

Note: At the February 4, 2021 meeting, the Commission amended the recommendations proposed in this EDR. The Commission Action reflects the Commission's approved comments on concept plans.



Executive Director's Recommendation

Commission Meeting: Federal 4, 2021

PROJECT**Southern Expansion - Revised U.S. Air Force Memorial Entrance**

Arlington National Cemetery
Arlington, Virginia

NCPC FILE NUMBER

8009

NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER

1.61(00.00)45248

SUBMITTED BY

United States Department of Defense
United States Army Corps of Engineers

APPLICANT'S REQUEST

Approval of final site and building plans

REVIEW AUTHORITY

Federal Projects in the Environs
per 40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1)

PROPOSED ACTION

Approve final site and building plans

ACTION ITEM TYPE

Consent Calendar

PROJECT SUMMARY

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) in conjunction with the Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) has submitted revised final site and building plans for the US Air Force Memorial Entrance at the Arlington National Cemetery Southern Expansion (Southern Expansion) project. At its November 2020 meeting, the Commission approved the preliminary and final design with the exception of the US Air Force memorial entrance. The Commission recommended the Army submit a revised design for the U.S. Air Force Memorial vehicular entrance gate to address the unwelcoming experience created by the 60-foot line of bollards and fencing adjacent to the official pedestrian entrance to the west. Staff will discuss this further in the analysis section.

KEY INFORMATION

- Established in 1864, Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) is one of the oldest military cemeteries in the country.
- If the Southern Expansion site had not been added to Arlington National Cemetery, the remaining capacity for interments for eligible veterans would have been exhausted for niche spaces by 2038 and 2043 for in-ground spaces according to the Center of Army Analysis report dated May 2015.
- In July 2013, the Commission approved the Millennium Expansion project, a 27-acre site in the northwest portion of the cemetery, that will add 27,000 interment spaces. The Southern Expansion will add over 60,000 additional spaces.
- Since the U.S. Air Force Memorial will be surrounded by the cemetery property, the USACE and Air Force District Washington worked together to incorporate the U.S. Air Force Memorial into the boundary of ANC.

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- Since November 2020, staff and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have met jointly with the Commission of Fine Arts staff regarding the redesign of this entrance.
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RECOMMENDATION

The Commission:

Approves the revised design for the U.S. Air Force Memorial vehicular entrance gate which includes additional landscaping, three new bollards, a new knee wall, and refinements to the gate design.

Notes that in response to Commission comments, the USACE, in consultation with NCPC and CFA staff, explored alternative vehicular entrance gate designs which included removing the vehicular bollards, designing a new gate, and adding more landscaping.

Finds the revised design best creates a welcoming entrance by minimizing the overall appearance of the gate, protects the visitor entrance area, and maintains the formality of the memorial and cemetery design.

PROJECT REVIEW TIMELINE

Previous actions	July 2015 – Arlington National Cemetery Final Master Plan October 2019 – ANC Southern Expansion, Information Presentation December 2019 – ANC Southern Expansion, Concept Design June 2020 – Defense Access Road Project, Preliminary and Final Approval. November 2020 – ANC Southern Expansion, Preliminary and Final Approval except US Air Force Memorial entrance.
Remaining actions (anticipated)	– None

PROJECT ANALYSIS

Executive Summary

Since the November 2020 Commission meeting, the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) reassessed their security need at the entrance to the visitor center and determined that additional protection is necessary at the entrance where people may congregate before entering. To address this issue and comments made by the Commission, USACE coordinated with CFA and NCPC staff to develop a revised design. While the USACE initially developed an alternative that removed the bollards behind the gate, both CFA and NCPC staff found the alternative necessitated a reinforced gate that is more robust in appearance with thicker posts and cross members. Overall, it seemed less welcoming than the original design. The USACE has therefore submitted a revised design for the U.S. Air Force Memorial which maintains the bollards, makes a few minor changes to the gate and fence, includes additional landscaping on both sides of the vehicular entry and adds a low knee wall west of this entrance. This revised design also includes a bicycle rack and three new bollards in front of the pedestrian access control point building for pedestrian safety reasons. Staff is satisfied that the applicant explored other options to address the Commission Action, supports this revised design and recommends the Commission **approves the revised design for the Air Force Memorial vehicular entrance gate which includes additional landscaping, three new bollards, a new knee wall, and refinements to the gate design.**

Analysis

The Commission reviewed and approved nearly all of the ANC Southern Expansion project in November 2020 with the exception of the U.S. Air Force Memorial entrance gate which the Commission noted was unwelcoming. The November 2020 Commission Action was as follows:

- *Require the Army to submit a revised design for the Air Force Memorial vehicular entrance gate to address the unwelcoming experience created by the 60-foot line of bollards and fencing adjacent to the official pedestrian entrance to the west.*
- *In addition, staff recommends the Army explore several changes that would improve this vehicular gate including:*
 - *Enhancing the fence with posts/columns delineating the vehicular driveway;*
 - *Integrating the bollards and new fencing; and/or*
 - *Adding shrubs and low landscaping to soften views of the fence and bollards.*

In response to this Commission Action, the USACE explored optional vehicular entrance gate designs that included removing the vehicular bollards and adding landscaping to make a more welcoming view of this gate. Staff organized a joint discussion with CFA staff and the USACE to discuss the project. CFA staff noted the original gate design (from November 2020) was approved by its Commission because it was a clean and simple form, that was visually not intrusive and did not include either substantial posts or pickets at the top. The USACE also noted stainless steel bollards were an existing element of the U.S. Air Force Memorial.

The USACE considered an alternative vehicular entrance gate design that removed the bollards in response to NCPC's review. Removing the bollards without fortifying the gate would have reduced the gate rating to less than a PU-30 (which is secure enough to prevent a pickup truck from driving through). The USACE then considered fortifying the gate to meet the PU-30 rating which required 8-inch-wide gate posts and additional diagonal cross members to anchor the system. Pickets were also added on the top of the fence. The posts would have been noticeably wider than the posts from

the original November 2020 design, which were 4-inch-wide posts. While NCPC and CFA staff generally prefer the removal of the bollards, the alternative gate design in this instance is not more welcoming than the original design and was found to be visually more intrusive on the overall design of the U.S. Air Force Memorial.

Following this joint meeting with NCPC and CFA staff, the applicant submitted a revised design which consists of retaining the bollards, installing a fence similar to the original design and additional landscaping on both sides of the new gate. Staff also notes this design includes three new stainless-steel bollards installed on the pathway leading to the front of the new pedestrian access control point and a low knee wall on the east side of the pathway to address vehicle safety concerns. The bollards and knee wall are intended to prevent an errant vehicle from injuring visitors waiting to enter into the cemetery at the new pedestrian access control point. Staff **finds the revised design best creates a welcoming entrance by minimizing the overall appearance of the gate, protects the visitor entrance area, and maintains the formality of the memorial and cemetery design.**

Since the November 2020 meeting, the Guild of Professional Tour Guides contacted NCPC staff noting their opposition to closing the Columbia Pike vehicular entrance for tour buses. Letters from members of this guild have been attached to this report. In its existing configuration, this entry affords vehicular access to the U.S. Air Force Memorial. The ANC made the decision to close this gate over a year ago when it incorporated the U.S. Air Force Memorial. All vehicles will enter the cemetery at the main entrance off Memorial Avenue. This issue is not before the commission.

