

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

+ + + + +

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY &
CULTURE

+ + + + +

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT & SECTION 106

+ + + + +

PUBLIC HEARING

+ + + + +

THURSDAY,
JANUARY 10, 2008

+ + + + +

The Hearing convened at 6:30 p.m.
in the Nan Tucker McEvoy Auditorium of the
National Portrait Gallery, 8th and F Streets,
N.W., Washington, D.C., Don Edwards,
Facilitator, presiding.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

A-G-E-N-D-A

Call to Order:

Don Edwards, Facilitator..... 3

Introduction of Purpose:

Curtis Davis..... 9

Jess Commerford..... 15

Discussion of Agenda and Protocol:

Don Edwards, Facilitator..... 34

Comments from the Public:

Floyd Coleman..... 36

Robert L. Wright..... 38

Robert Wilkins..... 40

Richard Westbrook..... 46

George Oberlander..... 48

Christopher Ziemann..... 54

Gene Tinnie..... 58

Vanessa Ruffin-Colbert..... 62

Meeting Adjourned:

Don Edwards, Facilitator..... 64

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

2 6:28 p.m.

3 FACILITATOR EDWARDS: My name is Don
4 Edwards. I'm going to serve as your
5 facilitator tonight. I am with Justice and
6 Sustainability Associates and we're part of
7 the Louis Berger team that has been given the
8 technical support to this EIS project.

9 We want to invite you at the end of
10 the program, the little presentation that's
11 going to be given, to come forward to one of
12 these mikes and provide any testimony that you
13 would like to have entered on the record. The
14 governing laws and legislation require that we
15 take every comment that we're given in written
16 or oral form. It will be entered into the
17 record and become part of the final report
18 after a decision has been made about the
19 study.

20 At the same time, we will not be
21 doing questions and answers tonight. So, it
22 is a process in which we document your inputs,

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 comments, questions of any type. But, at a
2 later point, when a decision is made, the
3 final responses will be reflected in that
4 decision document. So I do want you to
5 prepare yourselves to do that. We've
6 essentially allotted three minutes for
7 individuals and five minutes for
8 organizations. And at some point towards the
9 end of the presentation that you'll be given
10 prior to our testimony period, I will come
11 back and talk about some of the ground rules,
12 which are very elementary and very simple, and
13 I'm sure you'll have recognized them from all
14 the other kinds of efforts like this you've
15 participated in already. But I'll do that at
16 the end.

17 Before I get to that, I want to
18 tell you that, of course, here tonight we have
19 a very nice venue. And so we have restrooms
20 out front and hopefully you've signed in.
21 There will be some refreshments, I believe,
22 later that you can get, as you want to stay

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 here. We're going to be here until 9:00,
2 because we're actually obligated to be here in
3 case anyone comes in at anytime between the
4 published period for this testimony.

5 So, those of you are so inclined to
6 be here until 9:00, we welcome you to do that
7 and we will provide some refreshments, very
8 light refreshments, to sustain you as you're
9 here.

10 I want to say that I have two
11 colleagues who will be working the mic to help
12 you. But at the point where we give the
13 ground rules, you can begin to line up and I
14 will basically alternate in talking and asking
15 you to say your name, if you want to give your
16 address and your organization, we will welcome
17 that.

18 As you can see, we have a court
19 reporter here whose job and task it is to
20 capture those inputs. And of course, again,
21 if you have any written testimony, you may
22 hand that to any one of my associates or

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 myself and they will become part of the
2 written record. Any questions about that?

3 Yes, Dick?

4 MR. WESTBROOK: How am I going to be
5 able to show my air photos?

6 FACILITATOR EDWARDS: I think for
7 the purposes of this meeting, you'll just have
8 to hold them up or my associate can hold them
9 up for you. But, if you will, after this,
10 send us electronic copies and they'll be
11 entered into the record with your testimony or
12 your comments.

13 I want to now introduce Beth Cohen?

14 MS. GARCIA: Garcia.

15 FACILITATOR EDWARDS: Garcia. Who
16 is our sign language interpreter. And if
17 anyone needs sign language interpretation
18 services, she is here to help you provide
19 that, if you want to raise your hands and let
20 her know where you are.

21 MS. GARCIA: Thank you sir.

22 FACILITATOR EDWARDS: Thank you

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 Beth.

2 Okay. Let me say a little bit
3 about what's going to happen. This is a
4 milestone in a continuing process. And you
5 will hear more about that process. But
6 tonight, we are here to make a presentation to
7 you about the findings, the Environmental
8 Impact study that's been conducted over the
9 last few months have produced.

10 And you will get, first all, a kind
11 of introduction to the whole project from
12 Curtis Davis, who is the Project Executive,
13 working for the National Museum of African
14 American History and Culture and the
15 Smithsonian Institute.

16 And he will be followed by Jess
17 Commerford who is the Project Manager and Lead
18 Consultant with the Louis Berger Group to
19 actually walk you through a PowerPoint
20 presentation that will help ground you in the
21 background of the project, where we are and
22 where we're going to go next. And as I said,

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

(202) 234-4433

www.nealrgross.com

1 that will be followed by the public testimony
2 period.

3 In order to receive your testimony,
4 you're going to see Curtis Davis, who I've
5 just introduced and I will say more about.
6 And he will be sitting up here along with Gene
7 Keller. Gene is a Project Manager and the
8 person who is representing the National
9 Capital Planning Commission, which is the part
10 of the government that is actually responsible
11 for the production of this EIS study. He and
12 Curtis will be sitting here, but they won't
13 actually be responding to you in the audience.

14 So I don't want you to be confused when they
15 come up here and sit after the production.
16 You shouldn't think that when you talk,
17 they're going to talk back. Okay?

18 So are there any questions about
19 that? Yes.

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Do you have a
21 copy of PowerPoint?

22 FACILITATOR EDWARDS: I think the

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 PowerPoint is actually going to be available
2 on the website for the project. And that
3 address will probably be a part of the
4 PowerPoint, so you'll be able to see it there.

5 But it's -- I'm pretty sure that will be the
6 case.

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you.

8 FACILITATOR EDWARDS: Any other
9 questions? Anything? Okay. Very good. Now
10 what I would like to do, is bring up Curtis
11 Davis, who is the Project Executive for this
12 project and he will begin the process of
13 talking about the project and he'll be
14 followed by Jess Commerford from the Louis
15 Berger Group.

16 MR. DAVIS: Good evening.

17 On behalf of the National Museum of
18 African American History and Culture's
19 founding Director, Dr. Lonnie Bunch, let me
20 thank all of you for coming out this evening
21 and giving your time and to provide valuable
22 input to this important process.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 We have come to this point in a
2 deliberative process that has benefitted from
3 the consultations and guidance of numerous
4 organizations and individuals.

