

ARMED FORCES RETIREMENT

HOME SECTION 106 COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: December 07, 2005 9:00AM - 11:00AM

Location AFRH-W, Sherman Building 2nd floor conference room

Attendees: Joseph Woo (JW), Armed Forces Retirement Home (AFRH-W)
Lisa Burcham (LB), DC State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO),
Tim Dennee (TD), SHPO
Tom Mayes (TM), National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP)
Sophia Lynn (SL), NTHP
Frank Milligan (FM), NTHP
Gary Scott (GS), National Park Service (NPS)
David Murphy (DM), NPS
Rebecca Miller (RM), D.C. Preservation League (DCPL)
Barbara Zartman (BZ), Committee of 100 on the Federal City (C100)
Richard Houghton (RH), C100
Timothy Jones (TJ), ANC-4C
James Berry (JB), ANC-5C
Paul Brooks (PB), Catholic University of America (CUA)
David Moshier (DM), U.S. Army
Nancy Czapek (NC), General Services Administration (GSA)
Steve Schwartz (SS), GSA
Pamela Wessling (PW), RSM McGladrey (RSM)
John Thompson (JT), RSM
Giles Moore (GM), Koetter Kim & Associates (KKA)
Mona Khechen (MK), KKA
Emily Eig (EE), EHT Tracerics, Inc. (EHT)

This list represents all persons that signed the Section 106 Meeting sign-in sheet. There may be others who attended, however they are not included on this list.

OPENING REMARKS

The meeting began shortly after 9:00 AM in the second floor conference room of the Sherman Building at AFRH-W.

Copies of the Draft Master Plan and project schedule were distributed to all attendees.

NC provided opening remarks regarding the status of the project and the process. The purpose of the meeting was to review Draft Master Plan for AFRH-W, especially those portions of the document that have been revised to reflect input from the

committee. NC mentioned that, prior to the meeting, LB expressed thoughts on how the project should move forward.

LB - Following the KKA presentation, I will review thoughts on the larger Master Plan issues with the committee.

The committee was informed that AFRH will submit the Draft Master Plan to NCPC for review at its February 2, 2006 meeting. The Draft Master Plan was posted to the project web site on December 1, 2005. NC mentioned two events associated with public participation in the master plan process: a tour of the site was conducted on Saturday, December 3rd with approximately 75 participants, and an Open House will be held at the Sherman Building on December 13th to review the Draft Master Plan with the public.

LB - I was contacted by HNTB (architectural firm) regarding a tour of the property for potential developers. It is my understanding that HNTB's request was made after the extension, and that they were denied access to the site. She was asked to send information on the contact and GSA will check to see if any requests were made post the deadline for signing up for tours.

DESIGN FRAMEWORK AND GUIDELINES

GM reviewed Section 11 (Design Framework and Guidelines) of the Draft Master Plan.

NC - Regarding the historic fence along the eastern portion of the site, in Zones 5 and 6, neighbors who attended the tour on Saturday requested that portions of the historic fence be modified. Zones 5 and 6 do not require the same level of security as those portions of the site occupied by AFRH residents. The razor wire can be removed from the southern portions of the historic fence. The neighborhood residents asked that consideration be given to making the fence permeable and allowing pedestrian passage through the fence rather than going through the gates where automobile traffic is directed. It was felt that a more permeable fence would better integrate the new residential development into the fabric of the neighborhood.

LB - It is premature to address the openings in the historic fence. When a developer is selected and a specific proposal is presented, the SHPO will review that proposal.

The Design Framework and Guidelines presentation continued (GM) with initial focus on issues which affect site as a whole, including:

- Views, external and internal,
- Historic features; including landscape elements and buildings (contributing and non-contributing),
- Streets and streetscapes, and
- Built form.

SL - What is the Home's approach to preservation of contributing buildings?

LB - This issue should be held for the larger discussion following the KKA presentation.

GM – Following the sections of the guidelines that address the site as a whole, the Design Framework and Guidelines focus on individual zones.

ZONE 1

- Zone 1, activity primarily for AFRH’s own needs
 - Historic landscape and buildings
 - Proposed open space, and
 - Views, external into site and internal to Lincoln Cottage.
- Sub-zones of Zone 1
 - Sub-zone 1a with minimal development (flanking open space), and
 - Sub-zone 1b, the primary location for Zone 1 construction activity, and
 - Sub-zone 1c, little or no construction activity anticipated.
- Location of open space as organizing element in proposed new building locations,
- Replacement structure to address displaced parking (eliminated if a new nursing home is constructed in Sub-zone 1b) at the northern section of Sub-zone 1b, and
- Proposed building heights will relate to existing adjacent building scale, 80’ on the east side of the site and 55’ on the north side of the site.

