



Commission Action

December 4, 2025

PROJECT Women's Suffrage National Monument Washington, DC	NCPC FILE NUMBER 8699
SUBMITTED BY United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service	NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER 00:00(73.10)46084
REVIEW AUTHORITY Commemorative Works per 40 U.S.C. § 8905	APPLICANT'S REQUEST Approval of comments on site selection
	ACTION TAKEN Approved comments on site selection

The Commission:

Approves the following comments on the site selection study for the Women's Suffrage National Monument.

Notes Public Law 118-226, the Women's Suffrage National Monument Location Act enacted on January 4, 2025, authorizes the monument to be located within the Reserve on the National Mall. All four sites under Commission consideration are within the Reserve.

Notes all sites are located within important historic and cultural landscapes. The applicant will explore applicable steps to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impact to historic properties through the Section 106 consultation process.

Notes the applicant seeks a landscape design approach to the memorial. According to the applicant, the site should be large enough to effectively accommodate the high number of visitors expected, within a 20-minute walk of a Metrorail station and require minimal new infrastructure. The site should be in proximity to facilities that support the visitor experience such as restrooms and food service.

Constitution Gardens West Site

Notes the Commission approved phase two of the Constitution Gardens rehabilitation project in March 2024. The proposed Constitution Gardens West site includes portions of the rehabilitation project area that were planned for upgrades.

Notes in terms of accessibility, the Constitution Gardens West site is less than a mile walk from the Farragut West Metrorail Station and approximately a one mile walk from the Smithsonian Station. Constitution Avenue, NW provides opportunities for pick-up and drop-off to the memorial.

Finds the Constitution Gardens West site has the strongest thematic nexus of the final four sites studied by locating a monument commemorating the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution on Constitution Gardens, a living legacy to the Constitution and founding of the republic. The site provides additional thematic connections to the 56 Signers of the Declaration of Independence Memorial and Vietnam Women’s Memorial also located on Constitution Gardens, and a visual connection to the Washington Monument. The site is symbolically at the intersection of Constitution Avenue, NW and 19th Street, NW, referencing the 19th Amendment.

Finds a monument on this site has potential to complement the National Mall Plan and Constitution Gardens rehabilitation project vision for Constitution Gardens as a place full of activity throughout the day, night and in all seasons by attracting additional visitors to this destination on the National Mall; and therefore, **supports** advancing Constitution Gardens West for further evaluation.

Finds a monument on the west side of the Constitution Gardens Lake would have minimal impact on the approved rehabilitation project. This portion of the project area is adaptable as it was planned for passive uses and includes upgrades to the lake path, planting areas, and new seating.

Supports further exploration of the nodal landscape design approach which has potential to align well with the naturalistic landscape setting of Constitution Gardens and **recommends** close coordination with NPS and the Trust for the National Mall to ensure the design integrates into the rehabilitation plans for the lake area landscape previously approved by the Commission.

Constitution Gardens East Site

Notes the Commission-approved Constitution Gardens rehabilitation project includes improvements to the east portion of the lake including an updated event plaza and terraces that are planned to be a major draw for visitor programming. The site is also proposed for a future visitor pavilion in the next phase of Constitution Garden improvements.

Finds that while the thematic nexus is similar to Constitution Gardens West, the Constitution Gardens East site should be dismissed from further consideration due to conflicts with the approved plans for event programming and visitor spaces on this portion of Constitution Gardens.

Hockey Fields East Site

Notes the site offers an open and expansive area for memorial design with clear visibility of the Washington Monument.

Notes the site is currently used for a variety of recreational purposes, as one of the few open spaces of significant size in this part of the National Mall.

Finds the Hockey Fields East site’s current programming for recreational uses should be maintained, and the site should be dismissed from further consideration.

Washington Monument South Site

Notes the Washington Monument South site is an unprogrammed area located along a grove of trees at the edge of the monument grounds and adjacent to the proposed Sylvan Theater improvement area, which will include an amphitheater and visitor amenities. The site is within a 0.5-mile walk of the Smithsonian Metrorail Station. However, pick-up and drop-off areas are more limited at this site.

Notes the site is in close proximity to the 14th Street and Independence Avenue, SW block which the Smithsonian Institution has identified as their preferred location for the future American Women's History Museum.

Finds the site has a strong thematic nexus by commemorating the contributions of women in a prominent central location of national significance near the crossing of the primary vistas of the National Mall.

Finds that while the overall site area is approximately the same, the site's dimensions are less constrained than the Constitution Gardens West site, allowing for greater design flexibility. However, the proposed monument may be incompatible with the open turf lawn setting of the Washington Monument Grounds. Additionally, plans for the adjacent Sylvan Theater project have not been finalized leaving the compatibility with that design unknown. Further conceptual design analysis would be needed to ensure appropriateness for this site.

Recommends that if the Constitution Gardens West site is deemed infeasible after initial design study, the applicant should consider further evaluation of the suitability of the Washington Monument South site for conceptual design.

Recommends that, if this site is advanced, any design alternatives on this site be limited in height to respect the surrounding viewsheds to the Washington Monument.

Monument Design Development

Notes the Women's Suffrage National Monument Foundation (Foundation) plans to hold a design competition to identify and select a monument design.

Encourages the applicant to ensure the competition brief emphasizes the design will undergo iterative review by NCPC and other agencies, and the sponsor may consider consultation with NCPC and other stakeholders during the development of the competition brief and design finalist selection.

Recommends the applicant consider shade and seating areas for visitor comfort and integrate universal design principles into the site design. The monument's commemorative elements should be limited in height to maintain existing viewsheds and prevent encroachment into the setting of surrounding memorials.

Recommends the sponsor consider including spaces for children in the design to accommodate families and school groups visiting the National Mall, particularly if Constitution Gardens West is advanced.

Recommends that as the landscape plans are developed, the applicant should consider policy guidance in the Comprehensive Plan Federal Environment Element regarding tree removal, tree replacement, and the selection of plants that support pollinators, where appropriate (FE.G.1, FE.G.2, and FE.G.11).


12/5/25

Meghan Hottel-Cox
Secretary to the National Capital Planning Commission