5 From the members of the museum's
6 council to members of Congress and from the
7 president's commission to the Section 106
8 consulting parties. Equally important, has
9 been an array of supportive letters and e-
10 mails. We are grateful to all who have
11 written, commented or shared your thoughts.

12 The museum's leadership is quite
13 sure that tonight's testimony will give us
14 much to think about and act upon. We look
15 forward to continuing the discussions and
16 collaborations that advanced the development
17 of our nation's newest treasure.

18 In terms of the agenda, that was
19 carried out pretty eloquently by Don and I'm
20 not going to spend much time with that. But I
21 would like to talk a little bit about the
22 vision.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 As Lonnie Bunch travels around the
2 country talking about this museum and the
3 stories that it will tell, we have been moved
4 by the excitement and the appreciation that
5 people have about this museum being on the
6 National Mall. There is much excitement that
7 this museum has created. The product of the
8 vision, creativity, resilience, the hopes of
9 many generations will finally have a home on
10 the National Mall.

11 On these grounds, in the shadow of
12 the Washington Monument, next to the National
13 Museum of American History, we will build a
14 museum that is respectful of both the history
15 and culture of the African-American community
16 and the sacred space that it will occupy.

17 For while this Mall is America's
18 front yard and gathering place, it is also a
19 site of meaning for Americans who remember
20 Marian Anderson's Easter Sunday concert in
21 1939, or Dr. Martin Luther King's call for an
22 America that embraces all of its citizens.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 Consequently, one of the goals of
2 this museum, is to be a place to help
3 Americans to remember. To remember the names
4 we think we know. Names like, Frederick
5 Douglass, Rosa Parks and Ida B. Wells. But it
6 must also be a place that helps us to remember
7 the enslaved women who refused to let their
8 fields strip her of her family, her humanity
9 and her humor for the family who left the
10 south to rebuild lives on the south side of
11 Chicago.

12 And it must be a place that helps
13 us to remember to tap our toes, to Louis
14 Armstrong or to Aretha Franklin. It must be a
15 place that allows us all who visit, to revel
16 in the richness, the challenges and the beauty
17 of the African-American experience. But it
18 must also be a place that uses African-
19 American culture as a lens to better
20 understand what it means to be an American.

21 So much of the African-American
22 experience shapes all of our lives. If one

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 wants to understand core American values of
2 resiliency, optimism, or our spirituality,
3 where better to look than in an African-
4 American experience.

5 Further, this museum must be a 21st
6 Century institution that celebrates and
7 embraces collaboration. We must collaborate
8 with a myriad of historical and cultural
9 institutions that explore American history and
10 culture. We will draw people to Washington
11 and then encourage them to explore the history
12 and culture within their local communities.
13 And this museum must help Americans understand
14 their place in a global society.

15 While this museum will focus on
16 America, it must explore the diaspora from
17 Africa to Europe to South America.
18 Ultimately, the National Museum of African
19 American History and Culture will be a place
20 of meaning, of memory, of reflection, of
21 laughter and of hope for us all. It should be
22 a beacon that reminds us of what we were, what

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 challenges still remain and points us towards
2 what we can become.

3 Before I introduce one of the
4 members of our team, Jess Commerford, I'd like
5 to remind everyone of the overall process and
6 for some of you, who have not been engaged in
7 this, give you an overall summary of where the
8 project is going.

9 Jess is with the Berger Group and
10 is our EIS/106 project director and is here
11 working with the team to guide us through this
12 process.

13 I would like to note that the
14 museum has retained an architectural
15 programming and exhibition master planning
16 team, the FreelonBond joint venture with Lord
17 Cultural Resources and Amaze Design. They
18 will complete their work in the Fall of this
19 year. Their planning effort will support the
20 selection of a design architect and we will
21 begin that process late this year.

22 So with that, I'd like to introduce

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 Jess and again, thank you for taking the time
2 to come out and to participate in this
3 process.

4 MR. COMMERFORD: Thank you Curtis.

5 I'd like to take a minute. I always have the
6 unfortunate position in the agenda to follow
7 the wonderful vision statement with a much
8 more rudimentary aspects of why we're here
9 this evening.

10 But we are in the process of
11 preparing an Environmental Impact Statement,
12 which is a Federal requirement for a project
13 of this nature. And for some of you who were
14 at the Scoping Meeting, you've heard some
15 about that already, but let me touch briefly
16 on what that is and where we are in that
17 process. And I'll spend the next few minutes
18 doing that.

19 In 2001, Representative John Lewis,
20 Representative J.C. Watts, Senator Sam
21 Brownback and Senator Max Cleveland led a
22 bipartisan coalition to establish to establish

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 a National Museum of African American History
2 and Culture within the Smithsonian resulting
3 in the formation of the Presidential
4 Commission to develop a plan of action to
5 build the museum.

6 In January 2003, Congress wrote the
7 National Museum of African American History
8 and Culture Act, which established within
9 Smithsonian, the National Museum of African
10 American History and Culture. The Act was
11 signed by President Bush in December of 2003.

12 Following the Act, three documents helped the
13 Smithsonian select a site and to find a
14 preliminary program to inform the gross size
15 of the museum. Those documents are listed
16 here and they are on the website as well for
17 review.

18 In the Final Site Report, the
19 Presidential Commission engaged a prominent
20 museum programming and design firm to develop
21 a museum-building program. Based on their
22 professional understanding of museum

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 functional use organization, they developed a
2 basic museum building program which the
3 Presidential Commission recommends as
4 representing reasonable needs that were
5 neither too conservative or unnecessarily
6 generous. And it's a critical benchmark in
7 evaluating sites for the project.

8 In its Site Evaluation Study, the
9 Smithsonian and its consultants validated the
10 Presidential Commission overall program while
11 adjusting space categories and associated
12 areas slightly, based on the Smithsonian's
13 long experience in developing and operating
14 museums on a national scale.

15 The National Museum of African
16 American History and Culture site was selected
17 in accordance with Section 8 of the Museum
18 Act. This section of the act directed the
19 Smithsonian Institution Board of Regents to
20 choose among four identified sites. The site
21 for the museum is a 5-acre parcel that is part
22 of the Washington Monument grounds and the

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

(202) 234-4433

www.nealrgross.com

1 National Mall. It's a five-acre parcel
2 bounded by Constitution Avenue on the north,
3 Madison Drive on the south, 14th Street, N.W.
4 on the east and 15th Street, N.W.

