

THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS

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MEETING OF THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS

15 January 2004

The meeting was convened at 9:06 a.m. in the Commission of Fine Arts offices in the National Building Museum, 401 F Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20001.

Members present: Hon. David M. Childs, Chairman
Hon. Donald Capoccia, Vice Chairman
Hon. Diana Balmori
Hon. Pamela Nelson
Hon. Earl A. Powell III
Hon. Elyn Zimmerman

Staff present: Mr. Charles H. Atherton, Secretary
Mr. Frederick J. Lindstrom, Assistant Secretary
Ms. Kristina Alg
Ms. Sue Kohler
Mr. José Martinez
Ms. Susan Raposa

National Capital
Planning Commission

staff present: Mr. David Hamilton
Ms. Nancy Witherell
Ms. Elizabeth Miller

I. ADMINISTRATION

A. Approval of minutes of the 20 November and 18 December 2003 meetings. Mrs. Nelson asked that a statement she had made during the December meeting concerning the thickening of the chains between the bollards at the E. Barrett Prettyman Courthouse annex be inserted into that part of the minutes. It was unanimously agreed that this should be done, and the Secretary said he would take care of it. With that change, the minutes were approved.

B. Dates of next meetings, approved as:

19 February

18 March

15 April

C. Confirmation of actions taken during the 18 December 2003 meeting. The actions were confirmed in a blanket approval.

II. SUBMISSIONS AND REVIEWS

A. Department of Defense/Department of the Navy

(The agenda order was changed and item A.3 discussed first.)

3. CFA 15/JAN/04-3, Washington Navy Yard, Anacostia River waterfront Perimeter security fence. Concept designs. Staff member José Martinez introduced Larry Earle from the Navy to make this presentation. Mr. Earle said the final step in the Navy Yard's upgrading of their perimeter security would be a fence along the waterfront itself. He said in earlier years this would never have been considered a necessity, but in view of the city's desire to establish a walk along the entire waterfront, plus increasing security requirements, it was now felt that it had to be done. He showed a drawing of the proposed fence, a traditional design of wrought iron with concrete-capped brick piers, 9 and 1/2-foot-tall except where it would run behind an existing 1 and 1/2-foot serpentine knee wall, where it would be 8 feet tall. Periodically there would be turnstiles and vehicular access gates, but all this remained to be worked out in the future. During museum hours, there might be a guard at one of the turnstiles to check people in directly from the walk, but ordinarily, visitors would enter and be checked at the 11th and O streets gate. He noted that some trees that had been planted near the water's edge had created structural problems and would have to be removed. Lastly, Mr. Earle said there would be a park area below building 211, the Navy's conference center.

The Chairman asked Mr. Earle how long the fence would be, and when told that it would be 2,400 feet, he commented that that was longer than the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool and that the fence would be a very expensive one. He also observed that when walking along a fence of this length at a very oblique angle, as one would be doing in this situation so close to the water, it would appear completely opaque except for the area directly in front of the walker. He said the Commission needed to see full-scale drawings, if not a model, and a landscape plan, and he thought a site visit was required. Ms. Zimmerman suggested that new technology developed to keep people from intruding might be investigated, because she thought walking along a fence of this length, so close to the water, would not be a pleasant experience. Ms. Balmori thought there were also landscape elements, such as ha-has and groupings of trees, which could be incorporated and contribute to the security as well as soften the effect of an unbroken line of fencing. Mrs. Nelson liked the flow of the serpentine bench wall, which she thought might be used in combination with the fence to alleviate some of the rigidity.

The Vice Chairman asked how people were kept from entering the Navy Yard through the waterfront at present, and Mr. Earle said the waterfront was blocked off, and

all visitors had to enter through the 11th and O streets gate. Mr. Powell questioned the future of the ship piers; Mr. Earle said one had already been removed, and since only one or two were needed and they were very expensive to maintain, others might go, but at present there were no plans to remove them. Ms. Zimmerman suggested the Navy might consider landscape consultants to help them, and when it was learned that the architects were Einhorn, Yaffee, Prescott, it was suggested that they probably had someone they worked with in the landscape field who could be brought in.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Earle for coming in so early in the development of this project and said the Commission would work with him to help him meet his deadline. No formal action was taken, and a site visit was requested as soon as possible.

1. CFA 15/JAN/04-1, Naval Observatory and Vice President's residence, 34th Street and Massachusetts Avenue, NW. Perimeter security upgrades at the Main Gate, Gillis Avenue Gate, and South Gate. Designs. Before Mr. Earle began his presentation, Mr. Martinez said the third item in this submission, South Gate, had been postponed. Beginning with the Main Gate project, Mr. Earle said the Secret Service had requested that there be vehicle barriers on each side of the circular landscaped island in the middle of the driveway. He showed photographs with a simulation of the barriers in place, noting that the proposal for the Gillis Gate, a seldom used entrance leading to the Vice President's residence, would be similar. There was an immediate negative reaction to the installation—especially to the excessive use of the word STOP in very large red letters on each of the barriers. Mrs. Nelson remarked that there was no need for any graphics, since no one was going to be able to get through the barriers in the up position. Ms. Zimmerman suggested that a red line across the top would suffice if something was deemed necessary. The Vice Chairman observed that this kind of barrier was not even used at the White House. Mr. Earle agreed, saying that he also would have preferred that the barriers be pulled back somewhat, but the Secret Service said that was not possible. It was suggested that there be a meeting of the Secret Service, Mr. Earle, the Commission staff, and any member who wished to participate, to see what could be worked out. The Assistant Secretary said he had wondered why the barriers had to be placed in front of the hardened fence. He recalled that he had seen many other military installations where the barriers were placed right behind the fence; normally, the fence and gate would function as deterrents and the barriers would be down; in peak periods of danger, the barriers would be up. He noted also that the appearance of these barriers was very damaging to the neighborhood, and that the circular island had been designed specifically to prevent a straight shot through the main gate. There was further discussion of these barriers, and Mr. Earle said that although he was sympathetic to the questioning in regard to the positioning of the barriers, he could deal only with the recommendations concerning the graphics; he thought there would have to be a meeting with the staff and the Secret Service to discuss the other matters. It was agreed that a meeting should be set up, and Mr. Powell, who said he had dealt frequently with both the Secret Service and the FBI in regard to National Gallery of Art security, said he would be happy to attend. No action was taken.

