

Location of Meeting	600 Maryland Ave, NW – 5001
Time of Meeting	9:40 am – 11:46 am
Purpose of Meeting	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conclude discussion of preliminary assessment of effects 2. Continue with discussion of effects by alternative. 3. Develop understanding of future steps that lead toward Draft EIS In January.
Attendees:	Sharon Park, SI Amy Ballard, SI Judy Robinson, Robinson & Associates Erin Brasell, Robinson & Associates Gene Keller, NCPC Nancy Witherell, NCPC Thomas Luebke, CFA Curtis Davis, SI Brenda Sanchez, SI Jane Passman, SI Martha Catlin, ACHP Harry Rombach, SI Perry Wheelock, NPS Hany Hassan, BBB Jill Cavanaugh, Berger Rudi Byron, Berger Dreck Wilson, ASLAH George Oberlander, National Coalition to Save Our Mall Felicia Bell, USCHS Rebecca Miller, DCPL

1. EFFECTS MATRIX AND VIEWSHEDS

Sharon Park described the changes to the star chart, noting that the team has populated effects per alternative and carried across the fact that the building obstructs the bottom of the Washington Monument.

Curtis Davis stated that the alternatives are a tool to determine the impacts on historic landscapes. The principles will inform the design.

The group discussed the viewsheds and made several general comments:

- **Tom Luebke** stated that the panoramic view is not the most important; it is secondary to the views from the Mall. He noted that the site is in between the Federal Triangle and Smithsonian Institution museums, the latter of which is in the larger context of the Mall. This site should not complete a corner of only one of these systems; it turns the corner of a larger system.
- **George Oberlander** stated that the No Build Alternative (existing conditions) viewsheds need to be included.
- **Tom Luebke** requested that the semi-truck be removed from the 14th Street view looking north.
- **Felicia Bell** stated her preference that the building remain in alignment with the trees and other buildings (like NMAH). **Tom Luebke** concurred, stating that intrusion into the Mall is the real issue.
- **Martha Catlin** addressed the issue of height stating that it may not undermine the important characteristics.

- **George Oberlander** stated that this location has a very special openness that needs to be respected.

Several comments specific to Alternatives were also made:

Alternatives 1, 2, & 3

- **Tom Luebke** referred to Alternatives 1, 2, & 3 as a family of forms. He noted that Alternative 1 & 3 are extremes and Alternative 2 is a hybrid. Alternative 3 is higher but it seems to have less of an impact on the view of surrounding buildings. Alternative 2 is almost worse from 14th Street because it is higher. The comparison of the two led him to prefer Alternative 3.
- **Perry Wheelock** stated that Alternative 3 occupies the site; one needs to feel that one can walk freely across this site. The design should capture the personal sense of pedestrian movement.

Alternative 4

- **Curtis Davis** noted that any building in alignment maintains the sense of the Mall's continuum; Alternatives 3 & 4 are not in alignment and have a terminating effect rather than a 'marching-on'.
- **Judy Robinson** stated that Alternative 4 changes relationships with the other buildings with the terraced effect of public land up to the height of the building.
- **Tom Luebke** stated it does allow a sense of revealing of the urban fabric. I'm not sure this is the place to say it, yet it is a gimmicky and alien form. It draws the attention away from where one might want it. He stated that the principle of having these terraces could be applied in any of the options
- **Felicia Bell** stated that it is interesting to see a different aesthetic besides square buildings, such as slopes. She stated that she likes the idea of complimenting the Monument and feeding off it but not trying to compete. She stated her preference for a softer edge rather than something jagged.
- **Dreck Wilson** stated that Alternative 4 is the most complimentary to the Monument.

Alternative 5

- **Tom Luebke** stated that Alternative 5 favors one view; with the viewshed from the Ellipse, the impact is the relationship of the Ellipse and White House. With this diagonal, a gesture is created that is not wanted. He discussed the issue of formality. The Washington Monument is autonomous and the development of the grounds reinforces that dominance. The question is about the formal character. Should it react to the Monument like ripples? He does not think we should write off the possibility that there can be a 'collage-ing'; Scheme 5 begins that discussion.
- **Judy Robinson** stated that in Alternative 5, there are two different heights which create something to draw the eye. In the Constitution Avenue looking east viewshed, there are two elements and the one element has nothing to do with anything around it.
- **Sharon Park** stated that the notion that this building will somehow be competing with the Monument needs to be addressed in the principles.

Alternative 6

- **Martha Catlin** expressed her concern that Alternative 6 seems to be merely a smaller version on Alternative 1. She stated that these alternatives superimpose a "squareness" on a site with a curved edge and a linear edge causing too great a burden to create a shape when really the building should be a smaller version of the site footprint. She stated that for this alternative to be useful, it needs to work on all sides. Currently, it only works on two sides. **Tom Luebke** concurred, stating that a box is probably not the right answer; it is more effective to see the buildings are that react to a soft landscape.

The group concurred that Alternative 6 responds to the goal of complimenting the site and deferring to the presence of the Washington Monument. This alternative has a minimized visible mass and a soft edge along the southwest façade that is aligned with Madison Drive. The minimum functional building footprint, along with a significant percentage of below-grade space, allows for a lower building that when pushed as far east on the site as possible, seems to pull back from the Monument while still maintaining the façade aligned with the row of buildings along Constitution Avenue. This mass results in more open space on the site with a direct relationship to the remaining open space of the Washington Monument grounds and Madison Drive.

Alternative 6 is aligned so that the north building façade of NMAAHC align with the north façade of the NMAH main building mass. The east façade is pushed as close to 14th Street as possible, maintaining the required 50-foot security setback. The west façade responds to the shape of the site along Madison Drive.

2. PRINCIPLES

Sharon Park reviewed and summarized the seven principles that resulted from the discussion:

1. The building should respond to the site (i.e shape/ soft curve along Madison Drive, defer to Washington Monument)
2. The view from the U.S. Capitol should be respected and avoid intrusion.
3. The landscape of the site needs to be open. The character of lawn and trees as an open space that needs to be free form and flow.
4. Strive towards pure form to compliment the Washington Monument. The building should compliment the Monument and not draw undue attention from it.
5. Avoid hard square forms and respond to Monument with glass views.
6. Respect the composition of the Federal Triangle and views of it. The views of all adjacent historic resources as a backdrop is important.
7. Pedestrian movement should be free and inviting. Programming should allow use of the space.
8. The building should not violate the city's Height Act.

Sharon Park listed several key words: Monumentality, Significance, Identity, Context.

3. TIERED EIS PROCESS

Harry Rombach described the decision of SI and NCPC to pursue a tiered NEPA process, in which there would be two tiers.

- He stated each tier will have its own product.
- Tier 1 would occur before a design. Products for this would include a Final EIS with a Record of Decision (ROD) for environmental issues that are “ripe for decision.” This include many technical issues, such as ground and surface water, air quality, noise, and the like. The Section 106 counterpart would be a PA, MOA, or some other form of agreement. The preferred alternative in this tier would take the form of design principles, which would inform the subsequent design process. The EIS and ROD will describe a preliminary assessment of effects but will acknowledge that the Section 106 process will continue and will identify how it will continue including public engagement.
- Tier 2 would occur following a conceptual design. Currently, the SI envisions the product for this tier as an EA, which would analyse Aesthetic/Visual and Cultural Resources effects of the concept alternatives. If the preferred alternative went beyond the parameters set forth in Tier 1, then an EIS might be required for Tier 2.

Martha Catlin stated that there is no clear roadmap to integrate 106 into NEPA. She stated that this will be a difficult process.