NCPC Approves Final Plans for Korean War Veterans Memorial Wall of Remembrance

Commission Hears Update on the Burnham Place at Union Station Development

Washington, DC—At its Thursday, May 7 meeting, held online due to COVID-19 guidance on gatherings, the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) approved preliminary and final site and building plans for the Modification of a General Development Plan for the Meadowbrook Stables Riding Ring Pavilion. The Montgomery County Department of Parks, in coordination with Meadowbrook Stables, proposes to construct a new 225’ x 125’ wide pavilion over the stable’s Riding Ring C. The stables are located on county-owned parkland in the Rock Creek stream valley in Chevy Chase, Maryland. NCPC reviewed the project because it is located on land acquired with federal funding appropriated under the 1930 Capper-Cramton Act for the purchase of land in Maryland to develop parks.

After a robust public testimony session, Commissioners discussed possible measures to reduce visual impacts, and noted that this project is a park-related use that would benefit horses and riders and improve stable operations because it can be used in inclement weather. They found the proposed pavilion’s size, scale, and design appropriate for the site. While the pavilion would be in a 100-year floodplain, its design addresses potential flooding and has been approved by the Maryland Department of the Environment. NCPC recommended that the Montgomery County Department of Parks and Meadowbrook Stables continue to work with the local community to address on-going facility operations.

The Commission then approved preliminary and final site development plans submitted by the National Park Service, on behalf of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Foundation, for a new Wall of Remembrance at the Korean War Veterans Memorial located on the National Mall southeast of the Lincoln Memorial. The new wall, to be integrated into the landscape surrounding the existing memorial, would list the 36,574 members of the United States Armed Forces killed or missing in action in the war and list approximately 8,000 members of the Korean Augmentation to the United States Army.

The design will include a circular area surrounding the existing Pool of Remembrance defined by a low, angled wall at the edge. The sloped 380’ wall will measure approximately five feet and two inches in width and three feet and eight and a half inches in height. Additional information will be incorporated on the existing mural wall’s south side. Two new pathways would connect to the memorial from Ash Road from the north and Independence Avenue from the south.

The Commission found that the new wall and features are compatible with the original memorial’s design, well-integrated into its landscape, and would not have any negative impacts on the National Mall. Several Commissioners commented on the successful design integration of this addition to the existing memorial. They noted that the two new pathways would make it easier for people to walk to the memorial and that the simple lighting design would improve visibility at night. Construction is anticipated to begin in April 2021 with a targeted completion date of July 27, 2022, the 69th anniversary of the Korean War Armistice.

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Before adjourning, the Commission heard an information presentation. NCPC staff and representatives from Akridge and Shalom Baranes Associates, the project developer and architect, respectively, provided an update on the Burnham Place project that will be constructed above 14-acres of train tracks behind Union Station. The project would be a mixed-use neighborhood working in conjunction with a functioning train hall. It would include approximately 2.5-3 million square feet of development (office, residential, hotel, and commercial) in 10-12 buildings, along with new public parks and open spaces.

The Akridge and Shalom Baranes representatives emphasized the importance of coordinating Burnham Place with the Union Station Expansion Project and how it is important to think of the two projects together as a whole. They mentioned that planning is near the point where the two projects need to be interwoven to ensure the best possible outcomes for both, to ensure an attractive and popular transit-rich commercial center providing improved amenities and connections to the city, region, and Northeast Corridor. They expressed concerns about the preferred option for a parking deck in the Union Station Expansion Project, a point the Commission also made in January when reviewing the concept plans for the expansion project. Other key concerns about the Union Station project expressed by the Akridge and Shalom Baranes representatives were pick-up and drop off locations, pedestrian circulation, and a new bus facility.

This month’s agenda included two consent calendar items (no presentations were given):
1. Preliminary site and building plans for proposed entrance alterations at 726 Jackson Place, NW. (8164)
2. Preliminary site development plans for the Army Family Housing Renovation Program at Fort McNair and Fort Myer-Phase 1, 1st, 2nd, 4th, and 5th Avenues at Fort McNair, Washington, DC, and Sheridan Avenue at Fort Myer, Arlington, VA. (8166)

The Executive Director approved seven items under authority delegated by the Commission.
1. Preliminary and final building plans for an enclosed loading bay addition and egress door in Square 457, 601 D Street, NW. (P8158)
2. Final site development plans for the Potomac Annex Permanent Fence, 2300 E Street, NW. (8150)
3. Preliminary and final site development plans for demolition of Building 502, sheds, and pavilions at Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling, 20 MacDill Boulevard, SE. (8159)
4. Preliminary and final site development plans for renovation and modernization of the Marine Barracks Washington's Building 8, 8th and I Streets, SE. (8160)
5. Preliminary and final site development plans for a temporary display at the National World War I Memorial's sculpture fountain, Pershing Park. (7682)
6. Comments on concept plans for a security panel installation at the Pentagon Metro Entrance Facility, 1155 Defense Pentagon, Arlington, Virginia. (8165)
7. Preliminary building plans for the renovation of Building 48 at Fort McNair and the demolition of its annex, 4TH A Street, SW (8167)

Video, Commission actions, and related materials will be available online within five days of the meeting.

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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