CONFORMANCE TO EXISTING PLANS, POLICIES AND RELATED GUIDANCE

Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital

Staff finds that this project is not inconsistent with the relevant policies contained within the Urban Design, Transportation, Federal Environment, Historic Preservation, Visitors and Parks and Open Space Elements of the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital.

While cemetery operation is not a topic specifically identified in the Comprehensive Plan, the policies in the Federal Workplace Element supports the reuse of existing federal land and the minimization of development on open space. This project includes the reuse of existing ANC land for cemetery operations that is not suitable for burial space. The project also discusses the further consolidation of these facilities as the new interment sites become available for use.

National Historic Preservation Act

Pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, the USACE initiated Section 106 consultation in 2016. The USACE notes that this project will result in adverse effects to the Air Force Memorial Site and the ANC historic district. The historic district is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The USACE notes the impacts include the removal of the boundary

wall along Southgate Road, conversion of part of Patton Drive to a pedestrian trail and relocation of the Operations Complex, all contributing to the ANC NRHP-listed historic district; and modification of the Air Force Memorial site, which has been determined NRHP eligible. The adverse effects will be resolved through mitigation measures stipulated in a Memorandum of Agreement.

This mitigation consists of the following:

- installing an interpretive sign documenting the location, purposes, and composition of the Freeman's Village.
- developing interpretation showing the original design of the AFM including all its elements
- creating a webpage documenting cemetery expansion since its founding.

The Memorandum of Agreement is between the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Air Force District of Washington, and Arlington National Cemetery and resolves adverse effects to cultural and historical resources through these mitigation measures. As this project is located in the environs, NCPD does not have an independent Section 106 responsibility.

National Environmental Policy Act

Pursuant to its responsibility under the National Environmental Policy Act, the USACE developed the *Environmental Assessment for the Southern Expansion and Associated Roadway Realignment* to evaluate the impacts associated with this project. The stated purpose of this project is to "...meet the forecasted interment/inurnment demands of eligible veterans to preserve ANC as an active military cemetery, and to create an opportunity to increase multimodal capacity on this portion of Columbia Pike." The USACE considered four alternatives in the EA it developed for this project: a no action alternative; the preferred alternative which relocated Operations Complex south of Columbia Pike with underpass; the maintain the Operations Complex with underpass alternative; and the maintain the Operations Complex without underpass alternative. The preferred alternative allowed for the largest contiguous area for in-ground interments. As this project is located in the environs, NCPD does not have an independent NEPA responsibility.

CONSULTATION

U.S. Commission of Fine Arts

The U.S. Commission of Fine Arts included this project on its October 17, 2019 agenda for concept review. At that meeting, the Commission "...commended the development of the project since the initial presentation, particularly the integration of the existing Air Force Memorial within the seventy-acre expansion of the cemetery landscape, which will include gravesites, a columbarium, and support features such as roadways, a parking garage, and a service complex."

CFA reviewed the project at its October 15, 2020 meeting and approved the final design and requested follow-up information to clarify the design of the committal structures and the columbaria.

ONLINE REFERENCE

The following supporting documents for this project are available online at www.ncpc.gov:

- Submission Package

Prepared by Carlton Hart
2/5/2021

Attachments

- Staff PowerPoint
- 15 letters from members of the Guild of Professional Tour Guides

Arlington National Cemetery Southern Expansion – Revised US Air Force Memorial Entrance

Arlington Virginia

Approval of Final Site and Building Plans

United States Department of Defense

Project Summary

Commission Meeting Date: February 4, 2021

NCPC Review Authority: 40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1)

Applicant Request: Approval of Final Site and Building Plans

Session: Staff Presentation

NCPC Review Officer: Carlton Hart

NCPC File Number: 8009

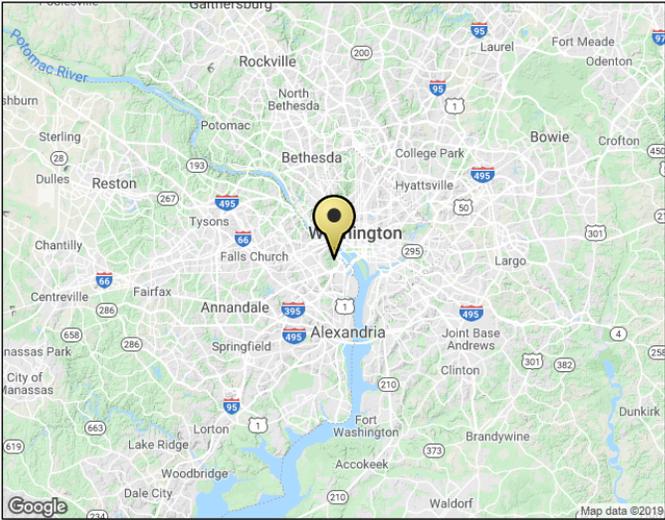
Project Summary:

ANC has submitted the proposed project, which is the expansion of Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) to the south. This expansion will include the integration of the Air Force Memorial (AFM) into the secure boundary of ANC and the development of the South Parcel. The Defense Access Road (DAR) re-alignment and the Future 9/11 Visitor Education Center (VEC) are integral projects ongoing that will be developed outside of the ANC property. The South Parcel is designated as the land south of the relocated Columbia Pike and will serve as the location for a new cemetery operations complex (Ops Complex) and parking garage for visitors to ANC, AFM, and ANC Employees. At the time of this report, the DAR Project, led by the Federal Highways Administration, is in concurrent progression with the ANCSE project and the 9/11 VEC project is in conception.

The ANCSE is a 70-acre expansion site with a main a primary purpose to increase the capacity for future interment at the cemetery. Per the conclusions of the Center of Army Analysis (CAA) Report (May 27, 2015), without the ANCSE, Arlington National Cemetery is projected to run out of in-ground interment space by 2043 and columbaria space by 2038. The CAA Report accounts for the columbaria and interment spaces made available by the recently completed Millennium Project.

The Commission approved the ANC Southern Expansion project in November 2020 except for the USAF Memorial Gate and recommended the applicant make some changes.

Site Location



Location Map

Final Design – November 2020



Previous Pedestrian Crossing and Entry



November 2020 Commission Action

New visitor's entrance to the cemetery and memorial

Recommends the Army explore several changes that would improve the vehicular gate including:

- Enhancing the fence with posts/columns delineating the vehicular driveway;
- Integrating the bollards and new fencing; and/or
- Adding shrubs and landscaping to soften views of the fence and bollards.

