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NCPC Approves Federal Reserve Board Campus Plans

At its [Thursday, September 2, 2021 online meeting](#) the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) approved final site and building plans submitted by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System for the renovation and expansion of the Marriner S. Eccles Building, the Board's headquarters, and an addition to the Federal Reserve Board-East Building. Both buildings are located on Constitution Avenue, NW in Washington, DC. The projects will address needed building system and other upgrades, help reduce leased space, and accommodate future office needs.

The Federal Reserve will consolidate its approximately 3,400 employees into a campus including the Eccles Building (constructed 1935-1937), the Federal Reserve Board-East Building (constructed 1931-1933), and the 1709 New York Avenue and Martin Buildings. Plans call for five-story infill additions on the Eccles Building's east and west sides that will connect its existing north and south wings. A five-story addition will be added to the Federal Reserve Board-East Building's north side and new four levels constructed underground. In addition, a new loading dock in the building will serve the campus, and a 318-space parking garage will be built under the building's south lawn, extending under 20th Street, NW. The exterior of both buildings will be restored, their interiors modernized, and systems upgraded. 20th Street, NW which runs between the buildings will be narrowed from 42' to 32' 6" to make it more pedestrian friendly. Lighting and perimeter security for the campus will also be updated.

In their approval, Commissioners commended the Board for engaging federal agencies and other interested parties throughout the development process and supported the proposed design of both buildings, noting the contemporary expansions nicely complement the existing historic architecture. They supported the site's landscape design and found that the tree replanting plan was in accordance with NCPC's Tree Replacement Policy. The Commission also found the new post and rail perimeter security system simpler, more elegant, and much improved from what currently surrounds the Eccles Building.

NCPC then provided feedback on two draft master plans. The first was for the 249-acre Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Muirkirk Campus located in Laurel, Maryland. Plans submitted by the General Service Administration call for the consolidation of approximately 1,500 employees onto the west parcel's northern portion (Beltsville Research Facility) near the primary Muirkirk Road entrance over a period of 20 years. The plan seeks to help make FDA more efficient and cost-effective and transform the campus into one that is an example of exemplary environmental stewardship.

Three different alternatives were developed. All three provide 438,000 gross square feet (GSF) of new development constructed in two phases to house 1,500 new employees (there are currently 300). The first phase, to be completed by 2030, would add 700 employees, 238,999 GSF of development, and a new parking garage. The second phase would add 800 employees, an additional 200,000 GSF of development, and a second parking garage. The alternatives differ in how the new buildings would be developed on the site. The Food and Drug Administration is conducting two phases of laboratory studies to determine the appropriate size of laboratory space for the campus, which may affect the development footprint and may impact a preferred alternative.

Commissioners did not express a preference among the three alternatives, finding that each alternative has positives and negatives. They commented favorably on the plan's goals and general approach, noting that development is not proposed for the site's densely forested east parcel or other natural areas, and that all development alternatives considered would comply with the Comprehensive Plan's tree preservation and replacement policies. They supported a formal entrance from Muirkirk Road into the campus, recommended that the General Services Administration study how to have an unobstructed view of the campus's natural landscape from its main entrance, requested information on the proposed program needs to understand how they would be affected by where the buildings and parking structures were located, and requested that employee parking be in structured garages (with surface parking only for visitors).

Commissioners then provided input to the Department of the Army on a draft master plan, known here as an Area Development Plan, for the 804-acre Fort Belvoir North Area located in Springfield, Virginia. The site is two miles north of the main Fort Belvoir installation and is currently home to the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency headquarters and support facilities. The plan would provide a development framework for the area to transform it into a secure, cohesive, and fully self-contained intelligence community campus. The site includes a campus core, where the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency headquarters is currently located, and an area outside the core that is undeveloped,

New development is proposed for the core area, including a future Defense Intelligence Agency headquarters (already funded) and other facilities. Areas outside the core were evaluated for the capacity to accommodate future development, including new tenants and program needs not yet identified. Much of this area is heavily forested. Three alternatives were studied (minimal improvements, moderate expansion, and maximum expansion) with the maximum expansion option the preferred alternative. This would include thirty, one- to three-story buildings, four surface or structured parking areas, and paved organization vehicle areas would be configured along two internal streets. As of now, the program and tenant needs for the proposed capacity development are unknown.

