



Commission Action

December 5, 2019

PROJECT

Arlington National Cemetery Southern Expansion and U.S. Air Force Memorial Modification

Arlington National Cemetery
Arlington, VA

SUBMITTED BY

United States Department of Defense
United States Army Corps of Engineers

REVIEW AUTHORITY

Advisory
per 40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1)

NCPC FILE NUMBER

8009

NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER

1.61(00.00)45039

APPLICANT'S REQUEST

Approval of comments on
concept plans

ACTION TAKEN

Approved comments on
concept plans

The Commission:

Supports the Southern Expansion Project as it creates several positive outcomes for Arlington National Cemetery and the Air Force Memorial including:

- The addition of contiguous interment space for the cemetery;
- The consolidation of cemetery operations and back-of-house functions to the south and away from visitor/interment areas;
- An improved memorial setting as a result of Columbia Pike's realignment; and
- The creation of a new visitor entrance for the both the cemetery and the memorial.

Finds that the proposed site plan is consistent with and extends the existing cemetery design which includes rolling hills with specimen trees punctuating the landscape; vistas for long and near views; and an internal roadway network providing access to burial sites.

Provides the following comments on the proposed plan with regard to the new visitor entrance, the operations facility, and the memorial:

New Visitor Entrance to the Cemetery and Memorial

Notes the project includes a new entrance for visitors to access the cemetery and memorial. Visitors may reach this entrance on foot, by public transportation, or by car via Columbia Pike. The new visitor parking garage will be located to the south of the entrance and across Columbia Pike.

Notes that Columbia Pike has four lanes of fast-moving traffic, making any pedestrian crossing difficult.

Requests the applicant continue to work closely with Arlington County to address curbside management along Columbia Pike and ensure the pedestrian crossing of this road will be safe and clear via traffic calming measures such as incorporating a median, a signal, or other features to slow or stop traffic.

Finds the overall idea of a pedestrian entrance along Columbia Pike and the entrance design elements of providing light and visibility through the building to be appropriate.

Finds the current design of the parking garage access control point is very utilitarian and is not welcoming to visitors.

Recommends the applicant either integrate the parking garage access control point into the topography or more closely associate this building with the architecture of the rest of ANC.

Notes the proposed new visitor's entrance does not include a plaza area on its north side to orient visitors upon their arrival to the cemetery or memorial.

Recommends the USACE create either a design element or wayfinding or both that helps to provide a sense of arrival and guidance for visitors to the cemetery or the memorial.

Operation Center and Columbarium

Notes that while the site's topography hides most of the operations facility, the USACE should continue to explore ways to further integrate the buildings into the site and screen with landscaping.

Requests the USACE develop site sections through the columbarium area, both east/west and north south, to understand the grade changes in this area more fully. In addition, sections through the in-ground burial areas and through the Air Force Memorial would also be helpful in understanding the visibility of and access to these areas.

Air Force Memorial

Notes the memorial will now be surrounded by interment spaces.

Recommends the applicant evaluate landscape screening around the high retaining wall of the memorial overlook to soften the transition to adjacent burial areas.

Notes the VIP entrance from Columbia Pike will remain but it will have limited use.

Recommends the USACE further develop the plans to reduce the prominence of the vehicular gate and demonstrate how the driveway can serve as a pedestrian area when not used for vehicles.

Julia A. Koster
Secretary to the National Capital Planning Commission

