16 January 2003

MEETING OF THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS

16 January 2003

The meeting was convened at 11:00 a.m. in the Commission of Fine Arts offices in the National Building Museum, 401 F Street, NW, Suite 312, Washington, DC 20001.

Members present: Hon. Harry G. Robinson III, Chairman
Hon. Donald Capoccia
Hon. David Childs
Hon. Pamela Nelson
Hon. Eden Rafshoon

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

I. ADMINISTRATION

A. Approval of minutes: 19 December 2002

The Minutes of the 19 December 2002 meeting were approved unanimously.

B. Dates of next meetings: 20 February 2003
20 March 2003
17 April 2003

The dates of the next three meetings were provided and approved.

C. Report on the revised design for the 2003 American Eagle Platinum Proof coin.

Ms. Kohler recalled to the members that the Commission had reviewed the design for the reverse of the 2003 American Eagle Platinum Proof coin at their December meeting. She stated for the record that a letter was received from the Mint detailing changes to the reverse design, per the Commission's suggestions in December. The rock below the eagle

had been removed and the eagle moved down and centered, so that its head would not be too close to the word "of." The Commission agreed that the design was much improved.

D. Report on the designs for the 2004 Florida State Quarter.

Ms. Kohler went on to report on the status of the Florida State Quarter. She said that the Commission was asked to review the designs between meetings, to accommodate a January 15 media event, at which Florida's governor was to present the five candidate designs. Ms. Kohler stated that the design known as "The Everglades," was the Commission's first choice, with the suggestion that "Florida" and "1845" be placed on one line on the upper arc of the coin. The second choice was "St. Augustine," with the suggestion that the dolphin be removed. These suggestions, Ms. Kohler said, were reported to the Mint. Mr. Atherton added that the Commemorative Coin Committee, Advisory Committee had made the same selections.

Item not on the agenda.

A brief discussion followed about coin designs versus postage stamp designs; specifically, that stamp designs have gotten more progressive compared with coins, which tend to be more formulaic. Despite occasional design competitions and the addition of new engravers at the Mint, coin designs on the whole are not very varied. General suggestions for improvements included use of different metals and shapes.

II. SUBMISSIONS AND REVIEWS

A. Department of Defense /U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

CFA 16/JAN/03-1, The Pentagon Memorial for the Victims of September 11, 2001. Information presentation on the six finalists from the international memorial design competition. (Previous: CFA 20/JUN/02-1).

Mr. Lindstrom introduced this item as an information presentation, a status report on the design competition for the Pentagon Memorial for the Victims of September 11, 2001.

He introduced Carol Anderson-Austra, project manager from the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, to present the project.

Ms. Anderson-Austra explained that the jury had met in early October and looked at 1,126 boards in three days. In making their selection of the six finalists, they took into account comments from the families of those killed at the Pentagon on September 11, 2001. The families had indicated that they wanted the memorial to be peaceful and tranquil and not ostentatious. They had viewed the boards before the jury saw them, and stated their preferences in comment books. They specified that they wanted no angels, flames, planes, dead bodies or flags; and that they wanted the memorial to be personal and intimate. Ms. Anderson-Austra said that the jury would meet in late February to make a selection from the final submissions.

She then presented the six final designs. The first design presented was by Shane Williamson, an assistant professor at the University of Toronto's Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Design. The design consisted of a dense grove of trees, facing the Pentagon building at the point of impact. Within the grove would be a clearing and in the clearing would be a wall. This wall would be aligned along the line of the approach path of the airplane to the building. It would be a "broken wall" with 184 pieces missing, one piece for each person killed. A person's name would be engraved in the area from which a piece of wall is taken, and missing piece would be offered to that person's family or hometown. The wall would be lit from within.

