

# U.S. COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS

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24 April 2015

Dear Mr. Vogel:

In its meeting of 16 April, the Commission of Fine Arts reviewed a revised concept design for the proposed landscape, lighting, bas-relief sculptures, and inscriptions for the Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial, to be located at Maryland and Independence Avenues, SW. The Commission expressed general support for the development of the design, providing the following comments for its refinement.

In its review of the proposed landscape design, the Commission members commended the project team for the thoughtful and comprehensive advancement of the design, which they said would create a beautiful, layered landscape that will contribute to the understanding of the memorial. They suggested a more deliberate placement of understory trees within the landscape, and they reiterated their recommendation that the Maryland Avenue axis be clearly differentiated from the approach paths, even when the trees are first planted on the site. They also noted that the scale of the trees in relation to the monumental tapestries and columns will change over time, and they recommended further study of how the living trees will be perceived against those depicted in the tapestry image. They observed that one column still seems exposed at the northeast corner of the site, and recommended further study of this condition.

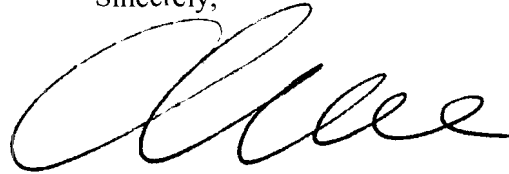
For the central memorial elements, the Commission members supported the stated intent for the character of the bas-relief panels to be located on the slabs behind the figural sculptures; they supported the subtle quality of the depiction of the D-Day landing craft in the right panel, and they recommended a similar contrast and character for the proposed world map in the left panel. They observed that the documented height of the podium below the slabs—as low as eighteen inches in some places—may not be high enough to discourage climbing onto the sculptural tableaux. The Commission members expressed general support for the presented development of the lighting proposal, noting that all the inscriptions must be legible in nighttime conditions.

Regarding the layout of texts from several of Eisenhower's public speeches inscribed on the rear faces of the central memorial elements, the Commission members expressed a preference for Option 2, where two speeches are differentiated as distinct texts of different lengths. However, they raised concerns about the legibility of the tabular format of the texts, particularly in their width, and suggested that some adjustment may be needed—such as in the width of some text blocks, the spacing between the lines, and the size of the lettering—in order to improve the readability of the inscriptions. For the notation of omissions within the text, they accepted the use of ellipses for short elisions and the use of the proposed four-diamond symbol to indicate longer breaks.

The Commission looks forward to reviewing further concept development of other components of the project such as the tapestry and sculptures, as well as the eventual final design submission for the overall project. The Commission's review should include the

opportunity to inspect full-scale mockups of portions of the tapestry, the central memorial elements, the inscription panels, and the monumental identification sign along the rear wall of the memorial. As always, the staff is available to assist you with the next submission and the coordination of the mockups.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Luebke', written in a cursive style.

Thomas E. Luebke, FAIA  
Secretary

Robert Vogel, Regional Director  
National Park Service, National Capital Region  
1100 Ohio Drive, SW  
Washington, DC 20242

cc: Carl Reddel, Dwight D. Eisenhower National Memorial Commission  
Craig Webb, Gehry Partners  
Nicholas Benson, The John Stevens Shop