

## Meeting Minutes

**FROM:** EHT Traceries  
**SUBJECT:** Smithsonian South Mall Campus Master Plan  
Section 106 Consulting Parties Meeting #3  
**DATE:** June 9, 2015

The following minutes represent comments received during the March Section 106 consulting parties meeting for the Smithsonian South Mall Campus Master Plan.

### Consulting Parties

Name	Organization
Andrew Lewis	DC HPO
Thomas Luebke	CFA
Sarah Batcheler	CFA
Brian Lusher	ACHP
Chris Shaheen	DC OP
Mina Wright	GSA
John Tinpe	ANC 2C
Jonathan D. Rogers	DDOT
Megan Kanagy	DDOT
Walter Graham	DDOT
Pat Tiller	Committee of 100
Carol Aten	Committee of 100
Rebecca Miller	DC Preservation League
Tisha Allen	DC Preservation League
Elizabeth Merritt	NTHP
William J. Cook	NTHP
Katie McGuigan	NTHP
Harrison Haas	NTHP
Mark Bennett	National Mall Coalition
Bob Craycraft	Waterfront Gateway Neighborhood Association

Russell Preble	Guild of Professional Tour Guides, DC
Kate Perry	
Cynthia Field	
Richard Busch	
David Maxfield	

### Lead and Cooperating Agencies/Project Team

Name	Organization
Sharon Park	SI
Ann Trowbridge	SI
Michelle Spofford	SI
Christopher Lethbridge	SI
Samir Bitar	SI
Amy Ballard	SI
Carolyn Rein	SI
Barbara Faust	SI
Bill Donnelly	SI
Peter May	NPS/NCR
Kathryn Smith	NPS/NCR
Perry Wheelock	NPS/NCR
Mike Commisso	NPS/NAMA
Jennifer Hirsch	NCPC
Cheryl Kelly	NCPC
Lucy Kempf	NCPC
Sean Franklin	BIG

Aran Coakley	BIG
Bill Marzella	EHT Traceries
Laura Hughes	EHT Traceries
Liz Estes	Stantec

Joan Glynn	Stantec
Laura Cooper	Stantec
Kirk Mettam	Silman
Nathan Hicks	Silman

## Presentation

1. Sharon Park (SP) presented an overview of agenda and goals for meeting.
2. Jennifer Hirsch (JH), NCPC, presented an overview of the NEPA Process, including:
  - a. The roles of NCPC and SI in the master planning process, as related to Section 106 and NEPA;
  - b. The preparation of an EIS (instead of an EA as anticipated earlier); and
  - c. A flowchart to describe the schedule and integration of the various processes.
3. SP presented an update to the Section 106 processes, including the various documents posted on the project website ([www.southmallcampus.si.edu](http://www.southmallcampus.si.edu)) since the last consulting parties meeting.
  - a. SP presented the various levels of historic designation for resources across the South Mall Campus.
  - b. SP indicated that a determination of eligibility would be completed for the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden.
4. SP presented the goals and objectives for the master plan.
5. Sean Franklin (SF), Bjarke Ingels Group, presented the master plan draft alternatives.
  - a. SF and SI responded to various clarification questions regarding the alternatives, drawings, etc. (see discussion below).
6. SP presented the alternatives considered but dismissed.

## Discussion

1. Tom Luebke (TL), CFA, questioned the operational aspects of the Arts & Industries Building (AIB), including east-west circulation and conditioning. TL questioned if the space would open even after the museums are closed to allow for the east to west connection at all times.
  - a. Christopher Lethbridge (CL) indicated that SI is currently in the process of installing dual conditioning systems in AIB: both for basic building maintenance and to support special events.
  - b. CL indicated that AIB has a capacity of 2,500, determined by egress.
2. Andrew Lewis (AL), DC HPO, questioned the current egress capacity of the Castle.
  - a. CL advised that SI would research and provide that information.
3. Chris Shaheen, DC Office of Planning, asked what was the required level of security and if the campus would be looked at holistically for perimeter security.
  - a. SP responded that perimeter security would be analyzed at the master plan level for the entire campus and that the prescribed level of perimeter security would be necessary due to the location of the museums on the Mall and the iconic nature of the Castle.
4. Elizabeth Merritt, NTHP, asked if the relocation of Jefferson Drive was discrete to Alternative D.
  - a. SP indicated that Alternative D follows the general plan of the 2004 Perimeter Security Master Plan, which received preliminary approval from NCPC.
  - b. SP also indicated that the relocation of Jefferson Drive was removed from the other alternatives at the request of NPS, but could possibly be interchangeable with other alternatives.
5. Cynthia Field (CF) commended the preservation of the Castle walls and vaults, and encouraged SI to preserve the foundation piers and (potential) reverse arch footings.

