



Delegated Action of the Executive Director

PROJECT Swimming Pool and Pool House East Potomac Park 972 Ohio Drive, SW Washington, DC	NCPC FILE NUMBER 7686
	NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER 1.52(38.00)44170
SUBMITTED BY United States Department of the Interior National Park Service	ACTION TAKEN Preliminary and final approval of site and building plans
	REVIEW AUTHORITY Federal Project in the District per 40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1)

The District of Columbia's Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), under a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the National Park Service (NPS), proposes to replace the existing pool and pool house in East Potomac Park (EPP) with a state-of-the-art, Olympic-sized, recreational and competitive aquatics facility capable of holding swim meets and competitive diving competitions. (The MOA allows the District of Columbia to operate, maintain, and improve the pool and pool facilities.)

East Potomac Park, constructed from tidal flats, was designated by the 54th Congress in 1897 to be a public park for the recreation and enjoyment of the people, with a goal to provide open space and facilities for outdoor recreational activities in a setting that exemplifies its scenic qualities. Today EPP contains active recreational facilities including golf with two 18-hole courses and one 9-hole course, a tennis center, miniature golf, and picnic facilities. The proposed improvements at the existing pool and pool house will enhance the recreational opportunities at EPP.

The EPP pool was originally constructed in the 1930s with the two adjacent buildings serving as the pool house (the adjacent structures were initially intended to be wings of a larger, central pool house structure that was never built). The existing pool house, built in the location of the previously planned larger pool house, was constructed near the end of the 1960s or early 1970s. It was also during this period that the original pool was replaced with an aluminum pool shell. The current pool house is undersized to meet current facility needs and is not compliant with current building codes or ADA requirements. The existing pool deck, also built in the 1930s, is deteriorating and has exceeded its building life cycle.

The proposed project includes the modernization of the swimming pool, the addition of a deeper diving area and diving boards and improved new pool facilities and landscaping all within the footprint of the existing pool, pool house, and entry courtyard. The proposed pool house will provide locker rooms with showers, family changing rooms, offices to meet current staffing needs, retail and food service functions, and provide spectator seating for viewing aquatic events. The design of the proposed pool house reflects the original 1930s planning vision for the site by

emphasizing the central entry axis between the two existing buildings. The proposed design utilizes a contemporary interpretation of the historic unbuilt plan for the pool house and uses some of that plan's design vocabulary such as providing colonnades that function as access routes to the proposed spectator seating areas. The main entrance to the pool house is planned with a landscaped plaza which reinforces the symmetry of the composition of the original buildings and provides an open air entry lobby, consistent with the original planning layout, to allow views of the pool as the public approaches the building.

As a project that replaces existing recreational facilities at EPP, the project is consistent with the original intent of EPP to provide recreational opportunities for the city. The proposal is not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital or any other federal interests.

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), on June 18, 2015, the NPS determined that the proposed construction meets the agency's criteria for a categorical exclusion C.19 per Section 3-4 of the agency's Director's Order 12. C.19 includes: Construction or rehabilitation in previously disturbed or developed areas, required to meet health and safety regulations, or to meet requirements for making facilities accessible to the handicapped." The project also meets the criteria for a categorical exclusion per C.21 of Section 8 of NCPC's Environmental and Historic Preservation Policies and Procedures. C.21 includes the review and approval of acquisition of occupiable space by lease acquisition, construction, or expansion, or improvement of an existing facility where: "The structure and proposed use are substantially in compliance with local planning and zoning and any applicable state or Federal requirements; The proposed use will only slightly increase the number of motor of motor vehicles at the facility; The site and the scale of construction are consistent with those of existing adjacent or nearby buildings; and, There is no evidence or environmental controversy." Prior to applying this categorical exclusion, NCPC staff determined that no extraordinary circumstances were present as required by the Commission's NEPA procedures.

In compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act, the NPS concluded Section 106 consultation with the DC State Historic Preservation Office (DC SHPO) on June 11, 2015. The DC SHPO concurred with the NPS that the undertaking will have no adverse effects on historic properties at the installation, conditioned that the DC SHPO is consulted regarding any further proposed refinements to the project plans and that any additional comments the DC SHPO may provide regarding those refinements be incorporated into the plans. NCPC designated the NPS lead agency for Section 106 purposes.

The Coordinating Committee met on June 17, 2015 and forwarded the proposed preliminary and final site and building plans to the Commission with the statement that the project has been coordinated with all participating agencies. The participating agencies were: NCPC; the District of Columbia Office of Planning; the DC SHPO; the District Department of Transportation; the General Services Administration; the NPS; and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.

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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 East Potomac Park Swimming Pool and Pool House in Washington, DC.

Marcel Acosta
Executive Director

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