

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER



January 11, 2011

Ms. Maria Burks, Acting Superintendent  
National Park Service, National Mall and Memorial Parks  
900 Ohio Drive SW  
Washington, DC 20024-2000

RE: Section 106 Consultation – Washington Monument Visitor Security and Screening Project

Dear Ms. Burks:

Thank you for contacting the DC State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) regarding the above-referenced undertaking. We have reviewed the project information and are writing in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and its implementing regulations to provide our initial comments regarding effects on historic properties.

As you are aware, the National Park Service (NPS) has been engaged in a variety of approaches to provide and improve security at the Washington Monument for a number of years. We appreciate that efforts are once again underway to design a permanent visitor security and screening facility so that the temporary structure currently located at the base of the Monument can be replaced. We also appreciate that opportunities to comment on the most recent design alternatives were provided at the public meeting held on November 8, 2011. The Area of Potential (APE) presented during that meeting appears to be appropriate for the undertaking. If necessary, the APE can be revised, depending upon how the design alternatives evolve.

Although this effort has been underway for a considerable amount of time, we urge the NPS to not let this fact compromise its renewed efforts to identify the absolute best solution. The importance of the Washington Monument as one of our nations' most prominent icons in the center of our city cannot be overestimated. We encourage the NPS to identify and evaluate a wide variety of approaches to help ensure that adverse effects will be completely avoided or minimized to the maximum possible extent. Perhaps, it would even be worthwhile to reevaluate earlier schemes to identify any aspects of those designs that might be worthy of reconsideration.

As before, the challenge associated with this difficult task is to design a facility that does not infringe upon the purity and simplicity of the Monument's design or how the structure meets the ground. Consideration must be given to visual effects within the Washington Monument Grounds and to the many other significant properties in the APE – particularly the long views to the Monument from the eastern end of the Mall. Naturally, every effort should also be made to ensure the structural integrity of the Monument regardless of which alternative is selected.

If you should have any questions or comments regarding this matter, please contact me at [andrew.lewis@dc.gov](mailto:andrew.lewis@dc.gov) or 202-442-8841. Otherwise, we thank you for providing this initial opportunity to comment and look forward to working with the NPS and all other parties to complete the Section 106 review of this critically important project.

Sincerely,

C. Andrew Lewis  
Senior Historic Preservation Specialist  
DC State Historic Preservation Office

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