2. CFA 15/JAN/04-2, Anacostia Naval Station, Harden Forth Sterling Gate at South Capitol Street, SE. Perimeter security upgrades. Design. This submission was postponed.

B. United States General Accounting Office

CFA 15/JAN/04-4, GAO Headquarters Building, 441 G Street, NW. Perimeter security barriers and guard booths. Final. (Previous: CFA 16/OCT/03-8) The Assistant Secretary introduced Mallory Andrews, director of facilities management at GAO, and architect Ingrid Stead. Mr. Mallory said they would present their final design and concentrate on materials, and after a brief orientation, he asked Ms. Stead to make the presentation.

Ms. Stead began with the G Street entrance, the main entrance to the building. She said first that they would like to make it a plaza-type entrance, and to accomplish this they were planning to pave the area between the grey granite strips with a reddish-colored aggregate concrete to harmonize with the dark red granite of the base of the building; it would come out to the curb. This would also be used at the H Street entrance. The existing red granite plinth walls at the G Street entrance would be raised and carried all along G Street, with the exception of the entrance area, and then, in a curve, around the corners on 4th and 5th streets, with black bollards continuing beyond and on H Street. Hardened iron benches would be used on both G and H streets. Bollards at the G Street entrance would be stainless steel, and a guard booth at the ramp would be built into the plinth wall and made of granite and steel. A similar guard booth would be place on H Street. At the loading dock entrances on 4th and 5th streets, the guard booths would be primarily stainless steel and aluminum. Delta barriers would be provided at all ramp entrances.

Samples of the materials were shown, and Ms. Zimmerman expressed concern with the aggregate concrete to be used at the entrances, saying that it had a coarse, unpleasant appearance and was too dark. She thought the granite should have more presence and the concrete should stay in the background. Mr. Mallory said they would work on that and bring in other samples. The Chairman questioned the design of the guard booths, particularly the overhanging roofs and the greenish color of the glass; he thought they should try to keep it the same color as that used for the windows of the building. Other than these comments, there were no objections to the final design, and Mr. Andrews was asked to bring aggregate samples and elevation designs for the guard booths to the staff for final review.

C. Department of State

CFA 15/JAN/04-5, People's Republic of China, International Center, Lot 12 (consolidated lots 11, 12, and 13), Van Ness Street, NW. New chancery building. Concept. The Assistant Secretary located the site, facing Van Ness Street and between International Drive and International Place. He pointed out the Federal Office Building and the central park area directly to the south and a pie-shaped lot, to be built on by the embassy of Morocco, to the southwest. Directly to the east, also facing Van Ness Street, was the embassy of Singapore. Mr. Lindstrom then introduced Donna Mavritte from the

State Department, who noted that while the plans for the Chinese embassy were being developed, the State Department was also developing plans for the United States embassy in Beijing. She then turned the presentation over to DiDi Pei and Gerald Zido from the Pei Partnership.

Mr. Pei showed a site plan, noting that no curb cuts were allowed on Van Ness Street, so the main entrance and drop-off to the entire compound had been placed on the south side, on International Place. Service and parking entrances would be off International Drive, to the west. Mr. Pei commented that they had suggested that the traffic direction on International Place be reversed to make a more gracious entry—from International Drive and then straight north on International Place to the entrance pavilion. There would be some landscaped parking near the corner of International Drive and International Place, across from the federal office building. Ms. Mavritte said the State Department would have no objection to the change in traffic direction. Mr. Pei noted that the axial entrance and the large central pavilion for ceremonial and reception purposes would follow some of the principles of Chinese architectural design, but the result would be contemporary, not Chinese architecture. Connected to the basically octagonal central pavilion, but separated from it by intervening garden space, would be two office wings, a large one to the west and a smaller one to the east, adjacent to the embassy of Singapore, thus dividing the complex into three distinct masses. The principal material would be stone, a light honey-colored limestone or granite. He said they hoped to find a suitable stone from China, but were still searching.

At this point Mr. Pei noted that the site had been a difficult one to work with because of the significant grade change—more than 40 feet—between the entrance pavilion and Van Ness Street; this had resulted in a building three stories high at the front (south side) and five stories on Van Ness. He showed section drawings making the organization of the space clear, noting that the connection to the office wings from the central pavilion would be below grade. Noting the staff parking below grade, the Chairman commented that this would not be allowed in an American embassy for security reasons. Mr. Pei said he understood that, but the Chinese did not object as long as access was highly controlled.

Elevation drawings were then shown, prompting questions from Ms. Zimmerman about the source of some of the forms. Mr. Pei said the sloping roofs were a contemporary form of those seen in China, and on the Van Ness elevation, the large, open, diamond-shaped form above the central pavilion wall came from the use in China of windows to frame views, windows that were more like picture frames to frame a view from the inside out. Ms. Zimmerman asked what would be seen through this “window” from the inside garden space. Mr. Pei replied that the view in that direction (north) was not one of the most attractive features of the site, and so by using this element, they were able to control it and allow more concentration on the foreground as well. Questions were asked about the height of the wall—30 feet—and what was behind it—occupiable space. Ms. Zimmerman commented that it was an enormous wall, and she thought that from a pedestrian point of view it would be very intimidating. She asked if there would be any windows in it; Mr. Pei said not along the front, but there would be windows on the sides.