Existing Air Force Memorial Entrance



Original Entrance Design – November 2020



Alternative Entrance Design – no bollards



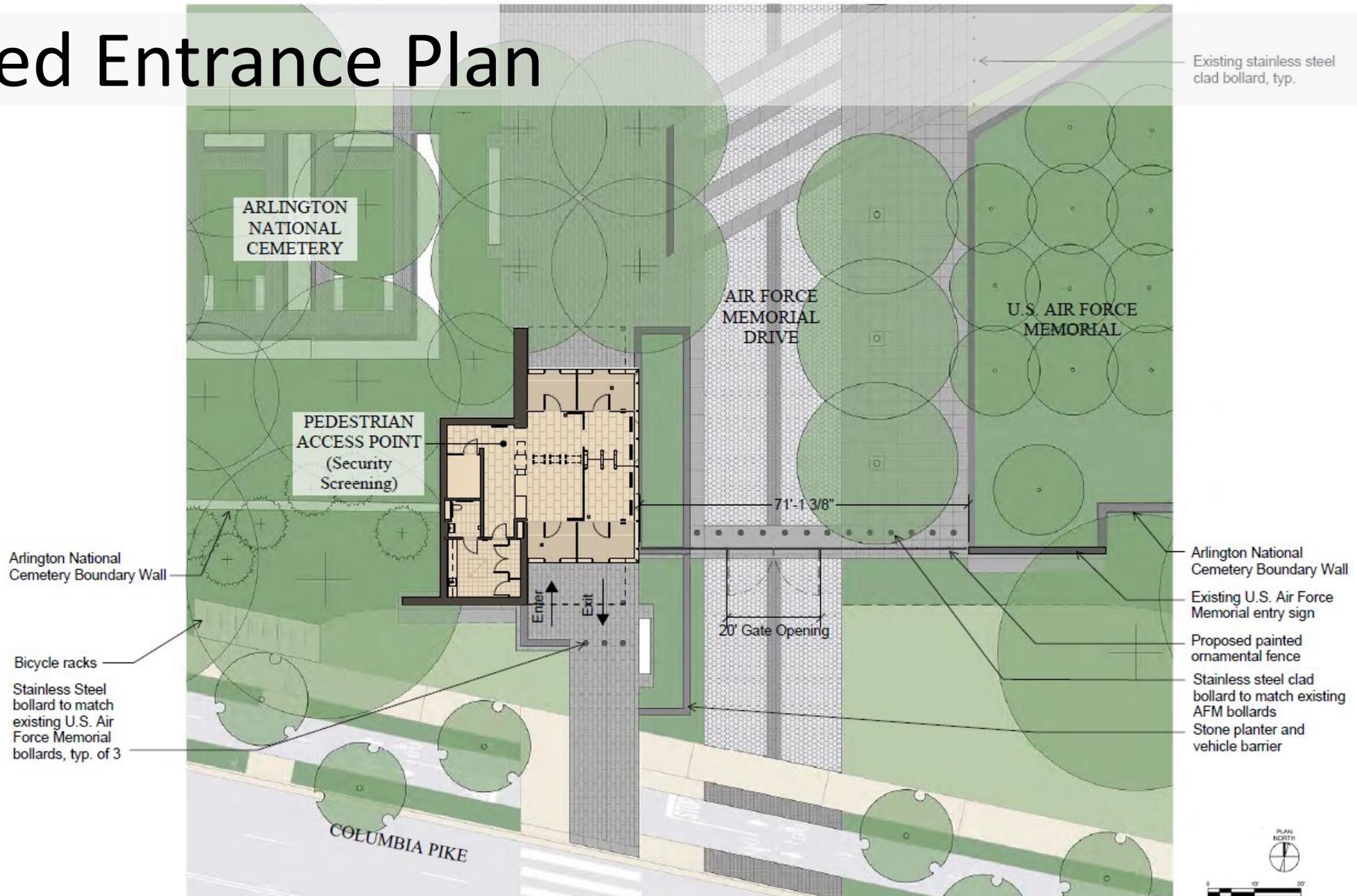
Revised Entrance Design - Final



Revised Entrance Design



Revised Entrance Plan



To: National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC)

Dear Commission Members,

My name is Jacquelyn M. Frend, a licensed, professional tour guide in Washington, D.C. and also a resident of the VA 8th Congressional District, the home of Arlington National Cemetery and the United States Air Force Memorial.

I am very concerned about the recent plans for the Air Force Memorial and, in particular, the plans to incorporate the Air Force Memorial into Arlington National Cemetery (ANC). While I support expansion of ANC and the increase in capacity for interments for eligible veterans, I object to some of the restrictions on access to the Air Force Memorial that will occur if the proposed plans are allowed to go forward.

Specifically, I understand that motor coach access to the Air Force Memorial will be eliminated, forcing visitors who arrive to the area in motor coaches to walk through ANC from the Visitor Center off Memorial Drive to access the Air Force Memorial. As a tour guide who frequently accompanies groups of visitors who arrive via motor coach to ANC, a typical walk through the cemetery is 3 miles -- to witness the Changing of the Guard, visit Arlington House, and the Kennedy gravesite -- and takes 2 to 3 hours. Eliminating motor coach access to the Air Force Memorial via Columbia Pike, will force visitors to walk an additional 2 miles up and back, making a trip to ANC 5 miles and probably take 4 to 5 hours. Groups do not have the time nor the energy to climb the hills of ANC and, if this proposal to preclude motor coaches from picking up and dropping off at Columbia Pike, is approved, the Air Force Memorial will only be viewed at a distance, denying many visitors the opportunity to pay their respects to a valued branch of our military.

Incorporating the Air Force Memorial into Arlington National Cemetery as an enclave limits access to visitors and is in total conflict with the intent and purpose of this memorial venue as it was originally designed. Memorials help to educate the public to the sacrifices made, and they inspire respect and reverence for the men and women who serve and as such need to be open and accessible to everyone, as is the case with the 24/7 access to the other military memorials in the Washington Metropolitan Area (DMV), including the Marine Corps Memorial, World War II, Navy, Native American Veterans, American Veterans Disabled for Life, and soon World War I.

The contention that the Air Force Memorial's absorption into the cemetery grounds is inevitable fails to take into account the long-term, adverse effects this plan will have on visitors from around the country.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my concerns about the plan to include the Air Force Memorial in the secured boundaries of the expanded Arlington National Cemetery.

Sincerely,
Jacquelyn M Frend
jackiefrend@gmail.com

To: National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC)

January 22, 2021

Dear Commission Members,

My name is Ella Schiralli, a licensed, professional tour guide in Washington, D.C. I wish to express my opposition to the current plan being considered to limit access to the Air Force Memorial, specifically, the plans to incorporate the Memorial into Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) with no access to Motor Coaches except for the ANC visitor center. While I support expansion of ANC and the increase in capacity for interments for eligible veterans, I object to so many of the restrictions on access to the Air Force Memorial that will occur if the proposed plans are allowed to go forward.

Incorporating the memorial into Arlington National Cemetery, as an enclave, limits access to visitors and is in total conflict with the intent and purpose of this memorial venue. Memorials help to educate the public to the sacrifices made, and they inspire respect and reverence for the men and women who serve and as such need to be open and accessible, as is the case with the 24/7 access to the other military memorials in the Washington Metropolitan Area (DMV), including the Marine Corps Memorial, World War II, Navy, Native American Veterans, American Veterans Disabled for Life, and soon World War I.

