

**Battleground National Cemetery
Accessible Walkway & Landscape Improvements Project**

National Historic Preservation Act
Section 106 Consulting Party Meeting Notes
July 31, 2024

Participants:

- Carmen Lenora Adkins (Chickahominy Indian Tribe)
- Brian Cheeseboro (NPS, CWDW)
- Chris Wilson (ACHP)
- Autum Cook (NPS, ROCR)
- Kym Elder (NPS, CWDW)
- Jamie Euken (NPS, ROCR)
- Matthew Flis (NCPC)
- Gary Thompson (President, Alliance to Preserve the Civil War Defenses of Washington)
- Cortney Gjesfeld (NPS, ROCR)
- Jim Shepherd (SmithGroup)
- Andrew Lewis (DC HPO)
- Loretta Neumann (Alliance to Preserve the Civil War Defenses of Washington, Committee of 100 on the Federal City)
- Louis Arguello (DC Water)
- Nick Martinazzi (SmithGroup)
- Rene Senos (NPS, NCR)
- Susan Bachor (THPO, Delaware Tribe of Indians)
- Sam Tamburro (NPS, NCR)
- Jason Theuer (NPS, NCR)
- Katharine Cline (ACHP)
- Nick Bartolomeo (NPS, ROCR)
- Jeanne (unknown)
- Benjamin Rosenfeld (Office of Council member Janeese Lewis George)
- Tonya Tipton (THPO, Shawnee Tribe)

National Park Service (NPS)
Rock Creek Park (ROCR)
Civil War Defenses of Washington (CWDW)
National Capital Region (NCR)
District of Columbia Historic Preservation Office (DC HPO)
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO)
Advisory Council for Historic Preservation (ACHP)
National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC)

Proposed Mitigation Measures:

- **Comment:** The NPS should take credit for restorative nature of the project, especially associated with the replanting efforts. The landscape improvements should be considered as a mitigation.
- **Question:** Is the prescribed treatment to the stairs restorative? Could that be considered as a mitigation?
- **Question:** What interpretive signage is available onsite? Are there more opportunities to interpret the history of the cemetery? Update existing interpretive signage?
- **Comment:** Develop a brochure (hardcopy and digital) that includes content associated with Battleground National Cemetery, Battle of Fort Stevens, and a summary of other Civil War Defenses of Washington sites.

Questions/Comments:

- **Comment:** A request was made by consulting parties to provide a list of attendees and their affiliation.
- **Response:** The NPS will provide a list of attendees and their affiliation as well as notes from the consulting party meeting on the Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) website.
- **Comment:** Consulting parties expressed concern that organizations and interested members of the public weren't consulted earlier in the planning process.
- **Response:** Due to staff turnover, complexity of the site, and previous agency comments, the consulting parties meeting was delayed.
- **Question:** Why weren't the treatment recommendations identified in the CLR considered? Were other alternatives considered during project planning?
- **Response:** During project planning, the team considered three potential alignments for the walkway. The team ultimately selected the proposed configuration, as it has the smallest footprint, is the least impactful to the historic design of the cemetery, and provides visitors with essentially the same entrance experience, as both the stairs and walkway will lead visitors to the same location in front of the Superintendent's Lodge. It was noted that visitor experience should be the same for all (universal experience).
- **Question:** Are the plans available for the public to review and provide comment?
- **Response:** The NPS will create a PEPC project to post the presentations, meeting notes, and solicit comments from the public.
- **Question:** Several consulting parties indicated their desire to extend the review comment period beyond August 31, 2024, to the end of September.
- **Response:** The NPS has extended the response date to include a 45-day review period that ends on **Saturday, October 5, 2024.**

- **Comment:** The NPS needs to be sensitive to the fact that this is hallowed ground and that the cemetery itself is a battleground.
- **Response:** The NPS is aware of the sensitivity of the cemetery, which has contributed to the lengthy project planning process.
- **Comment:** DC HPO concurred with other consulting parties for the need for early project consultation and supports the NPS approach to the project.
- **Comment:** Add interpretation to the site that tells inclusive stories.
- **Comment:** NCPC always strongly supports universal access. Entering from the main approach is important. The presentation provided in the consulting party meeting is consistent with what NCPC have already reviewed.
- **Comment:** NCPC needs to be a signatory on the MOA.
- **Comment:** Boxwood were historically included in the planting plan as noted in the CLR and are preferred by some consulting parties.
- **Response:** The NPS has selected more resilient species (compact inkberry) that is less susceptible to disease to replace the boxwood in this current plan.
- **Comment:** This project highlights preplanning element of the Section 106 process. The ACHP noted that they would like to participate in the undertaking and will be a signatory. The MOA should be routed to the ACHP at the end for their signature.

Chat Comments:

- Wanishi [Thank you]! Delaware Tribe has no comment or objections to this proposed project.
- The Shawnee Tribe has no questions or concerns at this time. Thank you.