

## **NATIONAL MALL PLAN SECTION 106 MEETING NOTES – MAY 27, 2009**

### **Handouts included:**

A draft Circulation Map for the Preliminary Preferred Alternative

**Attendees:** John Fondersmith – Committee of 100; Richard Westbrook – Guild of Professional Tour Guides / Committee of 100; Nell Ziehl – National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP); Judy Feldman – National Coalition to Save Our Mall; Kent Cooper - National Coalition to Save Our Mall; Nancy Witherell – National Capital Planning Commission; Elizabeth Miller – NCPC; Andrew Lewis – DC SHPO; Linda Doyle – Tourmobile; Kelly Fanizzo – ACHP; Caroline Hall - ACHP

**NPS:** Jennifer Talken- Spaulding – Cultural Resource Mgr; Perry Wheelock – Chief of Resource Mgt.; Susan Spain – Project Exec – National Mall Plan; Gary Scott – NCR Historian; Patrick Gregerson – WASO Chief of Planning; Maureen Joseph – NCR Acting Chief of Cultural Resources Planning

### **Meeting Notes:**

The meeting was the final section 106 meeting to be held during the spring of 2009. The focus of the meeting was to be on issues common to all areas and the time was to be set aside for each person present to identify what they felt was important. The meeting began with general discussion about specific areas and reiteration of what was in the preliminary preferred alternative. Jennifer showed photos to illustrate the areas discussed.

### *UNION SQUARE*

**Richard:** Union Square proposals are positive.

**Judy:** I have questions about the process and the way the McMillan Plan is dismissed.

**Maureen:** Described the process as one to identify cultural resources and their integrity. For example when the Capitol Reflecting Pool went in the 1970s it removed features with integrity.

Perry pointed out that the work in the 1930s by FL Olmsted Jr. did implement the McMillan Plan and reconsidered some proposals in it.

**Maureen:** The Union Square Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI) was the NPS first attempt to reassess the area.

**Andrew:** We need to revisit the historic significance of the reflecting pool.

**Perry:** The pool is on the LCS, not NR.

**Andrew:** Before we move forward we need to make a determination of eligibility for the reflecting pool.

**Maureen:** The CLIs (Mall and Union Square) compare the Mall (which was new construction) and Union Square (in which old elements were incorporated and changed). We start with Section 110 surveys.

**Judy:** All CLR's are just for portions of the National Mall. The total place is important.

**Perry:** 110 is data gathering so we can do the next round. The Union Square focus is because it is so important.

**Gary:** The NR nominations were done in the 1980s. The pool was quite new at that time.

### *THE MALL*

There was some discussion about materials used and adaptive rehabilitation.

**Perry:** The carriage roads at Acadia are an example of the ability to recapture through adaptive rehabilitation the leisurely use of carriage roads in ways that are appropriate for today – which includes use for mountain bikes, hiking, horse and carriages.

**Richard:** There are complaints as well as about gravel.

**Andrew:** What materials were used in Acadia?

**Perry:** Gravel

There was discussion that the level of use and rural setting of Acadia are very different from the urban setting and high levels of use that the National Mall sees.

**Nancy:** The areas on 12<sup>th</sup> street should be illustrated in this plan to demonstrate its potential impacts.

### *WASHINGTON MONUMENT*

**Judy:** Move Monument Lodge to a new area as proposed by ASLA.

**Perry:** This is a historic building (1888) whose use has changed over time – an example of adaptive rehabilitation. Today's uses are ticketing, restrooms, and bookstore. The bookstore is a use that could potentially be combined with the multi-purpose facility proposed in the plan. Monument Lodge could then be adapted for visitor screening.

**Andrew:** Why would you want to move it?

**Judy:** Because it is in the view and the important symbolism of the axis.

There was a general discussion about the way that topography screens views of Monument Lodge from the east until pedestrians get to 14<sup>th</sup>.

**John F:** The area between the Tidal Basin and the monument is a hodge-podge. There are poor connections.

There was general discussion about proposals in the preliminary preferred.

Susan pointed out there are proposals to improve connections at two points – near Survey Lodge and 15<sup>th</sup> and Independence; and that pedestrian circulation would follow Independence on the south side to emphasize the N-S views between the White House and the Thomas Jefferson Memorial.

Perry reminded people that 106 is a process that will not stop with the issuance of the draft plan and that 106 will continue for many projects as they come on line for construction.

#### ***ASH WOODS/DC WAR MEMORIAL***

Richard: Upgrade this area is good; DC War Memorial should be adapted to commemorate all DC citizens in all wars. Ash Woods is a good location for visitor center and visitor services.