As a tourist guide, I actively tour student groups in the spring. It is critical that we have the opportunity to introduce students and adult guests to the various memorials. With all the wonderful sites to visit, I depend on memorials to be open and available well beyond the traditional hours of operation at ANC. Additionally, it is unreasonable to expect motor coach groups to walk the entire length of ANC and back to visit the Air Force Memorial - time constraints, physical distance, and cost prohibitive to purchase tram tickets.

The Air Force Memorial is a much-admired asset in the DMV and limiting access to it is a great loss for locals and visitors alike. For many of my guests a visit to the Air Force Memorial is a highlight of their trip. Sadly, the unintended consequence of the proposed changes to entry, coach parking and group access may deprive future guests, including Air Force active duty personnel, veterans, and their families from experiencing this memorial. I urge you to reconsider the decision to limit coach parking at the Air Force Memorial visitor center. At a minimum, there should be early morning and evening night access for motor coaches at the Air Force Memorial.

The contention that the Air Force Memorial's absorption into the cemetery grounds is inevitable fails to take into account the long-term, adverse effects this plan will have on the Air Force institution, the tour guiding community and the national and international guest who visit Washington, D.C. I appreciate the opportunity to submit these comments and for your consideration of the expressed.

Sincerely,

Ella Schiralli
Capital City Custom Tours
eschiralli1@gmail.com

To: National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC)

Dear Commission Members,

My name is Anne Harrington, a licensed, professional tour guide in Washington, D.C. As a licensed guide, I write to express opposition to the restricted access to the Air Force Memorial and the plans to incorporate the Memorial into Arlington National Cemetery (ANC). While I support expansion of ANC to increase in capacity for interments for eligible veterans, I object to many of the access restrictions to the Air Force Memorial that will occur if the proposed plans are allowed to go forward.

Incorporating the Air Force Memorial into Arlington National Cemetery limits access to visitors. The plan will result in significantly less visitors to the Memorial due to the added time and mileage to reach the site by foot or tram. Not allowing easy access to the Air Force Memorial by motor coach will turn a 15-minute visit into an hour or more to then walk to the Memorial, to pay tribute, and then walk back to the motor coach parked at the Memorial Avenue lot. Most tour groups will probably omit this visit from their itinerary.

Memorials help to educate the public to the sacrifices made, and they inspire respect and reverence for the men and women who serve and as such need to be open and accessible, as is the case with the 24/7 access to the other military memorials in the Washington Metropolitan Area (DMV), including the Marine Corps Memorial, World War II, Navy, Native American Veterans, American Veterans Disabled for Life, and soon World War I. The Air Force Memorial will be the only memorial that limits public access.

The Air Force Memorial is a much-admired asset in the DMV and limiting access to it is a great loss for locals and visitors alike to pay respect to this important branch of the military service. Sadly, the unintended consequence of the proposed changes to entry, coach parking, and group access may deprive future guests, including Air Force active duty personnel, veterans, and their families from experiencing this memorial.

The contention that the Air Force Memorial's absorption into the cemetery grounds is inevitable fails to take into account the long-term, adverse effects this plan will have on the times visitors can access the Memorial.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my concerns about the plan to include the Air Force Memorial in the secured boundaries of the expanded Arlington National Cemetery and for your consideration of the opinions expressed.

Sincerely,
Anne Harrington
penny.harrington@yahoo.com

To: National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC)

Dear Commission Members:

I am Roy O'Connor, a licensed professional tour guide in Washington D.C.

Thank you for your decision to include the AF Memorial within the grounds of the expansion of ANC. This will certainly help promote our newest but still very under-visited military memorial. I love the setting and story of the Air Force Memorial. My groups do too!

As a DC tour guide, I feel the 90-120 minutes that I usually allow to cover ANC cannot be expanded beyond what my kids can accept. I can't imagine how adult and senior motor coach groups will last, walking the extra miles and back from the Memorial Bridge entrance.

I always fit in the AF Memorial on a different day from an ANC visit. To force coach travelers to see the AF Memorial while visiting ANC will only cause their enthusiasm and desire to drop and that will affect the AF Memorial and the Air Force story.

If you will allow passenger coach drop offs and pickups from the Columbia Pike side when we also visit the Pentagon 911 Memorial or lunch/dinner stops at Pentagon City Mall, everyone will benefit. Please reconsider your decision.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my concerns about the plan to include the Air Force Memorial in the secured boundaries of the expanded Arlington National Cemetery.

Sincerely,

Roy F. O'Connor

royococo@aol.com

January 21, 2021

To: National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC)

Dear Commission Members,

I am Sally Stotter, a licensed, professional tour guide in Washington, D.C. I am writing to express my opposition to the continued erosion of access to the Air Force Memorial and, in particular, the plans to incorporate the Memorial into Arlington National Cemetery. While I support expansion of ANC and the increase in capacity for interments for eligible veterans, I object to many of the restrictions on access to the Air Force Memorial that will occur if the proposed plans are allowed to go forward.

The Air force Memorial is one of my favorite stops. I take 15 to 20 groups there a year. The students love it. Not only is the memorial a great teaching memorial, it also gives a tremendous view of The District and ANC. The students also enjoy the evening Air Force Band holds concerts.

Generally, I take my groups up in the evening. It's a perfect end to a jam-packed day of touring the capital. If you only allow the memorial to be open during ANC hours, that would cut my trips by 2/3. It wouldn't be worth the trip if we have to spend time going through ANC security.

The security for the cemetery is so time consuming as it is, to go through it twice would be brutal. At least when we visit the cemetery, we spend a minimum of two hours there. I generally spend about half an hour at the memorial, about the same amount of time I allot for ANC security checks.

In addition, if we can't drop off at the memorial, the hike up adds another hour to an already full day. I couldn't combine ANC with the memorial to cut down on the security time because that would add two miles of walking. On most of the student tours I lead, we walk 8-10 miles a day. ANC day leans toward 10 miles. And the students would be miserable to go on a forced march, uphill after walking all over ANC.

I suspect I would take only a group or 2 a season, at most, as would most of the other guides I know. So, basically, most groups would only see the memorial as we drive past on our way to other, more accessible sites.

Please rethink your plan. Don't take an awe-inspiring experience away from DC area tourists. Don't make the memorial an inaccessible gem, not only

for students but for veterans and anyone else not in tiptop shape.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my concerns about the plan to include the Air Force Memorial in the secured boundaries of Arlington National Cemetery.

Sincerely,
Sally STOTTER
sallystotter@juno.com

January 21, 2021

To: National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC)

Dear Commission Members,

My name is Michael Ruggieri, a licensed, professional tour guide in Washington, D.C. I'm writing to express my opposition to the limiting of access to the Air Force Memorial and, in particular, the plans to incorporate the Memorial into Arlington National Cemetery (ANC). While I support expansion of ANC and the increase in capacity for interments, I object to many of the restrictions on access to the Air Force Memorial that will occur if the proposed plans are allowed to go forward.

