JEFF CAR 2015 Design Review Team S106 Meeting FINAL NOTES

Meeting #19: May 12, 2014 11 AM-12:45 PM Central

I. Attendance

Role	Name	Participated
DRT Member	Tom Bradley	X
DRT Member	Maggie Hales	
DRT Member	Vern Remiger	X
DRT Member	Judith Deel	X
DRT Member	Bill Hart	
DRT Member	Karen Bode Baxter	
DRT Member	Ann Honious	X
DRT Member	Mark Miles	
Advisor: National Trust	Jennifer Sandy	
Advisor: National Trust	Betsy Merritt	
Facilitator	Margo Brooks	X
Facilitator	Greg Cody	
JEFF	Janet Wilding	X
CAR2015	Ann Leavey	X
MVVA	James Smith	X
Trivers	Joel Fuoss	X
Trivers	David Lott	X
Trivers	Amy Huff	X
Trivers	Christopher Ching	X
Cooper Robertson	Tom Wittrock	X
Cooper Robertson	Jason Cadorette	X
NPS	Joanne Cody	X
Cohen Hilbery Associates	Gina Hilbery	X

II. Archeological Curation Plan

The DRT and Osage Nation approved the archeological curation plan with no revisions. The plan will be posted on the park web site.

III. Ranger Station Plans

The DRT had no comments on the design of the Ranger Station addition to the current maintenance building. The building is appropriately sited and of an appropriate scale.

NPS archeologists will test the building footprint and grassy area between the maintenance building and the entrance road in mid-July. Six to ten feet of fill is expected in this area. The scope will be circulated to the park, SHPO and Osage Nation for comment prior to the work. Backhoe trenching is expected to be part of the testing scope.

Some aspects of the work are not fully designed (access, utilities) and will be tested separately in accordance with the archeological monitoring plan.

DRT Comments

The DRT would like to see future design plans only if there are significant changes in location, size, scale or mass of the addition.

The park CRM team will continue to work with the design team on the project design.

Archeological scopes and results should continue to be shared with the DRT and the Osage Nation, including those regarding testing of utilities and access roads.

IV. Arch Legs

The DRT continued the discussion from last meeting (see notes from Meeting 18 4-4-14) regarding options for accessible exits at the Arch legs.

The alternatives included *(Please note that alternative names have been changed since the last set of notes)*:

Alternative B1 (current design direction): The Arch leg exit plazas would be made accessible and handrails added down the center of the east side of the Arch leg plazas. Because the entire exit area would be raised to accommodate landings, impacts would include: 1. minimal grade rises by the Arch legs; 2. possible cross slope changes; 3. covering or removal of portions of the stairs on both sides of the Arch leg exit plazas. The character-defining, intentionally designed line of the stair edges would change from straight (mimicking the line of the Arch legs) to curved and the bottom riser heights would not be uniform.

Alternative A keeps the plane of the exit plaza the same as existing, but builds raised accessible ramps (one to the north and one to the south of the Arch) through the center of the east side of the Arch leg exit plazas. It preserves the exit plaza features, but is a very visible new feature and would provide a different experience for people using the ramp.

Alternative C would make the exit ramps from inside the museum to where the ramp splits at the Arch legs accessible, but not change the existing slopes around the Arch legs. Although the current slope of the plaza around the Arch legs conforms to a 1:12 ratio, the required landings and handrails would not be built. This alternative preserves the most historic fabric, but people needing accessibility features would need to exit the museum through the main entrance.

Alternative D (new option). This alternative provides a 1:20 slope from the interior ramp through the Arch leg exit plazas. No handrails or landings would be necessary. Because the entire exit area would be raised to accommodate landings, impacts would include: 1. 3-foot grade rises by the Arch legs; 2. possible cross slope changes; 3. covering or removal of portions of the stairs on either side of the exit plaza. The character-defining, intentionally designed line of the stair edges would change from straight (mimicking the line of the Arch legs) to curved. 4. The interior ramp would lengthen by approximately 50-feet into the museum lobby; 5. The interior ramp would be raised higher than the existing interior historic guardrail and up to 9 additional stair risers would need to be built for people exiting from the tram lobbies. Alternative D was explored at the request of the park.

Discussion

The park proposed moving forward with Option C and requesting a waiver from GSA stating that accessibility cannot be fully met without destroying important historical characteristics of the Monument. The park would provide employees to assist anyone who could not make it up the slope without handrails and landings.

The SHPO agreed with this proposal as the least invasive.

CAR and NPS accessibility specialists provided background on GSA waivers, stating that a waiver has never been granted by GSA, although some modifications have been granted in the past. The process will take at least 6 months and must go through several approvals. The GSA and National Accessibility Offices will work with the park during this process.

