Carnegie Library
Rehabilitation and Exterior Restoration
801 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20001
Mount Vernon Square (Reservation 8)

Preliminary-Final Review Submission
National Capital Planning Commission
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CONTENTS

Project Narrative
Existing Conditions 3
Historical Overview 3
Project Description 4
Preliminary-Final Submission 4
Historic Preservation Documentation 4
Environmental Documentation 5
Entitlements Coordination 5
Schedule 5
Funding 5
Employment 5
Building Area and Site Coverage 5
Existing Conditions Photographs 6

Project Drawings
Location Plan 8
Floor Plans - Demolition 9
Floor Plans - Proposed 15
Elevations - Existing & Proposed 20
Sections - Proposed 24
North Stair and Entrance Details - Proposed 26
Site Plan - Demolition 31
Site, Landscape, and Signage Plan - Proposed 32
Site Furniture and Planting - Proposed 33
Rendering - Proposed 40

Appendices
Arborist’s Assessment and Tree Protection Plan
PROJECT NARRATIVE

Existing Conditions

Carnegie Library is located at 801 K Street, N.W., Washington, D.C., 20001. The site is located on Mount Vernon Square (also designated as Reservation 8), which is owned by the U.S. Government and administered by the District of Columbia. The Carnegie Library building is separately owned by the District of Columbia and administered by Events DC, the convention and sports authority for the District of Columbia. The building functions as the headquarters of the Historical Society of Washington, D.C. (HSW). It houses the administrative offices, archival storage, exhibit galleries, and research functions of HSW. It also houses event and office space for Events DC. The building features three full stories in addition to three habitable mezzanines and a sub basement.

Historical Overview

constructed in 1899-1902, Carnegie Library was listed in the District of Columbia Inventory of Historic Sites in 1964 and the National Register of Historic Places in 1969 as the Central Public Library. The nomination recognized the building's significance as one of many buildings given to American cities by industrialist and philanthropist Andrew Carnegie to promote free library systems. It also reflects the growth of the D.C. Public Library (DCPL) system from humble beginnings in rented quarters to a Beaux-Arts edifice on Mount Vernon Square. Mount Vernon Square is a contributing resource to the Plan of the City of Washington (L'Enfant Plan; L'Enfant-McMillan Plan).

Since its completion, the Carnegie Library has undergone several small- and large-scale renovations. Shortly after the library's dedication in 1903, Carnegie donated additional funds to complete the building's then-unfinished interior, including interior painting and expansion of the closed book stacks. From 1905 through 1962, DCPL undertook several additional changes, notably the reconfiguration of the Delivery Room and the addition of mezzanines in the east and west reading rooms. Carnegie Library operated as the Central Public Library for the District of Columbia until 1971, when those operations were transferred to the newly constructed Downtown Central Library, subsequently renamed the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Library.

The building's two later tenants, the University of the District of Columbia (UDC) (1977-1990s) and HSW (1999-Present), each completed major rehabilitations. At the time UDC acquired the library in 1977, it had been vacant for six years and was suffering from neglect. UDC's $4.2 million renovation included the reorientation of the building towards Mount Vernon Place, NW, with the construction of a new main entrance at the north elevation, the removal of book stacks, the addition of a large HVAC unit, new lighting, the conversion of the former stack room and Lecture Hall into office space, removal of the Delivery Room counter, alteration of the west stairway in the northern portion of the building, and an additional layer of plaster onto the existing decorative plasterwork.