Incorporating the memorial into Arlington National Cemetery, as an enclave, limits access to visitors and is in total conflict with the intent and purpose of this memorial venue as it was originally designed. Memorials help to educate the public to the sacrifices made, and they inspire respect and reverence for the men and women who serve and as such need to be open and accessible, as is the case with the 24/7 access to the other military memorials in the Washington Metropolitan Area, including the Marine Corps Memorial, World War II, Navy, Native American Veterans, American Veterans Disabled for Life, and soon World War I.

The Air Force Memorial is a much-admired asset in the DC area, and limiting access to it is a great loss for locals and visitors alike. As a licensed tour guide I have taken thousands of people to the memorial where they pay respect to this important branch of the military service. Their excitement, interest and reverence are very evident when they enter the complex. For many of my guests, a visit to the Air Force Memorial is a highlight of their trip. Sadly, the unintended consequence of the proposed changes to entry, coach parking and group access may deprive future guests, including Air Force active duty personnel, veterans, and their families, from experiencing this memorial.

The contention that the Air Force Memorial's absorption into the cemetery grounds is inevitable fails to take into account the long-term, adverse effects this plan will have on tourism.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my concerns about the plan to include the Air Force Memorial in the secured boundaries of the expanded Arlington National Cemetery. And thank you for your consideration of the opinions expressed.

Sincerely,

Michael Ruggieri

mike.in.va@comcast.net

Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 5:38 PM
To: NCPC General Information <info@ncpc.gov>
Subject: NCPC Website Email

From: Ken Workman
Email: kworkman@aol.com

To: National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC)

Dear Commission Members,

My name is George Workman, a licensed, professional tour guide in Washington, D.C.

I write as a proud USMC Vietnam Veteran.

I am against plans incorporating the Air Force Memorial within Arlington National Cemetery, if it would eliminate 24/7 tour bus access to the Memorial and restrict the hours viewable to Cemetery Visiting hours ONLY!

The history of OUR great country is couched in the history of the branches of our military services. Numerous have served, too many paying the ultimate price. These histories of service and the memorials honoring them are a main attraction for groups touring by motor coach. No other service memorials, NONE, limit access for coaches, nor hours they can be viewed; why then the Air Force Memorial?

I have led untold groups of adults and school age students who are accompanied by their parent, grandparent or other relative and are an active Air Force member or veteran, who relished the fact of being able to visit their service memorial and share their pride with their own son, daughter, etc. Why must it be necessary to deny these active or inactive Air Force personnel and veterans restrictions to their memorial when visiting by motor coach ?

I am confident that the commission, will, if they choose, find a way, a path, that will allow motor coach access to the Memorial. Understanding additional burial sites is important to the future of the cemetery, 24/7 access to the Air Force Memorial by motor coaches is also important.

Where there is a will there will always be a way!

Respectfully,
G. Kenneth Workman
Captain, USMC
334-303-3344
kworkman@aol.com
121 Brandy Highland Dr
Oxford, Alabama 36203

Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 9:44 PM
To: NCPC General Information <info@ncpc.gov>
Subject: NCPC Website Email

From: Russell Preble
Email: rapreble@aol.com

9120 BELVOIR WOODS PARKWA, APT 306
FORT BELVOIR, VA 22060

January 20, 2021

Mr. Paul E. Dans
Chairman, National Capital Planning Commission
401 9th St. NW, Suite 500N
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Chairman Dans,

Have you ever visited the Air Force Memorial in late evening on a clear night and taken the beauty of the city of Washington spread out before you? The Washington National Cathedral at your left, the Kennedy Center, the Lincoln Memorial, the Washington Monument, the Capitol, the Jefferson Memorial all spread out before you? It is a magical sight

I make it a priority to take my out of town guests to visit the Memorial and enjoy the breath taking view of our nation's capital. As a Washington DC tour guide I arrange my evening tours to end at the Air Force Memorial as the dramatic high point of their evening tour and possibly the high point of their visit to Washington.

In addition to evening access to the Memorial, provision in your plans must be made for motor coach parking so that evening visitors can savor the view at the conclusion of their evening tour

I strongly recommend that you visit the Air Force Memorial on a clear evening and you will understand why access to the Memorial in the evening is so important for all Americans to share the evening splendor of our city laid out before them.

Russell A. Preble
Certified Master Guide
Guild of Professional Tour Guides
Washington, DC

Lori Camil Cohen
6652 Cypress Point Road
Alexandria, VA 22312
Lorinova123@outlook.com

January 21, 2021

Dear National Capital Planning Commission Members:

Before the Covid 19 pandemic, I was a Washington, DC area tour guide. I look forward to the time I can again share the sights and great history of our area with student and adult groups. I am saddened to learn that the Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) Southern Expansion proposals will greatly limit access to one of my favorite sites: the Air Force Memorial. I ask you to reconsider that plan.

My tour groups learn a great deal about the Air Force and its values from visiting the Memorial. They learn what the magnificent spires represent. They stop at the glass plate showing the missing man formation, which some group members have seen (and heard) roaring over their heads during visits to ANC. They stop at the Honor Guard statue and notice the equal role of women. When my groups lack time to walk to the Pentagon Memorial, we discuss the terrorist attack of 9/11 while viewing the Pentagon building below. And the sweeping view is of course spectacular. Daytime visits are great, but night-time is a splendor all its own.

Most Air Force Memorial visitors arrive by motorcoach. The expansion proposal must include means for motorcoaches to easily pick up and drop off passengers. Also, tour groups have limited time on their itineraries. Imagine if groups of 50 had to walk all the way from the ANC entrance to the Memorial! (Most student groups won't take trams due to added cost). Unless the proposal addresses motorcoach and distance concerns, then it will effectively shut the public out.

I believe that representatives of the interested parties (including the Guild of Professional Tour Guides of Washington, DC, of which I am a member) should work together to determine how Washington area visitors and residents alike can continue to enjoy the Memorial, while also keeping the area secure. Please make that effort. The Air Force Memorial was intended to welcome visitors, not to be locked away.

Sincerely,

Lori Camil Cohen

cc: Barbara.m.lewandrowski.civ@mail.mil

To: National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC)

Dear Commission Members,

My name is Ellen Malasky a licensed, professional tour guide in Washington, D.C. and the president of the National Federation of Tourist Guide Associations-USA.

I'm dismayed at the plans for the changes at the Air Force Memorial. The memorial has been a favorite memorial for my clients and bus tours not only for honoring the Air Force and their medal of honor winners but also because of the beautiful view of DC. It was a wonderful way to end an evening tour. The plans for incorporating the memorial into Arlington National Cemetery, will result in limiting tourists ability to visit the memorial and is very disturbing.

The current plans will hurt visitation to the Memorial in a number of ways:

- The new entrance including the security will cause long lines.
- Limiting visiting the memorial to the hours ANC is open will not allow visiting the memorial in the evening.
- The new parking does not include coach parking. The requirement for all group tours to enter off Memorial Drive will pretty much eliminate group tours from visiting the memorial because:
 - o It's a long, hilly walk to and from the Memorial so seniors will be unable to walk that far.
 - o The tram is expensive and does not run that often.
 - o Student groups have limited time in their schedules with just enough allotted for the Changing of the Guard and the Kennedy graves.