5 The Smithsonian Institution and the
6 National Capital Planning Commission or NCPC,
7 are joint lead agencies for the EIS, and as
8 was mentioned, that's because they're the
9 responsible federal agency. The CEQ
10 Regulations, the Council on Environmental
11 Quality Regulations, which are the regulations
12 implementing NEPA state that, "Federal, state
13 or local agencies may act as joint lead
14 agencies to prepare an EIS, as long as they
15 include one federal agency." The National
16 Capital Planning Commission, as I said, is the
17 responsible federal agency.

18 The National Park Service is a
19 cooperating agency and the regulations, the
20 CEQ Regulations also mandate that federal
21 agencies responsible for preparing NEPA
22 analysis and documentation do so in

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 cooperation with state and local governments
2 and other agencies with jurisdiction by law or
3 special expertise. And in this instance,
4 National Park Service is participating because
5 they are transferring the land to the
6 Smithsonian Institution for the museum use.

7 What you see here is the slide that
8 illustrates the major milestones of the NEPA
9 process, that we have completed six of the
10 nine major steps to prepare an Environmental
11 Impact Statement, the draft EIS Notice of
12 Availability was published in the Federal
13 Register on December 21st, 2007. The
14 regulations require a 45-day comment period.

15 I would like to mention that the
16 public comment period has been extended from
17 February 4th to February 18th, 2008. The
18 primary reason for extending it a couple of
19 extra weeks was the fact that this was
20 released over the holiday period.

21 The Smithsonian Institution expects
22 the Tier 1 analysis and the document to lead

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

(202) 234-4433

www.nealrgross.com

1 to a Tier 1 preferred alternative, which is
2 expressed as a narrative of design principles
3 outlining opportunities, boundaries and
4 constraints for the project.

5 A Smithsonian Institution Record of
6 Decision will formalize the findings as far as
7 decisions that are able to be made now.

8 Concurrently, we are engaged in the
9 Section 106 process, addressing historic
10 resources. We have completed five of the
11 seven major steps within the Section 106
12 process pursuant to the National Historic
13 Preservation Act Regulations.

14 We are in the process of working
15 with consulting parties to further evaluate
16 any adverse effects associated with the
17 project. In the Spring of 2007, pursuant to
18 Section 106 regulations implemented by
19 Advisory Council and Historic Preservation
20 that encourage early coordination with groups
21 or individuals who have a demonstrated
22 interest in historic properties that may be

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 affected by a proposed project, the
2 Smithsonian Institution invited a number
3 constituents to participate in the Section 106
4 process as consulting parties.

5 And on this slide, I won't read
6 through all of these, but this is a list of
7 the consulting parties which can also be found
8 in the document.

9 The consulting parties have been
10 continuously involved in an open dialogue
11 with the Smithsonian Institution and NCPC to
12 shape concept alternatives and determine
13 effects on significant culture resources
14 associated with this project.

15 We are engaged here in what is
16 referred to as a tiered EIS. The visual
17 resources and historic preservation effects
18 have been the most complex and difficult to
19 define and analyze for this project.

20 Following Smithsonian review and
21 understanding of the current point and
22 alternatives development, the CEQ Regulations

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 noted before, the NCPC final environmental and
2 historic preservation policies and procedures,
3 and the discussion with the consulting
4 parties, the Smithsonian Institution and the
5 NCPC have determined that strategies to avoid,
6 minimize, or mitigate any adverse effects,
7 might be premature without a more definitive
8 design development.

9 Since the final design will not be
10 complete until 2010 or beyond, the Smithsonian
11 Institution may utilize the assessment of
12 environmental impacts for the majority of
13 research topics and the EIS process, when they
14 resume NEPA for the assessment and resolution
15 of effects for historic resources in the
16 future.

17 What you see here is an outline of
18 the draft EIS, which again, can be found on
19 the website, if you don't already have a copy
20 of that.

21 We'll talk a little bit more about
22 a couple of these sections, the purposes and

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 needs statement, which is really the backbone
2 of the EIS document. The proposed action is
3 the construction and operation of a permanent
4 facility for the Natural Museum of African
5 American History and Culture within the
6 Smithsonian Institution on the five-acre
7 parcel that is part of the Washington Monument
8 Grounds on the National Mall, as mentioned.

9 The need for action is to provide a
10 museum that can provide a national meeting
11 place for all Americans to learn about the
12 history and culture of African Americans and
13 their contributions too in relationship with
14 every aspect of our national life. To respond
15 to the interests and needs of diverse racial
16 constituencies who share a common commitment
17 to a full and accurate telling of our
18 country's past as we prepare for our country's
19 future. It is the only national venue that
20 can really serve as an educational healing
21 space to further racial reconciliation.

22 What you see here, are the resource

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 sections which are addressed in the
2 Environmental Impact Statement. Again, I
3 won't read through all of those. They are
4 listed here. And we'll talk a little bit
5 about the overarching principles that drove
6 the draft EIS Alternatives Development, which
7 had been shaped by a extensive coordination
8 with the National Capital Planning Commission,
9 the National Park Service and the consulting
10 parties. And they adhere to the following
11 overarching principles.

12 For physical character, physical
13 character should convey an image that is
14 clean, impressive and monumental.

15 For the mission and program, the
16 range of alternatives will fall within 350,000
17 and 450,000 gross square feet of space.

18 For monumental context, to provide
19 a place to reflect on the connection to
20 symbols of freedom and democracy.

21 For urban design, surrounding
22 heights massing and setbacks will be respected

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 and enhanced.

2 Culture resource protection,
3 respect and enhance the district's historic
4 legacy of planning and reinforce key
5 viewsheds.

6 For visitor use, public use of the
7 site will continue and public amenities will
8 be enhanced.

9 For visitor experience, it will
10 enhance connections to the National Mall,
11 monuments and other museums.

12 And finally, for museum functions
13 and operations, the operations will meet
14 desired standards of excellence, appropriate
15 for symbolic spaces on the Mall.

16 During the consulting party's
17 meeting on November 16, 2007, a discussion of
18 how the various alternatives might inform the
19 design architects in the future was held. The
20 following ideas relative to these four topics
21 were put forward to be considered as elements
22 of a set of Section 106 principles.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 For physical character and quality,
2 the building forum should respond to and
3 respect the unique shape of the site and avoid
4 projecting into sensitive viewsheds. The
5 architectural expressions should compliment
6 the Washington Monument.

7 For monumental context, enhance the
8 monumental context of its site on the monument
9 grounds and its adjacency to significant
10 historical properties in and around theMallthe
11 Mall.

