



# United States Department of the Interior



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
National Mall and Memorial Parks  
900 Ohio Drive, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20024-2000

October 7, 2019

Mr. David Maloney  
State Historic Preservation Officer  
District of Columbia, Office of Planning  
1100 4th Street SW, Suite E650  
Washington D.C. 20024

Subject: Redevelopment of Reservation 378

Dear Mr. Maloney:

The National Park Service (NPS), National Mall and Memorial Parks (NAMA), on behalf of the Federal Reserve Board, wishes to initiate consultation with the District of Columbia State Historic Preservation Office under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act regarding the construction of a new structure and the redevelopment of the garden at Reservation 378, in accordance with 36 CFR 800.3 of the regulations of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. Reservation 378 is located between 20th and 21st Streets, along Virginia Avenue, NW.

## **Purpose and Identification of Historic Properties**

The Federal Reserve Board (FRB) through an agreement with the NPS constructed and now maintains the underground parking garage, the entrance to the garage and a landscaped park on Reservation 378. The FRB proposes to replace the roof of the garage, construct a new accessible entrance to it in the form of a small building, and improve security. As a result, the existing garden will need to be removed for construction. George E. Patton, a nationally significant landscape architect designed the initial plan for Reservation 378, the Federal Reserve Annex garden. Minimalist plazas and planting plans, like those found at Bolivar Plaza, San Martin Park, and Patton's Robert Latham Owen fountain, reflect the modern landscape movement's attempt to address the massive social, physical and economic upheavals that affected cities throughout the country in the postwar period. Pared down, easily legible designs, featuring clean lines, simple forms and restricted use of materials and plant palates, were attempts to abandon the idea of architectural "style," in order to present a more universally appealing, timeless landscape, as part of an effort to respond to a rapidly changing, modern world. Another significant modern landscape along Virginia Avenue NW, is the garden designed for the north lawn of the Federal Reserve Annex, at Reservation 378, completed in 1977. In 1976, a storm destroyed much of Patton's original landscape. The Federal Reserve hired the firm of Oehme, van Sweden (OvS) to rehabilitate the space.

An early work of landscape architects Wolfgang Oehme and James van Sweden, the firm itself identifies the park as the first example of the New American Garden style of landscape design, for which they would become internationally known. Inspired by the modern movement, the New American Garden style embraced seasonality and the aesthetic of the Great Plains and North American meadows. The style is characterized by massive beds planted with swaths of grasses and perennials. Oehme, van Sweden's design for Reservation 378 captures a transitional period in modern landscape architecture, as the strict rigidity of earlier designs began to give way to more naturalistic expressions of seasonality and embrace of specific time and place. Oehme, van Sweden incorporated many elements from modernist George E. Patton's earlier design for the park—including specially designed hardscapes and small scale features

such as lamp posts—with their signature masses of native grasses, black-eyed susans and sedums. These meadow-like plantings softened Patton's original landscape, reflecting a symbolic break with the formal, European-inspired modern style, and signaling the beginning of a new, more expressive modern landscape architecture. George Patton, designed the original landscape over an underground parking lot. The final garden featured elements of the Modernist style Patton was known for, including specially designed lampposts, raised granite beds, a sunken tennis court along the park's western edge and plantings of evergreen and magnolias throughout. At the reservation's southeast corner, Patton designed a distinctly Modernist hardscape, centered around a large oval granite fountain and surrounding terraced plaza with built in seating. A Determination of Eligibility has not been completed for this landscape design.

The Area of Potential Effect (APE) is limited to Reservation 378 and the views into the park. The reservation is situated within the Plan of the City of Washington (incorporating L'Enfant and McMillan plan elements), which was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on April 24, 1997.

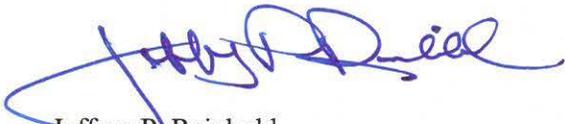
### **Consultation and Potential Effects to Historic Properties**

Based on known information about Native American Groups in the study area, we have determined that there are no federally recognized tribes listed that might attach cultural or religious significance to the APE. Therefore, no consultation with Native American Groups is necessary. Additionally, it is not believed that this action will affect ethnographic resources.

The proposed Area of Potential Effect is shown in the attached map. However, at this early stage, we are unable to make any determination of effect. The NPS and FRB are seeking ways to avoid and minimize the potential for adverse effects on historic properties. Once determined, the NPS and FRB will prepare a formal Assessment of Effects for the project.

We look forward to consulting with you on this project. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Catherine Dewey, Chief of Resource Management for NAMA at 202-245- 4711 or via email at [catherine\\_dewey@nps.gov](mailto:catherine_dewey@nps.gov).

Sincerely,



Jeffrey P. Reinbold  
Superintendent

Enclosures: Area of Potential Effect