While the Commission supported the early planning work being done to inform the location and layout of future consolidation and/or other funded projects, they raised significant concerns with the initial draft plan and want to see a new approach for how the land could be developed. They did not support designating forested areas as "highly suitable" for development, nor did they support the capacity development and parking as proposed and requested more information on why these areas were chosen. They requested that the applicant include several principles into the plan to guide the location and design of future development. These include prioritizing development on previously disturbed land and incorporating higher density development; minimizing forest clearing; and studying the ability to raise building heights to increase density while continuing to screen the buildings from nearby residential uses. The Commission also requested additional information on how existing parking is used to better understand parking needs.

NCPC approved a report to the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia regarding a map amendment for the Barry Farm neighborhood in various lots in Squares 5862, 5865, 5866, and 5867. The proposed zoning would allow matter-of-right development of the two zones consistent with the Barry Farm Redevelopment Plan for the site that is generally bounded by Suitland Parkway and the new Barry Farm Recreational Center to the north; Wade Road, SE to the east; St. Elizabeths East Campus to the south, and Firth Sterling Avenue, SE to the west.

NCPC has an advisory role to Zoning Commission submitted projects, and its review of this map amendment was focused primarily on historic preservation and urban design; particularly identifying any impacts to views from the federal St. Elizabeths campus located immediately to the west. Commissioners found that the proposed map amendment is consistent with the Barry Farm Redevelopment Plan and is not inconsistent with the *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital*.

Before adjourning the Commission heard an information presentation from NCPC staff on how the agency is advancing equity through its core work. While NCPC is committed to advancing equity in the areas of federal land use, community and economic development, the environment, parks and public spaces, transportation, security, and commemoration, staff realizes that more can be done. The agency uses the federal definition of equity as “the consistent and systematic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals.”

An Executive Order that charges the federal government to pursue a comprehensive approach to advancing equity for all was issued in January 2021. As part of this mandate, each federal agency should identify who is impacted by its policies, decisions, practices, or procedures; determine the extent to which its work has presented barriers to equity; eliminate those barriers and minimize any negative impact by updating agency policies, decisions, practices, or procedures to ensure equitable treatment; and evaluate the outcomes of those efforts regularly. Staff are researching and coordinating with other federal and regional agencies, developing an internal team to refine the approach, launching training efforts in the fall, and submitting an equity action plan to the Office of Management and Budget in January 2022. No official action is taken on information presentations.

Commission actions and related materials are available [online](#).

This month's agenda included seven consent calendar items (no presentations were given). Unless otherwise noted, all projects are in Washington, DC.

1. Preliminary and final building plans for Lincoln Memorial Temporary Facilities, 2 Lincoln Memorial Circle, NW. (7866)
2. Comments on concept plans for an Intersection Improvement Project, Pennsylvania and Potomac Avenues SE. (7476)
3. Preliminary and final site development plans for the Department of Agriculture South Building ExteNet Antenna Project, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW. (8298)
4. Preliminary and final site and building plans for the Washington DC VA Medical Center Oncology and Cancer Center Renovations and Addition, 50 Irving Street, NW. (8038)
5. Preliminary and final building plans for the Suitland Collections Center Garber Facility Building 38, 3904 Old Silver Hill Road, Suitland, Maryland. (8291)
6. Comments on revised concept plans for the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center Building 308 Modernization and Addition, 308 Center Road, Beltsville, Maryland. (8287)
7. Preliminary site and building plans for Replacement of the Marine Corps Base Quantico P191 Water Treatment Plant, 3019 Emory Loop, Quantico, Virginia. (8294)

The Executive Director approved five items under authority delegated by the Commission. Unless otherwise noted, all projects are in Washington, DC.

1. Preliminary and final building plans for replacement of the antenna at the Naval Support Facility Carderock Building 145 Water Tower, 9500 MacArthur Boulevard, West Bethesda, MD. (8293)
2. Preliminary and final site development plans for the Department of Education Lyndon B. Johnson Building Beam Barrier Project, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW. (8297)
3. Preliminary and final site development plans for an Immigrant Food Sign at the Franklin School, 925 13th Street, NW. (8300)
4. Final site and building plans for the Army Family Housing Renovation Program at Fort McNair and Fort Myer, Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, Washington, DC and Arlington, VA. (8166)
5. Report to the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia for a Text Amendment to Create the Barry Farm Zones. (ZC 20-21)