12 For urban design, the building
13 should respect the open feeling and freedom of
14 movement of the site and the adjacent Federal
15 Triangle Complex.

16 And finally, cultural resource
17 protection, the architectural expression
18 should not overshadow or detract from the
19 Washington Monument.

20 Using these several alternatives
21 were developed for the purpose of the draft
22 Environmental Impact Statement. NEPA requires

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 that the analysis of a No Build Alternative as
2 a baseline in the document. In addition to
3 the No Build, we analyzed six build
4 alternatives in the draft EIS. It's extremely
5 important to stress that these alternatives do
6 not represent design concepts. These diagrams
7 are meant to represent an approach to the
8 distribution of building mass on the site, the
9 maximum potential volume is represented by
10 height and building footprint. This maximum
11 volume includes potential building projections
12 like mechanical penthouses, but may not
13 include potential architectural embellishments
14 and features, like domes.

15 These alternatives are presented in
16 more detail in the space outside the
17 auditorium before you came in. If you would
18 like more information, please feel free to
19 visit the alternative station during the
20 public testimony where a Smithsonian staff
21 member or a member of our consultant team will
22 be available to answer any questions for

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 clarification.

2 With that, I'll briefly review the
3 alternatives that were presented in the draft
4 EIS. Alternative one, responds to the goal of
5 representing an aesthetic worthy of and equal
6 to the other surrounding landmarks by aligning
7 both the building facade lines and building
8 height with adjacent buildings.

9 Contextual massing that explicitly
10 relates to the patterns of buildings fronting
11 the National Mall. To form a building massing
12 perspective, the museum will appear as another
13 building in a family of buildings. And the
14 development of architectural concepts and
15 style that will eventually lead to either a
16 reinforcement of this contextual alignment or
17 the introduction of distinct developments to
18 differentiate the building from its neighbors.

19 Alternative two represents a more
20 literal approach to the contextual massing
21 strategy of alternative one with the addition
22 of a massing relationship that responds to its

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 most prominent neighbor, the Washington
2 Monument. The aesthetic is more varied with
3 the opportunity for an exceptional facade
4 treatment oriented towards the monument. This
5 orientation, unique to the surrounding
6 buildings, will possibly create the impression
7 of a building that not only continues the
8 progression of landmark Mall buildings, but
9 also ends the progression. The less
10 conventional building form with further
11 architectural development, can provide an
12 aesthetically appropriate transition that
13 bridges the access of the National Mall with
14 the north south access of open spaces leading
15 to the White House.

16 Alternative three, represents a
17 strong aesthetic impact through contrast which
18 differentiates its form from that of the
19 adjacent buildings. The freeform example
20 shown in the illustration is merely a diagram
21 of a single potential iteration of this idea.

22 The concepts of non-alignment of building

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 frontages and multi-directional orientation,
2 may extend upward into a more complex three
3 dimensional form that is illustrated here.

4 The aesthetic effect is generally a
5 more complex nature, with a potential for a
6 building that looks very different from a
7 variety of locations. The overall mass, shape
8 and size will be more difficult to discern
9 from a single vantage point, unlike
10 alternative one.

11 Alternative four incorporates
12 landscape features into the overall building
13 environment. The building is configured to
14 maintain strong building facade edges along
15 Constitution Avenue and 14th Street, while
16 stepping down with terraces, slopes and other
17 techniques towards the Washington Monument.
18 The aesthetic effect is that of a gradually
19 rising plain, perhaps with an amphitheater or
20 terrace seating facing the Washington Monument
21 that emerges from the ground and culminates
22 down a high point at the intersection of

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

(202) 234-4433

www.nealrgross.com

1 Constitution Avenue and 14th Street. The
2 terraced areas maybe used for programed
3 outdoor space for green roof elements or other
4 integrated landscape solutions.

5 The overall effect will contain two
6 distinct aesthetic experiences. Blending into
7 the landscape towards the monument and more
8 traditional vertical building facades at the
9 intersection of Constitution Avenue and 14th
10 Street.

11 Alternative five incorporates
12 outdoor public space into a centralized area
13 and framed by two separate building wings.
14 The enframed open space is directionally
15 oriented towards the Washington Monument. In
16 orienting towards the monument, a key view
17 corridor looking towards the monument from the
18 intersection of Constitution Avenue and 14th
19 Street is preserved.

20 The main aesthetic effect is of a
21 bifurcated structure with varying heights, the
22 relationship to contexts through building a

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 spacial orientation, rather than building or
2 height alignment.

3 Alternative six responds to the
4 goal of complimenting this site and deferring
5 to the presence of the Washington Monument.
6 This alternative has a minimized visible mass
7 and a soft edge along the southwest facade
8 that is aligned with Madison Drive. The
9 minimum functional building footprint, along
10 with a significant percentage of below grade
11 space allows for a lower building, that when
12 pushed as far east on the side as possible,
13 seems to pull back from the monument while
14 still maintaining the facade aligned with the
15 row buildings along Constitution Avenue.
16 This mass results in more open space on the
17 site with a direct relationship to the
18 remaining open space of the Washington
19 Monument grounds and Madison Drive.

20 In terms of the next steps, once
21 the public comment period concludes, we will
22 be working towards the preparation of the

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 final Environmental Impact Statement or FEIS.
2 At the outset of the final Environmental
3 Impact Statement, the Smithsonian will be
4 required to select a preferred alternative.
5 The products of the two processes are a record
6 of decision for the Environmental Impact
7 Statement as I mentioned before, and a
8 memorandum of understanding or MOU for the
9 Section 106 process.

10 The public comment period began on
11 December 21st with the Notice of Availability
12 Publication in the Federal Register and the
13 public release of the draft Environmental
14 Impact Statement. As I mentioned previously,
15 due to the fact that the NOA and the draft EIS
16 were released over the holidays, we have
17 extended the comment period an additional two
18 weeks, until February 18, 2008.

19 There are several ways to comment,
20 both in the future on the draft EIS and in the
21 meeting this evening. And I'm going to turn
22 it back over to Don at this point to

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 facilitate that and take comments from you
2 this evening. And I thank you for coming out
3 tonight.

4 FACILITATOR EDWARDS: All right.
5 Great. Thank you so much Jess. So let me
6 just kind of go over what it is that we'd like
7 for you to do. We have two microphones.
8 We're going to open our period of public
9 testimony now. We have a court reporter here.

10 And I am going to call first on the people
11 who signed up and you may go to either
12 microphone. And your comments, questions will
13 be placed on the record. I'd also like to
14 invite Gene Keller and Curtis Davis to come
15 and sit here to represent the Smithsonian
16 Institute and the National Capital Planning
17 Commission.