I understand that as the cemetery is in need of additional space for the in-ground and urn burials. This said, limiting the ability to visit the Memorial demonstrates a lack of respect for current members of the Air Force retirees and family members.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my concerns about the plan to include the Air Force Memorial in the secured boundaries of the expanded Arlington National Cemetery. and for your consideration of the opinions expressed.

Sincerely,

Ellen Malasky

president@nftga.com

From: NCPC System <info@ncpc.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, January 19, 2021 11:44 AM
To: NCPC General Information <info@ncpc.gov>
Subject: NCPC Website EmailFrom: Rhonda Briel
Email: rjbriel@aol.com

Re: Proposed Action Item 8009, ANC Southern Expansion, Revised U.S. Air Force Entrance Dear Commission Members, My name is Rhonda Briel, a licensed, professional tour guide in Washington, D.C. I am disappointed to learn that the expansion of Arlington National Cemetery, which I completely support, will eliminate access of motorcoaches to the Air Force Memorial. I often bring tour groups to the AF Memorial and this new proposal will affect that, not only because of the physicality of getting there for my older tour members, but also of the time restraints and limitations that would be put on our schedule. I am completely opposed to this! What is the point of honoring our service members if the majority of visitors (groups) to Washington, DC don't have easy access to all the memorials? I would hate for them to miss the beautiful view of DC plus the occasional special event, dancing or a concert on a Friday night. If a parking area is being built, why not allow for motorcoach parking for a limited number of coaches. I have never seen more than maybe 5 in the circle there, and often less! Please rethink this process before you lock out the people that it was intended for. Thank you in advance for your consideration of my thoughts.

Regards,

Rhonda Briel
rjbriel@aol.com

Dear Commission Members,

January 19, 2021

My name is Marc Landman, a licensed, professional tour guide. I am writing today to express my opposition to new limited access to the Air Force Memorial. In particular, the current plans to incorporate the Memorial into Arlington National Cemetery.

I support expansion of ANC and certainly, to increase in capacity for interments for eligible veterans, that is so important. I do not like the many new restrictions on access to the Air Force Memorial. That will occur if the proposed plans are allowed to go forward and proceed as is currently planned.

Unfortunately, incorporating the memorial into the Cemetery, will limit access to visitors. It is in total conflict with the intent and purpose of this memorial venue, as it was originally designed. Memorials help to educate the public to the sacrifices made, and they inspire respect and reverence for the men and women who serve. That is why it needs to be open and accessible, just like DC's other military memorials. They include the famous Marine Corps Memorial, World War II, US Navy, Native American Veterans, American Veterans Disabled for Life, and soon World War I.

This Air Force Memorial is a much-admired asset and limiting access to it is a great loss for all citizens. As a licensed tourist guide, my colleagues and I have taken thousands of people to the memorial. We all pay respects to this important branch of the military service. That remains important! The excitement, interest and definitely the reverence is evident when they enter the complex. For many of my guests, a visit to the Air Force Memorial is a highlight of their trip. Sadly, the unintended consequence of the proposed changes to entry, coach parking and group access may deprive future guests, including Air Force active duty personnel, veterans, and their families from experiencing this memorial.

The Air Force Memorial's absorption into the cemetery grounds fails to take into account the long-term, adverse effects this plan will have on these visitors and the education of our young people.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my concerns about the plan to include the Air Force Memorial in the secured boundaries of the expanded Arlington National Cemetery and for your consideration of the opinions expressed.

Sincerely,
Marc Landman
MarcNYCtours@Gmail.com

Dear Commission Members,

My name is Johnson Rebecca, a licensed, professional tour guide in Washington, D.C. I write to express my opposition to the continued erosion of access to the Air Force Memorial and, in particular, the plans to incorporate the Memorial into Arlington National Cemetery (ANC).

As a licensed tour director I have taken thousands of people to the memorial where they pay respect to this important branch of the military service. Their excitement, interest and reverence is very evident when they enter the complex. For many of my guests a visit to the Air Force Memorial is a highlight of their trip.

My father is an Air Force Veteran who served during the Vietnam War. Oftentimes, the Air Force doesn't get the notoriety or attention of the other three branches of service. Limiting access and especially, eliminating motorcoach access to the AF Memorial is yet another blow to these veterans who served and risked their lives the same as any veterans. It's also a wonderful opportunity to educate our visitors about the AF and its veterans.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my concerns about the plan to include the Air Force Memorial in the secured boundaries of the expanded Arlington National Cemetery. and for your consideration of the opinions expressed.

Sincerely,
Johnson Rebecca
pghrebecca@gmail.com

To: National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC)

Dear Commission Members,

I'm glad to learn of plans to expand Arlington National Cemetery. I hope this expansion can be accomplished in a way that still allows motor coach/bus access to the Air Force Memorial, independent of the Cemetery's open hours.

As a licensed, professional Washington, DC tour guide, I've brought countless tour groups to visit the Air Force Memorial since it first opened in 2006. These groups have represented every age and nationality. The vast majority of these groups have arrived by motor coach, and they especially appreciate visiting the Air Force Memorial late in the evening and early in the morning. Please make sure bus groups can visit the Air Force Memorial when Arlington National Cemetery is closed, as well as when the Cemetery is open.

A few years ago, I was guiding one of the hundreds of American 8th grade school groups that I've taken to visit the Air Force Memorial. On this occasion, an 8th-grader asked me to come with to look at a particular item, among several, that had been placed by previous visitors, at the base of the Glass Contemplation Wall. The item was a tiny urn with a tag tied to it. The tag gave details about the Air Force veteran whose cremated remains were partially contained within the urn.

The teacher in charge of the group, and one of the groups' chaperones, agreed to let the student accompany me to the entrance kiosk. There, we informed the person on duty about the presence of the urn. The guard was very impressed by the student's information, and left the kiosk immediately to go and look after the precious memento. This was a wonderful experience for the student. He had an opportunity to be the valued source of useful information.

On an earlier occasion, when the Air Force Memorial was still very new, I visited with a group of WWII veterans. The group of about 57 people was very predominantly male, and this was the only time I've ever seen WOMEN'S restrooms being "requisitioned" for use by MEN! (Of course it's usually the other way around.) When the gentlemen knocked on the door, I shouted out that I was in there, using the Women's restroom, but the elderly veterans couldn't hear me. For a little while after they entered, I kept yelling,

"Hello!! Occupied!! I'm a woman in here!!"

The men never heard me, but I sure could hear them. It was hilarious. Some affected female voices, and imitated what they thought women might say in the restroom, for example,

"Eek! There's a man in here!"

I remember how strange it was to look down at the floor of the stall next to me, and see a pair of feet facing the OTHER way! I'd never before in my life seen toes pointed TOWARDS the toilet! When I emerged from the restroom, the veterans' guardians, who'd been waiting outside for our guests-of-honor, many with vacant wheelchairs at-the-ready, were apologetic and stunned to see me. They saw that I thought the whole thing was funny, and then they laughed, too. Back on the motor coach, the story spread throughout the bus, and created a little buzz of amusement.

