



Commission Action

December 3, 2015

PROJECT Franklin Park Rehabilitation 14 th & I Streets, NW Washington, DC	NCPC FILE NUMBER 7545
SUBMITTED BY United States Department of the Interior National Park Service	NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER 21.00(70.00)44260
	APPLICANT'S REQUEST Preliminary approval of site and building plans
	ACTION TAKEN Approved with comments
	REVIEW AUTHORITY Approval per 40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1) and (d)

The Commission:

Approves the preliminary site and building plans for the rehabilitation of Franklin Park, located in downtown Washington, DC.

Supports the development of an unique urban park accommodating both local and national interests in the heart of downtown Washington, DC.

Notes that Franklin Park is a significant feature of the L'Enfant Plan, and that it is distinctive from other historic downtown park squares and circles, such as McPherson Square, in both function and character.

- Historically, the park had an important ecological function, and was created to protect the White House's primary water source in the early 1800's.
- The park's historic pastoral design is also unique from the more formal, symmetrical designs of some of Washington's other downtown parks, and reinforces a natural aesthetic of asymmetrical pathways, a significant tree canopy, and naturalized understory plantings. And therefore:

Finds that the proposed design approach and vocabulary, which draws on natural influences, is appropriate for Franklin Park as a reference to its historic ecological function and character; and

Finds that the new programming, including a café and children's area, is an appropriate departure from existing open space uses that will help this park realize its potential as a respite and a public space in downtown Washington.

Notes that the National Park Service is working diligently with the Government of the District of Columbia and the DowntownDC BID to develop an innovative partnership that protects and enhances Franklin Park for the next generation of park users. A well-funded and staffed

operations and maintenance plan is necessary to ensure the significant capital investment in the park is sustained for years to come.

Recommends the applicant consider the following comments prior to submitting for final review:

Café & Pedestrian Mall

- Provide further details regarding the design, materials, and construction of the café, including the green roof.
- Enhance visitor safety by providing restroom access directly from the interior of café.
- Per the MOA signed on June 3, 2015 pursuant to Section 106 and 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), integrate cultural and historic interpretive features on the history of Franklin Park within the pavement area of the pedestrian mall to engage visitors and activate the space.
- Provide further details regarding site programming and sustainable design features within the pedestrian mall.

Children's Garden

- Per the MOA signed on June 3, 2015 pursuant to Section 106 and 110 of the NHPA, incorporate the Potomac watershed theme throughout the design.
- Identify the type and location of specific play elements to be located within the Children's Garden.
- Consider use of the "living" fence as the preferred option to best integrate the protective measures necessary for a safe play space with the organic design of the park.

Central Plaza and Fountain

- Identify in greater detail those elements of the historic plaza and fountain that will be retained, reused, rehabilitated or replaced.

Recommends that additional details be submitted with the final design regarding the proposed sustainability elements, site grading, tree protection, lighting, site furnishings, and planting plan.

Requests a stormwater management plan, prepared in accordance with the Commission submission guidelines, that addresses compliance with the District Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE) and Section 438 of the Energy Independence and Security Act (EISA) regulations.

Deborah B. Young

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Secretary to the National Capital Planning Commission