18 We will take public comment orally
19 or in written form until 9:00 p.m. Because
20 that was our published period of comment. And
21 you may stay as long as you want and
22 participate as long as you want, but we will

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 end at 9:00 p.m.

2 So, the people who signed up, and
3 I'm going to ask them to come to the
4 microphones, Robert L. Wright, Robert Wilkins,
5 George Oberlander, Floyd Coleman, Richard
6 Westbrook and Chris Ziemann. If you will come
7 to the microphones on either side. I will
8 repeat that -- where is my colleague Sharon
9 Cowey? Sharon Cowey is sitting here in the
10 front and she is going to give you a notice
11 when you have a minute or so left. We have
12 asked you to, as individuals, keep your
13 comments or testimony to three minutes. And
14 if an organization, to limit them to five
15 minutes.

16 And Sharon, if you will stand up so
17 people know that when you act, they are to
18 follow your instructions. Okay. So this is
19 where you will know when your time has begun
20 to run out.

21 So, if whoever -- let's start over
22 here on my right. If you will introduce

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 yourself and if you want to add your address
2 and/or organization, we'll appreciate that.
3 You sir?

4 MR. COLEMAN: Good evening. My name
5 is Floyd Coleman, that's F-L-O-Y-D, C-O-L-E-M-
6 A-N. Although I belong to many different
7 organizations and so forth here in the City,
8 I'm representing myself.

9 This is a very important project
10 and I just want to underscore that fact
11 tonight. The African American struggle must
12 be told and it certainly must be told from our
13 National Mall.

14 The struggle for black liberation
15 has been going on, as you know, for centuries.

16 But it is also important for our young people
17 and others who visit this city and visit our
18 country to know that it has only been a few
19 years, really some 43 or 44 years, that black
20 people have been full citizens of this
21 country. I underscore the 1965 Voting Rights
22 Act. When you think about that, how recent

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 that was, this museum must tell that story and
2 the myriad, the many, many other stories that
3 exist.

4 Vincent Harding, the historian,
5 wrote a book entitled, "There's a River" and
6 of course he, along with many other important
7 African-American historians have dealt with
8 the black American struggle. And if I may add
9 a personal point, I entered that river in 1956
10 in Montgomery, Alabama. And there, of course,
11 Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King and others and
12 someone who needs to be more well-known was a
13 professor at Jackson -- at Alabama State
14 University, Jo Ann Robinson, a book has been
15 written about her. But, more needs to be
16 known about a very brave professor there at
17 Alabama State who led marches against lynching
18 in the 1950s and of course, was an aide to Dr.
19 King in the bus boycott and many of the other
20 things that took place.

21 I just want to again, say that the
22 African-American story must be told and it

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 must be told here on the Mall. Thank you.

2 FACILITATOR EDWARDS: Thank you
3 very much. Sir, if you will introduce
4 yourself.

5 DR. WRIGHT: Yes. My name is Dr.
6 Robert L. Wright. That's R-O-B-E-R-T, W-R-I-
7 G-H-T. My address is 6369 Brampton Court,
8 Alexandria, Virginia 22304.

9 I was Chairman of the Plan for
10 Action Presidential Commission for the
11 National Museum of African American History
12 and Culture. The Commission was established
13 by Public Law 107-106 and was created to
14 provide the president and Congress with an
15 implementation plan to create a National
16 Museum of African American History and Culture
17 in our nation's capitol. It was this
18 Commission that prepared the report to the
19 president and Congress entitled, "The Time Has
20 Come".

21 Among other things, the legislation
22 directed the Commission to look at possible

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 sites, a possible location for the museum on
2 or adjacent to the Mall in Washington, D.C.
3 The legislation also directed us to explore
4 the cost and the feasibility of converting the
5 Smithsonian's Art and Industries building into
6 a modern museum with requisite temperature and
7 humidity controls.

8 The site selection process was
9 thorough and extensive as outlined in the
10 Preferred Site Analysis Report that was
11 prepared on the direction of Attorney, Robert
12 Wilkins, who was Chairman of the Site and
13 Building Committee of the Commission. A site
14 criteria was established. From there, we
15 identified 11 sites on or adjacent to the Mall
16 that met the preliminary criteria. The
17 Commission toured all sites. After the site
18 visits, the Commission presented preliminary
19 thoughts and pros and cons on each site
20 toured. From there we narrowed the list down
21 to four preferred sites. The Capitol site,
22 the monument site, the Liberty lawn site and

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 the Overlook site.

2 The site on the Mall that we're
3 talking about, near the Washington Monument is
4 highly visible from the Mall and several
5 business streets, readily accessible to the
6 Washington Monument, the National Museum of
7 African American History, the crossroads
8 between the White House, the National Mall and
9 the Washington Monument.

10 The Commission has town hall
11 meetings in several cities throughout the
12 country. The common thread throughout the
13 town hall meetings, was that this museum
14 should be in the front yard of America. That
15 means on the Mall in the nation's capitol.
16 The Monument site is that front yard. Thank
17 you.

18 FACILITATOR EDWARDS: Thank you
19 sir. Sir, if you will introduce yourself.

20 ROBERT WILKINS: Thank you. My name
21 is Robert Wilkins. I am speaking as the chair
22 of the Site and Building Committee of the

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 Presidential Plan for Action Commission that
2 Dr. Wright so ably chaired and just spoke of.

3

4 I would like to say a few things.
5 First of all, as Dr. Wright explained, the
6 Presidential Commission considered all of the
7 site issues and came to the conclusion that
8 this site, adjacent to the Washington
9 Monument, was an appropriate site after very
10 careful deliberation and after consulting with
11 Congress, the Smithsonian, the Architect of
12 the Capitol, the National Park Service, the
13 National Capital Planning Commission, the
14 Commission of Fine Arts and various civic
15 groups and individuals.

16 We employed a prominent
17 architectural firm to assist us with this. We
18 had public meetings and forums here in
19 Washington and all over the country, as we
20 were deliberating. We studied all of the
21 relevant planning documents, from the L'Enfant
22 Plan to the McMillan Plan to the 1966 Mall

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

(202) 234-4433

www.nealrgross.com

1 Master Plan to the more recent plans by the
2 NCPC and others. And we developed a 200-page
3 final site report which analyzed all of this
4 information and which came to the conclusion
5 that this site was appropriate.

6 It was appropriate for several
7 reasons. And some of those reasons are
8 important for us to discuss as we are talking
9 about the various alternatives.

