



# United States Department of the Interior



## NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

May 11, 2021

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

Subject: Conceptual Design Refinements and Final Consultation for the FDR Prayer Plaque at World War II Memorial

Dear Mr. Maloney:

The National Park Service (NPS), National Mall and Memorial Parks (NAMA) wishes to consult with the District of Columbia State Historic Preservation Office (DC SHPO) under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act regarding the installation of the Franklin D. Roosevelt prayer plaque at the World War II Memorial, in accordance with 36 CFR 800.3 of the regulations of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

### **Management Summary and Identification of Historic Properties**

The Friends of the National World War II Memorial, Inc., pursuant to Public Law 113-123 (June 30, 2014) proposes to “install in the area of the World War II Memorial in the District of Columbia a suitable plaque or an inscription with the words that President Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR) prayed with the United States on D-Day, June 6, 1944.” The National Park Service initiated consultation with the DC SHPO on October 1, 2015, with the initial consultation exploring four possible sites for the siting of the plaque. Through consultation with the Commission of Fine Arts (CFA), National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC), and DC SHPO, the Friends of the National World War II Memorial, Inc., in cooperation with the NPS, selected the Circle of Remembrance as the preferred location for the proposed FDR Prayer Plaque.

In a letter dated December 1, 2016, the National Park Service consulted with the DC SHPO on the placement of the plaque within the Circle of Remembrance. The Friends of the National World War II Memorial, Inc. studied two locations for the placement of the plaque, ultimately choosing Alternative II, which serves to “complete” The Circle of Remembrance while retaining the current footprint.

The proposed concepts for the FDR D-Day Prayer are designed to be consistent materially and aesthetically with the WWII Memorial. The benches at the WWII Memorial are composed of light grey ‘Kershaw’ granite with gently rounded edges. The walls and benches at the Circle of Remembrance and the FDR D-Day Prayer will reflect this design language. The Circle is reenvisioned with the same materials as the WWII Memorial, replacing the existing fieldstone wall and wooden benches with Kershaw granite walls and benches, creating a more cohesive aesthetic. The design for the Circle of Remembrance includes new granite paving within the circle itself. The paving design will also take cues

from the WWII Memorial in terms of material and pattern. The concept for the D-Day Prayer Memorial still proposes an inscription on a bronze plaque to provide legibility for visitors and to allow for long-term maintenance by the National Park Service. Some design refinements include embedding the plaque into a granite wall instead of two pillars and incorporating a brown patina (see slides 29-30) with raised gold lettering for long-term maintenance and compliance with accessibility guidelines. While design refinements have occurred since the last consultation in 2016, none impact the shape and general character of the site. The appendix in the enclosed presentation illustrates the evolution of the design to the present concept. Refinements since the last consultation with the DC SHPO include:

- Enlargement of the plaque from 7' to 10';
- More substantial granite base foundation for the plaque that incorporates text (still under consideration);
- Enlarged plaque that is elevated to highlight its unique materiality and create a sensation of 'floating' above the stone base;
- Reduced height of site walls and pillars to enhance views in and out of Circle; and
- Addition of a large, circular motif within the pavement at the center of the circle (still under consideration).


The World War II Memorial was constructed in 2004 and is located on the National Mall at 17th Street, NW. It honors the 16 million who served in the armed forces of the US, the more than 400,000 who died, and all who supported the war effort from home. By its Congressional designation as a national memorial, the World War II Memorial was automatically listed in the National Register of Historic Places at its dedication. The Memorial is also listed as a contributing site within the East and West Potomac Parks National Register Historic District (1973, revised 2001) and the National Mall National Register Historic District (2016). The Area of Potential Effect (APE) includes the immediate area at this location.

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

As determined in its last consultation with the DC SHPO on December 1, 2016, the NPS determined that design Alternatives I and II for The Circle would have a no adverse effect under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act on the World War II Memorial. Since that time, the National Park Service and the Friends of the World War II Memorial have chosen design Alternative II as its preferred design. This design emphasizes the 'circular' form of the Circle of Remembrance and creates a strong visual connection with the WWII Memorial. Additionally, it provides an enclosure for the Circle while creating a defined threshold. Design refinements introduced since the last consultation with the DC SHPO in December 2016 do not impact the shape and general character of the site and the no adverse effect finding. As noted in our last correspondence dating to 2017, we are providing the DC SHPO a final opportunity to consult on the refined design concept and the provisional no adverse effect finding.

Enclosed find the relevant plans and supporting documentation that identifies the location of the APE and additional details of the project. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Catherine Dewey, Chief of Resource Management, at (202) 245-4711 or [catherine\\_dewey@nps.gov](mailto:catherine_dewey@nps.gov).

Sincerely,

*For* 

Jeffrey P. Reinbold  
Superintendent  
National Mall and Memorial Parks

Enclosure