

**Washington Monument Screening Facility: Section 106 Meeting #3, December 13, 2011**  
Minutes (final)

Meeting: Section 106 Meeting #3  
Date: December 13, 2011  
Time: 2:00-4:00 p.m.  
Location: NPS National Capital Region Headquarters  
1100 Ohio Drive, S.W.

Attendees

Russell Preble	Guild of Professional Tour Guides	<a href="mailto:RAPreble@aol.com">RAPreble@aol.com</a>
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Don Hawkins	Committee of 100	<a href="mailto:hawkinsmay@gmail.com">hawkinsmay@gmail.com</a>
Katry Harris	Advisory Council on Historic Preservation	<a href="mailto:kharris@achp.gov">kharris@achp.gov</a>
Thomas Luebke	U.S. Commission of Fine Arts	<a href="mailto:tluebke@achp.gov">tluebke@achp.gov</a>
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Sarah Batcheler	U.S. Commission of Fine Arts	<a href="mailto:sbatcheler@cfa.gov">sbatcheler@cfa.gov</a>
Shane Dettman	National Capital Planning Commission	<a href="mailto:shane.dettman@ncpc.gov">shane.dettman@ncpc.gov</a>
Jennifer Hirsch	National Capital Planning Commission	<a href="mailto:jennifer.hirsch@ncpc.gov">jennifer.hirsch@ncpc.gov</a>
Edwin Fountain	National Parks Conservation Association	<a href="mailto:elfountain@jonesday.com">elfountain@jonesday.com</a>
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**1 Introduction and Welcome**

- 1.A Jennifer Talken-Spaulding (JTS) welcomed participants and apologized for the absence of National Mall and Memorial Parks Superintendent Bob Vogel and Deputy Superintendent Steve Lorenzetti, who had been called to meet with congressional officials. JTS reviewed the Section 106 process to date, including the goals and content of previous meetings, and notified

consulting parties of materials related to the undertaking that were available for download from the NPS Planning, Environment, and Public Comment (PEPC) website (<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/>). She noted that the powerpoint presentation for the meeting had already been placed on the PEPC site.

## **2 Summary of Geotechnical Findings**

- 2.A Hugh Lacy (HL) presented findings from previous geotechnical studies of the Washington Monument and Grounds and from an ongoing study. HL presented illustrations of the soils beneath the monument, the location of borings for the present study, sections through the monument showing boring findings, and other study results. Soils around the monument consist of fill earth around the monument foundation, relatively stable beds of sand and gravel below the fill, a layer of blue clay, and bedrock. The blue clay layer is compressible, he said.
- 2.A.1 Richard Westbrook (RW) asked if borings had been done since the August earthquake. HL responded that the original borings for the present study had been done two weeks before the earthquake, and there were plans to do additional borings. JTS clarified that soil borings were part of the plans for repair of the damage suffered by the monument during the earthquake, and the results of those borings would be used in the visitor screening facility Section 106 and NEPA review. HL stated that he expected to find no difference in the soils before and after the earthquake.
- 2.A.2 Katry Harris (KH) asked about Section 106 compliance for the repair of the monument. JTS stated that, until now, NPS had been involved in studying the effects of the earthquake on the monument and that design of the repairs had just begun. Section 106 consultation on the repairs would begin when the designs had advanced.
- 2.B HL reviewed the methodology for his firm's analysis of the effects of Alternative A.1 on the monument. The analysis concluded that the movement of the monument as a result of the implementation of Alternative A.1 would be a little in excess of what might be prudent and would require an engineered solution to resolve. The issue is the "unbalanced unloading" that excavation for the underground security screening building, passageway, and access ramps would require on the east side of the monument. The engineered solution would require an equal unloading on the opposite side of the monument to reach a balance. He stated that this solution could be applied to all the alternatives that result in an unbalanced unloading. Although the other alternatives had not been modeled as Alternative A.1 had been, HL said it was likely that some alternatives would not require an engineered solution.
- 2.B.1 Hany Hassan (HH) pointed out that the excavation in Alternatives A.5 and A.7 would be balanced on either side of the monument (north and south) and that no excavation would be required for Alternative B.1.

