



Commission Action

October 1, 2020

PROJECT Marriner S. Eccles and Federal Reserve Board-East Building Renovation and Expansion 1951 Constitution Avenue, NW Washington, DC	NCPC FILE NUMBER 8113
SUBMITTED BY Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System	NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER 1.34(00.00)45198
REVIEW AUTHORITY Approval per 40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1) and (d)	APPLICANT'S REQUEST Approval of preliminary site and building plans
	ACTION TAKEN Approved preliminary site and building plans with comments

The Commission:

Approves the preliminary site and building plans for the Federal Reserve Board Eccles and FRB-East Building renovation and expansion.

Commends the Board for fully engaging partner federal agencies and the Section 106 Consulting Parties through the evolution of the design process and for a thorough and responsive submission.

Notes the key elements that have changed since concept review in 2019 include development of the Eccles building infill, skylights, atriums and FRB-East building addition, the landscape plan, perimeter security and transportation management plan.

Notes the Section 106 and NEPA processes are ongoing and additional design developments may result from the evaluation of impacts after further consultation.

Finds the Board has successfully responded to the Commission's previous comments and requests, as follows:

Massing/Design

Finds the design development of both buildings successfully responds to the existing architecture and creates additions and infills that are contemporary, yet compatible to the historic buildings, while exhibiting high quality civic design, appropriate for buildings located on Constitution Avenue.

Notes the Board has reduced the penthouse height and footprint on both buildings to limit visibility from Constitution Avenue and C Street.

Finds the skylight design for the Eccles building achieves a balance between minimizing views from Constitution Avenue and preserving the center pavilion's character-defining features within the courtyards; however, there may be additional refinements that could further minimize its visibility from Constitution Avenue.

Requests the Board continue to use the Section 106 process to evaluate the scale of the skylight and impacts on views from Constitution Avenue.

Requests that if rooftop antennas are anticipated, the Board submit a rooftop antenna plan showing the height and location of future antennas with appropriate setbacks and screening so they are not visible from Constitution Avenue or the National Mall.

Transportation/Parking

Finds that following the Commission's concept review, the Board has reduced the number of parking spaces at the FRB-East building from 536 to 318 to meet NCPC's parking ratio of one parking space for every five employees for the campus.

Notes the NCPC parking ratio for this area increased to one space per every six employees with the recent adoption of the updated Transportation Element in July. The approved action stated that individual projects with previous Commission action under the 2016 policies (such as this one) would move forward using the 2016 Transportation Element.

Finds the Board has submitted a thorough Transportation Management Plan (TMP) with several transportation management plan strategies to continually improve upon the parking ratio.

Notes the parking for both buildings will be consolidated in 3 levels under the FRB-East building, the terrace lawn and 20th Street, NW.

Notes the Board evaluated five possible locations for the for the entry and exit parking ramps at the FRB-East building.

Finds the proposed location of the entry ramp on 19th Street and the exit ramp on 20th Street results in the least amount of impact to the historic building by not altering the building and front lawn's appearance from Constitution Avenue; however there are still outstanding issues with regard to the location of curb cuts and ramps that need to be resolved with the District.

Recommends the Board soften the hard edge of the wall between the sidewalk and the ramp with a landscape buffer.

Landscape/Tree Strategy

Notes the Board has completed a draft Cultural Landscape Report and Assessment of Effects, noting several character defining features of the landscapes for both buildings.

Notes the proposed building additions/renovations will necessitate changes to the landscape of both buildings.

Finds the Eccles landscape, designed by Paul Cret with a specific intent, should be retained as much as possible, while the FRB-East landscape, historically less formal, can support new features and alterations.

Finds the proposed design for the Eccles landscape largely protects the character defining features of the site while improving circulation and stormwater management.

Finds that overall, the proposed landscape for the FRB-East building reflects the symmetry of the historic design, while addressing program needs related to creating a new main building entrance, improving universal accessibility, and addressing site security needs.

Notes additional refinements to the proposed landscape plan may occur during the Section 106 process to further minimize the loss or alteration of historic and character-defining landscape features.

Requests the Board submit a tree re-planting plan, including size, type, and location, in accordance with NCPC's Tree Replacement Policy.

Notes that 35 trees in the right-of-way will need to be removed for the perimeter security installation or because of poor health and the Board is committed to replant in accordance with all District Department of Transportation (DDOT) requirements.

Requests the Board continue to coordinate with the DDOT and the Public Space Committee.

Perimeter Security/Public Accessibility

Finds the Board proposes to replace the existing perimeter security system around the Eccles Building with a simpler/more elegant post and rail design in the same location as the existing bollard system.

Notes the Board proposes to replicate the same perimeter security design around the FRB-East building.

Finds that overall, the proposed design is an improvement from the existing oversized and tightly spaced bollards but that additional consultation is needed with the Consulting Parties.

Requests additional information and renderings for all of the guard booths.

Finds the perimeter security will not allow the public any access to the grounds and that the Board should consider public access to some of the grounds (such as the fountains or northwest plaza) and/or virtual tours of the buildings as potential mitigation in the Section 106 process.

National Park Service Property

Notes that construction related to the building addition of FRB-East will directly impact the National Park Service triangular shaped property to the north.

Notes the Board is proposing to make landscape, path, and sidewalk improvements as part of the overall project.

Requests the Board continue to coordinate all improvements with the National Park Service.

Lighting

Notes the Board has submitted an initial response to the Commission's lighting request, noting that exterior lighting will be updated across the site, including lighting for the building façades, vehicular and pedestrian access, and the streetscape.

Requests the Board submit an exterior lighting plan/diagram for the grounds and building facades at final review.

Wayfinding

Notes the exterior signage will use contemporary materials and processes that respect the historic features of each building while creating a more unified appearance and signage system throughout the campus.

Supports the Board's approach to signage and wayfinding and requests a more detailed wayfinding plan at final review.

General Comments

Notes that a Section 106 Memorandum of Agreement will be executed to address agreed-upon mitigation measures commensurate with adverse effects resulting from the project.

Requests additional coordination with all consulting parties regarding the proposed design, landscape plan, lighting, and perimeter security.

Notes that the Federal Reserve Board has prepared a Draft Environmental Assessment which is available for public comment until October 12.

Julia Koster 10/02/20
Julia A. Koster
Secretary to the National Capital Planning Commission