The next design was created by the design team of Julie Beckman and Keith Kaseman, founders of KBAS (Kaseman Beckman Architectural Strategies) in New York. Their concept was a "field of objects," specifically, cantilevered aluminum benches. There would be 184 benches or memorial units, aligned with the flight path. Each unit would be engraved with the names and birth dates of a person killed. They would be arranged in the field by the person's age, north to south, youngest to oldest. The units would also be spaced on the field chronologically, with less density on the north, because there were fewer children. The benches would rise from the ground, with some facing toward, and

some away, from the Pentagon. Benches facing the Pentagon would indicate that the person named on that bench was killed inside the building, whereas benches facing away would indicate that the person named on that bench was aboard the airplane. The benches would stand in a field of gravel, and each bench would have a tree. The benches would also each have integrated reflecting pools at the base, with light and water elements.

The third design was created by Jean Koeppel and Tom Kowalski, TKA Studio, Brooklyn, NY. Ms. Anderson-Austra said that while the design was technically complex, the idea was simple. The designers got the idea when walking through the neighborhood near the World Trade Center in the weeks following the attacks. They observed that people wrote messages in the dust on the windows, and their design would emulate that gesture. The design consisted of 184 glass monoliths arranged on an area reminiscent in size to the destroyed façade of the Pentagon. This area would be surrounded by a rectangular pool, accessible by footbridges. Each monolith would be engraved with a name, and arranged so that people could walk among them. A cooling system would allow moisture to condense on the surfaces of the glass, so that visitors can write messages on the surfaces. Fresh condensation would regularly erase the surfaces, so that new messages could be written.

The Commission raised concerns about the technical and maintenance aspects of this design. They asked if engineers consulted on the project could give assurances that the cooling mechanisms would always function. They also wanted to know who would be responsible for maintaining the memorial. Ms. Anderson-Austra replied that since Washington is humid, that will aid in creating condensation. Except for the coldest or rainiest days, they anticipate that the memorial would be fully functional. The Pentagon, Ms. Anderson-Austra said, would be responsible for the maintenance of the memorial, until a private foundation could be established to manage the site.

The design submitted by Mason Wickham and Edwin Zawadzki of In Situ Design, Brooklyn, NY consisted of a long bronze table, inscribed with 184 names and surrounded by 184 stone seats. The table and chairs would be located in a walled garden space with a

view of the sky. Visitors would descend into the space at one end, and ascend to ground level at the other end; the concept being that the space would be a refuge from its immediate surroundings. Behind the table would be a polished wall which would reflect the west façade of the Pentagon.

Mr. Jeff Lee, of Lee & Liu Landscape Architects relayed some of the families' comments on this design. They had remarked that the polished reflection of the Pentagon did not show the ground level, where there were a lot of casualties. They were also concerned about potentially hot surfaces of the sculptural elements in the summer, and wondered if a water element would be appropriate.

The fifth design was submitted by a team from Australia and New Zealand consisting of Richard Weller, Vladimir Sitta, Jacky Bowring, Peter England and Martin Musiatovicz. The memorial site would contain 184 box-like objects, modeled on an airplane flight recorder case (also known as the "black box"). These objects would be called "Life Recorders." They would stand about 3 feet high and be made of concrete and Cor-Ten steel. Each object would be a box, and within the box would be a mirror encased in safety glass and placed in an underwater compartment within the box. A person's name or some other meaningful phrase would be etched into the mirror, and the etching would be reflected skyward. The families would also have the option of placing mementos into the box. The Cor-Ten exterior would oxidize bright orange, simulating the color of real flight recorders. The surfaces could also have an epoxy coating. The concrete interior would be polished to best convey the play the light and water within the box. The bases would be dark and recessed, and lit at night such a way as to appear to be floating.

The final design was created by Michael Meredith, Assistant Professor at the University of Toronto. The design consisted of a marble pedestal in the shape of a truncated cone. The round surface at the top would be polished to reflect the sky. The pedestal would be low enough for a person to stand on. The concept was that the individual standing on the surface would become part of the memorial and that their presence would "complete" it. The top surface would be off-center, creating a graduated slope from the surface to the

ground level. Names would be incised onto the surface of the slope. The pedestal would be surrounded by trees and benches. Ms. Anderson-Austra indicated that this design's simplicity appealed to the families. The Department of Defense and the Army Corps of Engineers appreciated its simplicity from a maintenance standpoint.

