

The differences between the action alternatives appear in the amount of impacts to wetlands, forests/vegetation, and community gardens, and provision of multi-use fields and water access.

6.0 COORDINATION AND PREPARERS

A. History of Public Involvement

An extensive agency coordination and public involvement program, established during the WWB Replacement Project was continued during planning activities for JPP. The design phase of the WWB Replacement Project included the establishment of several teams and working groups comprised of agency representatives, technical experts and citizens to continue the refinement of the WWB design that was selected during the planning phase of the project. The following teams were put in place for technical and agency support:

- The Interagency Coordination Group (ICG) represents 25 regulatory and resource agencies that reviewed the project-wide permit requirements, avoidance and minimization alternatives, and mitigation alternatives and proposals. The ICG continues to monitor adherence to the permits and monitors the design, viability and success of the mitigation. In this capacity, they have provided comments for the appropriate impact mitigation for JPP, as well as other aspects of the WWB Replacement Project.
- The MOA stipulated the formation of the Design Review Working Group (DRWG). The technical experience of this group allows for discussion of Section 106 coordination, review of design documents and confirms compliance with the MOA. They also served as the Historic Advisory Committee during the WWB Design Competition conducted in 1998. They have provided guidance on interim and ultimate plans for the enhancements in JPP as well as other aspects of the WWB Replacement Project.
- The Environmental Management Group (EMG) comprises environmental managers from the Sponsoring Agencies and the USCOE, provides input, expertise, and policy direction for environmental issues including types of mitigation and treatment.
- The Virginia Technical Coordination Team (VATCT), comprised of FHWA, VDOT, Fairfax County and City of Alexandria engineering staff, provides design direction for Virginia improvements and receives information about JPP.

The following public involvement and outreach activities have been underway during the planning processes for the WWB Replacement Project and the JPP improvements:

- Two offices were established with scheduled weekly public hours and other opportunities for the public to reach the technical staff by appointment. The offices offer a resource of graphic and report documentation and staff to answer questions. One of these offices is located in Alexandria.

- Citizen Advisory Committee for the 1998 WWB Design Competition, which included members of the local community, participated in the selection of a design concept for the new WWB. This particular Committee was interested in the bridge aesthetics and views from within JPP, including the Operator's Tower location.
- The establishment of four Stakeholder Participation Panels, one of which focused on JPP issues. Field visits were held and attendance and participation of the panel members was consistent. The members of the Stakeholder Participation Panel requested that they remain involved, on an as-needed basis, throughout subsequent phases of the project.
- Open Houses conducted in June and November 1998 and June and December 1999.
- "Fast Facts" summarizing key issues of the project, specific resource papers such as cultural resources in JPP and Freedmen's Cemetery as well as quarterly issues of the Connections newsletters and many pro-active media placements.
- A project website (www.wilsonbridge.com) that debuted in November 1998, as part of the planning process is regularly updated and includes notice of public meetings.

The Alexandria City Council has held many meetings, open to the public, during which the JPP improvements were discussed through their development. For instance, the City Council reviewed and endorsed the 30% design drawings for JPP and the Urban Deck at a City staff presentation of the park and deck plans during a work session on February 20, 1999.

The Mayor, staff, and the Chair of the Park and Recreation Commission presented the 30% design on the Mayor's monthly cable television show on March 8, 1999 and the plans were presented to a number of City Boards and Commissions.

Presentations on the current plans for JPP and the Urban Deck were made to members of City Boards and Commissions (August 14, 2000) and to approximately 120 people at a public informational meeting held on September 6, 2000. A City Council Public Hearing was conducted on November 18, 2000. The Council discussed the topic during the December 8, 2000 City Council Meeting at which time the interim plan for JPP was approved with modifications of retention of a forested area. The Council conducted a City Council Public Hearing on December 16, 2001.

Joint Public Hearings on the Draft SEIS and Joint Permit Application were held February 8 and 10, 2000. The Joint Public Hearings were held to afford interested parties the opportunity to review project information and to present their views regarding the information contained in the Draft SEIS. This information focused on the geometric refinements of conceptual mitigation plans, as well as current status of the JPP conceptual interim and ultimate improvements. Cultural resource findings, threatened and endangered species findings and other concerns of the refinements to WWB Alternative 4A were described at this time as Current Design Alternative 4A. Public and private oral testimony was recorded and transcribed. In addition, written comments were received, both at the Joint Public Hearing and during a comment period.

Following the Joint Public Hearing and the receipt of public comments on the Draft SEIS, sponsoring agencies assessed the comments and directed revisions to complete the FSEIS in April 2000.

During December 2000, the City of Alexandria established a Neighborhood Task Force for the WWB Replacement Project. The Neighborhood Task Force is comprised of 10 members, two of whom are City Council members. A WWB Replacement Project representative is a liaison to the Task Force.

On June 27, 2005, the City of Alexandria held a public hearing on the design concepts under consideration for the JPP improvements. The City Council voted to recommend "Scheme A" to the NPS for consideration (this EA identifies the Council's recommendations as Alternative 1). The Council's Scheme A featured two 110 x 60 yard multi-use athletic fields north of the WWB, one oriented in an east-west direction and the other oriented north-south, and provision of 110 parking spaces between Royal and Lee Streets. The Council also specified that appropriate tree buffers should be provided to mitigate the impact on adjoining neighborhoods.

The 2006 JPP EA was available for public and agency review at area public libraries and on the NPS website. This EA also will be available for public and agency review at area public libraries and on the NPS website. The website address is <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/gwmp>. You may fill out a comment form online during the public comment period. Refer to the cover letter at the front of this document for the list of libraries and the dates for public circulation and receipt of comments.