The Chairman told Mr. Pei that when talking among themselves before the meeting, the members had expressed some concern about that wall, and he said he had

noticed, while traveling in China, that the walls there exhibited an attention to detailing, fine joint work, and sometimes a subtle shift in the plane; he suggested that even a recall of the shape of the window frame element or other patterns along the wall might make it richer, without losing the modernist vocabulary. Also, there might be ways to use landscaping along the garden edge at the top of the wall as well as at the sidewalk level. He recalled the enormous windowless walls of John Russell Pope's National Gallery building, which because of the detailing and the wisteria, avoided the feeling of blankness and intimidation. Turning to the window frame, he said he found it very interesting because it made "an announcement about the unity of these three pieces", and was "an extension of the axis as you come through". He thought, however, that it had a thin feeling, like a cut-out, and ways of giving it more thickness without destroying its graphic quality should be explored. Later in the discussion he asked Mr. Pei for the length of the building along Van Ness Street and was told it was 400 feet.

The members asked a number of other questions for clarification of some aspects of the design. Mr. Pei then spoke briefly about the perimeter fence, which he said would follow the State Department's fencing guidelines. He pointed out that in some places there would be a metal picket-type fence on a low granite wall, and in others the metal fence alone would be used in combination with stone piers. He said they wanted to retain a feeling of transparency, and although they had not worked out the fence in any detail, it would be shown to the Commission later. The Chairman asked Ms. Balmori for her feelings on landscaping, for the Van Ness frontage in particular; she said she thought there would be ample opportunity along the wall and behind the fence, and it would be good to tie the exterior landscaping to the gardens interlaced around the central pavilion. She had another comment, and that was that she hoped that the materials and detailing would help alleviate the separateness she felt between the west office wing and the rest of the complex.

The Chairman concluded the discussion by saying that while he thought there were many levels to go to make this a great building, he commended the exploration of geometry, the balancing of the program, and the way the building was set into the site; he thought it had a consistency of vocabulary that would enable everything to be tied together successfully. He thought the layering and the detailing would be very important, especially for the window frame, which he thought would become the symbol of the entire complex. All of this, he said, would be summarized in a letter which would constitute the Commission's formal action, rather than trying to phrase it in a motion.

(The agenda order was changed and items II.E.1 & 2 discussed next.)

E. Smithsonian Institution/National Zoological Park

1. CFA 15/JAN/04-7, National Zoological Park, New Asia Trail, Phase I, south of the Olmsted Walk. Final. (Previous: CFA 20/FEB/03-3)

2. CFA 15/JAN/04-8, National Zoological Park, New Asia Trail, Phase II, south of the Olmsted Walk. Concept.

Mr. Martinez introduced Harry Rombach from the Smithsonian to discuss final designs for Phase I of this project and concept designs for Phase II. Mr. Rombach

recalled first the Commission's concerns the preceding February as to how the Asia Trail project would fit in with the principal plan for the Zoo; he said it complied with the 1986 master plan and would also serve as a guide and inspiration for a more comprehensive plan that was being developed. He said there had also been some concern about how it would affect the Olmsted plan; he said they would address that at this meeting. Additionally, the Commission had requested a professional model which would show the surrounding neighborhood, and he noted that the model had been prepared and was just outside the conference room. With that, he introduced architect Leon Chatelain to discuss his project.

Mr. Chatelain first showed slides giving a history of the development of various plans for the Zoo. He said the Zoo consisted of 163 acres, and he would be talking about the upper northwest corner, an area of about 17-20 acres bordering the main entrance off Connecticut Avenue and continuing along the Olmsted Trail. He said Frederick Law Olmsted had been engaged in 1890 to develop a concept plan for a zoo; at that time there was only a small collection of animals housed on the Mall. Several things to bear in mind about this plan was that it was developed before the age of the automobile, when people arrived by carriage or by foot, and were used to doing more walking than we do now. The animals were exhibited in small cages bordering the walkways. Over the years the exhibits began to creep up the hill. During the 20s and 30s much larger facilities were developed, and in 1972 a master plan looked at how people moved through the zoo and what kind of buildings were appropriate; the emphasis was on pushing them back into the hillsides so that the animals came to the forefront. In 1984 Olmsted Walk was developed and improvements were made at Panda Plaza and at the Connecticut Avenue entrance. In 1986 the master plan was revised and the eleven thematic areas were reduced to a few broad areas of development, such as aquatic and grassland areas.

Mr. Chatelain continued by saying that in 1996 it was realized that many of the facilities were in bad condition. He showed a drawing indicating which parts of the Zoo were in need of work, which were in good shape and which were under construction. When the new Director, Dr. Lucy Spelman, came in 2000, a ten-year plan was devised to address the failing areas. He recalled the Commission's recent approval of the Children's Farm, to be built in a formerly neglected area.

Mr. Chatelain then turned to the quarter-mile long Asia Trail project, which because of the funding and phasing necessary to keep some of the animal in their habitats, would be undertaken in two phases, the first to begin near the Connecticut Avenue administration building. This first phase, which had already been given concept approval and had now been developed to the final design stage, would include new facilities for the sloth bears, clouded leopards, fishing cats, and red pandas, ending up at an expanded panda exhibit. He said most of the holding facilities for these species would be underneath the actual trail, so that the buildings would be secondary to the experience of the park.

Phase II would encompass an expanded elephant exhibit, including a trek, which would provide a steeper trail to give the animals more exercise. There would be other new facilities for rhinos, Asian otters, and other species to be determined, in the area between the bird house and the sloth bear exhibit. Mr. Chatelain then concluded his slide show and introduced landscape architect Warren Byrd from Nelson-Byrd Landscape

Architects to walk the members through the entire Asia Trail project and talk about site and landscape intentions.