- a. SP responded that they plan to enter into contract to conduct exploratory investigation into the Castle footings. They indicated that although historical research suggests that the reverse arch footings exist, they have never been found.
6. AL questioned the design of the vertical circulation in the Castle, while also acknowledging that SI is still at the master plan stage.
  - a. CL responded that SI expects the future design of the building to incorporate reconstructed north stairs and other existing stairs where feasible.
7. Mina Wright (MW), GSA, questioned the program for AIB, and how it can be developed without a permanent use for that building.
  - a. SP and CL responded that they are exploring several potential future uses for AIB, including special events, limited public use, and the future location of the Visitor Center during the Castle restoration.
8. Consulting parties (CPs) questioned the total square footage of Alternative D.
  - a. SP indicated that the total square footage was flexible, depending on the combination of options.
  - b. CL indicated how the recent renovations to AIB have dramatically reduced the square footage.
9. CPs also asked for description of program goals across the campus.
  - a. SP responded that they have that information, but would need time to compile it.
10. Jonathan Rogers, DDOT, stated that, while DDOT is supportive of centralized loading, they have operational and safety concerns for locating it at a new curb cut on Independence Avenue for the ramp to underground service close to 12<sup>th</sup> Street.
  - a. SP responded that SI has conducted previous discussions with DDOT to review the plan, and that SI is entering into contract to prepare a DDOT Scoping Report and Transportation Analysis. SP indicated that they would consult with DDOT to further develop the plan.
11. Rebecca Miller, DCPL, stated that the presentation materials list “renovation/restoration” as a single treatment, when in fact have individual definitions. She encouraged SI to develop zoning diagrams to reflect different treatment levels.
12. Brian Lusher (BL), ACHP, stated that the presentation of the goals and objectives was helpful for understanding the mission of SI in the master plan.
13. TL acknowledged SP’s progress in the refinement of alternatives, but also stated that he had concerns regarding the size of underground expansion of Castle and the proposed below-ground uses.
  - a. He reiterated the architectural and historical significance of the Castle.
14. Pat Tiller (PT), Committee of 100, stated that he was familiar with the practice of base isolation, but he questioned whether the base isolation could be implemented without the large underground expansion.
  - a. Kirk Mettam (KM), Silman, responded that the base isolation and underground expansion were synergistic treatments, but not necessarily mutually inclusive.
15. AL raised several points around Castle treatment and potential adverse effects:
  - a. He reiterated his request to include a single alternative that includes Castle restoration without underground expansion.
  - b. He also questioned the change in character of the Castle under the proposed alternatives, both from the exterior and the interior (existing) basement.
  - c. SP responded that the Lower Level 2 spaces would not be visible from the interior historic spaces or exterior.
16. Several CPs continued the discussion of the development of an Alternative B.1, which would include base isolation but without a Lower Level 2.
  - a. SP questioned whether that would meet its purpose and need of providing centralized loading and utilities.
  - b. Ann Trowbridge (AT) questioned whether the loss of connectivity between Castle, Quad, and other facilities would negate other master planning objectives.
  - c. SP concluded that it would explore a potential Alternative B.1 option.

- d. AL encouraged SI to consider the range of potential effects to historic resources for each alternative as a tool for decision making. He stressed the importance of protecting the two National Historic Landmarks on the campus (the Castle and AIB).
17. BL stated that he looked forward to the discussion of the seismic studies and their implications for Castle treatment.
18. MW stated that she was sympathetic to SI for the scope of its master plan, but was struggling with understanding the program needs.
  - a. MW stated that a better understanding of the program would be helpful for SI to justify its area needs, excavation, etc.
19. CF raised several points about the historic resources across the campus, including:
  - a. She urged SI to reconsider a new opening on the east wall of the Freer Gallery and encouraged SI to retain and improve the existing accessible entrance at the Independence Avenue service door;
  - b. She questioned the decisions to alter the walls in the Hirshhorn plaza;
  - c. She questioned whether a new “pop-up” in the Haupt Garden would alter views from the Mall;
  - d. She encouraged SI to retain the existing Quad pavilions, and convert them to new uses if possible; and
  - e. She questioned the change in the landscape design, namely the proposed dip for a direct, below-grade entry to the Castle.
20. Sarah Batcheler (SB), CFA, questioned the overall programmatic needs of SI across the campus, not divided by the various buildings.
  - a. SP responded that SI could provide that information.
  - b. AT added that adjacencies, accessibility and relationships among existing and new spaces were critical and are key drivers of the master plan development.
21. SB also raised several points around the design of the Hirshhorn and Seventh Street, including:
  - a. She stated that lowering the Hirshhorn plaza would negatively affect the character of that space;
  - b. She discouraged raising the level of the Hirshhorn sculpture garden;
  - c. She requested greater clarity in the treatment of the Hirshhorn loading dock; and
  - d. She asked SI to consider the cumulative effects from the proposed changes to the National Air and Space Museum.
22. KM stated that base isolation was not the only driver in the need to create additional space around the Castle. Making that space public would necessitate the removal of the extensive mechanical, etc. equipment currently in that space. This equipment would have to be accommodated elsewhere.
23. PT questioned the landscape changes and the proposed dip.
  - a. SP responded that those were architectural designs and will be subject to change as those projects are implemented.
24. AL stated that, if below-grade spaces are being reorganized to support new entries, perhaps SI could consider how much of the purpose and need could be accommodated without expanding the footprint of the Castle.

## Conclusion and Next Steps

1. SP outlined that the schedule for upcoming consulting parties meetings would include a meeting focusing on the Castle in late July and a meeting focusing on the landscape design in September.
2. SP reminded the consulting parties of the materials posted on the project website, [www.southmallcampus.si.edu](http://www.southmallcampus.si.edu).
3. Any additional comments can be emailed to Michelle Spofford at [spoffordm@si.edu](mailto:spoffordm@si.edu).

## Follow-up Questions

1. The CPs presented several questions/requests for information to be included at following meetings:
  - a. The existing egress capacity of Castle;
  - b. Castle seismic report to be made available to the public prior to the next meeting;
  - c. Examples of base isolation at other buildings;
  - d. Additional information on program goals and needs and the variations across alternatives;  
and
  - e. Alternative “B.1” to include restoration of the Castle but without extensive excavation to create a subbasement.

*Minutes prepared by Bill Marzella, EHT Tracerics, June 18, 2015*