



Commission Action

October 4, 2018

PROJECT National World War I Memorial Pershing Park Washington, DC	NCPC FILE NUMBER 7682
SUBMITTED BY United States Department of the Interior National Park Service	NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER 1.23(73.10)44812
REVIEW AUTHORITY Approval per 40 U.S.C. § 8905 and Public Law 113-291	APPLICANT'S REQUEST Approval of comments on revised concept plans
	ACTION TAKEN Approved comments on revised concept plans

The Commission:

Notes the design has changed over time to now restore and rehabilitate a substantial portion of the existing park while accommodating the memorial program.

Finds the park and memorial improvements can enhance the Pennsylvania Avenue corridor experience and contribute positively to an active downtown Washington, DC.

Memorial Wall

Finds the memorial wall length has been reduced and a water feature has been integrated into the wall, consistent with the Commission's previous request.

Finds the freestanding wall in its current design creates a clear front and back, and the space at the rear of the wall is not yet fully developed.

Requests the applicant provide alternative design strategies that treat the memorial element in a unified way, without a front or a back, so that it is not perceived as dividing the park, but a feature that can engage visitors from all sides. Alternative strategies should also consider the treatment of the western steps and how the space might be designed to encourage people to gather and use the space in a positive way.

Pool and Walkway

Notes the applicant has developed three options for the pool and walkway configuration.

Finds the "L" Walkway with Existing Pool Depth most closely retains the original pool depth and configuration, and provides a new pedestrian connection between the eastern and northern portions of the plaza.

Finds the “L” Walkway with Partial Deep Pool and Scrim provides a new pedestrian connection between the eastern and northern portions of the plaza, and alters the original pool depth in the area proposed to be a scrim of water.

Finds the “U” Walkway with Partial Deep Pool and Scrim provides a pedestrian path that begins and ends at the eastern side of the plaza, and alters the original pool depth in the area proposed to be a scrim of water.

Requests that for each of the three options, the applicant describe how the water feature and plaza area will be used throughout the year, recognizing the extreme temperatures of the summer and winter months.

Notes that the original pool design included a variety of plantings in and near the pool, and the opportunity exists to incorporate additional plantings to soften the hardscape, support the memorial program, and improve the visitor experience.

Notes the applicant has indicated they continue to work with NPS to address issues related to safety and fall protection, and any measures if necessary, should be included in future submissions to the Commission.

Park Use and Programming

Requires a plan be prepared that identifies the proposed urban park spaces and potential programming or activities that can occur in those spaces.

Notes the berms and limited entry points from the southern perimeter of the site create challenges for pedestrian access and visibility.

Requires the applicant provide design options as part of the next submission that improve the sense of entry at the southeast and southwest corners of the site, highlight pedestrian access, and encourage visitation to the park and memorial from the south.

Finds that the commemorative elements should largely be limited to the memorial wall, kiosk area, and existing Pershing Memorial to highlight their importance and to allow for other types of park uses within the site.

Supports improvements to the legibility of the Pershing Memorial walls; and requests additional information be provided describing the proposed enhancements.

Julia A. Koster
Secretary to the National Capital Planning Commission