## **3 Significance and Contributing Features of the Washington Monument**

- 3.A Judy Robinson (JR) reviewed the historic resource segments of previous meetings. She then presented the primary and secondary areas of potential effects (APEs). The secondary APE had been revised at the suggestion of the District of Columbia State Historic Preservation Office to include the Northwest Rectangle and Federal Triangle historic districts. She also reviewed

illustrations of the historic resources in the APEs (properties individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places, historic districts, cultural landscapes, and elements of the Plan of the City of Washington).

- 3.B JR discussed the significance of the Washington Monument, as described in the 1981 National Register (NR) documentation and the 2004 historic structures report (HSR). She noted that the National Register documentation listed the period of significance as 1848 to 1889, while the HSR extended the period of significance to 1913 to include improvements made to the public spaces on ground floor of the monument.
- 3.C JR explained that neither the NR documentation nor the HSR specifically identified contributing features of the monument. For the purposes of consultation for this undertaking, existing features dating to the period of significance (as detailed in the HSR) were considered contributing features. She then discussed these features with the help of powerpoint slides.
  - 3.C.1 Tom Luebke (TL) asked for more information on the “Phoenix column” that could be seen in a photograph of the south corridor. JR responded that the name derived from the manufacturer and showed a slide illustrating the interior structure of the monument, which consisted of cast-iron columns and beams from this manufacturer. While altered slightly over the course of time, this interior structure dates from the completion of the monument during the 1880s.
- 3.D JR reviewed information on the contributing features of the Washington Monument grounds that had been derived from the Washington Monument and Grounds Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI) and presented in the first consulting parties meeting in March 2011. Perry Wheelock (PW) clarified that the end of the period of significance for the CLI was 1943 to include the construction of the Thomas Jefferson Memorial.
  - 3.D.1 Jennifer Hirsch (JH) asked for clarification of contributing features on the plaza surrounding the monument. JR explained that the CLI lists only the location and presence of the flagpole circle as a contributing feature. The flagpoles and flags themselves have changed and therefore do not contribute to the landscape significance. A circular apron around the monument, she further explained, had existed since the monument’s completion, but the form of this apron had changed on several occasions. The current granite paving was installed in 2004-2005 as part of the security improvements for the monument. JTS indicated that NPS considers the improvements made at that time, designed by the Olin Partnership, important and continues to implement portions of the plan, such as plantings, that have not yet been carried out.
  - 3.D.2 KH asked whether the Olin Partnership plans were included in the 2002 programmatic agreement (PA) covering the permanent security improvements to the Washington Monument and its grounds. She noted that the existing PA could have an effect on the implementation of the screening facility project. [Note: The Olin Partnership concept plan is referred to in both the recitals and stipulations of the PA.]
- 3.E Don Hawkins (DH) recalled that when the issue of security improvements to the Washington Monument was first raised, the Committee of 100 on the Federal City suggested an alternative that placed visitor screening within the 15-foot-thick walls on the west side of the monument,

obviating the need for below-ground construction or construction on the plaza. He noted that at the beginning of this current undertaking, he had made the same suggestion for the committee. He noted that this alternative was not included among the seven to be discussed at this meeting, and yet the Park Service had not given reasons for eliminating it from consideration. He added that the Committee of 100 thinks that any alternative that affects the engineering accomplishment of the Washington Monument should be avoided if at all possible and that the committee's proposal was much less expensive than any of the other alternatives.