10 One reason is that from the very
11 beginning, from the L'Enfant Plan, it was
12 envisioned that a building would be at that
13 location. So make no mistake, if anyone comes
14 here and says tonight or at any other time,
15 that putting a museum at this location would
16 be contrary to some plans for the Mall, tell
17 them to look at the original plan for the
18 Mall, done in over 200 years ago, and you'll
19 see a building right there.

20 ***DT STOP 7:08:45***

21 Furthermore, the McMillan Plan
22 which is seen as the key blueprint for the

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 Mall places a building right there at that
2 site. And indeed, the Commission of Fine Arts
3 approved a building at that site back in 1910,
4 which was to be a new headquarters for the
5 State Department, but for bureaucratic and
6 other reasons, the building was never
7 constructed. The plans were drawn up and they
8 actually approved those plans. So, this site
9 is completely appropriate for a building.
10 It's appropriate for a monumental building and
11 not just a building that's a bunker, where the
12 primary space is below ground and there's
13 just a small amount of space above ground. A
14 building can be constructed at that site that
15 would be no closer to the Washington Monument
16 than the Annex of the Holocaust Museum, which
17 is on the south side of the Mall there at 15th
18 Street. And so, all of that should be taken
19 into account when evaluating the various
20 alternatives and there should not be some
21 unreasonable restrictions placed on the
22 potential design of this building, when no

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 such restrictions were placed on the design of
2 other buildings on the Mall.

3 The buildings on the Mall are quite
4 varied. From the East Wing of the National
5 Gallery of Art to the National Museum of
6 American Indian to the National Museum of
7 American History, you'll find a wide range of
8 design styles, architectural styles and the
9 way that they fit within the Mall context and
10 the buildings were allowed to be designed with
11 a reference to the story that the museum
12 itself was intended to tell. Well, this
13 museum ought to have that same flexibility to
14 be designed in accordance with and with an
15 ability for that design to reflect the story
16 and the history and the culture which a museum
17 was designed to tell.

18 We titled our report, "The Time Has
19 Come," as Dr. Wright just explained, because
20 the quest to build this museum is over 90
21 years old. It began back in 1916. Congress
22 actually approved this museum in 1929, but

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 they didn't fund it and it never got built.
2 So, we've been talking for a long time. And
3 if there's anything on the Mall in Washington
4 or anywhere else that's grandfathered, this is
5 literally grandfathered. Because grandfathers
6 of people living today and grandmothers of
7 people living today, were working on this and
8 were trying to get Congress to approve it and
9 fund it many, many years ago.

10 So, as we move forward, all of that
11 should be taken into account and considered
12 and thank you for this opportunity to do so.
13 I would like to place within the public
14 record, two documents. One called "The
15 Forgotten Museum" and one, which was a letter
16 that I wrote on behalf of the Presidential
17 Commission to the Smithsonian as they were
18 deliberating on which site to select, because
19 they provide further background for the
20 historical and cultural analysis and context.

21 Thank you.

22 FACILITATOR EDWARDS: Thank you.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 I'm going to go over to this side. Sir, if
2 you will step up and introduce yourself.

3 RICHARD WESTBROOK: I'm Richard
4 Westbrook. I reside at 505 H Street, S.W.
5 You can see my house on the bottom of that air
6 photo, but that's -- we are long overdue to
7 have a museum to African Americans. Way
8 overdue. The problem with this site, and I'm
9 looking at it from the Licensed Tour Guide for
10 the District of Columbia for the Metropolitan
11 Area.

12 Tour guiding is getting to be an
13 absolute chaotic operation. Especially if
14 there's a little bit of rain and you hit the
15 congestion of the peak, afternoon peak hours.

16 This site, in my opinion, it should be
17 absolutely left open. We are having more
18 outdoor temporary events that are so impacting
19 the Mall. And by the way, the Mall goes from
20 14th to 3rd Street. It is the grass and tree
21 panels of that area that, you know, there's a
22 constant need to be refurbishing the grass.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 So if you could have one of these temporary
2 events on the Washington Monument grounds,
3 that would be an alternative. We are getting
4 more and more of these events.

5 You know, this is a National
6 Register landmark, the Washington Monument.
7 Reservation Two of the L'Enfant-Ellicott Plan.

8 Over decade after decade, from 1966, we have
9 always kept that site open. And by the way, I
10 was an employee of the National Capital
11 Planning Commission for 20 years, when we
12 approved Constitution Gardens, Vietnam
13 Memorial, east wing of the National Gallery,
14 the Aerospace Museum. I had gone back to
15 Arlington County planning before the Indian
16 Museum was opened up.

17 I am recommending still, that the
18 Banneker Overlook site be considered. This
19 will help the city. It will help tourism, a
20 proposed garage, a tour bus garage and visitor
21 parking, 75 tour busses, 1,150 temporary for
22 visitors. It's a short walk to the Mall. And

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 put on the top of this garage, the African
2 American Museum.

3 Am I over? I don't know why they
4 limit people to three minutes. Really, Don,
5 this is -- you don't need to limit anybody.

6 FACILITATOR EDWARDS: Dick, we'd
7 like for you to make sure that your images are
8 entered into the record. And if you'll make
9 sure that I get a copy of them electronically,
10 we'll have that done.

11 MR. WESTBROOK: Yes.

12 FACILITATOR EDWARDS: Thank you
13 for your comment.

14 MR. WESTBROOK: Your office has it
15 now.

16 FACILITATOR EDWARDS: Okay. I'll
17 speak with you after the meeting. Sir, if
18 you'll introduce yourself.

19 MR. OBERLANDER: Yes, I will. My
20 name is George Oberlander. I represent the
21 National Coalition to Save the Mall, a
22 coalition of professional and civic

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 organizations and other concerned historians,
2 artisans and citizens to provide a
3 constituency dedicated to the protection and
4 preservation of the Mall and National Capital.

5 Our mission is to defend our
6 national gathering place and symbol of
7 constitutional principles against threats
8 posed by proposals for new museums, memorials,
9 security barriers, service buildings and roads
10 that would encroach on the Mall's historical
11 and cultural integrity, its open space and
12 sweeping vistas in significance in American
13 public life. And we therefore support the
14 Congress's moratorium on no more buildings in
15 the Mall area.

16 Last February -- we are consulting
17 parties in the Section 106 process for
18 historic preservation, which is going on at
19 the same time the EIS is being prepared. And
20 as I say, it's still going on. Last February
21 the coalition submitted nine major comments
22 and concerns regarding the EIS by our

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 Chairman, Judy Feldman. And I will resubmit
2 those three pages dated February 1, 2007. In
3 our opinion, the draft EIS does not discuss
4 any of the concerns adequately or directly.
5 And we hope that the final EIS will more
6 adequately and specifically address those
7 concerns. I will not read them, because of
8 the shortage of time. I believe I have five
9 minutes, or whatever is left of five minutes.

