



Commission Action

June 4, 2020

PROJECT Suitland Collections Center Master Plan 4210 Silver Hill Road Suitland, MD	NCPC FILE NUMBER MP135
SUBMITTED BY Smithsonian Institution	NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER 3205.11(05.00)45126
REVIEW AUTHORITY Advisory per 40 U.S.C. § 8722(a) and (b)(1)	APPLICANT'S REQUEST Approval of final master plan
	ACTION TAKEN Approved final master plan with comments

The Commission:

Approves the final master plan for the Smithsonian Institution's Suitland Collections Center located in Prince George's County, Maryland.

Notes that the Commission last approved a Master Plan for the Suitland Collections Center (SCC) in 1993 and smaller facilities on the site between 2008-2010, and that the long-term needs of the Smithsonian Institution for the SCC have changed.

Site Plan

Supports the proposed layout of the new collection's storage buildings arranged around a common open space that connects with the other administrative buildings on the campus.

Finds the site plan meets the Institution's needs for collections storage, docking and loading, while also providing a more human scale design for employees and visitors to enjoy.

Notes the Smithsonian will implement the plan in several phases which are tied to other Smithsonian museum projects over the next few decades.

Security

Notes that the SCC is a unique campus that houses important collections for the Smithsonian Institution. The campus is currently secure and includes a perimeter fence, which runs along Silver Hill Road to the south of the campus and through a wooded area adjacent to Suitland Parkway.

Notes the Smithsonian has indicated more substantial upgrades to the fence segments are necessary to meet long-term security needs for the site. These include increasing the height of both fence segments to ten feet and adding a clear zone along the woodland fence of 25 feet which would require vegetation and tree removal.

Notes that while the Commission finds a perimeter security fence is warranted given the important collections at the campus, details regarding specific location, height, clearance zones, and lighting will be reviewed and considered when the Smithsonian submits the projects in the future (approximately ten years from now).

Requires the Smithsonian to include an updated security analysis with the future project submissions as campus needs and the surrounding context may change with implications for the fence details including height, location, vegetation removal, and lighting.

Parking and Access

Notes the Comprehensive Plan Ratio for the SCC site is 1:3 because of the campus' proximity to the Suitland Metro Station; however, the walk is currently dangerous and potentially unsafe, requiring three slip lane crossings. A large portion of the campus is also up to 1.2 miles from the station.

Notes that the master plan has been updated to address recommendations by the Commission and commits to achieving a 1:3 parking ratio and reduces the overall number of parking spaces on site over the initial 20-year planning horizon.

Requests that the Smithsonian submit updated Transportation Management Plan metrics to NCPC once they have completed the detailed survey proposed for fiscal year 2021.

Notes that the Smithsonian has agreed to convene a meeting with the National Park Service, Maryland State Highway Administration, and the General Services Administration on the proposed bicycle and pedestrian improvements on Silver Hill Road.

Requests that the Smithsonian notify the Commission of any substantial progress in their effort to coordinate on the bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements on Silver Hill Road.


Julia Koster 06/04/20

Julia A. Koster
Secretary to the National Capital Planning Commission