- 3.E.1 JTS responded that DH's suggestion had not been advanced because it did not satisfy security requirements. Joni Gallegos (JG) reviewed some of the reasons why the suggestion did not satisfy these requirements, including the need for an indirect path of entry into the monument. DH stated that this information had not been shared previously and that review of alternatives for federal projects was a public process. NPS could not make its decisions behind closed doors, he said.
- 3.E.2 KH asked for an explanation of the schedule for the planned environmental assessment (EA) for the undertaking. JTS stated that the goal was to show refined alternatives to the Commission of Fine Arts (CFA) and the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) in the spring and that these refined alternatives would be then analyzed in the EA. KH stated that the EA included alternatives considered and dismissed, such as the west entry screening alternative. The release of the draft EA could be the opportunity for public comment that the Committee of 100 seeks. She also stated that she thought it was appropriate for NPS to respond to the Committee of 100's proposal and concerns in written form. JTS agreed with the value of KH's suggestion and noted that decisions were recorded for NPS's administrative record. Accounts of the decision-making process could be therefore be easily shared with consulting parties.
- 3.E.3 JTS asked DH how NPS could satisfy the concerns of the Committee of 100. DH stated that a discussion with knowledgeable people (security and engineering experts) would be necessary. JTS agreed to arrange such a meeting. JTS also suggested a site visit with the consulting parties to develop an understanding of the relation of the alternatives to the existing conditions at the monument.
- 3.E.4 KH stated that an understanding of the purpose and need for the undertaking was not shared by NPS and the consulting parties. She suggested that NPS work toward a purpose and need statement that responsible parties can share. She also suggested that the purpose and need statement be expanded to include the visitor experience. JTS reviewed the statement of purpose and need, provided at the September 20, 2011, meeting, which includes a visitor experience component. KH noted that, in the integration of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 106 processes, NEPA is often far in advance of Section 106. She stated the necessity for sharing reasons for dismissing alternatives before the project can advance through the Section 106 process.
- 3.E.5 RW noted that the proposal he had put forth, which began access to the monument from the visitor facility proposed for the Sylvan Theater location, had also not been included in the alternatives under review in Meeting #3.

## **4 Presentation of Alternatives**

- 4.A HH conducted the presentation of seven alternatives culled from the seventeen presented at the September 20, 2011, consulting parties/public meeting. Each alternative included plan, section, and perspective views.
- 4.A.1 Edwin Fountain (EF) asked if HH could elaborate on the differences between Alternative A.1 and Alternative C.1. HH explained that Alternative A.1 proposed a below-grade entry at the edge of the existing plaza, while Alternative C.1 proposed a below-grade entry within the existing plaza. EF also asked for more information on the operation of Alternative A.5. HH explained that A.5 employed two ramps to reach below-grade entries north and south of the plaza. One ramp on each side of the monument would parallel the existing sidewalk, and the second ramp would skirt the plaza boundary.
- 4.A.2 RW asked if the screening equipment would detect explosives that might be carried into the monument. JTS responded that the screening equipment and operation plan is designed to detect and defeat a variety of potential threats, including explosives.

## **5 Viewshed Analysis**

- 5.A. HH presented the viewshed analysis for the seven alternatives. Renderings were prepared for ten views for each of the seven alternatives. The ten views were:

1. View from Old Post Office tower
2. View looking west from the Mall
3. View looking east from the WWII Memorial
4. View looking from the Jefferson Memorial
5. Aerial view
6. Pedestrian view from the Monument looking east
7. Pedestrian view from the Monument looking west
8. Pedestrian view from the Monument looking north
9. Pedestrian view from the Monument looking south

A matrix was also presented which allowed the alternatives to be compared.

- 5.A.1 KH stated that the word “effect” may not be appropriate for the slides or the matrix since “effect” has a specific definition under Section 106. At this point in the analysis, she said, the visibility of the alternatives from designated locations, rather than their effects, was being illustrated.
- 5.A.2 RW stated that he would like to see views from 14<sup>th</sup> Street and Constitution Avenue illustrated. These views should be rendered both with and without the proposed National Museum of African American History and Culture.

## **6 Next Steps and Schedule**

6.A JTS stated that NPS would plan a site visit to the Washington Monument for consulting parties early in 2012. The goal for presenting refined alternatives to CFA and NCPC and releasing the EA in the spring would still be pursued.

6.A.1 EF recapped the Section 106 process as it had been carried out thus far. He reiterated that NPS had not held a discussion of the reasons for dismissing or advancing the alternatives presented or presented its reasons for its decisions. No information on the security requirements had been presented or how NPS had responded to consulting party comments. For these reasons, he said, comments from the National Parks Conservation Association would remain the same for the alternatives presented as they had been when presented previously.

6.A.2 KH indicated that a logical next step would be to present relative effects of the alternatives as defined by Section 106 regulations. She stated the need to have a detailed discussion of reasons the dismissed alternatives had been rejected.