Mr. Byrd said there had been four guiding principles that had been developed in laying out the Asia Trail project. The first was to keep in mind the original Olmsted plan and the recently developed Olmsted Walk which had followed the alignment of one of the old secondary walks in its layout. He said the intention in developing the Asia Trail was to be as “Olmstedian” as possible, not only in the sinuous character of the alignment, but in the way the trail and habitats fit into the natural landscape and how the plantings were conceived, that is, in a picturesque and natural way rather than from an architectural point of view. Secondly, they had tried to keep in mind that the project was in Rock Creek Park, and they had tried to keep the character of the park itself. Thirdly, they had wanted to respect and raise the level of the Asiatic elements of the plantings, so as to resemble as closely as possible the natural habitats of the animals. He commented that at the detailed level of choosing plants, stone, and water elements, there would be a kind of evolution through an area that was more truly Rock Creek Park to one that became increasingly Asiatic but still did not lose the feeling of being in the Park. The last of the four criteria was to make the project as sustainable as possible, in regard to the kinds of materials used, use of reused or recycled water, working with native plants, and in terms of the way the buildings were designed, oriented, and as much as possible, concealed in the hillside.

Turning to the trail itself, Mr. Byrd said it would vary in width from 8 feet to about 15 feet of walking or driving surface. It would be ADA-compliant with a slope of five percent or less, except for one portion which had to be eight percent because of the steep grade. The predominant paving would be a dark brown material called Naturalpave, a natural resin-bound aggregate, which had a very natural look, was ADA-compliant, and very durable. Some natural stone would be intermingled at points where one would go off the trail into some of the secondary paths leading to exhibit areas. Where ravines were crossed, or for very steep grades, hard Ipi wood would be used, and for areas where children might be playing around sculpture, a natural dirt paving would be used.

Railings would be of simple steel construction, either Corten or painted with a brown rust color. Mr. Byrd showed diagrams and drawings as he spoke, and samples of the materials mentioned. Turning to the plantings, he said bamboo would be used at the entrances to set the Asiatic tone, adding that most of the animals existed in bamboo grasslands. Depending on the location, either upland or lowland plants would be used, as well as both evergreen and deciduous, native and Asiatic species. He commented that there was really not a great deal of difference between what grew in the parts of Asia these animals came from and what was native to the Washington area. He noted that plants would also be used for their screening function, saying they had been very careful to see that views were screened from both Connecticut Avenue and nearby apartment buildings, as well as from one exhibit to another; plants would also be used to make sure visitors were looking at the animals and not at people off in the distance.

The wall surfaces seen throughout the trail were discussed next. Mr. Byrd said they would be mostly natural stone, except for very long walls, such as the one planned for the elephant exhibit; it would be made of a stamped concrete artificial stone. The natural stone used would be primarily bluestone, for both walls and pavement; some of

the seating areas in the amphitheatre would be made of Carderock stone, which the Zoo had already used extensively. Mr. Byrd also discussed the kind of barriers to be used, saying they would vary from an almost transparent mesh, to glass panels, to moats; in some cases plants themselves would become barriers.

When Mr. Byrd had finished his presentation, the members had several questions for him, particularly about the artificial stone—how much of it there would be and at what distance it would be seen. He said they would use as much natural stone as possible, but would use the artificial variety where very large amounts were needed, making natural stone prohibitively expensive, or in places where there were steep grades where the weight and amount needed made it impractical. A question was also asked about the glass barriers—would they be cleaned every day to keep them from becoming unattractive? Mr. Byrd assured the members they would.

Mrs. Nelson commented on a different matter. She said she had noticed some sculptures in the plan and comments made about children playing on others already in place. She said she thought that a zoo, by its nature, was there to teach, and to develop, especially in children, a respect for animals and the environment. When children were encouraged to play on animal statues and have their pictures taken, the zoo became more like an amusement park. It sent a message that animals existed to amuse us, to become our pets, and that did not encourage respect. The Chairman said he agreed absolutely, and he thanked Mrs. Nelson for her comments on this matter.

Mr. Rombach asked a representative from the Zoo to respond to Mrs. Nelson. The representative said first that she agreed with Mrs. Nelson's comments and fully understood her concern. She wanted to point out, however, that the primary purpose of the sculptures, and the reason for placing them close to the animals, was their teaching function, especially for visually-impaired children who were able to understand the size and the feel of the animal through touching the sculpture. She also noted that salient features of the animals, such as large claws for digging, could be pointed out on the sculptures and then the children could observe them on the real animals nearby. From her experience the sculptures were not about play but interaction. Mrs. Nelson agreed this was a worthwhile use of the sculptures, but it seemed to her that the play aspect was the one most often encouraged. She thought it would be better to remove them to a place specifically reserved for teaching, rather to have them in such close proximity to the animals.

Mr. Chatelain then showed drawings of the sloth bear house, the one building that was not tucked in under the trail, but rather set into the hillside near Connecticut Avenue. The visibility of this structure had concerned the Commission during the first presentation. He said it was oriented to the south, where the service side was, to provide natural day lighting for both the employees and the animals, and it further carried out the environmentally-conscious theme by having a "green" roof, that would also cut down on its visibility. It would be faced with Carderock stone. As had been requested, he showed a section drawing through Connecticut Avenue, but noted that the model would make more clear the orientation, setting, and visibility issues. He was asked about the visibility from a number of sensitive points and answered each to the satisfaction of the Commission. Questions for clarification were asked about the area called Conservation Plaza. Mr. Byrd said it was a two-level area with the lower level devoted to a conservation interpretation of the giant panda habitat as well as Asian habitats in general.

He said it was an occupiable space, a teaching space with exhibits. The upper level was simply a widened path area with bamboo at the entrance where visitors could rest; there would also be a service entrance here to the bamboo shed. The Vice Chairman had a question about the purpose of the bundled bamboo seen in some of the drawings. Mr. Byrd said it was used to signal the entrance to the trail, and it was also used at key points for orientation or signage.

There were no further questions, and the Chairman asked if there was a motion to give final approval to Phase I of the project. Mr. Powell made the motion, which was amended at the request of the Vice Chairman to include Mrs. Nelson's comments. The motion was seconded by Ms. Zimmerman and carried unanimously.

The concept for Phase II having already been covered, and hearing no objections, the Chairman suggested that it be approved, so that they could move forward to developing it in more detail and present it to the Commission at a later date. He told Mr. Chatelain and Mr. Byrd that the Commission would also like to see plans for changes in the location and use of animal sculpture at the Zoo.