The Chairman thanked Ms. Anderson-Austra for her presentation and suggested that the Department of Defense might consider producing a publication in which all 1,126 designs would be presented. Ms. Anderson-Austra agreed that a publication of this sort would be possible, as there are digital images available and should be properly archived. Presently, she said, there were no funds or plans to publish or display their images of all the entries.

B. Department of State

CFA 16/JAN/03-2, International Center. Northwest corner of Van Ness Street and International Court, NW. Guard booth. Design.

Mr. Martinez introduced the next project, a guard booth on the northwest corner of Van Ness Street and International Court NW. Mr. Martinez pointed out the location of the proposed guard booth and explained that the proposed booth would be designed to match an existing booth at the International Chancery Center facing International Court. Although the proposed booth would look much the same as the existing booth, the materials would be different. Mr. Martinez also said that the design for the proposed booth, if acceptable, would be a prototype for four additional booths in the area. Mr. Martinez then introduced Donna Mavritte, project manager for the International Chancery Center. She, in turn, introduced Sal Poulton, of Gileau-Poulton Architects to present the project.

Mr. Poulton began by explaining why there is a need for a guard booth at the proposed location. He said there is currently a uniformed Secret Service officer in a car at the intersection. Also, the number of high profile embassies in the area necessitates a need for a guard booth. He reiterated that the idea was to replicate the existing guard booth and use the design as a prototype for future booths. He showed that the proposed booth would

be skewed at the corner to provide maximum visibility up and down both International Circle and Van Ness Street. The booth would be placed on a raised pedestal to maximize visibility and would have a security glazing system to meet given security requirements.

As to materials, Mr. Poulton said that concrete would be used for ease of maintenance and that the roof would be made of single ply membrane, which would look like the existing roof on the other booth, but would last longer. At the request of the National Capital Planning Commission, red brick, rather than gray brick, would be used for the sidewalk. The metal elements would be a patina green, to match the existing booth, and the facia would be a metal facia matching the sandstone concrete. There would also be bollards at the corners of the booth, to add vehicular protection and to keep the footprint small.

In answer to the Commission's questions, Mr. Poulton referred them to a map in the project file which showed the locations of future guard booths. He also affirmed that the red brick would be installed on the International Court sidewalk, and the gray brick would be on the Van Ness Street sidewalk. When asked why the proposed design differed from the existing booth, Mr. Poulton replied that the existing booth was not up to current security standards. He explained that the door of the proposed booth would be placed on the side rather than on the back, because the security staff wants to be able to remove the door to allow the guard unfettered access. Removal of the door would also give the structure a lower profile.

The Commission also raised concerns about the color of the bollards and concrete façade. They felt that the bollards around the guard booth, as well as the row of bollards behind the booth, should have the same sandstone color as the concrete, as opposed to the green color as represented in drawing. The sandstone façade, one member suggested, sharply contrasted with nearby white buildings and the bright green roof would also not blend well with its surroundings. However, a main concern was that the structure, with its many horizontal lines and roof of a lighter shade of green than that of the existing booth, was not a strong enough statement of security. A motion was made that the Commission

approved the concept, provided that the applicants return with a design that addresses the issues discussed. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously, with an assurance from the Chairman that the applicants would receive correspondence which would state the Commission's suggestions.

C. District of Columbia Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs

1. Old Georgetown Act

a. Appendix I.

Mr. Martinez told the Commission that there were few changes to the draft Old Georgetown Board Appendix, mainly requests for extensions to design revisions to be presented to the Board. Mr. Martinez highlighted one project in particular, a proposed building on 3333 M Street, case OG 03-34. He explained that a design for a new building on the site was approved for permit a couple of years ago. Since that approval, the building occupying that site had been demolished and a hole had been dug. Also in that time, the applicants returned to the Board with a different appearance to the front façade than what had been previously approved. The Board had reviewed this new proposal over the course of three meetings and was pleased with the direction the design was taking. Mr. Martinez showed the Commission presentation boards for the project, which had been seen by the Board at their last meeting on 3 January 2003. Revised drawings had also been submitted since that meeting.

