

# U.S. COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS

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NATIONAL BUILDING MUSEUM  
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4 May 2005

Dear Mr. McGill:

During its meeting of 21 April 2005, the Commission reviewed and approved the concept design for the rehabilitation and reconfiguration of the public plaza fronting the Department of Education Building (FOB-6) at 400 Maryland Avenue, SW. The members were pleased that the General Services Administration and the Department of Education are working to improve this highly visible public space and that the unsightly and inappropriate "little red school houses" covering the building's entrance ways will be removed as part of this project. A suggestion that arose after the presentation was to study the possibility of relocating the Milford School Bell or placing another piece of public art into the gathering space on the beginning point of the spiral ramp. This could function as the special accent feature of the gathering space and highlight the geometric origin of the spiral as it curves through the plaza bringing you to the building's primary entrance.

The Commission looks forward to further review of this project and recommends a design development submission be forwarded as soon as possible that includes additional information on the planting plan, lighting plan, and selection of materials for the plaza's decorative paving and planter walls. Our next meetings are scheduled for 19 May and 16 June, with submission deadlines of 5 May and 2 June, respectively. As always, the staff is available should you require guidance.

Sincerely,



Thomas Luebke, AIA  
Secretary

Michael McGill, Special Assistant for Regional Coordination  
General Services Administration  
301 7th Street, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20407-0001

cc: Dilip Chitre, GSA  
James Clark, MTF A  
Lisa E. Delplace, ASLA, Oehme, van Sweden & Associates, Inc.