

October 2, 2020

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NCPC Approves Preliminary Federal Reserve Expansion Plans *Commission Updated on I-495 and I-270 Managed Lanes Study*

Washington, DC—At its [October 1 online meeting](#), the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) approved preliminary site and building plans for a [project on the Federal Reserve campus](#) submitted by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System. Plans call for the renovation and expansion of the Marriner S. Eccles Building located at 2051 Constitution Avenue, NW and the renovation of, and addition to, the Federal Reserve Board-East Building located at 1951 Constitution Avenue NW. The Eccles Building is the Board's headquarters.

The Federal Reserve Plans to 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 to the Eccles Building's east and west sides and a rooftop addition on the north wing that will connect to the new additions. The existing east and west exterior courtyards will become atriums. A five-story addition will be added to the Federal Reserve Board-East Building's north side with an additional four levels underground. 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. Existing perimeter security system around the Eccles Building would be replaced by a simpler and more elegant post and rail design that would also be constructed around the Federal Reserve Board -East Building.

In its approval the Commission noted that the Board successfully responded to prior Commission comments. These include making the design of the proposed contemporary additions compatible with the historic buildings; shrinking the Eccles Building's penthouse height and footprint so that it won't be as visible, and reducing the number of parking spaces at the Federal Reserve Board-East Building from 536 to 318 to meet the Comp Plan's parking ratio of one parking space for every five employees for the campus. They requested that the Federal Reserve Board submit a tree re-planting plan in accordance with NCPC's Tree Replacement Policy and that it consider public access to some of the grounds (such as the fountains and northwest plaza).

"We're gratified for an exciting and thorough renovation to these incredible jewels in Washington that have high visibility," said NCPC Vice Chair Thomas Gallas. "The care and attention paid to the buildings and their historic surroundings is very clear."

The Commission provided comments on concept plans submitted by the Department of Defense's Washington Headquarters Services for [stormwater engineering design and security upgrades at the Pentagon Reservation](#). The first five projects will reduce the reservation's discharge of pollutants in stormwater runoff that will allow it to comply with the Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load program. These include adding bioretention areas and tree boxes in several parking lots, resulting in the removal of 190 parking spaces. The sixth project focuses on security and safety upgrades at the campus, including along a 1,200-foot long walkway between the Pentagon Transit Center (including the Metro station) and the National 9/11 Pentagon Memorial. Changes include an 8-foot high fence on the side facing the Pentagon that would complete the building's perimeter security, new entry points for employees, a cable and rail system on the side of the street to protect pedestrians, landscaping, and trees.

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The Commission was supportive of efforts to add stormwater biorientation areas and replace the temporary security measures with permanent ones. However, they found the sixth project's proposed design not welcoming because it forces pedestrians to walk between the new fence on one side and the cable rail system on the other. It was suggested that the applicant examine relocating one of the biorientation areas to the side of the walkway facing the parking lot to replace the cable and rail system. Since the walkway is so long, they recommended that planting strips or low shrubs, along with public art, be added to reduce the monotony.

Before adjourning, NCPC staff provided an information presentation to the Commission on the status of the [I-495 and I-270 Managed Lanes Study](#) jointly conducted by the Maryland State Highway Administration and United States Federal Highway Administration. The study is examining the potential widening of I-495 (the Beltway) in Maryland and a portion of I-270 to add managed lanes (similar to high occupancy toll lanes in Virginia). Widening of the Beltway could require land from Capper Crampton Parks (Rock Creek, Sligo Creek, Cabin John, and Northwest Branch Stream Valley Parks) and several federal properties. NCPC has approval authority over any Capper Crampton park development.

The study is evaluating six build alternatives and is the first of a two-part National Environment Policy Act process. The second will assess alternatives along I-270 between I-370 (Gaithersburg) and I-70 (Frederick). The managed lanes would be constructed in three phases, with Phase 1 from the George Washington Memorial Parkway, along I-270, to I-70. Phase 2 would be along the northern I-495 Beltway, from I-270 to I-95. Phase 3 would be along the eastern Beltway, from I-95 to Maryland Route 5, in southern Prince George's County. A preferred alternative will be selected in early 2021 and a final Environment Impact Statement and Record of Decision released in the fall of 2021.

While no action is taken on information presentations, Commissioners did provide feedback to staff on proposed comments NCPC will submit on the project's draft Environmental Impact Statement. They supported adding the Intercounty Connector as an alternative, requested that the study leaders provide additional information on the potential impact the project will have on federal land and facilities, as well as cultural resources, and recommended that travel patterns be reexamined in light of changes made by the Covid pandemic. The requested information would support future Commission reviews.

This month's agenda included five consent calendar items (no presentations were given):

1. Final master plan amendment for the Department of Homeland Security Headquarters Consolidation at St. Elizabeths Master Plan Amendment 2, 2707 Martin Luther King Jr Avenue, SE. (MP211)
2. Final site development plans for the Korean War Veterans Memorial Wall of Remembrance Graphics Package, Independence Avenue and Daniel French Drive, SW. (8107)
3. Final site and building plans for proposed entrance alterations at 726 Jackson Place, NW. (8164)
4. Preliminary site and building plans for a wargaming center, parking garage, and area distribution node, Quantico, Virginia. (8212)
5. Final site development plans for a photovoltaic facility and boiler conversion at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, 9000 Commo Road, Cheltenham, Maryland. (8081)

The Executive Director approved three items under authority delegated by the Commission.

1. Final site and building plans for the Army Family Housing Renovation Program at Fort McNair - Phase 1, B Street and 4th Avenue, SW. (8166)
2. Preliminary and final site development plans for surface parking lot modifications and site improvements at the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, 10903 New Hampshire Avenue, White Oak, Maryland. (8131)
3. Preliminary and final site development plans for covered walkways at Buildings 21-1-31 at the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, 10903 New Hampshire Avenue, White Oak, Maryland. (8213).

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