D. Smithsonian Institution

CFA 25/JAN/04-6, Museums of the Smithsonian Institution on the National Mall, Constitution and Independence avenues, Madison and Jefferson drives, and the cross streets between 4th and 14th streets, NW. Perimeter security barriers. Concept. Staff member Kristina Alg introduced Harry Rombach from the Smithsonian to begin the presentation. Mr. Rombach recalled the haste in which temporary security measures were installed after the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, and the growing impatience with the ugliness of the Jersey barriers and planters that were used everywhere on the Mall. He said it had taken some time to develop a permanent perimeter security plan that would meet both the vehicular intrusion requirements as well as the Smithsonian's aesthetic requirements, and he hoped it would meet the Commission's requirements, too. He introduced architect Hany Hassan from Beyer Blinder Belle, and landscape architect Roger Courtenay to describe their plans.

Mr. Hassan began, saying that the scope of the project included all the Smithsonian museums on the Mall, that is, from 14th to 4th streets, between Constitution and Independence avenues, excluding the Museum of the American Indian, where the security plan had already been approved by the Commission. He commented that while developing plans that would insure security, they had always tried to be conscious of retaining the openness and the freedom of moving through the Mall.

Mr. Courtenay said the basic approach had been that the security perimeter would be established at the back of the sidewalk to establish some consistency in the project as a whole. Beginning with the Museum of Natural History, he pointed out the use of a low, free-standing wall running around most of the building, behind the historic stone curb. On Constitution Avenue it would be articulated with piers and metal fencing, still keeping the visibility of the landscape beyond. Mr. Hassan said the piers would be 30 inches high and infilled with metal fencing of a design taken from the building's details. In response to the Chairman's question, he said the piers would be 4 feet apart. Bollards would be used at entry points, and there would be special conditions to meet ADA and tree preservation issues. On Madison Drive hardened benches would be set into the wall,

and bollards would be used along the sidewalk at the entrance to meet the required standoff distance for the portico. On 9th Street, the existing street ramp wall would be considered the perimeter security, and on 12th Street there would again be a low, free-standing wall. In regard to the very important large oak tree on the corner of 9th and Constitution, a garden of large geologic specimen stones would provide the needed security.

The Museum of American History was discussed next. Low, free-standing walls would be used here also, except where there were existing terrace walls, as on Madison Place. In the case of those up on the Madison Place plaza, they would be redesigned to provide the necessary security. Sallyports and entrances would remain as they are now, with the use of retractable bollards or cable-beam barriers. Mr. Hassan commented that the wall to be built on the north side would be similar in design to the existing southern terrace wall; both would be hardened. Benches would be inserted into the 14th Street wall.

Turning next to the Quadrangle, which included the Smithsonian Castle, the Arts and Industries Building, the Freer Gallery, the Sackler Gallery and the Museum of African Art, Mr. Courtenay said it was here that they had encountered the most unique set of conditions, often requiring custom solutions. On Independence Avenue, the Freer Gallery and the Arts and Industries Building were both very close to the curb, meaning that the stand-off had to be as close to the curb as possible. The solution had been to use integrated bollards, reinforced planting, and fences around the street trees. In the Enid Haupt Garden frontage between the two buildings, the existing walls would be used, plus bollards across entries, low fences in the landscape, and bollards to connect to the streetscape treatment in front of the Freer and Arts and Industries buildings. Mrs. Nelson asked if the large bollards at the Freer entrance on Independence Avenue would be removed; she was told that they would be.

On the north side, Mr. Courtenay noted a unique condition with the Smithsonian Castle in relation to the layout of the Mall as established by the McMillan Commission, creating serious stand-off conditions with respect to the porte cochere and the center projection of the building; he noted there were only a few feet between the building and the curb. The proposal was to move Jefferson Drive north by approximately its width, lower it, bring the Joseph Henry statue back across the street, and bring the stairs back into an appropriate architectural relationship with the building. The street would be narrowed and the parking removed, creating a more pleasing setting for the Castle on the Mall. There would be a sloped green median between the street and the main pedestrian walkway with low retaining or balustrade walls to provide the security perimeter in front of the castle entrance and along Jefferson Drive. Bollards, hardened benches and light poles would be placed between the Castle and the Arts and Industries building, and on the Freer side, there would be similar walls and benches, and retractable bollards and a raised planter at the entrance. Mr. Hassan showed photographs of the existing conditions and compared them to what was being proposed to make the changes clear.

Mr. Courtenay then moved on to the plans for the Hirshhorn Museum. Here he noted that the existing architectural walls, which would be hardened, would form the primary perimeter security for the building, except on 12th Street, where the loading dock was about 15 feet below grade and there was a significant retaining wall along the street. A low free-standing wall against that retaining wall would be added, along with heavy

plantings of shrubs. Entrances on both north and south would have bollards across them, and he noted that the museum was interested in perhaps making these bollards individual works of art; the north steps would also be provided with stone sculpture plinths. Mr. Hassan showed drawings, noting that their objective here was to mitigate the effect of the long line of bollards needed to protect the wide entrance openings in the walls.

Lastly, Mr. Courtenay discussed plans for the Air and Space Museum. Here again, the existing terrace walls around the base of the building would be utilized, in some places hardened or slightly raised to meet the 30-inch required height. On the west, with the sculpture and the unused entrance to the parking garage, a low, free-standing wall would be introduced, with retractable bollards across the garage entrance. At the south entrance the existing steps would be rebuilt with integrated handrails and bollards at the base. The north entrance, where most people entered, would have a line of bollards curving out from the steps; the sculpture and the flagpoles would be hardened and their locations changed slightly, and there would perhaps be an introduction of low horizontal stone pieces as bases for sculpture. Mr. Hassan noted again the proximity of the south entrance to Independence Avenue, similar to the situation at the Freer and Arts and Industries buildings. He said the perimeter security barrier here would have to be close to the edge of the curb, and would be a variation of a fence detail, incorporating the bollards. New trees would also be added to Independence Avenue to improve its appearance as well as add to the consistency of the streetscape.