The Chairman recused himself from the discussion, because he was working with the architect on a project. The Commission commented favorably about the modern approach designs were taking in Georgetown. It was suggested the Banc Street elevation be enlivened and, as an example, a different treatment of a garage door was recommended, and a treatment of a garage door was pointed to.

After the Commission agreed that its recommendations were in line with those of the Old Georgetown Board, the Appendix was unanimously approved.

2. Shipstead-Luce Act

a. S.L. 03-033, 411 New Jersey Avenue, SE. National Democratic Club. New "townhouse" building. Concept.

Ms. Alg introduced Mr. Geoffrey Griffis of Hickok Warner Architects to present a concept design for a new townhouse building for the National Democratic Club. Mr. Griffis began by clarifying the exact location of the proposed townhouse, as directly south of the Capitol. He explained that the lot on which the townhouse would be built is the end parcel of a row of townhouses, directly adjacent to Amtrak train lines. The lot has a width of 44 feet, whereas most townhouse lots are 16-18 feet wide. Since the building will have 40 percent lot occupancy, he explained, the "mass is squished in little bit on a very wide site."

Mr. Griffis said that every effort was made to make the townhouse design compatible with existing surrounding buildings. This was challenging, because there was an such a variety of buildings in the area, including commercial and industrial buildings and contextual townhouses. The problem was how to fit a new townhouse into the context of surrounding townhouses, when the new townhouse has a lot that was nearly twice as wide. A solution was utilize the fact that the lot was a corner lot and design the proposed townhouse to be compatible other townhouses in terms of height, massing and articulation, but divide the townhouse on the corner lot to "give a semblance of a single townhouse and an additional one, but have the building read together as a single structure."

Mr. Griffis hastened to add that as this was not intended as a residential townhouse, it should not be read as one. The idea, again, was to make it compatible with its surroundings, particularly with nearby commercial townhouses. The north and east elevations of the building would be connected at the corner by a tower element. An open front porch would also occupy the north and east elevations and hold the base of the building together. A two-story bay on the east elevation would pick up the massing that occurs on other townhouses on that block. In answer to an inquiry from the Commission

regarding the building's color, Mr. Griffis replied that red brick with a precast or limestone cap may be used.

The Commission commended the efforts to connect the proposed building with its surroundings, and was complimentary of how the two-story bay would mimic the entrances to the other buildings. There were concerns about the way the building would turn the corner and about surface parking and landscaping. A motion was make that the townhouse be approved in concept with a request that the applicant return with a full landscape plan during the permit review process which would address these concerns. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

b. S.L. 03-038, 2800 Chesterfield Place, NW. Additions and modifications to an existing dwelling. Concept (Previous: S.L. 02-129, seen CFA 19 Sept 02).

Ms. Alg introduced this project by recalling to the Commission that they had reviewed it in September 2002 as part of a larger submission of three houses. What they were about to see was reduced to renovations and additions to the one existing property on the site. She also called the Commission's attention ANC 3F's recommendations and letters of concern from the neighbors. She then introduced Richard Newlon, the architect presenting the project, Rick Tenenbaum, chairman of American Masterworks, and John Farmer, counsel.

Mr. Tenenbaum provided background to the applicants' efforts since the project was presented in September, including meetings with the ANC and the resubdivision of the property by which lot 90 became lot 102. He said that the house was redesigned to incorporate neighbors' comments, was reoriented so that the front door would face Chesterfield Place, and that the glass elements would be reduced while the stonework would be increased. The house, he said, would be sited in such a way that there would be no zoning concerns, and he referred to John Farmer to answer any zoning questions. Mr. Tenenbaum then turned the presentation over to Mr. Newlon.