In 1999, Congress designated the Carnegie Library as the site for a city museum. HSW, which would operate the museum and house its administrative and research facilities in the former library, entered into a 99-year lease for the building. A comprehensive rehabilitation was undertaken to accommodate the City Museum, which opened in the spring of 2003. The project included: a newly constructed 150-seat theater in the east wing of the building; a permanent exhibit in the former west reading room on the first floor; new egress stairs and elevators; community galleries focusing on D.C. neighborhoods; two galleries, a public reading room, and a library on the second floor; and an archaeology lab, with classrooms and workshops in the basement. Though the City Museum only remained operational through November 2004, HSW remains in the building and continues to operate the library on an appointment basis.
Project Description
The proposed project will rehabilitate and modernize the Carnegie Library building to become a retail and education facility. The building will be leased jointly by HSW (which will continue to operate its research library, exhibit galleries, and administrative offices there) and a retail tenant (which will operate a retail, events, and educational facility in the building). The project will include a full restoration of the building exterior, including the repair and cleaning of the exterior stone, repair and retrofit of the original wood windows, repair and retrofit of the original skylight frames, and repair of the copper roof cladding. On the north side, the non-original stair and awning will be removed and replaced with a new stair that improves access to the building. Windows on this elevation—modified during the UDC and HSW rehabilitation projects—will be replaced or retrofitted.

The interior of the building will be rehabilitated, including removal of non-original infill construction throughout the building dating from the 2003 City Museum rehabilitation. The scope of this project included the enclosure of the central atrium with a museum gallery, offices, and clerestory extension with hipped roof. This addition will be removed, creating a central, skylit atrium space. The new atrium will be enclosed with a flat skylight, positioned below the existing roof line to obscure its visibility from the surrounding streetscape. Additionally, the MEP and other systems throughout the building will be upgraded or replaced.

Historic Preservation Documentation
Because the Carnegie Library is a District of Columbia Government-owned building in the Central Area, the proposed project is subject to the review and approval of the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) under the National Capital Planning Act. NCPC’s approval of the project is considered a Federal undertaking; therefore, the project must undergo review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the National Environmental Policy Act to consider its effects on historic and environmental resources.

NCPC initiated consultation with the D.C. Historic Preservation Office (DC SHPO) on April 21, 2017. The first consulting parties meeting was held on May 17, 2017. The purpose of this meeting was to define the undertaking, present the draft Area of Potential Effects and list of historic properties, and present additional information on the proposed design. Events DC and NCPC have continued to consult with DC SHPO and the consulting parties to identify, assess, and resolve adverse effects on historic properties.

On July 29, 2017, NCPC notified DC SHPO and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation of its determination that the undertaking would have an adverse effect on the Carnegie Library building. On August 24, 2017, NCPC hosted a second Section 106 consulting parties meeting to provide an update on the proposed project, to identify adverse effects on historic properties, and to discuss resolution strategies.

Preliminary-Final Submission
The Commission approved the concept proposal for the Carnegie Library project at their meeting of June 1, 2017.

This revised submission includes a complete set of project plans, most of which have remained substantially unchanged since the previous submission, with the exception of the configuration of the north stair. This submission also includes more information regarding the proposed signage and landscape plans.

The scope of the comprehensive improvement plan for the landscape includes:
- A site-wide tree survey and protection plan (enclosed with this submission);
- Replacement of an undersized street tree in the K Street sidewalk with a large healthy tree to match the other street trees;
- Retrofit of the existing irrigation system to be fed from rainwater collected from the roof;
- New rainwater retention planting areas immediately adjacent to the building;
- New park benches on paved pathways where benches are currently located;
- GRADE of south plaza to correct inaccessible slope;
- Removal of non-historic switchback ramp at south plaza;
- Removal of ADA ramp at north basement entry;
- Removal of non-historic stairs at north entry and construction of new stairs and ADA lift;
- Addition of new secure bike storage adjacent to building (in location of existing north ADA ramp);
- New hedge and vine screening for cooling tower (will be implemented in a symmetrical layout);
- New trashcans to match DC-approved standard;
- Replacement of four “Washington Globe” light fixtures that are only thirteen feet tall with new globe fixtures that are eighteen feet tall to match all the other globe fixtures on the site;
- Relocation of two of the Washington Globe fixtures to better illuminate the south plaza and the façade;
- Relocation of one DDOT street lamp (currently centered on the south elevation) to the west and installation of a new, symmetrical DDOT street lamp to the east; and
- Replacement of existing exterior signage with new identification and wayfinding signage across the site.
Environmental Documentation

NCPC has prepared Environmental Assessment (EA) to consider the project’s effects on environmental resources. Events DC and NCPC hosted a public scoping meeting on May 9, 2017 at the Carnegie Library. The purpose of this meeting was to invite public comment on the range of alternatives to be considered in the Environmental Assessment. On July 7, 2017, NCPC released the EA for public comment.