Please ensure that visitors can continue to have memorable experiences at the U.S. Air Force Memorial.

Sincerely,
Hopi Auerbach
Mobile: 301/442-5227
Washington, DC Tour Guide
Licensed, Certified Master
German & English
14 Ridge Road Unit X
Greenbelt, MD 20770 USA

To: National Capital Planning Commission (NCPCC)

Dear Commission Members,

My name is Helga Warren, a licensed, professional tour guide in Washington, D.C. I write to express my opposition to the continued erosion of access to the Air Force Memorial and, in particular, the plans to incorporate the Memorial into Arlington National Cemetery (ANC). While I support expansion of ANC and the increase in capacity for interments for eligible veterans, I object to many of the restrictions on access to the Air Force Memorial that will occur if the proposed plans are allowed to go forward.

Sometimes this memorial is not on the tour itinerary, but teachers of school groups ask for it because their students have relatives who served in the Air Force or have expressed a future interest in the Air Force themselves. When it is added to an already full itinerary teachers often combine it with a dinner visit to The Fashion Centre mall in Pentagon City, which means the students and other visitors would go there outside of the regular Cemetery hours of 8-5 or 8-7. It is important that people have full access to this memorial as they do to the other military memorials in Washington.

Incorporating the memorial into Arlington National Cemetery, as an enclave, limits access to visitors and is in total conflict with the intent and purpose of this memorial venue as it was originally designed. Memorials help to educate the public to the sacrifices made, and they inspire respect and reverence for the men and women who serve and as such need to be open and accessible, as is the case with the 24/7 access to the other military memorials in the Washington Metropolitan Area (DMV), including the Marine Corps Memorial, World War II, Navy, Native American Veterans, American Veterans Disabled for Life, and soon World War I.

The Air Force Memorial is a much-admired asset in the DMV and limiting access to it is a great loss for locals and visitors alike, including visitors from abroad. As a licensed tourist guide I have taken thousands of people to the memorial where they pay respect to this important branch of the military service. Their excitement, interest and reverence is very evident when they enter the complex. Guests admire the view and pay close attention to the symbolic references that we point out to them. The memorial is especially striking at night and offers an opportunity for reflection on the events of the day and the special meaning that military service holds for us as a people.

The contention that the Air Force Memorial's absorption into the cemetery grounds is inevitable fails to take into account the long-term, adverse effects this plan will have on tour buses being able to park at the memorial. It does not seem right that your mode of transportation limits your right to visit this memorial when you please. Not everyone has the time or physical energy to make the long walk from the Visitor's Center in the Cemetery to the Air Force Memorial, in addition to visiting the other important, must-see sites in Arlington National Cemetery. Please consider making the Air Force Memorial accessible to all of the visitors to the Washington, DC area, not just a select few.

Thank you for your careful consideration of these comments and the opportunity to present my concerns about the plan to include the Air Force Memorial within the secured boundaries of the expanded Arlington National Cemetery.

Sincerely,
Helga Warren
helgawarren@cox.net

To: National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC)

Dear Commission Members,

My name is Linda Dickinson, a licensed, professional tour guide in Washington, D.C. and also a resident of the VA 8th Congressional District, the home of Arlington National Cemetery and the United States Air Force Memorial.

I support the expansion of ANC to increase in-ground burials for eligible veterans. However, the proposed restrictions to access the memorial will severely limit visitation to those for whom the memorial is dedicated...US Air Force veterans traveling by motor coach.

At this time, it appears that Columbia Pike will route by the memorial. Therefore, driving by the memorial will be the only way for any coach group (seniors, veterans, adults, students, etc.) to see it. They will not experience it. Features that convey the message of service in the US Air Force such as the statue of the Honor Guard and powerful inscriptions. They will not be able to stand under the three majestic spires and look up at the sky...an awesome experience intended to inspire all.

If all the restrictions are adopted, my singular request is that Columbia Pike remain aligned as it is so that coaches and vehicles can at least drive by.

With appreciation for your consideration of my concerns,

Linda Dickinson
linda.p.dickinson@gmail.com

Dear Commission Members,

My name is Melanie La Force, a licensed, professional tour guide in Washington, D.C. and also a resident of the VA 8th Congressional District, the home of Arlington National Cemetery and the United States Air Force Memorial.

I write to express my opposition to the changes to access to the Air Force Memorial and, in particular, the plans to incorporate the Memorial into Arlington National Cemetery (ANC). I am not in agreement with the changes to access to this memorial for the simple reason that they limit access to people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities. The cemetery closes at an early hour for valid security concerns, but it has been my experience to bring groups up to the Air Force Memorial and see the breathtaking view of our city at night and in early hours. We simply drive up the guard in our bus, the driver proudly announces the states where everyone is from and whether he, too, is a vet; and then we are given permission to enter. The bus parks quickly and the group can walk a short distance to see a most astounding view. There are well-maintained bathrooms and the group then gets back onto the bus to continue touring.

The original design by James Ingo Freed was to be expansive and all-encompassing, to give a feeling for the sky, flight, and freedom. It was the last design of Mr. Freed, an architect who, during World War II, fled the Nazis as a young boy, made his home in America, studied to be an architect, went on to design the Holocaust Memorial Museum, and engaged in a successful career as an architect. Many visitors, when they visit at all times of the day and at night are in awe of the spire-like structures that represent the contrails of airplanes. The fourth spire is missing because it represents the pilot who did not make it home. Memorials help to educate the public to the sacrifices made, and they inspire respect and reverence for the men and women who serve, and, as such, need to be open and accessible, as is the case with the 24/7 access to the other military memorials in the Washington Metropolitan Area (DMV), including the Marine Corps Memorial, World War II, Navy, Native American Veterans Memorial, the American Veterans Disabled for Life, and soon the World War I.

The Air Force Memorial is a much-admired asset in the DC metropolitan area and limiting access to it is a great loss for locals and visitors alike. As a licensed tourist guide with ten years, I have taken thousands of people to the memorial where they pay respect to this important branch of the military service. Their excitement, interest and reverence is very evident when they enter the complex. One time, I brought up a bus load of tired and hungry eighth graders from Mississippi. It had snowed the night before, and a light covering lay on the ground, creating a dramatic white blanket on the figures and at the base of the walls. The students jumped off the bus to touch the snow, to figure out which figure is a woman, to see the memorial, and to have one last look at DC before dinner and the long ride home. Please keep the Air Force memorial open so that people can have experiences such as these in Arlington, Virginia and their Capitol. For many of my guests a visit to the Air Force Memorial is a highlight of their trip. Many of my visitors are handicapped, mobility impaired, or elderly. They cannot walk long distances or up steep hills. To enter from the main entrance of Arlington Cemetery, get to a shuttle, see the memorial, then return on the shuttle would take too much time from the actual amount of time a group visits the memorial. Visitors generally do not go that far back into the cemetery. Our bus drivers would need to pay extra money for time parked in the parking lot and would be competing with those groups who are coming to see the Changing of the Guard and the Kennedy Grave sites and other sites as well. The distance and hills that need to be walked make it difficult to walk over that side of the cemetery.