#### ***SUMMARY - ONE IDEA THAT THE EACH MEMBER OF THE GROUP WOULD LIKE NPS TO CONSIDER.***

**Richard:** You have my notes. What will be your reaction to comments? Do you use realistic tourist projections?

**Kelly:** From the ACHP perspective this has been challenging but terrific to be involved in early planning where there is no preferred alternative. Some of the confusion that results is that this is an ongoing process with further consultation and input crucial to its success. Cumulative impacts will look at all areas.

**Andrew:** I'd like to thank NPS for providing so many opportunities for public review and comment. They will take our comments and we'll use them to develop a draft programmatic agreement. With proposals for Union Square and Sylvan Theater there will be more opportunities as alternatives are developed. Stimulus funding and projects present an opportunity and a challenge – how will 106 be used in ARRA projects? Recommend that the 1<sup>st</sup> round of the PA address organization of continued consultation, consultation and what does not require further consultation.

**Nell:** We sent in detailed comments. We have issues about what the National Mall is and what are its characteristics. There is a lot that is positive and many minor impacts which will be taken together will be major. More detail and more information may result in different feedback because this is complicated.

Linda: I have enjoyed the process.

**Nancy:** Working early in the process is good. I'd like to thank all the parties and preparers. Need to make sure that the public is aware of where we are in the process, what has been done

and what will continue. Need to make sure that all contents, titles and links that are on the web are in the listed in the document. Future plans for Union Square will be a linchpin. What will the plan achieve, who will be involved with future planning, and will future design address land not under NPS management.

**Elizabeth:** Quick question about circulation. This works well with the Framework Plan – which will take pressure off the National Mall. We have been working closely and we need to continue to think about conceptual connections to and from the National Mall and general statements about operations. There are some nasty connections in the SW area that will be addressed in pre- design for projects in this area.

**Kent:** We've been at this for a long time. At the last meeting I was stunned because I had no idea. How will projects and oversight for the stimulus packages occur? There will be contracts, design and award. What will be the public input?

**Perry:** There will be section 106 consultations.

**Judy:** I'd like to say the process is important but it is weak. A tremendous amount of work has been done. What we have experienced is that public input doesn't make a difference – this has been from the fall of 2006 we have been asking for scientific data and we never get it. Any comments are therefore based in ignorance. Visitor transportation is an example. We have sent letters in 2008 and 2009 and we have gotten two replies. We continue to see larger jurisdictional problems with the plan. We see two federal agencies. Is this the vision set forth for the National Mall? It is disconnected with federal agencies. The National Mall is a bigger place. The CLRs are portions. There cannot be decision making with NPS interests only. The plan is not forward looking, but to preserve the status quo. Need to address transportation – it is the key to getting around. Without spending lots of money – but maybe it needs to be subsidized. What scares me most is that federal agencies need to acknowledge piecemeal planning. We get no response – but told we are fine. Some good ideas, but ultimately other agencies are not involved.

**Maureen:** One of the things you need to remember. CLIs are the first step. To look at areas holistically we need to look at small pieces such as areas or reservations as well as L'Enfant and McMillan. I like the idea of a Landmark Nomination (NHL). We are still gathering data about the whole landscape.

Note: NPS will be completing cultural landscape inventories for Washington Monument and the DC War Memorial – with drafts expected this summer.

**Gary:** We need to remember that the goal in the NW area for a long time has been to reinstate Constitution Avenue to the Belvedere.

**John F:** There has been lots of work. We have a continuing frustration that we don't see the other parties. Elizabeth Miller is the tie into the Framework Plan. We will want to see traffic and pedestrian connections; waterfront walk; and the flooding/global warming.

**Perry:** NPS is always collecting data that is useful to know.

**Patrick:** This is the most inclusive process NPS has undertaken – with public involvement, 106 parties and federal and local agencies – NCPC, AOC, SI, NGA and many others. I participated in many of those early meetings. NPS does not plan in a vacuum. In this case the public involvement is national in scope. For example, Rock Creek Park became largely involved with local issues. What we do after this is that you will have additional opportunities to participate. We'll be going out nationally – and it is costly to do this as well as have so many consulting parties meetings. The National Mall Plan is a nice model to seek. Again – there will be more opportunities to participate.

**Susan:** Section 106 consultations have a different purpose than cooperating agency work. They are different groups and do not meet together.

Repeated meetings with non- federal participants would be a violation of the Federal Advisory Commission Act (FACA). However, the NHPA provides a specific role for consulting parties, which allows the parties to meet regularly.

**Perry:** Thank you. There are lots of good ideas that will percolate up through the process. You might want to check the NPS PEPC site for wayfinding and design refinements.

The meeting ended at 3:45pm and Section 106 consultations will take a hiatus until the draft plan is available to the public.