10 What I will discuss now, is the
11 coalition's real concern over the improper
12 process undertaken and the EIS being used as
13 justification for the Smithsonian's decision.

14 The EIS has been developed after
15 the site location had been decided by the
16 Board of Smithsonian January 30th, 2006. The
17 CEQ Regulations specifically state, and I
18 quote, "The primary purpose of the EIS is to
19 serve as an action-forcing device" and to be
20 used by Federal agencies, "to plan actions
21 and," and I emphasize, "make decisions" at
22 Section 1502.1 of the CEQ Regulation. The

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 Smithsonian Board decided on the location
2 before the required EIS was prepared to
3 evaluate alternatives.

4 In other words, tonight's hearing
5 is after the site decision has already been
6 made. So why discuss alternatives, including
7 the no-action alternative. The EIS is now
8 being used to justify the earlier decision.
9 That's all it is being used for. This is
10 contrary to CEQ Regulations, which seek
11 documentation upon which a site location
12 decision can be made. We are very
13 disappointed about the cause of events and
14 further unhappy that a review agency, like
15 NCPC, that has disapproval authority from each
16 of the alternatives, is party to such an
17 after-the-decision fact justification.

18 The EIS and 106 process are
19 responsible for identifying appropriate
20 mitigation measures on adverse impacts not
21 already included in the proposed action or
22 alternatives. There is no coverage of that

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

(202) 234-4433

www.nealrgross.com

1 requirement in Section 1502.14(F). It is
2 difficult to understand that the proposed
3 action of placing a building on the northeast
4 corner of the Washington Monument grounds is a
5 possible mitigating measure on the impacts on
6 historic resources. Rather, we believe that
7 action is a major environmental consequence on
8 urban quality, historic cultural resources and
9 the design of the Washington Monument and this
10 grounds. And that is what CEQ tries to
11 prevent from happening.

12 In our opinion there should not be
13 a building on the preferred site, even though
14 some plans many years ago may have shown it,
15 but a site has never been formally considered
16 for a public building. It is rather doubtful
17 that all of the major impacts on historic
18 resources can be mitigated.

19 And since my time is running out, I
20 will e-mail the rest of the plans. We are not
21 opposed to the creation of the National Museum
22 of American History and Culture. Indeed we

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 supported and I personally, on behalf of the
2 coalition, testified in Congress to that
3 effect.

4 We oppose the site selection for
5 the museum and the processes Smithsonian has
6 followed to get the required approval. We
7 realize much time and effort has been spent on
8 the project and concerns that Congress has
9 identified only four sites the Smithsonian was
10 to choose from. We realize, to the extent
11 that we are -- we realize the reality of the
12 situation and that the Smithsonian is going
13 through the review process to obtain approval
14 of the preferred site and it can be termed as
15 a done deal.

16 Since it is a done deal, we would
17 like to make one further comment on the -- for
18 the record, and that is the tiered approach
19 that the EIS is taking in our opinion, is
20 flawed. If we do not agree with that, then
21 the document that we'll submit through e-mail
22 will give further information.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 Last, but not least, an item that's
2 not mentioned in the EIS, and when the museum
3 is built on the preferred site, we believe a
4 definite program be included for day and night
5 activities outside the structure to help
6 animate this part of the Mall and the monument
7 grounds. We have mentioned this several
8 times, but no reference to the EIS or any
9 analysis of it in the documents so far. Thank
10 you very much.

11 FACILITATOR EDWARDS: Thank you,
12 sir. Sir, if you'll introduce yourself?

13 MR. ZIEMANN: Hi. My name's
14 Christopher Ziemann. I'm the Ward 2 Planner
15 for the District Department of Transportation.
16 We just have a few comments. We'll also
17 submit these written as well, but I thought
18 I'd bring them up now.

19 One is the -- well, these are
20 basically comments that were comment to all of
21 the alternatives. The first is the loading
22 access off of 14th Street. DDOT is

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 particularly concerned with the amount of
2 volume and the importance of 14th Street as a
3 commuter corridor and also as a very important
4 street in the District transportation network.

5 We think that loading access off of 15th
6 Street would be a better option.

7 There's also no mention of where
8 tour buses would drop off or pick up visitors.

9 And the last comment is that the -- it
10 sounded like, in the EIS, that during
11 construction, it said the site would be closed
12 to pedestrian traffic. We wanted to make
13 sure, or we wanted to push that, if, as long
14 as the site is closed to pedestrian traffic,
15 at least the sidewalks remain open,
16 considering the amount of visitors that travel
17 from that part of the, the eastern part of the
18 Mall to the Washington Monument.

19 FACILITATOR EDWARDS: All right.
20 Thank you very much. I think all of the folks
21 who signed up to provide testimony have
22 spoken. I want to invite anyone who wants to

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 come forward now. You need not have any
2 written testimony to submit. You can simply
3 stand up and state your opinion. And if no
4 one comes up right now, you can come back any
5 time between now and about ten minutes to
6 nine.

7 I want to just encourage you to
8 take this opportunity to go on the record.
9 And I will be here, and the rest of us will be
10 here, until such time that someone comes up
11 and we'll check back in with you at about ten
12 minutes to nine.

13 And my colleague is telling me that
14 there are refreshments upstairs, as I
15 mentioned earlier that can sustain you until
16 perhaps you figure out what you want to say.
17 Thank you very much. We'll be here.

18 And, if you decide not to come and
19 stay, thank you for coming out and we will
20 continue to keep you involved in this process,
21 especially if you have signed in and we can
22 stay in touch with you.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 The Smithsonian Institute is here
2 and then I'll ask you to introduce yourself.
3 And if you are standing to take a seat. We
4 are going to take some more public testimony.

5 While you are getting seated, let me talk
6 about the process a little bit for those who
7 are going to be making the testimony.

8 Essentially tonight you are offered
9 an opportunity to make written and/or verbal
10 testimony. For individuals, you have three
11 minutes and for representatives of
12 organizations you have five minutes. My
13 colleague Sharon Cowey here will hold up a
14 card. Sharon, if you will hold up a card.
15 You will be given a cue as to how much time
16 you have remaining and when your time has run
17 out. My colleagues here at the microphones
18 will be there to assist you in recognizing and
19 keeping our rules in mind.

20 So, if you will, sir, introduce
21 yourself and you may give your address and/or
22 organization that you are representing.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 MR. TINNIE: Thank you. I can't
2 remember when I felt so important. My name is
3 Gene Tinnie. I am from Miami, Florida,
4 specifically 80 N.W. 51st Street. I signed in
5 with my mailing address.