One possible modification that may help the waiver process would be to include handrails on one side of the Arch leg exit plazas so that the only accessibility requirement missing would be landings. This would also aid with general safety, as will heated pavers.

Another option is to provide a fully accessible exit on one side of the Arch and not the other. CAR2015 did not like this option in case one exit needed to be closed.

The design team confirmed that in case of emergency, there is an accessible exit and place of refuge from the main lobby floor, although this would not be a regular exit since it goes out to the loading zones.

NPS asked if there was another fully accessible option that might take people out from the plaza and around the stairs via a trench in the landscape. This was not a preferable option because it would entail big changes to the landscape, require physical barriers to keep people from falling into the trench from above and provide a much different exit experience for people with disabilities.

The SHPO felt that if a handrail were necessary, it may be acceptable as part of Alternative C. It is the least invasive of the options. The park would prefer no handrail if a programmatic approach were feasible.

The park was urged to explore the logistics of a programmatic approach without handrails. How would an operator help push multiple wheelchairs or provide support for multiple cane users or elderly people at one time? How do wheelchairs function on the current slope?

The design team was asked to present the options with a clear statement of the historic, character-defining features that need to be protected to the Universal Design Team (UDT) and get feedback on the location, and type of potential handrails and/or programmatic approaches that may help. This is with the understanding that the UDT may push for universal design solutions without regard for historical appropriateness. Having greater input is necessary to gauge what modifications the DRT may want to consider.

DRT Comments

The DRT would like Alternative C presented to the Universal Design Team (UDT) along with a clear description of the character-defining features that the DRT would like to see preserved. Options that may include handrails in on the existing slope should be discussed with the UDT to better understand concerns and

improvements that may preserve critical design features while providing for better accessibility and safety.

The DRT will take these ideas into account and will work with the park and NPS to prepare a waiver application to the GSA with the knowledge that a waiver is unlikely to be granted without some concessions for accessibility and safety.

V. Old Courthouse Accessibility

The design team presented the current philosophy and options behind accessible ramp features both interior and exterior to the Old Courthouse.

Inside ramps would not be permanently fixed and would be compatible with existing floor materials (wood on wooden floors or metal at metal thresholds).

Outside, the ramps are designed with a switchback that would minimize maintenance. The ramps will be set on a concrete stem wall. A variety of material options were presented for the partitions and handrails. These included: clear glass, frosted glass, solid metal panels, metal mesh panels, cable, or cast iron fencing similar to the fencing currently around the Old Courthouse.

Discussion

Glass was rejected due to maintenance concerns as well as the solidity of the materials.

Metal panels were rejected for similar reasons and due to the fact that it would create a very contemporary appendage to an historic building.

SHPO preferred the cable options because they were least visible, but wondered if there were better ways of making the cable blend into the building.

CAR2015 preferred the fencing option with some changes to the stem wall, but SHPO cautioned against perpetuating a false sense of history. More information on the original fence was needed.*

**The 1982 Old Courthouse Historic Structures Report indicates that the first fence at the Old Courthouse property (1835) had a stone base topped with a brick wall and caped with stone. In 1845 a hammered limestone base with a dressed circular cap topped with a wrought iron fence was added to the perimeter. The stone base may have been painted a dark color. The fence was removed by 1884 and the limestone base a decade later. In 1955 the NPS decided to rebuild an iron fence atop a granite base for durability. The turtle gates are not of historic design.*
http://www.nps.gov/jeff/parkmgmt/upload/Historic-Structure-Report-OCH.pdf

A related project was addressed whereby the park is proposing to stabilize the Old Courthouse moat walls by extending the wall footer by several feet. Archeology would be done in advance of the project, however, as design progresses, the ramp footings may tie into the moat footers.

DRT Comments

Interior ramps: The DRT is satisfied that the interior ramps will meet the Secretary's Standards in being both reversible and compatible with surrounding materials. Design should continue along this line.

Exterior ramps: The layout of the exterior ramps and the fact that they are designed to sit on the porch rather than tie into the porch is acceptable and meets the Secretary's Standards. The materials that the ramp will be composed of should be further explored. Additional cable options that blend better with the building and changes to the stem wall should be explored as design progresses.

Footings: Provided that the disturbance caused by the new moat wall footings is investigated archeologically, there is no concern regarding tying the ramp footings into the moat footings.

VI. Next DRT Meeting

The next DRT meeting will be June 4, 2014 at 10 AM Central. Topics of discussion will be:

- Additional Old Courthouse ramp materials
- Design for Luther Ely Smith Square
- Museum entrance/park over the highway lighting
- Old Cathedral path lighting
- Drinking fountain fixtures