The NPS will consider the public and agency comments prior to determining the final decision document that would be sent to the National Capital Region Director for approval and signature. Responses to comments would be incorporated in the Final EA and a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) issued. The elements of the FONSI would then be included in the final design. The NPS will continue coordination with the Virginia SHPO pursuant to Section 106 of the NHPA and other interested parties, as appropriate.

B. Summary of Public Input in the Planning Process

Public Involvement Activities

Table 2 lists the opportunities for public input in the planning process. The planning process included the JPP Stakeholder Participation Panel's recommendation to the City and the NPS for parking and access concepts to be presented in the EA. At the same time, the City of Alexandria's Neighborhood Task Force for the WWB Replacement Project and the Yates Gardens Civic Association considered the concepts and provided their own recommendations to the City and NPS. In July 2005, the Alexandria City Council held a public hearing and voted to support an action alternative that accommodates two multi-use fields on the north side of the WWB and 110 parking spaces between Royal Street and Lee Street. The NPS published a JPP EA in June 2006 which contained four action alternatives that addressed the recommendations received at that time. The JPP EA was circulated for public comment between August 18 and October 18, 2006. This EA reflects the suggestions and comments received through these public involvement activities.

**TABLE 2
PUBLIC INPUT IN THE JPP PLANNING PROCESS**

Public Involvement Activity	Date	Purpose/Issues
Stakeholder Participation Panel Meeting	December 1998	JPP project introduction.
Stakeholder Participation Panel Meeting	May 1999	Recommended location of multi-use fields, hard surface areas, and pathways.
City of Alexandria Board and Commission Meetings	August 2000	Presentation of conceptual mitigation plan.
City of Alexandria City Council Public Hearing	November 2000	Presentation of JPP concepts as approved by the SPP.
2001 EA Public Comment Period	January – February 2002	2001 EA available for public inspection and comment
Joint Meeting of the SPP and the City of Alexandria Neighborhood Task Force (NTF)	June 2004	Presentation of JPP parking and access concepts.
Stakeholder Participation Panel Meeting	September 2004	Presentation of revised JPP parking alternatives
Yates Gardens Civic Association Meeting	October 2004	Present current alternatives and obtain comments.
City of Alexandria Public Hearing and Vote	June 2005	City of Alexandria obtained public comment on proposed concepts and voted to support an action alternative that accommodates two multi-use fields on the north side of the WWB and 110 parking spaces between Royal and Lee Streets.
Citizens for a Historical and Natural Jones Point Park (CHNJP)	September 2005	Present current alternatives, clarify NEPA process and NPS Management Policies, and obtain comments.
Open House	October 2005	Present the current alternatives under consideration for improvements to JPP in an informal, open house setting.
Public Hearing	September 2006	Provide a formal opportunity for public comment on the project.
Citizen Information Meeting	June 2007	Present Alternative 4A

Written Comments on the 2006 JPP EA

Public review of the JPP EA occurred in the fall of 2006. During this period, the NPS received 393 written and verbal comments, which park staff then analyzed. After analyzing the comments, the NPS modified the Preferred Alternative from Alternative 4 to Alternative 4A.

The preferred method for receiving public comments, electronically, on the 2006 JPP EA was through the NPS Planning, Environment, and Public Comment (PEPC) website where the EA was publicly posted on the Internet. The PEPC database is a tool used by the NPS to manage official correspondence and analyze public comment in the planning process. Citizens filled out a comment form online or mailed comments directly to the NPS. Copies of the written correspondence are available for inspection at the NPS George Washington Memorial Parkway Headquarters in Turkey Run Park during normal business hours. This EA reflects the suggestions and addresses the comments contained in this correspondence.

Comments primarily reflected the location and amount of active and passive recreational uses in JPP. Commenters who support active uses expressed a desire for two athletic fields at JPP. Those preferring passive uses expressed their desire for fewer or no fields in JPP. The two prevailing points of view were, for the most part, split down the middle in terms of the number of comments received. Other important issues included the potential effects from the action alternatives on the adjacent neighborhood, which has been impacted by the WWB Replacement Project. The most notable of these concerns was maintaining, to the maximum extent possible, the natural forest buffers that could possibly control potential flooding from the Potomac River and visual and natural environmental effects from the action alternatives. In addition, vehicular parking and access to the Potomac River for disabled visitors are important needs in the park.

In reviewing public comment, the NPS modified the Preferred Alternative to further resource protection interests, minimize impacts to the adjacent neighborhoods while balancing both active and passive uses, protecting natural resources, and preserving and interpreting cultural resources.

Table 3 presents a summary of the comments received. The Appendix contains NPS responses to substantive comments received on the JPP EA.

**TABLE 3
SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS ON THE 2006 JPP EA**

<u>Total Correspondence Received:</u>	393
(does not include multiple signatures on petition)	
<u>Support for Alternative 4:</u>	
Public Hearing:	31 (minus 12 duplicates)
Written Correspondence:	66
PEPC:	100 (minus 8 duplicates)
Petition:	81 (minus 29 duplicates & 10 unreadable)
Total:	278 (219 minus duplicates)
<u>Support for Alternative 1:</u>	
Public Hearing:	5 (minus 1 duplicate)
Written Correspondence:	7
PEPC:	104 (minus 2 duplicate)
Form Letter:	71
Total:	187 (184 minus duplicates)
<u>Support for Alternatives 2 and 3:</u>	0
<u>General Comments:</u>	
Public Hearing:	4
Written Correspondence:	5

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