Commission Action

December 5, 2019

PROJECT
Federal Reserve Board Building Project
The Federal Reserve
1951 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC

SUBMITTED BY
Board of Governors of the
Federal Reserve System

REVIEW AUTHORITY
Approval
per 40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1) and (d)

NCPC FILE NUMBER
8113

NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER
1.34(38.00)45007

APPLICANT'S REQUEST
Approval of comments on concept plans

ACTION TAKEN
Approved comments on concept plans

The Commission:

Commends the Federal Reserve Board for fully engaging partner federal agencies and the Section 106 Consulting Parties through the evolution of the design process for the building project.

Supports the Board's goal to consolidate their employees into federally-owned buildings, meet its long-term space requirements and address physical and operational deficiencies found in the historic Eccles and FRB-East Buildings on Constitution Avenue.

Finds that the Board evaluated a range of design options (discussed below) with the federal agencies and Section 106 Consulting Parties, to address the needed square footage requirements for the new programming while balancing historic preservation considerations.

Notes that during the federal agency and Section 106 Consultation meetings, the parties generally agreed that a primary objective is to prioritize higher levels of preservation in the more iconic Eccles Building by accommodating more program and modifications in the FRB-East Building.

Notes that based on the discussion and evaluation during the on-going Section 106 Consultation Process in 2019, the Board has proposed three options (A-C) for evaluation with Option B as their preferred massing and height option in order to reduce potential adverse effects to the Eccles Building.

Eccles Building Massing Options

Notes that for the Eccles Building, all three options:

- Construct a five-story infill addition on the east and west sides of the building that will connect the existing north and south wings;
- Construct a rooftop addition on the north wing that will connect with the east and west infill additions; and

Notes the following with regard to the east and west exterior courtyards:

- Options A and C cover the east courtyard and convert it into an atrium, while the west courtyard will remain open.
- Option B covers the east and west exterior courtyards (creating atriums), with the east atrium becoming an entrance to the Eccles Building for staff and VIPs.

Finds that the east and west side additions are designed to be set back from the existing wings, allowing for the additions to be perceived as compatible and non-historic.

Recommends that the applicant continue to explore ways to remove the penthouse additions on the south side of the Eccles Building, to minimize impacts to the historic views towards the Eccles Building.

FRB-East Building Massing Options

Notes the following massing differences among Option A-C for the FRB-East Building:

- Option A includes a six-story addition above grade and retains the FRB-East Building's center wing; however, it does not meet the Board's program to house 1,750 seats, falling about 180 seats short.
- Option B includes a five-story addition above grade and removes the center wing of the existing building. It maintains the alignment of building faces along C Street, while providing 1,750 seats for staff.
- Option C includes a seven-story addition and retains the center wing.

Finds that the five-story height of the addition to FRB-East complements the scale of the historic building, and the Eccles Building across the street. The addition would also not be highly visible from the National Mall on the south side of Constitution Avenue.

Does not support the taller massing of Alternatives A and C because, while they preserve the historic center wing, the proposed addition to the FRB-East Building is not compatible to the building and the historic context, and is not in keeping with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation concerning guidance for additions to historic buildings.

Requests that applicant explore opportunities to reduce the height of the penthouses on FRB-East to minimize any visual impacts.

Parking and Transportation

Advises that, regardless of the option selected, the project is located in an area of the District with a 1:5 parking ratio under NCPC's current parking guidance, which will be determined based upon the proposed campus population.

Notes the following known parking differences among the alternatives for this submission:

- Option A proposes a new underground parking garage below the south lawn of the FRB-East Building (no extension under 20th Street), with 243 new parking spaces. The existing parking garage at the Eccles Building would remain, and would be accessed through the west courtyard.
- Option B proposes a new underground parking garage below the south lawn of the FRB-East Building and 20th Street NW, with 577 parking spaces, but eliminates the existing parking garage at the Eccles Building. The west courtyard would be enclosed as an atrium, and the curb cut would be closed on 21st Street, NW.
- Option C proposes a new underground parking garage of four levels, below the addition of the FRB-East Building instead of the south lawn, with 194 parking spaces. The existing parking garage at the Eccles Building would remain, and would be accessed through the west courtyard.

Notes that the concept submission does not provide the number of expected Board employees for the entire campus nor does it include the number of parking spaces at the Martin and Eccles Buildings. Therefore, the proposed parking ratio is unknown for this review.

Notes the options reflect a range in total parking without explanation for the different amounts.

Finds that the amount and location of parking will have an impact on the overall design of the FRB-East building and possibly the Eccles Building, as well as impact the function of the transportation network.

Supports the least amount of parking as possible given the campus' access to the Farragut West and Foggy Bottom Metro Stations, as well as other modes of transportation in downtown Washington, DC.

Requests the Board consider options that minimize parking, in consideration of NCPC's parking guidance, potential impacts to the transportation network, and possible effects on the buildings' landscapes.

Requests the Board submit a thorough Transportation Management Plan (TMP) as part of the Environmental Assessment, and include the number of expected Federal Reserve Board employees anticipated to be housed in Eccles, FRB-East, and Martin Buildings, summary of employee means of commuting, and locations of employee commutes.

General Comments

Supports the applicant's intent to preserve heritage trees and other landscape features in the front lawns of the Eccles and FRB-East Buildings.

Supports the applicant's intent to provide universal accessibility to both the Eccles and FRB-East Buildings from Constitution Avenue.

Requests additional information on the following topics for the next submission:

- Elevations and renderings showing the exterior design treatments for both the Eccles and FRB- East Buildings additions
- Additional massing options for the Eccles buildings related to the penthouse additions, particularly on the south side
- Landscaping for both buildings
- Site lighting, signage, and wayfinding
- Perimeter security
- Tree removal and replacement locations
- Public accessibility on the site, especially the lawns and open space fronting Constitution Avenue.

Notes that a Section 106 Memorandum of Agreement will be executed to address agreed-upon mitigation measures commensurate with adverse effects resulting from the project.

Notes that the Federal Reserve Board is preparing an Environmental Assessment which will be released prior to submission for Preliminary Review in 2020.

JULIA KOSTER Digitally signed by JULIA KOSTER
Date: 2019.12.06 16:41:45 -05'00'

Julia A. Koster
Secretary to the National Capital Planning Commission