Mr. Hassan said the last element they wanted to discuss with the Commission was the design of the eight guard booths to be placed within the project. He said they would be placed primarily at the vehicular access points. The suggestion was to look for a way to unify these structures, and one way would be to use a consistent rectangular footprint and a similar vocabulary—stone base, glass, and a metal roof. These elements would vary according to the architecture and character of each of the buildings; he showed some preliminary drawings and said the designs were still at a very conceptual level. With that, Mr. Hassan ended the presentation.

The Chairman commented that this project was obviously an interagency one, involving this Commission, the Smithsonian, the Park Service, and the Planning Commission. As the Mall was under the jurisdiction of the Park Service, he assumed the Smithsonian had been working with them, and he noted that the security aspect was one that NCPC had been very closely involved with. He said the Commission would like to hear the reactions of both these agencies and also make sure that there had been cooperation among the staff of each agency involved. Mr. Childs then said that as his firm, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, was doing work on some of the buildings and particular locations involved in this project, he would leave the room and turn the gavel over to the Vice Chairman during the discussion.

Mr. Capoccia said first that he would like to commend the approach the Smithsonian had taken. He said he could not have imagined dealing with each building separately, and he thought the consistency of the approach, the unobtrusiveness, and the retention of the openness of the Mall had been very well handled; he was especially impressed with the effect of the realignment of Jefferson Drive in front of the Castle. One thing he had noticed was that there was no mention of signage. He recalled the Commission's recent review of a sign program for the Smithsonian, and he wondered how that would be worked in. Mr. Hassan said they were very much aware of that

program, and would coordinate with it, but it was a totally separate issue from the perimeter security system. Mr. Capoccia then asked if that was the same approach they were using with the guard booths—that they would be tailored to each building and not be part of the security program. Mr. Hassan said they would be consistent in terms of footprint and materials, but the details for each one would be drawn from the building where it was placed. They would try to make them as unobtrusive as possible because they really clashed with the park environment of the Mall. The Assistant Secretary asked to comment at this point, saying that during a previous discussion the Chairman had indicated his preference for a very contemporary, modern design, compatible with the historic buildings; he thought that should be kept in mind during the discussion. Mrs. Nelson said she, too, was not happy with the design of the guard booths, but she realized that the design was only a very preliminary one. She singled out the stone base particularly, thinking that the same stone would not work well with, for example, both the Castle and the Hirshhorn. Other than that, she was very pleased with the presentation, particularly with the plans for the Castle. Mr. Powell thought the guard house design was going to draw a lot of comment, and he thought there had to be some consistency in it.

The Vice Chairman noted the presence of John Parsons from the Park Service and asked if he had any comments. Mr. Parsons said the Smithsonian and the designers had been consulting with them constantly, and he thought the beauty of the project was in its comprehensive approach, something he had not seen elsewhere in the city. He praised the Jefferson Drive proposal, commenting that the only problem was the required removal of some trees, but he thought they could solve that.

The Vice Chairman asked if there was anyone from the public who would like to be heard. Architect Don Hawkins, representing the Committee of 100, asked to comment. He said the Committee had been involved in the Historic Preservation Act's Section 106 process with the Smithsonian and its architects, and he just wanted to commend them for the openness and sensitivity they had brought to the project; he said it had been a pleasure to be involved. He had not seen the guard booth before, but from the discussion, he thought it would evolve into an even better design.

The Vice Chairman asked if there was anyone from NCPC who would like to be heard. Elizabeth Miller, project officer for the Urban Design and Security Plan, offered to comment. She said NCPC had been working with the Smithsonian throughout the design development phase and the 106 process, and would review the project in February. She said they thought it was a very appropriate and comprehensive approach, and looked as though it was consistent with the Urban Design and Security Plan, although she was still in the evaluation stage and looked forward to reviewing the details. From what she had seen, she thought it would set an example for others setting up a security program.

Mr. Rombach commented that they had also been working with their neighbors; he told Mr. Powell they had been in contact with his staff at the National Gallery, and he said Mr. Courtenay's firm had also been consulting with the Department of Agriculture on their security plan. Mr. Powell commended Mr. Rombach on the plan, saying that he thought the Castle entrance changes would be a wonderful addition to the Mall.

The Vice Chairman asked if he could have a motion to approve the plan in concept. Mrs. Nelson made the motion, seconded by Mr. Powell, and it was unanimously approved, with the Commission looking forward to seeing material samples, elevations, and details on this very fine project.

F. National Park Service

1. CFA 15/JAN/04-9, Meridian Lodge House. Meridian Hill Park, 16th and Euclid Streets, NW. Rehabilitation and additions. Designs. Ms. Alg introduced Adrienne Coleman, Superintendent of Rock Creek Park, to make introductory remarks to the proposed rehabilitation and addition to the Lodge House at Meridian Hill Park. Ms. Coleman said that the project would repair infrastructure, such as mechanical, electrical and water systems and also concrete work to the John Joseph Early aggregate. She introduced Maryanne Gram, a consultant with Architrave, to present the project.

Ms. Gram began with a brief history of the park and Lodge House. She said the lodge was built in the 1920s and was located in what was known as the Upper Mall of the park, along 15th Street. The lodge housed facilities for rest room and police. Using illustrations of the time, Ms. Gram highlighted materials and architectural details of the lodge in 1924. These elements included the exposed aggregate concrete, latticework, wood windows and brick walls within the concrete structure. There were also wood latticework and look-outs around the cornice and low slope copper standing seam roof. By 1936, a portion of the interior was removed, leaving an open pavilion structure in that place. The rest rooms, however, remained. By 1993, the materials had deteriorated to the point where the interior structure was removed and opened to the sky. The wood fascia was rebuilt in the 1990s according to historic plans and the roof remained open. The building became basically a landscape structure, a pavilion.