6 I'm actually representing semi-
7 officially two entities. One is the City of
8 Miami, Virginia Key Beach Park Trust. I'll
9 explain that and how it relates to this. And
10 the other is an ambitious slave ship replica
11 project that I happen to be in town for. Some
12 of us were participating in a very stimulating
13 session over at the National Archives
14 commemorating the 200th anniversary of the
15 abolition of the slave trade, which, of
16 course, relates to this project quite
17 directly.

18 Much of what - I just got the word
19 on this and I would just like to share some
20 thoughts for the record, which I think are
21 probably mostly preaching to the choir, but if
22 it helps to underscore some things that we all

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 already know, then so be it.

2 I think the - certainly the primary
3 concern and almost by definition of this
4 gathering, would be to have a very intelligent
5 and informed decision-making process as it
6 pertains to the impact of the future museum on
7 the environment.

8 The Virginia Key Beach project that
9 I mentioned is a project we have in Miami,
10 Florida. It is the old, basically the colored
11 beach from the segregation era, which is being
12 restored into a combination indoor/outdoor
13 museum experience, but it happens to be
14 located in a very sensitive barrier island
15 ecology. And it's something that we foresee
16 as maybe a pilot for many other projects where
17 human history and natural history are
18 presented in a seamless way, right along with
19 just having fun and recreation.

20 We are aware of the fact that
21 having that kind of environmental concern,
22 although it seems like something new in our

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

(202) 234-4433

www.nealrgross.com

1 social experience, it's something that really
2 goes back to ancient traditions and certainly
3 African traditions so that we would -
4 certainly I would just add my name to those
5 who would have the concern that the new
6 museum, however it is constructed and
7 configured is done so in a way that's very
8 harmonious with the ground on which it stands.

9 In addition to the natural
10 resources to be preserved, naturally we have
11 concern with the cultural resources and
12 something that simply does not get mentioned
13 enough is the fact that all of these
14 discussions that we have here in the nation's
15 capital and elsewhere are taking place on land
16 that was occupied by other populations, first
17 nation's for centuries and that doesn't get
18 enough recognition.

19 And I would hope that the future
20 museum demonstrates some sensitivity to the
21 significance of the site in terms of what
22 could be discerned as to what significance it

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 might have had to the native populations
2 before that.

3 In my other incarnation of the
4 slave ship replica project is something that I
5 and my colleague Harmon Carey from Delaware
6 have been working on for a number of years.
7 We are in the process of having conversations
8 with the museum about possibly incorporating
9 it and that would naturally involve having an
10 adjunct location on the water. And I just
11 wanted to mention that as a possible point of
12 interest of that and other replicas that might
13 be considered as part of the museum
14 experience. And in considering that we would
15 also want to be as sensitive to the
16 environment. So, since I'm in town and have
17 the opportunity, I'm grateful for it and I
18 thank you very much.

19 MR. EDWARDS: Thank you very much.
20 And I want to remind us all that the period
21 for public comment after tonight is open until
22 February the 18th. Any written testimony may

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 be sent by e-mail or by letter to that
2 address. Is there anyone else who would like
3 to make public comment or testimony? If you
4 will introduce yourself.

5 MS. RUFFIN-COLBERT: Good evening.
6 My name is Vanessa Ruffin-Colbert. I'm a
7 native Washingtonian and did quite a bit of
8 historic study, but most of all, I've been
9 here and born in southwest and living in and
10 around the Southwest, Northwest, Northeast
11 area all of my life.

12 One of the things that I asked when
13 this project was first announced in 2006, I
14 became aware of it over at the -- another
15 museum here in the Mall. My concern was with
16 flooding and I know what very comfortable is
17 people with being along the river's edge and
18 in the flood plain. But this is the one area
19 remaining historically. That even though
20 we've been through a dry season, still has
21 that concern in my mind. And I know we,
22 architecturally, can do a lot of things that

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 we have all kinds of superman powers to beat
2 nature. But I want to make sure, if we choose
3 this site, and we're insistent on building on
4 it, that the monies are available to keep this
5 museum intact and dry and representational of
6 what it should be.

7 We've made many attempts in this
8 city, but I've seen every one of these
9 organizations that alleges they can beat it
10 this time at this location. Still have to
11 rebuild the locks in Georgetown. Still, those
12 tour buses during a rainy season, and when we
13 get a lot of water, that's the one place down
14 there that you still run into pools of water.

15 So these are my concerns and
16 consideration as we, as a people, who are used
17 to being along the river's edge and in the
18 flood plains insist upon and are getting
19 comfortable with a location where this
20 national treasure is to be placed.

21 And I really just wanted to go on
22 record asking that real consideration be given

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 to the original water flows, the patterns in
2 the area that what of engineering geodesic
3 studies, things that are needed are current
4 and that the monies, the monies and the
5 technology to beat them come into place. Army
6 Corps of Engineers still hasn't quite decided
7 the way and I'm real leery about washes, as
8 far as keeping us dry. Thank you.

9 MR. EDWARDS: Thank you very much.

10 Is there anyone else who would like
11 to provide testimony or comment at this time?
12

13 Okay. I am going to do a check
14 here. We are at 7:58. We are going to be
15 here until 9:00. I will probably ask the
16 cutoff testimony or comment at about ten
17 minutes to nine. But, you again, are welcome
18 to stay. We do have refreshments upstairs.
19 This is an opportunity for you to look at the
20 boards and to speak with the technical
21 consultants and representatives of NCPC and
22 the Smithsonian to your heart's content. We

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 will be here and at any point that someone
2 wants to make comment or testimony, please
3 bring it to my attention. Thank you.

4 (Whereupon, the foregoing matter
5 went off the record at 7:47 p.m. and resumed
6 at 8:50 p.m.)

7 FACILITATOR EDWARDS: I'd like to
8 have your attention. It's 8:50 and that is
9 when I said that we would see if there were
10 any folks in the audience who wanted to make
11 comment tonight. This is the last opportunity
12 for oral comment.

13 You will have until February the
14 18th to make written comment and you can send
15 your public comment or testimony to any of
16 these, via any of these media.

17 So I will ask, is there anyone in
18 the audience who wants to go on the record
19 tonight with their oral testimony? Okay.
20 Hearing no one, I will now formally bring to
21 close, the public testimony period for this
22 project and thank you for coming out tonight.

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 Have a safe trip home.

2 (Whereupon, the foregoing matter
3 went off the record at 8:50 p.m.)

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

NEAL R. GROSS

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701