LB – The National Historic Landmark (NHL) has higher status on the site. Views of the NHL are being scrutinized. The SHPO is reviewing external views; It is important to examine what portions of the NHL can be seen by the public viewing from outside of the fence.

ZONE 2

- Chapel Woods (Zone 2), proposed for residential use by AFRH for its own needs:
 - Historic landscape, pathways, roadways, and
 - Historic buildings.
- Sub-zones of Zone 2:
 - Sub-zone 2a: insert houses within existing trees, and
 - Sub-zone 2b: surface parking area converted to an organizing open space with new housing units located facing the open space, and
 - Sub-zone 2c: new housing inserted along the eastern edge of the zone.

LB – We have concern regarding potential damage to existing trees during construction, and concern with the introduction of additional paved surface to Zone 2. The graphics included in the Draft Master Plan are misleading regarding the detrimental affect that proposed construction activity will have on existing trees. The Design Framework and Guidelines need greater specificity regarding preservation of existing trees.

TD – The Design Framework and Guidelines should demonstrate sensitivity to maintaining existing trees in Zone 2. Without specificity in the guidelines, you will end up with scattered trees adjacent to residential development in Zone 2. The preferred outcome is preservation of dense tree coverage in Zone 2. Specific areas where you propose insertion of residential construction need better documentation to determine exact tree locations to determine feasibility of your proposal.

LB - The SHPO feels that AFRH should take additional time to better develop standards for Zone 2. The guidelines should specify that the roads will be maintained in the same location and the same dimension. Guidelines need to protect maximum tree coverage and require new tree plantings. The scale of new construction needs to respond to the site.

TD - The 106 consultation process seeks to minimize adverse affects of the Master Plan. We see Zone 2 as an opportunity for mitigation of activities that are proposed elsewhere on the site. How do we identify the adverse affects?

DM - What happens if AFRH grows beyond the projections that are contained within this 20 year planning document?

LB - There is a large tract of open space on the site (golf course) that could be developed at some future date, and can accommodate future AFRH expansion.

NC - The proposed development in Sub-zone 1c along North Capitol Street will accommodate growth for AFRH.

LB - The SHPO suggests that Zone 2 be placed in the Draft Master Plan as a "Study Area" for the twenty year period. Zone 2 should be part of the next twenty year Master Plan, rather than the current plan.

ZONES 3 and 4

- Historic Features, including the meadow and Pershing Road
- Views
- Sub-zones of Zone 3 and 4
 - Sub-zone 3a: primarily open space, only 10% coverage allowed, and
 - Sub-zone 3b: primarily open space (maintain 4 acres), and
 - Sub-zone 3c and Zone 4 are the location of the densest development proposed for the site; they contain a series of interconnected open spaces within the development area.
- The Design Framework and Guidelines contain specific controls on location of taller buildings in the development zones and specify that taller buildings be located adjacent to open space.

GS -NPS properties contain significant maintenance facilities. The Master Plan anticipates demolition of AFRH maintenance yard. How do you propose to support the entire facility without a maintenance yard?

NC - Except for the central heating plant, the buildings located in the maintenance yard are vacant. A couple of buildings are used to store busses, none for maintenance. Those functions have been out-sourced.

TM - At the last meeting there was discussion regarding the Irving Street gate and location of buildings in relation to the gate. The diagram on page 60 of the Draft Master

Plan shows a building directly adjacent to the Irving Street entrance. I understood from the last meeting that no building would be located in close proximity to the gate. We need to preserve green space and the view into the site.

GM - If you refer to the Illustrative Development Scenario on page 63 of the Draft Master Plan, you will see that a pair of buildings frames the Irving Street entrance. The buildings have been shifted north from Irving Street, providing open space at the entrance.

LB - You set the tone at the entrance of the site. You should seek to protect the pastoral character at the entrance. The SHPO would like to see the setback issue addressed at the Irving Street gate, and in general, in a more quantitative approach in the Master Plan.

TD - Why are you proposing to frame the view at the Irving Street gate? What is the point?

LB - Protection of view sheds need more specificity in the Design Guidelines. New construction should be prohibited in specific areas, these should be delineated in the Master Plan.

TD - Regarding the open space in Zones 3 and 4, the relationship between void and landscape should be better addressed. The pasture is maintained as open space, yet constructing eight and ten story buildings along the edge of the pasture changes one's perception of the open space, changes one's understanding. What is the prescription? The pasture is transformed. It might not be the logical feature on the site to be targeted for preservation. If Zone 4 is developed as residential use, might the open space be better located along Irving Street?