I personally know this cemetery and have walked it many times because a friend of my fathers who died in the Vietnam War and was a pilot, is buried there. Capt. Wesley R. Phenegar, Jr. USMC was killed in an aircraft accident on 13 August 1967, in Vietnam. He developed engine trouble during a combat mission. He tried to make an emergency landing but lost his engine completely. He elected to stay with his aircraft to avoid hitting a Vietnamese village. Memorial services were held by his fellow Marines and by members of the Vietnamese village he saved. The President of the United States presented the DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS posthumously to Captain Wesley R. Phenegar, Jr. United States Marine Corps for his heroism.

I tell his story to students and many visitors and the memorial provides a time and place that honors him. I just don't want him to be forgotten and so it is very important that I bring visitors to the memorial so that I can tell his story. Wes' name is listed at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall, and I have read his name aloud during a "reading of the names" ceremony at that memorial as well.

Many visitors want to have a positive experience when they visit Washington, DC. For many it is their last visit. The Air Force Memorial, in its design and accessibility, gives hope and inspiration to so many American and foreign visitors. They often have come from far away, saved money to afford the trip, and wish to see the important

memorials during an often brief and intense visit. Having access to the memorial only through Arlington Cemetery limits access for these dedicated people. Furthermore, visitors often express appreciation and donate to various veterans' groups and contribute to the history of the air force. The unintended results of the decision to limit access through Arlington Cemetery would deprive people of the experience of a visit to a beautiful memorial which is easily seen on the horizon from across the Potomac.

I urge you to reconsider and allow tour guides and buses to have direct access to the memorial and develop a different kind of security measure for this beautiful and awe-inspiring memorial which was designed so that all can visit.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my concerns about the plan to include the Air Force Memorial in the secured boundaries of the expanded Arlington National Cemetery.

Sincerely,
Melanie La Force
6528 27th St. N
Arlington, VA 22213

mjlforce1758@gmail.com

Written statement regarding NCPC File 8009, the Arlington National Cemetery Southern Expansion Project – February 4, 2021 National Capitol Planning Commission Meeting

Good afternoon,

I am Maribeth Oakes, a member of the Guild of Professional Tour Guides of Washington, DC. The Guild's over 500 members are comprised of DC licensed tour guides, tour operators and friends of the tourism industry.

We recognize that today's discussion is focused on the revised entrance plans for the Arlington National Cemetery Southern Expansion Project. The Guild's initial intent was to comment on pedestrian access at this gateway. However, upon learning that the Expansion Project plans will prohibit tour group coach access to the Air Force Memorial at the Columbia Road entrance, the Guild feels compelled to voice our collective objection to this exclusion. Thank you for this opportunity to share what's at stake if this ban on coach parking is allowed to stand.

In short, a group's ability to pay tribute to Air Force veterans and active members will be compromised, at best. More likely, the result will be that groups will stop visiting the Air Force Memorial altogether.

Because group tours will be required to enter Arlington National Cemetery from Memorial Avenue visitors will be forced to make a two-mile round trip walk from the current visitor center to the memorial. For older guests, young children or individuals with mobility issues this walk will be impossible. And for most groups the tram is not an option due to costs, not to mention the near impossibility of getting groups of 50 people into one tram, particularly during peak tourist season.

Very often visitors take group tours because it is an economical way to see a site, and for some its they only way they can afford to travel. All too often this will be the only time an individual will ever visit the area...and in this case our national military memorials. Will these travelers face unequal treatment, and be forced to take extra steps, simply because they travel by coach?

From the time of Air Force Memorial's dedication, access to the memorial was visitor friendly, and just a few steps from a motor coach. What was a fifteen-minute visit will now involve at least a thirty-minute walk just to reach the memorial, and another thirty minutes to return to their coach. Tour groups operate on strict schedules, which means they will likely forego visiting the memorial and denied the ability to pay tribute to members of the Air Force.

I, like many other guides frequently take retirees, or family members of someone who served or is serving in the Air Force to the memorial via motor coach. For example, a favorite tour of mine was a group of Air Force veterans who served together in the late 1960s. They and their spouses gather for a reunion every other year. Their joy at being together again was evident by their jokes, smiles and laughs. Their only itinerary request was to begin the tour at the Air Force Memorial. Under the proposed expansion plan a two-mile round-trip walk would not have worked for them for many reasons. The distance they would need to walk, the amount of time that would be required to make the walk, and the fact that their tour started after a dinner banquet, so they wouldn't have been able to enter the cemetery to even visit their memorial.

Equally troubling is that the Air Force Memorial will be the only memorial that limits public access. All other military memorials in the metropolitan Washington area are open to the public 24/7. The Marine Corps Memorial, World War II, Vietnam War Veterans, Korean War Veterans, Navy Memorial, Native American Veterans Memorial, Americans Disabled for Life Memorial and eventually, the World War I Memorial are open and accessible at times that accommodate the visitor's schedule.

The Guild maintains that group visits to the memorial are an opportunity for the public to learn more about this important branch of military service. A stop at the site enables tour guides to share stories of the Air Force. Guides tell the story of when this branch of the service was established, note the Medal of Honor Recipients listed on the north wall, and talk about the women service members (students love the challenge of finding the woman statue). Limiting access to the memorial means that fewer people will gain an understanding of the sacrifice and service of the men and women who served, a particularly regrettable loss of information for young people who visit the area.

Groups on a motor coach will visit many sites in Arlington, including the Pentagon and 9/11 Pentagon Memorial, Pentagon City Fashion Mall, and traditionally a visit to the Air Force Memorial. Often tour operators/companies arrange itineraries in a manner that bundles a visit to these sites around a meal stop at the mall, and very often after a dinner meal stop. Inclusion of the Air Force Memorial into Arlington National Cemetery will severely restrict the times in which visitors can access the memorial.

Please know that guides support the expansion of Arlington National Cemetery and the increase in capacity for interments for eligible veterans. However, we object to the restrictions on access to the Air Force Memorial that will occur due to current plans. Regarding oversight of the memorial, guides have asked about the National Park Service overseeing the Air Force Memorial so, like the other memorials NPS manages, the Air Force Memorial might remain accessible to the public.

Even if the memorial's absorption into the cemetery grounds happens, there is still an interest in having motor coaches park at the newly proposed Columbia Pike entrance. This accommodation will allow groups to enter the cemetery more conveniently near the Memorial. At a minimum the expansion project should include:

- accommodations for coaches at the proposed Columbia Pike parking complex with pedestrian safety measures for walking large groups across the Pike, and
- expedited access and security screening at the Columbia Pike entrance for guests visiting only the Air Force Memorial and not ANC.

The Guild will be sharing our concerns with staff at Arlington National Cemetery, but we appreciate the opportunity to present them to NCPC. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Maribeth Oakes
Co-Chair, Government and Tourism Committee
Guild of Professional Tour Guides
7502 Holly Avenue
Takoma Park, MD 20912
202-957-4406