



Commission Action

March 2, 2017

PROJECT

Foreign Missions Center Master Plan at the former Walter Reed Army Medical Center

16th Street, NW, between Aspen Street and Alaska Avenue, NW
Washington, DC

SUBMITTED BY

United States Department of State

NCPC FILE NUMBER

MP305-7393

NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER

62.10(05.00)44501

APPLICANT'S REQUEST

Approval of comments on draft master plan

ACTION TAKEN

Approve comments on the draft master plan

REVIEW AUTHORITY

Advisory
per 40 U.S.C. § 8722(a) and (b)(1)

The Commission:

Supports the Department of State (DOS) vision for the Foreign Mission Center (FMC) to develop the northwestern portion of the former Walter Reed Army Medical Center (WRAMC) site as a campus with designated lots leased to foreign missions for individual chancery development, in a manner similar to the existing International Chancery Center (ICC).

Supports the following DOS goals for the draft FMC Master Plan as they align with policies within the Foreign Missions and International Organizations Element of the Comprehensive Plan:

- Enhance DOS efforts to gain new sites to construct safe, modern, and secure embassies and consulates overseas;
- Accommodate foreign government chanceries on a consolidated campus promoting safety and protection of diplomatic facilities as mandated by the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 1961, and as authorized in the 1982 Foreign Missions Act;
- Support DOS commitment to sustainable design and reduction of carbon footprint;
- Create cost-neutral development on the DOS portion of the FMC;
- Support the desire of foreign missions to build significant facilities that reflect the character and ethos of their native architectures;
- Optimize land use and strive to maximize assignable land to ease the burden of the cost model.

Support DOS plans to include a low-density chancery development in scale with the surrounding neighborhood, provide foreign missions suitable development sites, and protect existing historic resources by repurposing some existing historic buildings.

Notes that while NCPC is reviewing this master plan under 40 USC 8722 (a) and (b)(1) of the Planning Act of 1952, individual sites at the FMC will be reviewed by NCPC under the criteria in the Foreign Missions Act.

Notes that NCPC executed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with DOS, on February 27, 2017, that describes the review process NCPC will use for individual lots at the FMC.

Reminds DOS to update the draft FMC Master Plan as necessary to align with the MOA that describes the process for NCPC review of individual foreign mission development proposals.

Notes that the District of Columbia Government has developed a plan for the eastern portion of the former WRAMC that consists of a mid-to-high rise, mixed-use development. The remaining portion of the former WRAMC site will be used by the National Children's Hospital.

Regarding the following topics, the Commission:

Historic Preservation

- **Encourages** DOS to preserve as many of the historic buildings as possible that are contributing elements of the WRAMC Historic District to help preserve its integrity.
- **Encourages** DOS to preserve Buildings 40 (WRAIR Building), 41 (Red Cross Building) and 57 (Memorial Chapel) as they are all contributing elements of the Walter Reed Army Medical Center Historic District and are described as being suitable for reuse on the campus.
- **Recommends** that if Building 40 is demolished the proposed development should maintain the axial alignments and symmetry that exists with Building 1.

Transportation

- **Recommends** that DOS explore connecting 14th Street, NW to Alaska Avenue, NW to complete the street network in this part of the District.
- **Requests** that DOS address DDOT comments on the Comprehensive Transportation Review.
- **Supports** the DOS recommendation of no on-street parking at the FMC due to security concerns.
- **Recommends** that the Commission support the 1:1 proposed parking ratio, but also requests that DOS encourage the foreign missions that develop at the FMC to improve the parking ratio, where possible.

Security

- **Encourages** DOS to incorporate policies contained in the Foreign Missions and International Organizations Element and the Urban Design Element of the *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital* regarding the appropriate use of bollards, delta barriers, guardhouses and fencing at federal facilities in an urban setting.

Development Guidelines

Notes that the development guidelines include a description of campus development in three zones and staff offers the following comments and recommendations pertaining to these zones:

- **Finds** that the density, scale and most of the proposed setbacks are appropriate given this is in a transitioning neighborhood that will include a mixed-use enclave.
- **Ensures** replacement trees follow the policies within the Comprehensive Plan (2016).
- **Encourages** foreign missions to place surface parking either on the side or behind one side of the proposed chanceries.
- **Encourages** DOS to create a consistent building frontage along both the northern portion of 14th Street, NW and Dahlia Street, NW.
- **Encourage** DOS to maintain as much of the existing remnant forest area as possible as these individual sites are developed.
- **Supports** the reuse of Building 40 as it will best maintain the historic axial relationship with Building 1.
- **Requests** that DOS add additional detail in the guidelines for Lot 12 to engage Main Drive more appropriately as this property will serve as the main entrance of the FMC campus from 16th Street, NW.
- **Encourages** DOS to either establish additional guidelines for Lot 14 regarding building siting as it is the largest lot at the FMC or consider separating it into two lots which would be more consistent with the size of other proposed lots at the FMC.

//Original Signed//

03/03/2017

Julia A. Koster

Date

Secretary to the National Capital Planning Commission