

U.S. COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS

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29 May 2015

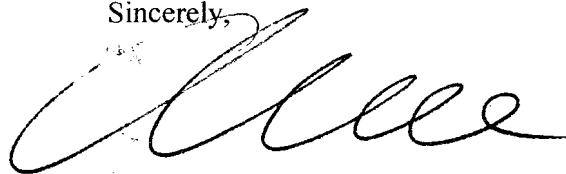
Dear Ms. Rutter:

In its meeting of 21 May, the Commission of Fine Arts reviewed a revised concept for the south expansion of the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts at 2700 F Street, NW. Commending the productive collaboration between the client and the designers, the Commission approved the submission with the following comments for the further development of the design.

In their continuing support of the project, the Commission members described the decision to locate the River Pavilion on the terrace side of the parkway as a refinement that will improve the operations of the pavilion, the occupiability of the terrace, and the microclimate of the elevated landscape. However, they observed that the new composition has resulted in spatial conflicts that should be reconsidered, citing the narrow space between the River Pavilion and the pool, and awkward conditions within the design where multiple surface materials and landscape elements intersect. Given the constricted area available for the pool and circulation around it, they suggested that the pool might function better as a surface scrim of water that could be drained for use during special events; they also noted that the sound of traffic on the parkway and nearby Theodore Roosevelt Bridge could be masked through the use of dynamically moving water. Commenting that the pedestrian bridge—with its open views of the river—will create a welcome destination in itself, they recommended eliminating plantings and increasing the occupiable area of the bridge to avoid conflicts between pedestrians, bicyclists, and seated visitors. More broadly, they recommended that the overall design for the south expansion should celebrate the riverfront setting of the Kennedy Center, and they commented that railings on the terrace should be designed carefully to avoid a visual intrusion into the experience of the landscape.

The Commission looks forward to further review as the design is developed. As always, the staff is available to assist you with the next submission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Luebke', written over a horizontal line.

Thomas E. Luebke, FAIA
Secretary

Deborah Rutter, President
Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts
2700 F Street, NW
Washington, DC 20566-0001

cc: Chris McVoy, Steven Holl Architects,
Peter May, National Park Service