Mr. Newlon explained that the redesign of the house was a contextual response to the neighborhood. He showed photographs of selected houses in the neighborhood, both traditional and contemporary in design, which were his points of reference in the redesign. He indicated on the drawings the footprint of the existing house, versus the footprint of the proposed house. Parts of the foundation walls across the front of the existing house would be retained, and the proposed house would have two stories above street level as well as a lower level where the hill on the site drops. As requested in September, there would be a visible front entrance from the street. Mr. Newlon said that in the redesign, there was an attempt to find a middle ground between the traditional and contemporary homes in the neighborhood. To this end, traditional elements would be conveyed through massing and contemporary elements would be conveyed through materials and detailing. To illustrate these points, Mr. Newlon indicated the front elevation's massing and the side elevation's combination of roof shapes, windows and walls. The design was contemporary in its cleanliness and lack of detail, he said, and in its materials which would include glass, stone, pewter window frames and charcoal gray tiles for the roof.

The Commission had several questions and comments about this design. When asked if the lighting concerns raised in September were addressed, Mr. Newlon said that the use of frosted glass on the lower window panels and a reconfiguration of the windows would result in thirty percent less lumination. Only one curb cut would be added; the one curb cut would accommodate the proposed house and one other future house. The third future house would be accessed by the public alley.

Although only the proposed house on Chesterfield Place was under review, the Commission was concerned about the prospect of two additional houses on the adjoining lots in the future. Three houses on the site, besides being very crowded, raised questions about the use of the yard, to which Mr. Newlon replied that there would be a common garden area for all the properties. The Commission suggested that planning for a yard for one house at this time could be problematic when it came time to plan for the next two, and that perhaps it would be better to plan for all three homes at the start, to avoid

problems. The applicants said that there was some uncertainty as to whether the next two houses would be built, due to issues outside the Commission's purview, and that for the time being, they were concentrating on just the one house. Mr. Tenebaum also said that efforts were being made to preserve as many trees as possible, and for this reason, the house would not be sited as close to Rock Creek Park as it could be.

The Commission agreed that the proposed design did not meet the applicants' stated criteria of fitting in with the neighborhood. For example, the roof design was different from its context and it was suggested that such a roof, with its "South Pacific" sensibilities, might be more appropriate for an embassy of Singapore or Bali, rather than for this neighborhood. A simpler roof and perhaps punch windows would be preferable. They also felt that the "middle ground" approach between traditional and contemporary architecture would not be successful.

Comments from the community were generally not in support of the proposed design. Mr. Peter Halle, a neighbor, said that whether the design was traditional or contemporary, it simply needed to be better. Ms. Barbara Simons, of the Forest Hills Citizens Association, concurred with Mr. Halle and said specifically that the proposed design for this, and the two other houses presented previously, was "too institutional," and not appropriate for the neighborhood. When asked by the Commission whether her association would support a readdressed design as a comprehensive plan for all three homes, she replied that it would, provided that the proposed design for all three homes was more pleasing. Two members of ANC 3F, Robert Maudlin and Karen Perry, also indicated that a holistic approach to the site would be preferable. Ms. Perry was concerned about the reflective nature of the metal and glass, and the effects this may have on drivers. All community member were also concerned about unresolved zoning issues.

A motion was made that the applicants return with a stronger design, either more traditional or more contemporary, as opposed to a "middle road" design. The motion was amended to include reconsideration of the effects of lighting from the amount of fenestration. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

c. S.L.03-019, 555 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW. The Freedom Forum. New mixed use building to house the Newseum. Concept. (Last seen 19 December 2002).

The applicants postponed their presentation until the February meeting.

d. Appendix II.

Ms. Alg indicated changes to the Shipstead-Luce Appendix since the draft was written. Case SL 03-30, the Dacor-Bacon House, was removed and would appear next month. The applicants for the Taylor residence at 3800 18th Street, case SL 03-34, had submitted more information and staff made a recommendation of no objection to the issuance of a permit. The Warner Theater, case SL 03-37 was removed so that the applicants could continue to work of the design. The Shipstead-Luce Appendix was approved unanimously.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:09 p.m.

Signed,

Charles H. Atherton
Secretary