The intent of the project, Ms. Gram said, was to restore the lodge to its original function. The landscape plan would be true to the original landscape design, yet would be fully accessible. There would be a return to planting pockets in the asphalt. The lodge would still be a brick structure within a concrete structure. The existing latticework would be mirrored in a sliding steel gate system, which would be added to the building as a security measure. Ms. Gram showed elevation boards, starting with the front elevation. She illustrated what the elevation would look like with the security panels closed and highlighted a band of windows which would match the previous band of clerestory windows. The wood lattice would be rendered in coated steel, rather than wood, for maintenance and security reasons. The copper roof would be returned, with a prepatinated copper to accelerate the aging. Finally, she showed a color rendering which illustrated the doors, designed to match the historic profile. The doors and windows would be made of white oak with a natural stained finish and the wood fascia and look-outs would be cedar.

The Commission was unanimous in its enthusiasm for the project and approved the proposal.

2. CFA 15/JAN/04-10, Franklin Park. Bounded by K, I, 13th and 14th streets, NW. Landscape renovation-Phase I. Design. Ms. Alg said that since the staff had worked with both the Park Service and the Downtown BID to advance the design for the landscape renovation of the park, she would briefly describe what was being proposed, rather than have a formal presentation. She said that the Downtown BID, in coordination with the National Park Service, was endeavoring to improve Franklin Park. In order to do that, they submitted a design that would include the addition of some

trees and the removal and relocation of some other trees to create open spaces on the east and west side. Additionally, two minor pathways would be removed, in addition to the removal and the addition of trees to create the green spaces. She said that the applicants would return with another presentation for street furniture, including benches, trash cans and lighting.

The Chairman thanked Ms. Alg for her summary and thanked John Parsons of the Park Service also. The project was approved.

G. District of Columbia Department of Mental Health

CFA 15/JAN/04-11, St. Elizabeths Hospital. 2700 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue, SE. New hospital building. Revised concept. (Previous: CFA 20/MAR/03- 5). In her introduction to the revised concept design for St. Elizabeths Hospital, Ms. Alg informed the Commission, for the benefit of those members not appointed when the project was last reviewed in March 2003, that the proposed design was very much informed by the hospital's program. Jamshid Sepehim, of EYP Architects, made the presentation.

With the aid of a site plan and models, Mr. Sepehim explained that the hospital would be a 300 bed facility with secure and less secure components. The less secure portion of the building would be located in the front, upon approach to the site. The secure component would be the back, surrounded by a security fence. These two components are linked by a third, which would house support services such as the kitchen and shipping and receiving areas.

Mr. Sepehim then described the changes to the design since March 2003, starting with the change in footprint. Two of the residential units would be stacked upon another two units, and the wing would be skewed about 15 degrees. This adjustment would avoid conflict with the communication tower and would allow the security fence to move further in from the edge of the site. Retaining walls would also be reduced, as would the penthouses for the mechanical equipment. To address the Commission's concern that the service yard was too visible, Mr. Sepehim said that mechanical space taken from the basement would be used with a green roof. This would be an eight to ten foot brick wall with planting at its base, and a green roof.

The revisions to the previously approved concept were approved unanimously.

H. District of Columbia Office on Aging

1. CFA 15/JAN/04-12, Old Kennedy Theatre Wellness Center. 318-324 Kennedy Street, NW. Alterations and additions. Designs. The Assistant Secretary said that the next two submissions from the District of Columbia Office on Aging were for senior wellness centers. Both proposals were adaptive reuse, partial preservation projects that would reconfigure existing buildings for wellness centers. The first building was the Old Kennedy Theater, a former cinema. The theater and the facades of its adjoining buildings in the center of the block would be preserved. Mr. Lindstrom introduced Louis Fry III, of Lance Bailey and Associates, to make the presentation.

Mr. Fry began by indicating the site in context, Kennedy Street NW between 3rd and 4th Streets. The facades of the Kennedy Theater, the Palace Restaurant and the two

storefronts in between would be retained. He said that the storefronts had been boarded over, and that much of the original character was lost over time. The concept, then, was to revive the feeling of the shops. The wellness center would exist as one entity behind the theater and storefronts and the activities within would be viewable from the outside. In an effort to maintain the theater facade as much as possible, the entry would be modified to accommodate the main entrance to the whole facility.

The proposal for the facility's design was very well received by the Commission. Ms. Nelson raised concerns about accessibility, particularly at the main entrance. She asked if there would be a point at the Kennedy Street entrance where people could be dropped off. Mr. Fry said that there would be sufficient parking behind the building, all at one level, and so far only the building itself had been addressed. He said the possibility of having the street modified to accommodate six-degree parking was being explored. He agreed that accessibility was an important issue, and that there have been meetings with the community and the Councilor about that.

A motion to approve the proposal in concept was made, seconded and carried.

2. CFA 15/JAN/04-13, Old Hayes School -Ward Six Senior Wellness Center. 1035 5th Street, NE. Renovations and addition. Design. Mr. Martinez introduced the second senior wellness center submission. Rather than a theater, the existing building to be reconfigured was a school. He introduced Charles Bryant to make the presentation.

Mr. Bryant indicated the location of the school at 5th & K Streets NE and stated it was an old building, not in very good condition and vacant for some ten years. In order to accommodate the program proposed for the building, it would be necessary to add more space. An addition would be built on the north side of the existing building. This addition, along with other restorative treatments, would respect the historic elements of the building.

Moving to the elevations, Mr. Bryant noted the composition of the doors and windows on the facade of the west elevation and the high floor to floor ceiling heights. He also noted two tower elements and said that a third tower would be part of the proposed addition. The third tower would not be perfectly symmetrical, but would serve as a unifying element. Mr. Bryant highlighted the profile of the existing roof as seen on the north, south and west elevations, noting the roof profile on the north elevation gave the appearance of having been chopped off. The roof, which was in very poor condition would be replaced with a roof that would unify all the elements beneath the cap of the building, and eliminate the "chopped-off look" on the north elevation.