The EA is enclosed in this submission and addresses environmental considerations associated with the project including stormwater management, floodplain management, and wetlands protection.

Entitlements Coordination

Because Carnegie Library is a public, District Government building, the project must undergo review by the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts (CFA) to seek its advice on any exterior alterations to the building. CFA granted concept approval to the project at its meeting on May 18 and revised concept approval on July 20, 2017.

The Federal entitlements process is being coordinated with the D.C. Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB) process to ensure the proposed project is compatible with the character of the Carnegie Library and surrounding historic properties. HPRB granted concept approval to the project at its meeting on June 29, 2017, with final review delegated to staff.

Schedule

Construction is anticipated to begin in the fall of 2017 and continue for approximately one year, with occupancy in the fall of 2018.

Funding

The entirety of the project will be funded privately by the retail tenant.

Employment

Neither the existing nor the proposed employment on the site will exceed 500 employees over a twenty-year period.

Building Area and Site Coverage

The approximate, existing gross site and building areas are listed below. Under the proposed project, only the gross building area will change nominally; otherwise, these figures will not change.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Square Feet</th>
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<tr>
<td>Gross building area</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gross site area</td>
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<tr>
<td>Area of building footprint</td>
<td>17,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Site coverage</td>
<td>~14.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Existing Conditions Photographs

Figure 5: South elevation, facing northwest.

Figure 6: South elevation, facing north

Figure 7: South and east elevations, facing northwest

Figure 8: East elevation, facing northwest

Figure 9: North elevation, facing southwest

Figure 10: North elevation (including non-original stair and awning), facing southeast
Exterior Conditions Details
Floor Plans - Demolition

DEMOLITION LEGEND
- EXISTING WALL TO BE REMOVED
- EXISTING WALL TO REMAIN
- FLOOR SLAB TO BE REMOVED
- SITE WORK TO BE REMOVED, REGRADED PRIOR TO NEW WORK
- WALKWAY PAVING TO BE REMOVED AND REPLACED

Basement Floor Plan
First Floor Mezzanine Plan
Second Floor Mezzanine Plan
Floor Plans - Proposed

Basement Floor Plan
Second Floor Plan
Existing South Elevation

Top of Ridge
57’-6”

Existing Roof
Penetrations

Existing Skylight

Existing South Elevation

Existing Chimneys

Existing Skylight

Existing Copper Roof

Existing Roof
Penetrations

Top of Ridge
57’-6”

Existing Roof
Penetrations

Existing Danby
Vermont Marble

Existing Milford
Granite

Proposed South Elevation

Third Floor
28’-6”

Second Floor
19’-7”

First Floor
0’
Existing North Elevation

Top of Ridge 57'-6"
Third Floor 28'-6"
Second Floor 19'-7"
First Floor 0'

Existing Skylight
Existing Roof Penetrations
Existing Danby Vermont Marble
Existing Milford Granite

Proposed North Elevation

New Glass Balustrade
New Clear Glass Entrance
New Glass Balustrade

Existing Chmneys
Existing Skylight
Existing Roof Penetrations
Existing Roof Penetrations
Existing East Elevation

Top of Ridge 57'-6"

Existing Roof Penetrations

Existing Copper Roof

Existing Chimneys

Existing Danby Vermont Marble

Existing Milford Granite

Proposed East Elevation

Top of Ridge 57'-6"

Second Floor 19'-7"

Third Floor 28'-6"

First Floor 0'
Carnegie Library Rehabilitation - NCPC Preliminary-Final Submission

Existing West Elevation

Top of Ridge 57'-0"

Third Floor 28'-6"

Second Floor 19'-9"

