



Information Presentation

Commission Meeting: February 7, 2019

PROJECT National Native American Veterans Memorial National Museum of the American Indian 4th Street and Independence Avenue, SW Washington, DC	NCPC FILE NUMBER 8018
SUBMITTED BY Smithsonian Institution	NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER 1.41(73.10)44823
PRESENTER Vivian Lee, NCPC Staff and Smithsonian Institution	REVIEW AUTHORITY Pub. L. No. 103-384, §3 (c)(2), 108 Stat. 4067, 4068 (October 22, 1994), as amended and 40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1) and (d)

The Smithsonian Institution (SI) will provide a site visit and information presentation on the National Native American Veterans Memorial at the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI). The purpose of the memorial is to give all Americans the opportunity to learn of the proud and courageous tradition of service of Native Americans in the Armed Forces of the United States. The memorial is not subject to the Commemorative Works Act. In 1994, Congress passed the Native American Veterans' Memorial Establishment Act (Public Law 103–384). This Act authorized the SI to build and maintain a Native American Veterans Memorial inside the museum and hold a competition to select the design of the memorial. The Act also granted approval of the selected design to the Board of Regents of the SI. In 2013, the Act was amended to allow the memorial to be located outside of the museum on the NMAI site as determined by the SI. Due to the unique circumstances of the Act, NCPC does not have review authority for the design and location of the memorial; however, any related improvements that change the previously approved site plan (such as access to the memorial/changes to the landscape) will require NCPC approval under the National Capital Planning Act.

The NMAI is located on the southeast corner of the National Mall on a 4.25-acre trapezoidal site. The museum is bounded by Jefferson Drive to the north, Third Street to the east, Maryland and Independence Avenues to the south, and Fourth Street to the west. Constructed in 2004, the NMAI's curvilinear form evokes a wind-sculpted rock formation. The SI consulted extensively with Native American community members, artists, and tribal elders to develop a design that would embody the building traditions of the diverse groups. As a result, the building aligns with the cardinal directions and center point of the U.S. Capitol Building dome. Other design strategies developed through tribal consultation include the use of natural materials to suggest the physical landscape and the integration of significant ceremonial spaces within the building and landscape. The landscape is comprised of four symbolic habitats, including wetland, hardwood forest, meadow, and cropland. The museum grounds is home to more than 27,000 trees, shrubs, and herbaceous plants.

The museum's design concept was developed by Canadian architect Douglas Cardinal, a member of the Blackfoot tribe, in collaboration with the firm Geddes Brecher Qualls Cunningham (GBQC) of Philadelphia. The design work was completed by another architectural team that included

Polshek and Partners, SmithGroup, Jones and Jones, and the Native American Design Collaborative, among others. The NMAI is one of the most popular Smithsonian museums, with more than 1.1 million visitors in 2016. The NMAI is a contributing building to the National Mall Historic District, which was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on October 15, 1966 (documented May 19, 1981) and updated in December 2016.

In November 2017, the SI and the National Native American Veterans Memorial Advisory Committee announced a two-stage international competition, which was accessible to professionals, university-level students, and other interested people over the age of eighteen. The first stage of the competition was blind and drew 120 proposals. The jury selected five finalists during the second stage. In July 2018, the jury unanimously selected the “Warrior’s Circle of Honor” design concept submitted by Harvey Pratt, a Native American artist. The memorial will be dedicated on Veteran’s Day 2020. The design and construction budget is eight million dollars.

The memorial will entail a 50-foot diameter plaza located on the northeast portion of the museum grounds, near the existing wetlands. The memorial elements consist of a sacred circle supported by a water-fire drum, benches, a red legacy footprint walkway, and paths. During this information presentation, the SI seeks input on the memorial design. The applicant will also share the competition process, project review schedule, and coordination efforts with other agencies.



Figure 1: Memorial Placement near the corner of Jefferson Drive and Third Street, SW

PROJECT TIMELINE

Previous actions	None
Remaining actions (anticipated)	Spring 2019 - Approval of comments on concept design Summer 2019 - Preliminary and final approval of site development plans