



Information Presentation

Commission Meeting: July 7, 2022

PROJECT
New Smithsonian Museums
Site Evaluation Study
Washington, DC

NCPC FILE NUMBER
8327-8328

NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER
00:00(73.10)45528

SUBMITTED BY
Smithsonian Institution

PRESENTER
National Capital Planning Commission staff
Smithsonian Institution

The purpose of this information presentation is to provide an update on the Smithsonian Institution's (SI) site evaluation study for two new museums: the National Museum of the American Latino and the American Women's History Museum. SI has initiated the site evaluation process, which will include consultation with NCPC, among others. The study will cover both museums and will occur concurrently. The presentation will review the current list of sites under consideration, as well as an overview of the national survey results. The BOR must carry out site selection in consultation with, among others, the Chair of NCPC. As such, NCPC has an advisory role.

In December 2021, 26 initial sites were presented. Those were narrowed down to 14 "Tier 1" sites in March 2022, which were advanced for additional study. Since that time, SI has identified a short list of four focus sites for further evaluation. These include three previously-identified sites, and one new site. The four sites are identified below, along with some additional information for each location.

1. Arts and Industries Building - 900 Jefferson Drive, SW

- Under SI jurisdiction
- It is a National Historic Landmark
- Building is currently used for special exhibitions and events
- Located on the National Mall
- Has frontage on Independence Avenue
- Located adjacent to other SI facilities, including the Castle
- Located between two Metrorail stations (Smithsonian and L'Enfant)

2. Northwest Capitol site – bounded by Constitution Avenue, First Street, Pennsylvania Avenue, and 3rd Street, NW

- Under Congressional jurisdiction
- Has highway infrastructure underneath portions of the site
- Several blocks from nearest Metrorail stations (Judiciary Square and Union Station)

-
- Highly visible from U.S. Capitol
 - Frontage on Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
 - Portions located in flood risk zone
 - Height, massing, and architecture will be important considerations given the site's relationship to the Capitol grounds and the U.S. Botanical Garden
 - Viewsheds and setbacks along Pennsylvania Avenue would need to be evaluated
 - Will require coordination with Pennsylvania Avenue Initiative
3. **South Monument site** – bounded by Raoul Wallenberg Place, Jefferson Drive, 14th Street, and Independence Avenue, SW
- Under NPS jurisdiction
 - Located in the Reserve
 - Located on the National Mall
 - Located a few blocks from nearest Metrorail station (Smithsonian)
 - Located close to Washington Monument
 - Viewshed impacts would need to be evaluated
 - The smallest of the four sites
 - Would likely require off-site space to meet program
4. **Tidal Basin site** – location bordered by Raoul Wallenberg Place, Maine Avenue, and Independence Avenue, SW
- Under NPS jurisdiction
 - Located in the Reserve
 - Currently used as a rugby field, temporary staging for events
 - Located several blocks from the nearest Metrorail station (Smithsonian)
 - Located across from the National Holocaust Museum
 - Located within cross-axis between White House, Washington Monument, and Jefferson Memorial
 - Only one frontage for pick-up/drop off, loading access
 - Will require evaluating impacts to viewsheds in cross-axis
 - Landscape setting of Tidal Basin could be impacted

As noted in previous discussions, other museums are likely over the medium and long term, including the National Museum of Asian Pacific American History and Culture. If any of the focus sites are ultimately unavailable or not viable, it will be necessary to consider other locations on or adjacent to the National Mall. In particular, sites along Independence Avenue and within the Southwest Ecodistrict should be carried forward for further evaluation. These include: Banneker Park, the Whitten Building, the Forrestal Building site, the Orville Wright Building site, and the Wilbur Wright Building site. Locations on Pennsylvania Avenue could also be considered.

ATTACHED:

- Overview and Map

PROJECT TIMELINE

Previous actions	December 2021 – 1st Information Presentation March 2022 – 2nd Information Presentation
Remaining actions (anticipated)	Through 2022 - Ongoing consultation on site evaluation process; final information presentation expected Fall 2022 Future - Review of site and building plans for proposed museums

New Smithsonian Museums Site Evaluation Study

Washington, DC

Information Presentation

Smithsonian Institution

Background

- In December 2020, H.R. 133 was signed into law, which establishes two new museums within the Smithsonian Institution – American Women’s History Museum and National Museum of the American Latino
- Legislation provides that the Smithsonian Institution Board of Regents (BOR) designate sites for the museums within two years (December 2022)
- The Smithsonian Institution has initiated the site evaluation study, which will include consultation with NCPC Chair, among others
- The study will cover both museums and will occur concurrently
- SI provided briefings in December 2021 and March 2022

Background

- The Board of Regents must consult with, among others, the Chair of NCPC.
- NCPC has an advisory role.
- Chair can provide letter with recommendations to Board of Regents.
- Following site selection, NCPC will have approval authority over site and building plans for the museums in accordance with the Planning Act.

Focus Sites under Consideration

