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NCPC Provides Feedback on Hirshhorn Museum and Plaza Revitalization Plans Commission Hears *Reimagine Anacostia Park* Presentation

Washington, DC—At its [July 11, 2024 meeting](#) the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) provided feedback to the Smithsonian Institution on concept plans for the revitalization of the **Hirshhorn Museum Building and Plaza** located on the National Mall. The museum, plaza, and streetscape would be renovated, accessibility improved, and the museum expanded from 167,000 square feet to approximately 234,000 square feet. The museum opened in 1974.

Project components include expansion of the museum's lower-level and lobby, a new entry from the sculpture garden, revitalization of the plaza and perimeter, conversion of the fourth floor from office space into gallery space, the addition of mechanical equipment on the rooftop, and repairs to the building's exterior. The Smithsonian anticipates that museum visitation will double to 1.5 million annually in the next ten years, and the work will benefit future visitors.

Commissioners were supportive of the Smithsonian's goals to revitalize the museum and plaza and believe that the proposal well balances program needs and the visitor experience with historic preservation considerations. They thought that a new mechanical rooftop enclosure would impact views of the museum from the National Mall and could alter how people experience the building from the interior courtyard. As a result, they recommended that the Smithsonian study alternative locations, configurations, and sizing for the proposed equipment to further explore all reasonable options that avoid a visible rooftop mechanical enclosure. If the Smithsonian determines that the rooftop is the only viable alternative, then it should analyze ways to reduce its height and visual impact.

National Park Service staff gave an information presentation on its plans to **Reimagine Anacostia Park** between the 11th Street Bridge and the CSX railroad bridge (sections D and E of the park). The approximately 1,110-acre park, located on the Anacostia River, became part of the National Park Service (NPS) system in 1933. It includes a skating pavilion, playgrounds, picnic areas, fishing, tennis courts, and multi-use sport fields.

The proposal seeks to improve the park and its connections to neighboring communities and the Anacostia River. Three revised concept designs are currently open for public comment through August 30, 2024. NPS anticipates finalizing the plan in late 2024. Commissioners were enthusiastic about the proposed designs, believing them to be transformational, and were pleased with the work and outreach that the Park Service has done. No action is taken on information presentations.

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

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The Commission approved two items on the Consent Calendar (no presentations were made). Unless otherwise noted, the projects are in Washington, DC.

1. *Final master plan with for the Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling Installation Facilities Standards, 200 MacDill Boulevard, SE. (MP55C)*
2. *Preliminary site and building plans for the Fort Belvoir Veterinary Treatment Facility Replacement, Fort Belvoir, Virginia. (8566)*

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

1. *Final site and building plans for the U.S. Naval Observatory Booths, Gates, and Parking. (8542)*
2. *Preliminary and final building plans for the Veterans Administration Building Antenna Updates, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW. (8559)*
3. *Preliminary and final building plans for the Orville Wright Building Antenna Installation, 800 Independence Avenue, SW. (8556)*
4. *Preliminary and final building plans for the U.S. Department of Education Building Photovoltaic Array Modernization, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW. (8561)*
5. *Preliminary and final site and building plans for the NIH Building 11 Central Utility Plant Addition, 9000 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, Maryland. (8558)*
6. *Preliminary site and building plans for the Clara Barton National Historic Site Rehabilitation, 5801 Oxford Road, Glen Echo, Maryland. (8562)*
7. *Preliminary and final site and building plans for the James J Rowley Training Center Troysgate Project, 9200 Powder Mill Road, Laurel, Maryland. (8565)*
8. *Preliminary and final site and building plans for the Marine Corps Base Quantico Maintenance Support Facility, 2006 Hawkins Avenue, Quantico, Virginia. (8555)*
9. *Preliminary and final building plans for the Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall Antenna Installation, Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, Fort Myer, Virginia. (8569)*

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.