



Commission Action

May 2, 2019

PROJECT US National Arboretum Perimeter Fence Replacement and Gate Improvements United States National Arboretum 3501 New York Avenue, NE Washington, DC	NCPC FILE NUMBER 8064
SUBMITTED BY United States Department of Agriculture National Arboretum	NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER 43.20(38.40)44910
REVIEW AUTHORITY Approval per 40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1) and (d)	APPLICANT'S REQUEST Approval of comments on concept design
	ACTION TAKEN Approved comments on concept design

The Commission:

Notes the mission of the U.S. National Arboretum is to “enhance the economic, environmental, and aesthetic value of ornamental and landscape plants through long-term, multi-disciplinary research, conservation of genetic resources, and interpretative gardens and exhibits.”

Supports the general intent of the proposed perimeter fence replacement and gate improvement project to improve the overall appearance and security at the National Arboretum, consistent with its focus on research and interpretation.

Notes the project will replace 12,662 linear feet of decorative perimeter fencing with new decorative fencing, replace 855 linear feet of the chain-link perimeter fence with new decorative fencing, install an initial 210 linear foot section of new black vinyl chain-link fencing, and modify six (of seven) existing perimeter gates.

Perimeter Fence Replacement

Recommends that the National Arboretum install a single style of new decorative picket fencing that matches the existing style as much as possible, while accommodating the increased height and new picket spacing necessary to support the project goals.

Notes that the applicant will submit more detailed fence plans in a future project submission to NCPC for preliminary and final review.

Notes that new perimeter fencing will be realigned on to federal property under the jurisdiction of the National Arboretum in four locations along the northern perimeter and one location along the western perimeter.

Requests additional information regarding where the new fence installation will require tree and vegetation removal, and how these impacts would be mitigated through new tree and vegetation plantings.

Perimeter Gate Modifications

Notes that there are currently seven perimeter gates at the National Arboretum. The concept plan proposes six perimeter gates, with two identified for pedestrian use, two identified for vehicle use, and two identified for combined pedestrian and vehicular use.

Notes the new gate proposed along Bladensburg Road, designed for both pedestrian and vehicular use, will serve as the future main public entrance to the Arboretum. This gate was identified in the Arboretum Master Plan (2000) approved by NCPC and will be submitted for review as a separate project contingent upon future funding.

Notes that the National Arboretum proposes a new public pedestrian gate along M Street, to allow entry at the original Art Deco-designed entrance, for better neighborhood access to the Arboretum's many amenities.

Recommends that the National Arboretum work with the District and local community to re-establish this entrance for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Requests a phasing plan as part of the next submission to understand the order in which the USNA gates will be opened, modified, or closed, and how this sequence will accommodate visitors and Arboretum operations, while minimizing any impacts to on- and off-site access and circulation.

Requests detailed plans, elevations, technical specifications, and renderings for each proposed perimeter gate modification.

Historic Preservation Review

Requests additional information be provided as part of the next submission regarding the existing stone pillar and gates, and whether these features are contributing elements of the historic site, in coordination with the DC State Historic Preservation Office.

Notes the USNA was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1973, and that the concept plan is currently under review by the District of Columbia State Historic Preservation Office as part of an ongoing Section 106 consultation process.

Julia A. Koster
Secretary to the National Capital Planning Commission

