholders to ensure a coordinated vision for the larger area. The Commission will review a master plan update to the AFRH campus this winter.

Executive Order 13690 Interagency Working Group

NCPC was invited by the White House Council on Environmental Quality and Office of Management and Budget to participate in an interagency working group to implement Presidential Executive Order 13690. This Executive Order directs each federal agency to take action to reduce risk of flood loss; to minimize the impact of floods on human safety, health, and welfare; and to restore and preserve the natural and beneficial values served by floodplains. The Executive Director participated in the first interagency meeting on Tuesday, August 24, 2021. Julia Koster will serve as our staff liaison to the working group.

Public Outreach

National Capital Region Facilities Outreach Initiative

The Urban Design and Plan Review Division was busy this summer hosting its first annual outreach meetings. Staff met with several local jurisdiction representatives and federal agencies including the Department of the Army, the Department of the Navy, the Federal Highway Administration, and the U.S. Postal Service. Additional outreach meetings are scheduled through the end of September. These meetings offered insight into projects each agency has in the pipeline for their facilities in fiscal year 2022, and were an opportunity for NCPC to brief applicants on the work completed over the last fiscal year, including how applicants should report their Transportation Management Plan data as part of the new monitoring program, which will begin this October. The Facilities Outreach Management System (FOMS) has proven to be an indispensable tool in conducting this outreach and keeping track of pipeline projects, meeting notes, and contact information.

Advancing Basic Equity Report

On August 9, NCPC provided a 200-day assessment report to the Office of Management and Budget regarding EO 13985 Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities through the Federal Government. The Commission will receive a briefing on this work at its September 2 meeting.
Executive Director Featured in ULI Park and Recreation Month Story

In honor of Park and Recreation Month this past July, the Urban Land Institute and the National Recreation and Park Association partnered to honor parks and their important role. One feature was an online article where five ULI members discussed the importance of parks and how they support and use parks. The Executive Director was one of the five members featured. Others include Justin Duff, Senior Director, VanTrust Real Estate; Glenda Hood, President, Hood Partners LLC (and former Mayor of Orlando, Florida); Riki Nishimura, Principal, Populous; and Allison Schapker, Chief Project Officer, Fairmount Park Conservancy. The article is online at https://urbanland.uli.org/sustainability/why-developers-and-land-use-professionals-are-championing-u-s-parks/.

Montgomery County Site Visit

On July 20, NCPC staff conducted a site visit and spoke with staff from the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission – Montgomery County. They recently designed and moved into new office space and have a new commission meeting space that supports a variety of in-person and online formats. NCPC will renovate its existing space this fall, and the site visit helped to inform options for the design and technology that will be considered.

Planning Ethics Presentation

On July 12, Office of Public Engagement Director Julia Koster provided a presentation to students in a Georgetown University planning program course on planning ethics.

Personnel

NCPC says Farewell to Senior Urban Planner

Senior Urban Planner Sarah Ridgely accepted a position in the Office of the Architect of the Capitol as a Senior Master Planner. She will lead development of a campus master plan and will continue to collaborate with NCPC on interagency working groups and projects of common interest. We wish her well in her future endeavors.

Executive Director Announced as Honor Award Winner

The Washington Architectural Foundation and AIA|DC named Executive Director Marcel Acosta as their 2021 Donald B. Myer, FAIA Public Service Award recipient. The 2021 Honor Awards will be presented at AIA|DC’s Fall Design Fete on November 12.