



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
National Mall & Memorial Parks
900 Ohio Drive, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20024-2000



D66 (NCR-NAMA)

April 2, 2010

Mr. Reid Nelson
Director, Office of the Federal Agency Programs
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Suite 803
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Mr. Nelson:

On April 1, 2010 the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) reviewed and approved the NCPC Executive Director's Recommendation (EDR) for the preliminary and final design of the National Park Service (NPS) preferred alternative for the rehabilitation of the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool and the surrounding area. The EDR was based on the design development materials that were previously presented at the March 18, 2010 Commission of Fine Arts (CFA) meeting, which resulted in the CFA's approval of the project. The presentation materials had been posted in advance of the CFA meeting on the NPS Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) website, www.parkplanning.nps.gov. A copy of the CFA letter to the NPS approving the project with recommendations was posted shortly thereafter on the commission's website at www.cfa.gov/meetings/2010/mar/20100318_02.html. The NCPC EDR was also available for review at www.ncpc.gov/DocumentDepot/Actions_Recommendations/2010April prior to this week's NCPC meeting.

As you recall, the presentation materials addressed specific design developments resulting from the February 18, 2010 CFA meeting, along with concerns expressed by the consulting parties at the February 17, 2010 Consulting Party Meeting #4. The specific design developments and areas of concern were also documented in the March 17, 2010 Programmatic Agreement (PA), and are:

1. The design of security barriers and circulation systems at the interface of the Reflecting Pool with the East Plaza of the Lincoln Memorial will be designed comprehensively and coordinated to minimize adverse effects on the cultural landscape and to provide for the removal of all temporary barriers and a selected number of permanently installed bollards at the East Plaza, the addition of universally accessible paths, and the replication of a missing concrete walk at the southeast end of the Reflecting Pool.
2. The design, scale, color, and materials of the paving for the dirt or "social" paths adjacent to the granite coping to the north and south of the Reflecting Pool will be compatible with the granite coping of the Reflecting Pool but not appear to be an extension of the coping.

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3. New light standards, to be installed on the outboard side of the north and south elm walks will be designed in a size and of materials that minimally intrude upon the scale and visual relationship of landscape features. The installation of the new light standards will be coordinated with the re-installation of benches and waste receptacles that have been refurbished or replaced-in-kind.
4. The location and design of the new equipment and structures required for the modified water system will blend as harmoniously as possible with the existing scale and context of adjacent cultural landscapes and will be located outside the primary viewsheds of the Reflecting Pool area.

Undertaking

At the April 1 meeting, the NCPC reviewed the final designs for the NPS preferred alternative for the security barriers and circulation systems at the East Plaza of the Lincoln Circle and west end of the Reflecting Pool. These designs have been previously presented to consulting parties and to the CFA.

The NCPC also reviewed the NPS preferred alternative for a 13'-4" gray exposed concrete aggregate finish for the paving material proposed to be adjacent to the granite coping along the north and south sides of the Reflecting Pool. The CFA approved this alternative at their March meeting with the stipulation that the final selection of paving materials will be subject to inspection and approval of an on-site mock-up. The NCPC EDR also stipulated that decisions on the color and texture of the paths be delegated to the Executive Director as part of an on-site mock-up.

The light standards proposed for installation along the north and south elm walks are the same refinement of the previously presented type preferred by the NPS, and as shown to consulting parties at the February 17 meeting and to the CFA in March. The proposal for the light fixture is a simplified tapered pole.

As reviewed in the February 17 consultation meeting, the CFA March presentation, and described in the NCPC EDR, the water system treatment building is proposed to be located adjacent to the area associated with U.S. Park Police (USPP) stables. The 40 ft. by 60 ft. building will be clad with insulated brown metal panels to visually recede in the landscape and blend with the existing service buildings. Additional trees and shrubs will be planted to screen the building from both Ash Road and Independence Avenue. During the discussion period at the April 1 NCPC meeting, the Secretary of the Interior's representative to the Commission responded to public testimony and provided additional information regarding specific proposals to relocate the USPP stables from the National Mall. We have enclosed documentation associated with this proposal and the subsequent 2006 recommendation to keep the USPP stables function at its current location in Ash Woods.

In summary, the NCPC approved the EDR for the preliminary and final designs of the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool and surrounding area project with the provision noted above that the Commission delegate to the Executive Director final decisions on the color and texture of the exposed aggregate paths, which will be made on site while viewing material mockups.


Finding of Effect

As stated in our March 18, 2010 letter to you, the NPS understands that the rehabilitation of the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool will result in an overall adverse effect to historic properties. We appreciate your expeditious response to our letter and your concurrence, dated March 24, 2010, that the proposed designs, as approved by the CFA, for the new paving materials, the elm walk light standards, and water system treatment building do not create new adverse effects or intensify previously identified adverse effects. The NPS also believes that the April 1 NCPC approval of the EDR does not create new adverse effects or intensify previously identified adverse effects for the new paving materials, elm walk light standards, and water treatment building.

The NPS is committed to preserving the historic integrity of the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool and the surrounding area, and avoiding, minimizing and mitigating adverse effects is of paramount concern. Under the terms of the PA (see Section 2(b)vi and 2(b)vii), I look forward to receiving your reply regarding concurrence as soon as you have completed your review of our finding and no later than April 8, 2009. The NPS may assume concurrence on the part of the DC SHPO and/or ACHP signatories if either party fails to respond beyond this comment period. Thank you again in advance for your support of this important project.

If you should have any questions or concerns, please contact Perry Wheelock at 202-619-7088.

Sincerely,



John Piltzecker
Superintendent
National Mall and Memorial Parks



I Concur

CC signatories to the programmatic agreement (PA),
CC Andrew Lewis, Louise Brodnitz, Nancy Witherell

enclosures