Mr. Bryant said that the positive features of the building would be restored. Materials would be duplicated as closely as possible, and repairs would be made to the masonry work. The major walls of this wall-bearing building were in good condition and the foundations would be examined to determine if they will meet new code requirements from a loading perspective. Basically the intent was to restore, repair and extend the building, with respect to its historic character, while being responsive to the program proposed for the building's use.

The submission was well received and the Chairman was complementary towards the proposed articulation of the old versus new elements, particularly with respect to the

slight asymmetry of the third tower. A motion to approve the proposal in concept was made, seconded and carried.

I. District of Columbia Public Schools

CFA 15/JAN/04-14, Alice Deal Middle School. 3815 Fort Drive, NW (in Fort Reno Park). Renovation and additions. Concept. Ms. Alg said that the next submission was for renovations and additions to the Alice Deal Middle School. She said the project would involve the removal of a previous addition. Proposed additions to the rear of the building would include a cafeteria and ancillary space. Jeffrey Luker, of Quinn Evans Architects, made the presentation. He began by introducing Tracey Twyman, project manager and Christine Cho, one of the principal architects on the design team.

Mr. Luker said that Alice Deal Middle School was located in Fort Reno Park. The proposal was to renovate the existing 1930s building and remove the wing that was added in the 1960s. The wing's floor levels did not line up with the original building. The existing boiler room at the rear of the building would be removed. Two light courts in the existing building would be used to introduce a grand stair which would link to the proposed new addition. This would be a four-component addition at the rear of the building which would consist of a gymnasium, an outdoor student plaza, a cafeteria and a facility for mechanical and electrical services. The circulation would be organized to retain the primary entrance to the existing building and to introduce a secondary community entrance adjacent to the gym. Additional staff parking and service circulation would be introduced at the end opposite the gym. The main building would be largely preserved, with most resources being concentrated on the new components necessary for a modern program.

The Chairman was complementary towards the basic concept and the effort to preserve the main portion of the school. He asked for more specific information about the proposed additions. Beginning with the gymnasium, Mr. Luker highlighted the entrance proposed for the Howard Street elevation. This entrance, the second community entrance to the building, would have a more modern canopy to allow as much as possible into what would be a low elevation area. Clerestory windows would help light the gymnasium within. He then discussed the area of the proposed additions that would embrace the rear courtyard and acknowledged Ms. Cho's work in that area. There would be a pair of towers at the rear elevation into which the previously mentioned grand stair would flow. This elevation would also contain large double-height windows and a walkway at the second floor level that would overlook the play fields. The facade of the cafeteria was less developed at that point, except that it would be consistent in character to the rest of the elevation, with doors that would open onto the plaza.

The Commission was very complementary towards the proposal. The Chairman commended the contrasting styles of the more contemporary proposed additions with the Georgian architecture of the existing building. A motion made to approve the submission in concept was seconded and carried.

J. District of Columbia Public Schools / U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

CFA 15/JAN/04-15, Woodson High School. 55th and Eads Streets, NE. Rehabilitation and alterations. Final. (Previous: CFA 16/OCT/03- 18). The Assistant Secretary said that the applicants working on the rehabilitation and alterations to Woodson High School were present for their final review. Based on comments received from their last review in October 2003, made changes to the windows treatment proposed for the rear of the building and to the front entrance and parking area. He introduced Bruce Mongrain of SHW Group to present the project.

Mr. Mongrain said that additional and larger windows would be added to the south elevation. Specifically, windows would be added to the second floor where special education and science rooms would be and also on the third floor. Various factors were considered when re-examining the entrance and parking area. One was security and the other the separation of the parents' drop-off area from the main delivery route. As reconfigured, the location of the parking area would allow pedestrians access to the administrative and security areas. A center island would divide the drop-off area from the delivery route.

In order to soften the forecourt area, one parking space would be replaced by a planter area. Some of the hardscape areas would be replaced with additional planters and with landscaping along 55th Street. The center island would be planted with trees, rather than be a hard surface. Mr. Mongrain showed several perspectives on boards to illustrate the landscaping.

With agreement from the Commission, the Chairman said that the applicants had responded well to the concerns raised at the last presentation. A motion to approve was made, seconded and carried unanimously.

K. District of Columbia Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs

1. Old Georgetown Act

a. O.G. 03-284, E. Chamberlain residence. 2720 O Street, NW. New single-family dwelling. Concept. Mr. Martinez said that the Old Georgetown Board were comfortable with the direction being taken for the proposed design of the new residence at 2720 O Street. They did have a concern, however, about the introduction of a curve in the dormers to emulate the elevations in the lower levels. He introduced architect Don Hawkins to present the project.

Mr. Hawkins said that the proposed house was to be the residence of a single occupant, with potential for a live-in assistant. The possibility of an elevator and ramp access from the first level were being considered. He said the house would be located in the Herring Hill section of Georgetown. The block, which was quite irregular in terms of setbacks and rhythm, contained several frame houses from the 19th and 20th centuries. Mr. Hawkins proposed to build a 21st century steel frame house with copper shingle cladding.

The house would be on the north side of the block, set back about six feet from the building line at the front. This was important in terms of the copper materials, Mr. Hawkins said, because the front of the house would never be in direct sunlight. The copper shingles would be prepatinated with a light acid wash to allow a natural color change. The design was partly based on the idea of irregularities; this idea would be

realized by the absence of a plain green front and differences in the shadow line under the drip line. Mr. Hawkins showed the Commission a sample of the copper shingle. He said that basically the intent was to build the simplest house possible within a Georgetown pattern of two and one half stories.

The proposal was well received by the Commission and the Chairman commended Mr. Hawkins for his approach. Mr. Martinez made a point of clarification; that the Board was concerned that the curve over the main doors and gutters did not appear in the dormers. The Commission left it up to the architect. A motion to approve was made, seconded and carried unanimously.

b. Appendix I. The Old Georgetown Board appendix was approved.

2. Shipstead-Luce Act

a. Appendix II. The Shipstead-Luce appendix was approved.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:30 PM.

Signed

Charles H. Atherton
Secretary