LB - What do the constructed buildings need for space around them? The pasture is compromised. Preservation of the pasture isn't necessary with the quantity of development that is being proposed. Pershing Drive is the landscape feature that should receive greater priority in planning this portion of the site. Pershing Drive should be maintained along with the alee of trees. I recognize that the existing width of Pershing Drive is inadequate to accommodate traffic generated on the site. We would like to work with you on achieving a satisfactory outcome that preserves some or all of Pershing Drive within Zone 4. The experience of passing through the tree canopy should somehow be incorporated into the final plans for the site.

EE - I would push for a pedestrian path or bicycle path, not as an element in a park.

LB - You need to keep pushing to maintain Pershing Drive in Zone 4. Keep the connection as pedestrian or bicycle path.

NC - We might need to better articulate the problem, not articulate a solution.

TD - You are doing what is appropriate - consulting with developers on achieving an acceptable solution.

JT - While it is not an ideal solution, one possible approach would be to remove trees from one side of Pershing Drive, widen the street, then plant trees along the roadway.

SL - This would create an imbalance and is the wrong approach.

TD - The layout of this zone is unknown.

LB - I would like to see a roadwork system in place. Circulation character is important. Regarding the buffer zone, you should identify a minimum dimension and maintain flexibility within your guidelines.

GM - The Plan specifies 18' as a minimum buffer zone.

GS - A 50' to 60' is a more appropriate width for a buffer zone.

GM - The 18' is within the property line. Actual width is generally greater, and 18' is a minimum dimension. We are allowing for variations to respond to site features.

TD - The guidelines for building height allow for maximum flexibility. Why would a developer build less than the 85' maximum allowed? What would induce less than the 65' street frontage? It seems that the guidelines recognize the bulk of development that is being proposed with the set back requirements. Isn't there a better way to address the bulk of proposed buildings? There is too much similar building proposed.

GM - The guidelines establish a horizontal control line, and step back on the top two floors. The tallest structures on the site are set at 130', but the vast majority of the proposed construction builds to 65', then steps back before reaching the 85' maximum.

RM - Who gets to build to the 130' height?

NC - NCPC is the governing authority that has the final say regarding building on the site.

LB - Can you capture language that spells out the relationship of tall buildings to open space?

GM - Page 59 of the Draft Master Plan contains language that describes conditions that must be met for a building to exceed the 85' height limit in Zones 3 and 4.

PW - AFRH needs the conference room at 11:00 this morning. Rather than continuing the discussion about the remaining zones in the same level of specificity, we should attempt to conclude our discussion about the overall proposal contained in the Draft Master Plan.

LB - Zones 5 and 6 and Zones 1 and 2 are important development areas. We recognize that AFRH has an immediate need for revenue generation from their real estate. The

Design Guidelines are in greater specificity for Zones 3 and 4, and this is the area that AFRH is ready to move forward. I suggest that you proceed with Zones 3 and 4, but continue your planning efforts on the remaining portions of the site. AFRH can pursue parallel tracks; a MOA for Zones 3 and 4 to meet immediate financial needs of AFRH and, continue with greater specificity on planning the remaining areas on the site.

NC - The Master Plan document needs to consider the whole site and how each of the areas relates to the whole. While we don't need finalization of Zones 1 and 2 and Zones 5 and 6, we need a balance and an understanding of how the individual zones relate to the whole.

LB - AFRH should move forward with a separate MOA on the Grant Building. It will be easier to deal with Zones 3 and 4 and the non-contributing buildings in those zones. We can work together to achieve solutions to these zones while AFRH is still drafting a plan for the remainder of the site. I will not take the Draft Master Plan to the Historic Preservation Review Board at present; there are too many questions outstanding.

What does NCPC expect? The SHPO is willing to provide Zones 3 and 4 specific inputs.

Questions still remain regarding AFRH development and reuse of buildings on the site. We have not seen a preservation plan; there is no long-term maintenance plan for contributing buildings on the site. This plan is for redevelopment, not preservation. The preservation component is not clearly expressed.

NC - How do we get further clarification from the Office of Planning?

TM - Your plan treats Zones 3 and 4 differently. You don't address AFRH's own needs or NTHP needs on the site. What about their parking requirements? What about NTHP access and security? AFRH needs to work out details of a visitation plan. We suggest that the critical needs are moved along, and that a separate 106 process be initiated for the remainder of the site. The plan needs to address the protection of the historic character as a whole.

SL - The Grant Building is an "X factor", or unknown. Without a preservation plan, the broader scope of mission is missing. This can have a profound affect on the National Monument.

LB - I suggest that NC and Nancy Witherell (NCPC) have a separate discussion about next steps.

TD - The RFQ response should inform the overall process. When responses are received, you should have a better idea about proposed use, circulation within the site and other unknown issues.

GS - The Draft Master Plan has addressed the need for public open space on the site.

The meeting concluded promptly at 11:00AM.