



## Commission Action

January 9, 2020

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<b>PROJECT</b> <b>National Desert Storm and Desert Shield Memorial</b> National Mall Southwest Corner of 23rd Street and Constitution Avenue, NW Washington, DC	<b>NCPC FILE NUMBER</b> 7745
<b>SUBMITTED BY</b> United States Department of the Interior National Park Service	<b>NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER</b> 1.44(73.10)45053
<b>REVIEW AUTHORITY</b> Commemorative Works per 40 U.S.C. § 8905	<b>APPLICANT'S REQUEST</b> Approval of comments on concept plans
	<b>ACTION TAKEN</b> Approved comments on concept plans

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The Commission:

**Supports** the conceptual design scheme at the Constitution Avenue site and commends the landscape-oriented approach that minimizes the use of vertical elements and respects its open setting and views to the Lincoln Memorial and National Mall.

**Finds** the memorial's proposed themes ("storm", "pivot", and "coalition") effectively commemorate Operation Desert Storm and Desert Shield and create a strong thematic framework for the design of the memorial.

**Finds** the size and location of the memorial preserve adequate open space for recreational use and/or future commemorative works on the remainder of the site while also fostering a contemplative gathering space buffered from adjacent activities.

**Finds** the proposed siting and design of the memorial create an opportunity to envision greater changes to the roadway infrastructure which dominates the adjacent land to the west.

Regarding commemorative elements:

### *Layout and Circulation*

**Notes** that visitors could access the memorial from 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, NW or Constitution Avenue and finds that visitors will primarily enter the memorial from the 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, NW access point.

**Finds** the entrance to the memorial from 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, NW is significant to experiencing the commemorative elements as intended.

**Recommends** the applicant explore visual cues to direct east-bound pedestrians on Constitution Avenue NW and south-bound pedestrians on 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, NW (from Metro) to enter the site from the 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, NW access point.

**Supports** the use of green space and a water feature within the memorial to evoke a desert oasis, recalling this as a unique characteristic of the desert landscape.

#### *Berms*

**Finds** the berms effectively suggest the dune forms in the desert landscape of Kuwait.

**Finds** the asymmetrical placement and height of the berms provide adequate enclosure for the memorial, buffer noise from traffic and adjacent activities, and enable views to the Lincoln Memorial and National Mall while minimizing visibility to the memorial from these sites.

#### *Central Element*

**Finds** the coalition theme is successfully expressed through the circular form of the central element and the recognition of the multiple nations involved in the War around the circumference.

**Requests** the applicant provide alternatives for the surface treatment of the central element as seen when the water feature is turned off, noting that the treatment should contribute to the overall narrative.

#### *Sculptural Walls*

**Finds** the height, scale, and placement of the commemorative sculptural walls respect surrounding views, and address visibility and security issues.

**Recommends** the applicant study the angle of the walls to deter unwanted activities such as climbing or skateboarding, and to also optimize readability of the information on the walls.

**Recommends** the proposed cast sculpture of the falcon and eagle symbolizing liberation and leadership relate to the imagery proposed on the “storm” wall.

**Finds** the proposed quotations support the “storm” and “pivot” themes; however, the overall physical expression of the commemorative themes can be strengthened through further design of the stone carvings and bas-relief imagery.

#### *Statues*

**Finds** the scale, orientation and placement of the statues need further study and refinement.

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**Requests** the applicant consider refinements to and alternatives to the statues that express the “pivot” theme and complement the landscape character of the memorial in the next submission.

Regarding infrastructure and existing resources:

*Potomac Park Levee and Clean Rivers Project*

**Notes** the siting and design of the proposed memorial are intended to have minimal impacts on these future infrastructure projects.

*Existing Vegetation*

**Notes** the applicant has made a conscious effort to minimize tree loss and proposes new trees to maintain the allee of trees on 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, NW and Constitution Avenue and maintain consistency with the Lincoln Memorial Cultural Landscape.

**Recommends** the applicant consult with a certified arborist to evaluate impacts to existing trees based on the proposed grading and conceptual design and to ensure proper tree protection measures are in place.

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Julia A. Koster  
Secretary to the National Capital Planning Commission

