



## Commission Action

April 4, 2019

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<b>PROJECT</b> <b>US Park Police Stables Replacement and Site Improvements</b> National Mall, located in Ash Woods, between Independence Avenue and Ash Road, east of the Korean War Veterans Memorial and west of the DC War Memorial Washington, DC	<b>NCPC FILE NUMBER</b> 8014
<b>SUBMITTED BY</b> United States Department of the Interior National Park Service	<b>NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER</b> 1.43(38.00)44817
<b>REVIEW AUTHORITY</b> Approval per 40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1) and (d)	<b>APPLICANT'S REQUEST</b> Approval of comments on concept design
	<b>ACTION TAKEN</b> Approved comments on concept design

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The Commission:

Provides the following comments on the US Park Police Stables Replacement:

**Supports** the project and the National Park Service's efforts to partner with the Trust for the National Mall to replace the existing US Park Police Stables with a facility that enhances the visitor experience, improves overall function, and is sensitively designed within the context of the National Mall.

**Notes** that the project is consistent with the 2010 National Mall Plan, which identified several improvements located within Ash Woods, including rebuilding the US Park Police stables and encouraging the stables and paddocks to become a public attraction with educational opportunities.

**Notes** that the National Mall consists of a hierarchy of elements including large scale national memorials and monuments formally organized around the Mall panels and the Reflecting Pool, and smaller support facilities organized less formally. The hierarchy of these elements is reflected in their scale, massing, materials, and orientation.

**Finds** that the US Park Police Stables currently serve as a support facility at the lower end of this hierarchy, consisting of small detached structures arranged around a paddock. The structures are oriented off-axis from Ash Road, rotated approximately 13 degrees to the northwest.

**Finds** that the orientation, massing, and design of the stables can help to elevate its prominence as a public attraction; however, it should still appear secondary to the monuments and memorials on the National Mall.

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*Alternatives*

**Notes** that the applicant has provided four alternatives, which differ in orientation and design.

**Finds** that given the scale of the proposed stable building at approximately 200 feet in length, it should have a more formal orientation, parallel to Ash Road and the Reflecting Pool, to respond to the surrounding context.

**Finds** that unlike Alternatives 1 and 2, Alternatives 3 and 4, should be dismissed because they follow the original orientation of the stables, rotated approximately 13 degrees away from Ash Road and the Reflecting Pool, and do not respond to the surrounding context.

**Comments favorably** on the orientation of Alternatives 1 and 2 because the orientation helps to reinforce the spatial definition of the National Mall.

**Provides** the following comments regarding Alternatives 1 and 2 organized by impacts to the National Mall character, environment, and visitor experience:

Symmetrical Building – Alternative 1

**Notes** that Alternative 1 proposes a traditional stable with a symmetrical composition, and a building orientation parallel to Ash Road and the Reflecting Pool. It includes a continuous pitched roof with five cupolas for ventilation. It also includes two public paddocks with viewing areas.

**Finds** that the symmetrical layout is efficient, elegant, and has a strong identity as a stable; however, the continuous roof line and cupolas make the building more visually prominent on the National Mall when compared to Alternative 2.

Asymmetrical Building – Alternative 2

**Notes** that Alternative 2 proposes a contemporary stable with an asymmetrical composition, and a building orientation parallel to Ash Road and the Reflecting Pool. It includes a combination of pitched and flat roofs with two cupolas for ventilation. It also includes two public paddocks with viewing areas.

**Finds** that the asymmetrical design maintains the secondary character of the stables within the hierarchy of elements on the National Mall. The segmented roof line breaks the massing, provides opportunities for green roofs, minimizes the use of cupolas, and mimics the existing detached stables composition.

**Finds** that the proposed massing, scale, and height of the stables is compatible with the setting of the National Mall. It provides a compact and efficient layout that generates the least amount of impervious area, as compared to the other alternatives.

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*Building Materials*

**Notes** that the applicant has provided three building material options that emphasize the building horizontality but differ in color and texture.

**Comments favorably** on Option 1, which consists of a coursed fieldstone base and “wood” fiber cement rainscreen, because these materials reflect the stables function, are compatible with the context, and evoke the original materials of the stables.

**Recommends** that the applicant make the materials of the public educational space more transparent and welcoming.

**Finds** that the materials proposed for Options 2 and 3 are not compatible with the National Mall materials. In particular, Option 3’s color palette emphasizes the building’s mass and does not reflect the stables’ function.

*Additional Comments*

**Requests** eye-level simulations and renderings to better understand the impacts of the proposed stables on the viewshed of the Lincoln Memorial and other resources of the National Mall, in particular:

- Views along Ash Road looking east toward the Washington Monument and west toward the Lincoln Memorial.
- Views from the DC War Memorial looking west, and from the hockey fields looking south.
- Views from Independence Avenue near the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial looking north.

**Requests** that the applicant include the following as part of the preliminary review submission:

- A landscape plan that considers low impact development practices, is consistent with the informal character and tree species of Ash Woods, avoids impacts to historic viewsheds, and prevents a net tree loss in accordance to the *Comprehensive Plan of the National Capital*.
- A lighting plan that respects the hierarchy of memorials, monuments and civic buildings, with the US Capitol and Washington Monument the most prominent features in the nighttime skyline.

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Julia A. Koster  
Secretary to the National Capital Planning Commission

