



BENNING NEIGHBORHOOD LIBRARY
LIBRARY REPLACEMENT
3935 Benning Road, NE

Washington, D.C.

Delegated Action of the Executive Director

May 30, 2008

Pursuant to delegations of authority adopted by the Commission on October 3, 1996 and 40 U.S.C §8722 (b) (1), I approve the preliminary and final site and building plans for the proposed replacement of the Benning Branch Library of the District of Columbia Public Libraries, located in Northeast Washington, DC, as shown on NCPC Map File No. 81.00(38.00)41522.

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The District of Columbia Public Library (DCPL) has submitted preliminary and final site and building plans for the Benning Branch Library in Northeast Washington, D.C. The Commission commented favorably on the concept plans for this project at its April 3, 2008 meeting and did not request any changes.

This is one of the first libraries to be replaced under the DCPL capital construction program. DCPL proposes to demolish the aging Benning Branch Library, in operation since 1962, and construct a new library on the same site. The site is located in Ward 7 on the east side of the Anacostia River near the intersection of Benning Road and Minnesota Avenue.

The new building will consist of two levels and approximately 25,000 gross square feet. The first level of the library, accessible from the north entrance at Benning Road, will contain a majority of the library's program, including reference and periodical sections, adult/young reading rooms, and a children's reading area. The ground floor, accessible from the parking lot of the adjacent shopping center, will contain the library's administrative and community areas as well as access to the building's mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems. The project is being designed for LEED Silver Certification and will include a landscaped roof to satisfy project sustainability goals.

The design concept for the building will architecturally express two distinct yet complementary intersecting volumes. The upper level, shaped as a copper clad box, will contain the primary library floor functions and the lower level, enclosed in glass and concrete, will contain the public meeting rooms and services functions. Natural light, a generously proportioned communicating stair, and open expanses of glass further unify the upper and lower levels.

The total site area is 25,241 square feet, with a 15,000 square foot building footprint. The site has 83% lot coverage, with the remainder of the lot being covered by landscape and fourteen parking spaces. New public sidewalks will be provided. The existing trees in the public right of way will be maintained and new grass will be added. A linear strip of grass will also be added along the west side of the building. The parking lot will be accessed from Benning Road.

As a District of Columbia project outside of the Central Area, NCPC is advisory and does not have independent responsibility for the project under the National Environmental Policy Act or the National Historic Preservation Act.



Perspective from Benning Road

The Coordinating Committee reviewed the proposal at its March 12, 2008 meeting and forwarded it to the Commission with the statement that the project has been coordinated with all agencies represented, with the exception of the District of Columbia Office of Planning (DCOP). DCOP has since coordinated the project. The participating agencies were NCPC; the District Office of Planning; the District Department of Transportation; the Department of Housing and Community Development; the General Services Administration and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.

Marcel C. Acosta
Executive Director