



Delegated Action of the Executive Director

PROJECT Potomac Annex Permanent Fence United States Department of State 2300 E Street, NW Washington, DC	NCPC FILE NUMBER 8150
	NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER 1.33(38.00)45102
SUBMITTED BY United States Department of State	ACTION TAKEN Approve final site development plans
	REVIEW AUTHORITY Approved Per 40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1) and (d)

The United States Department of State (DOS) has submitted an application for final site development plans for a permanent security fence at the Potomac Annex and Navy Hill installation, located at 2300 E Street, NW, in Washington, DC. The Commission approved the preliminary site development plans for the permanent fence on its March 7, 2020 Consent agenda. The Section 106 Consultation process has now been completed, resulting in an executed Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to document mitigation measures to address the adverse effects. The project site is located near the intersection of 23rd and C Street, NW. The Potomac Annex campus is a federal property generally bounded by 23rd Street, Constitution Avenue, the E Street Expressway, and the E Street approach ramp to Interstate 66. The purpose of the project is to provide a security fence between DOS' campus and the United States Institute of Peace (USIP). The Commission reviewed and approved temporary fencing alternatives on September 6, 2018. These were to be used by DOS to determine, in coordination and consultation with consulting parties, including USIP, where the permanent fence should be located. The fence will generally be installed along C Street, just north of the DOS's property line at the curb.

In 2012, the United States Department of the Navy (Navy) transferred administrative jurisdiction of Buildings 6 and 7 at the Potomac Annex to USIP. The Navy transferred the remaining portion of Potomac Annex, except three Navy flag officer houses and associated land, to the United States General Services Administration (GSA) for use by DOS. The Potomac Annex has been determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, as the Observatory Hill Historic District.

The addition of an elevated pedestrian walkway between the USIP headquarters building and the Potomac Annex created unscreened access between USIP staff and visitors to DOS operated property. The permanent fence will address the security needs of DOS as well as life safety needs for USIP. The project will retain the existing guard booth at the campus entrance at C and 23rd Streets, and a new guard booth will be constructed east of the new vehicular gate, across from USIP's courtyard. In addition to the fence, the other key elements of the proposed project include the following:

1. Install a new folding vehicular gate to the west of the entrance to USIP’s courtyard at Buildings 6 and 7 on C Street, with new wedge barriers.
2. Construct a new 2-officer guard booth and pedestrian turnstile immediately to the east of the new vehicular gate, across from the USIP courtyard, while removing the existing one officer guard booth. The new 2-officer booth is needed to control the new wedge barriers located in the south entrance road.

The proposed black ornamental security fence and gates will be eight feet in height, installed in a racking manner, to address the topography, without having to stair-step the fence. The turnstile will also be black. The new guard booth will have a flat metal roof, glazing, and concrete and stone sidewalls. DOS has indicated that the proposed permanent fence location supports USIP site access and egress during emergencies as well as meeting fire code requirements. The fire access road remains twenty-four feet wide. The existing two-cable, anti-vehicle fence, installed by DOD at the USIP and DOS property line, is supplemented with an anti-vehicle cable fence based on an updated I-66 ramp vector analysis.

