



Information Presentation

Commission Meeting: October 3, 2019

PROJECT

Amendment to the 1974 Pennsylvania Avenue Plan and Guidelines for Square 491
Washington, DC

NCPC FILE NUMBER

P8072

NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER

1.21(00.00)44924

SUBMITTED BY

United States General Services Administration

REVIEW AUTHORITY

Amendments to the PADC Plan and Square Guidelines pursuant to 40 U.S.C. § 6702(d) and the Memorandum of Agreement dated July 25, 1996, 61 Fed. Reg. 41789)

PRESENTER

Johns Hopkins University

Johns Hopkins University (JHU) is in the process of purchasing 555 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, currently home to the Newseum. JHU will provide an information presentation on the proposed design changes to the building, converting it from its current museum use to a state-of-the-art educational facility. With the Newseum closure planned for the end of 2019, JHU anticipates construction to begin in late 2020 and completion of renovations by mid-2023.

The university is consolidating their Washington programs from a number of locations in and around their 1717 Massachusetts Avenue facility into one location on Pennsylvania Avenue. The renovation requires both internal and external modifications, which will be reviewed by the Commission as part of a concept submission in December.

Key planning and design considerations include the views to the U.S. Capitol, façade design, building entrance, ground floor public access and programming, and opportunities to activate the Pennsylvania Avenue sidewalks. The design team includes many of the firms involved in development of the original building, including Ennead Architects (formerly Polshek Partnership), WSP (formerly Louis Berger), and the structural engineering firm LERA.

While this project is being undertaken on private property, it is within the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation boundary and subject to the Congressionally-mandated Pennsylvania Avenue Plan and Square Guidelines. It is also within the Pennsylvania Avenue National Historic Site District; as part of the National Historic Preservation Act, a Section 106 process was initiated by the General Services Administration (GSA), the lead federal agency. A meeting was held with stakeholders on September 24, 2019 to discuss the proposed Plan and Square Guideline amendments and changes to the building. In addition to the JHU presentation, NCPC staff will provide a brief overview on the Pennsylvania Avenue Plan and the unique amendment process that will be undertaken for it and related Square Guidelines beginning in December.

PROJECT TIMELINE

Previous actions	January 2, 2003 – Commission approved amendments to the Pennsylvania Avenue Plan and Guidelines for Square 491. <i>(P6306 - attached)</i>
Remaining actions (anticipated)	December 2019 <i>(tentative)</i> – Review of concept design and Pennsylvania Avenue Plan amendments. Spring 2020 <i>(tentative)</i> – Review of preliminary design and Square 491 Guidelines amendments.