



Commission Action

April 5, 2018

PROJECT National Desert Storm and Desert Shield Memorial Washington, DC	NCPC FILE NUMBER 7745
SUBMITTED BY United States Department of the Interior National Park Service	NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER 00.00(73.10)44729
REVIEW AUTHORITY Approval Per 40 U.S.C. § 8905, Public Law 113-291 and Public Law 115-18	APPLICANT'S REQUEST Approval of comments on site selection
	ACTION TAKEN Approved comments on site selection

The Commission:

Regarding the memorial and site design:

Notes that the applicant has developed conceptual design schemes for the three sites currently under consideration, in response to the Commission's request.

Notes the proposed memorial area will generally occupy less than a half an acre but the specific size varies among concepts. The memorial area has decreased from the original 1.5 acres.

Notes the applicant has stated that a sacred space for reflection is critical to the memorial program.

Finds that a predominant feature of the conceptual design schemes at each location are commemorative walls, which help to create intimacy but pose challenges related to views, visibility, and security, depending on their height and length.

Recommends the applicant consider alternative commemorative elements that achieve the same purpose while distinguishing the memorial from others with similar wall features.

Recommends that if walls are to be used, the applicant reconsider their height and scale to avoid challenges related to views, visibility and security.

Regarding the Constitution Avenue site:

Supports the site as the preferred location of the proposed memorial given its strong thematic connection to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, proximity to other 20th Century War memorials, as well as nearby diplomatic agencies and organizations such as the US Department of State and US Institute of Peace.

Notes the site also allows for a contemplative gathering space that can be set back or buffered from traffic noise and other nearby activity.

Requests the applicant continue to develop the three conceptual design schemes for the site and further address the following comments in the next submission:

- Given the cultural and historic landscape of the Lincoln Memorial, as well as the site's open setting, develop alternative commemoration strategies, including a landscape-oriented approach, that minimize vertical elements. While not preferred, if walls are proposed, detail their purpose and use, and reevaluate their height and length to avoid monolithic elements that block views.
- Provide existing and proposed views from the Lincoln Memorial to the site and from the site to the Lincoln Memorial.
- Show how the proposed memorial will relate to the Constitution Avenue corridor, both in its current condition and if it were to be extended to the river.
- Show how the memorial could relate and connect to future memorials that may also be built on the site or vicinity, and describe any uses or functions that would be appropriate to share across multiple memorials.
- Describe how any existing recreational uses on the site could be accommodated in the future.

Regarding the Walt Whitman Park site:

Finds that while the site is the most flexible in terms of design and could readily accommodate a contemplative gathering space as shown in the proposed concepts, the location of the site in between the White House and Kennedy Center, and near the Department of the Interior, may be better suited for another memorial theme.

Finds that a memorial that does not require a contemplative gathering space may better accommodate active recreational and park uses as part of the memorial, which would be appropriate and desired in this urban setting.

Notes that the *Memorials and Museums Master Plan* recommends the site also incorporate interpretive elements related to the life and work of Walt Whitman.

Regarding the Belvedere site:

Notes the memorial site is located less than twenty feet from Rock Creek and Potomac Parkway, which carries over 30,000 vehicles per day, and is near the flight path to Reagan National Airport resulting in airplane noise at certain times.