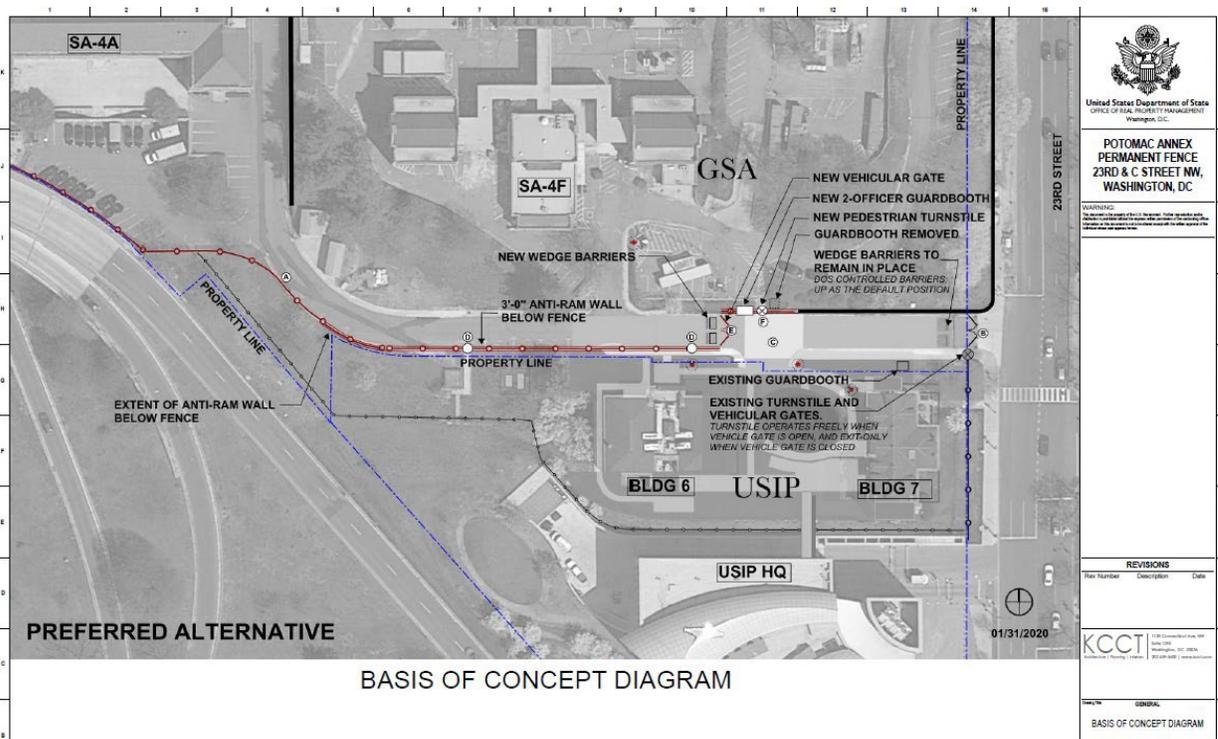


Figure 1: Site plan showing location of permanent security fence.



Figure 2: Rendering showing new guard booth, bi-folding gate, and new fence.

In determining the proposed location for the permanent security fence, DOS utilized the temporary fence alternatives and the evaluation process as the method to analyze locations for the permanent security fence needed to secure their campus from USIP's headquarters. DOS also coordinated extensively with USIP, and the other Section 106 consulting parties. The evaluation criteria developed by DOS included a range of topics including visual effects, operational and construction costs, life safety and access, and vehicular access. DOS completed the Section 106 process with an executed Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) on April 17, 2020, to address adverse effects resulting from the new permanent fence. NEPA was completed by DOS with the use of Categorical Exclusions related to "Repairs and alterations or modernization conducted in accordance with applicable plans, such as Facility Master Plans." NCPC is using a categorical exclusion to fulfill its NEPA requirements, namely, categorical exclusion (2) which applies to the approval of the installation or restoration of minor site elements, such as, but not limited to, identification signs, sidewalks, patios, fences, curbs, retaining walls, landscaping and trail or stream improvements.

The U.S. Commission of Fine Arts approved the project on its February 20, 2020 consent calendar.

Overall, staff finds the proposed permanent security fence is a reasonable solution with minimal impacts. Further, USIP has reviewed and concurred with the proposed alignment and has indicated it will meet their safety needs as well. Therefore, staff recommends the approval of the final site development plans for a permanent security fence at the Potomac Annex.

* * *

Pursuant to delegations of authority adopted by the Commission on October 3, 1996 and per 40

U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1 and (d), I approve the final site development plans for a permanent security

fence at the Potomac Annex located at 2300 E Street, NW, in Washington, D.C.

 5/01/20

Marcel Acosta
Executive Director

Date