First Floor 0'
Sections - Proposed

Proposed Transverse Section (Facing West)

Skim Faced Plaster on Historic Brick

Glass Balustrade
Proposed Longitudinal Section (Facing North)

- Glass Balustrade
- Wood Doors
- New wood wainscot to reference historic bookcases
- Marble Piers in North Entry
- Plaster
North Stair and Entrance Details - Proposed

- Existing Sidewalk
- New Stone Stairs
- New Bronze Handrail
- New hard landscaping
- New stone stair
- New glass balustrade with bronze handrail
- New ADA Lift
- New access to ADA lift
- New glass balustrade
- Granite Stairs

August 4, 2017 (revised September 20, 2017)
Perspective View - Facing South
Isometric View of Stairs from Northeast
Perspective View - Facing West
Site Plan - Demolition

DEMOLITION LEGEND
- EXISTING WALL TO BE REMOVED
- EXISTING WALL TO REMAIN
- FLOOR SLAB TO BE REMOVED
- SITE WORK TO BE REMOVED, REGRADED PRIOR TO NEW WORK
- WALKWAY PAVING TO BE REMOVED AND REPLACED

MOUNT VERNON PLACE

1/32" = 1'-0"
Site, Landscape, and Signage Plan - Proposed

New hedge screening
New bike racks and storage
New ADA Lift

Three trees to be removed and replaced in-kind

New north stair entry

Note: A Comprehensive Tree Survey and Tree Protection Plan was developed for the entire site in Spring 2017. All trees affected by construction will be adequately protected.

Replace K Street lights with new Washington Globes to match Mount Vernon Place
Replace underperforming street tree to match surrounding
Demolish existing metal switchback ramp

LEGEND
VEGETATION
- Shrubs (Portugal Laurel)
- Ground Cover (Appalachian Barren Strawberry)
- Sod / Seed
- Bioretention Area

HARDSCAPE
- Brick
- Exposed Aggregate

LIGHTING
- Cobra Head
- Washington Globe
- Double Washington Globe

SITE FURNITURE
- Bench (replace)
- Trash Receptical (replace)

SIGNAGE
- Wayfinding Signage
- Site Identification
- Accessible Entry Directional
- Tenant Signage
- Tenant ID, Ground
- Tenant ID, Facade
- Tenant ID, In-Glazing
- Tenant ID, Banner

MISCELLANEOUS
- Accessible Pathway
- Subsurface Rainwater Harvesting Tank
Site Furniture and Planting - Proposed

72-inch "Gretchen" Bench with Arms
Manufacturer: Landscape Forms
Materials: Powder-coated cast aluminum legs and arms; wood slat seat and back (Specified bench will have center armrest)
Number Proposed: 4

ES-142 Trash Can
Manufacturer: Victor Stanley
Materials: Powder-coated steel (black)
Number Proposed: 4

Hedge Screening Shrubs
Species: Portugal Laurel, Prunus lusitanica
Location: Screening employee bike storage and cooling tower along north areaways of east and west wings

"Downtown" Bike Rack
Manufacturer: Dero
Materials: Powder-coated steel
Number Proposed: Bicycle parking for 48 visitors and 32 employees

"Washington Globe" Lamp Post
Manufacturer: Spring City
Materials: Cast Aluminum
Number Proposed: 10

Perennial Groundcover
Species: Appalachian Barren Strawberry, Waldsteinia fragarioides
Location: Planting beds around perimeter of foundation
Ground Sign Details
Ground Sign Details

A Site Identification

B Accessible Entry Directional

C Tenant ID, Site

SIGN PANEL:
Dark bronze or corten steel closed panel sign construction

LETTERING:
Cut-out lettering revealing Off-white Corian panel behind

The Carnegie Library
at Mt. Vernon Square
Detail at South Elevation Signs

Anchor points in grout joints

New marble to match existing
Illuminated white logo

Conduit

5'-10" 3'-0" 16"
**Proposed Logo Banner Details**

Logo Banner at North Plaza

Logo Banner at South Plaza

Logo Banner Pole Elevation