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NCPC Hears Update on National Institute of Standards and Technology Master Plan

Other Information Presentations Addressed Other Upcoming Projects Scheduled for Commission Review

Washington, DC—Representatives from the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) discussed the [status of a master plan](#) for the 578-acre campus at the National Capital Planning Commission's February 1 meeting. NIST, founded in 1901 as the National Bureau of Standards, relocated from Washington, DC to Gaithersburg, Maryland in 1962. The campus includes 62 buildings and structures with more than 3.6 million square feet of space and approximately 4,000 personnel.

Half of the campus' permanent buildings are more than 50 years old, and many of these mid-century modern buildings contribute to the campus' eligibility for listing as a historic district on the National Register of Historic Places. The draft master plan, which NCPC anticipates reviewing in April, will respond to anticipated growth and the need for modern, sustainably designed facilities to meet NIST's diverse, highly technical mission needs.

The next presentation provided an overview of agency studies intended to develop guidance regarding appropriate levels of change when [adapting designed landscapes](#) to meet current needs and goals or to accommodate changes in the surrounding area. Key issues to examine include function and use; landscape design; historic preservation; change in context; access and connectivity; and maintenance.

These findings will be included in a forthcoming update to the *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital's Federal Parks & Open Space Element*, NCPC's primary policy document used in reviewing projects. Recent examples include the National World War I Memorial at Pershing Park, pedestrian improvements at Banneker Park, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau Plaza reorganization, and the South Mall Campus Master Plan. Staff is currently updating the element, and anticipates asking the Commission to release it for a 60-day public comment period at its March 1 meeting.

NCPC staff provided details about the Commission's review responsibilities for the campus master plan, individual infrastructure projects, and individual chancery applications related to the new [Foreign Missions Center](#). The center will be located on a 32-acre section of the former Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Northwest Washington, DC.

Based upon a 2017 Memorandum of Agreement between NCPC and the U.S. Department of State, NCPC's review process and standards at the Foreign Mission Center are different than those used for other master plans, site development and project reviews. Individual chanceries will be reviewed using criteria in the Foreign Missions Act that currently guide review of chanceries on private land. NCPC anticipates reviewing the Foreign Mission Center's final master plan this spring. The center could host between 11 and 15 foreign missions with 2,000 employees in approximately one million square feet of development. Also anticipated is review of a chancery for the State of Libya, the center's first chancery.

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Purple Line Transit Partners provided an update on the [Purple Line light rail line](#) and addressed prior Commission questions related to station design, infrastructure materials, and connectivity to Metro. The 16-mile line, anticipated to open in 2022, will run from Bethesda to New Carrollton, Maryland and provide direct access to Metrorail, Metrobus, MARC, Amtrak, and county bus systems. The Purple Line will also provide access to three federal facilities: the National Oceanic and Atmospheric headquarters in Silver Spring; the Army's Forest Glen Annex in Silver Spring; and the Internal Revenue Service's building in New Carrollton. The system will have 21 stations, each featuring art installations, and use 140 foot long five-module multiple-articulated light rail vehicles with capacity for approximately 300 people.

The meeting concluded with an [information presentation](#) on the [Flood Risk Management Planning Resources for Washington, DC](#). The guide, a product of NCPC and the interagency DC Silver Jackets team, will help federal and local government planners and facility managers better understand the different flood risk planning resources available to make targeted, informed decisions when developing projects or protecting assets.

The guide is a compilation of previously published studies and information for the District of Columbia. It includes a short summary of key flood risks in the National Capital Region; an overview of 11 studies and tools that address current and future flood risks in the region; and brief descriptions on how to use these studies to manage flood risk.

This month's agenda also included two consent calendar items (no presentations given):

- Preliminary and final site development plans for the Northwest Branch and Northeast Branch Stream Valley Parks to accommodate the Purple Line Light Rail, Prince George's County, Maryland.
- Preliminary and final site development plans for a Ground-Mounted Solar Array at the National Institute of Standards and Technology, 100 Bureau Drive, Gaithersburg, Maryland.

In addition, the Executive Director approved one item, under authority delegated by the Commission.

- Preliminary and final site development plans for a land mobile radio antenna on Building 503 at Fort Detrick's Forest Glen Annex, 2460 Linden Lane, Silver Spring, Maryland.

The National Capital Planning Commission is the federal government's central planning agency in Washington, DC and surrounding counties of Maryland and Virginia. The Commission provides overall guidance for federal land and buildings in the region. It also reviews the design of federal projects and memorials, oversees long-range planning for future development, and monitors capital investment by federal agencies.

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