
DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

SUBJECT: Section 106 Committee for AFRH; Comments on AFRH Preservation Plan
DATE/TIME: May 1, 2007; 2:00PM – 4:00PM
LOCATION: GSA, 301 7th Street, S.W., Room 7600

ATTENDEES:

Katharine Kerr, ACHP
Tim Dennee, DC SHPO
Gary Scott, NPS
David Murphy, NPS
Sophia Lynn, NTHP
Elizabeth Merritt, NTHP
Reyn Anderson, UNC
Cliff Valenti, UNC
Timothy Jones, ANC 4
Nancy Witherell, NCPC
Sandra Hoffman, PCHRC
Richard Houghton, C100
Mike Hayden, Military Officers Association of America
Hillary Lord, EE&K
Matt Bell, EE&K
Doug Smith, EE&K
Mike Walker, Trijan Development
Ronnie McGee, R McGhee & Associates
Tim Sheckler, GSA
Steve Schwartz, GSA
Victoria Hartke, GSA
Denise Decker, GSA
Pam Wessling, Staubach
Giles Moore, KKA
Emily Eig, EHT Tracerics
Laura Trieschmann, EHT Tracerics

The Section 106 Committee for the Armed Forces Retirement Home (AFRH) met on Tuesday, May 1, 2007, from 2:15 PM to 4:00 PM to review the updated Master Plan for AFRH-W.

Tim Sheckler welcomed everyone and presented the meeting agenda, which was to include a process update, AFRH goals, the presentation of the updated Master Plan and next steps.

Process Update

Tim Sheckler stated that AFRH is in the process of revising the draft Master Plan, preparing the Final Environmental Impact Statement, finalizing the Historic Preservation Plan, Revising the draft Programmatic Agreement, and preparing a nomination for the eligible AFRH-W Historic District to the National Register of Historic Places.

AFRH Goals

Mr. Sheckler proceeded to present AFRH's goals for the Master Plan. These include maximization of development while maintaining the Home's historic character and open space, providing uses to the community that are complementary to the Home, ensuring that the Home's facilities are conveniently located and there is room for future development, providing for the Home's security, integrating landscape and built form, respecting the character of adjacent communities and integrating new development into the city fabric, and allowing flexibility through the structure of the Master Plan and its design guidelines.

Updated Master Plan

Giles Moore presented the updated Master Plan. He informed the group that the development zones had been renamed as Zone A, Zone B, Zone C, and AFRH Zone. Zone A is the former Zones 3 and 4; Zone B is the former Zone 5, and Zone C is the former Zone 6. The AFRH Zone is the former Zone 1, Zone 2, and the golf course areas. Development within the AFRH Zone is slated for the purposes of AFRH. The other zones will be reserved for non-AFRH development.

AFRH Zone is a total of 162 acres set in the northern part of the campus. The Master Plan proposes 398,000 square feet of new development and the adaptive re-use of 30 existing contributing buildings. New development will respect and reinforce the campus arrangement and historic character. There are three sub-zones within the AFRH Zone: North-Northeast, Chapel Woods, and Golf Course. North-Northeast is planned to receive 350,000 square feet of new development with height limits of 55 feet in the Historic Core and 85 feet along North Capitol Street. This is a reduction of 40,000 square feet from what was proposed in the draft Master Plan. The plan includes the retention/reuse of all contributing structures and includes landscape improvements. Chapel Woods is planned for low-density development of 42,000 square feet (33,000 square feet less than in the draft Master Plan) with a height limit of 40 feet. Intact wooded areas will be protected and existing road alignments preserved. The draft Master Plan had included housing on the eastern edge of Chapel Woods but that has been removed in response to comments from the SHPO. The Golf Course work is planned to include a replacement clubhouse (3,000 square feet), a replacement maintenance building (3,000 square feet) and relocation of two holes within the footprint of the existing golf course.

Zone A will be the first of the development zones to be initiated. The zone will house mixed use (residential, medical, office, retail, grocery, hotel, and park land). Historic preservation will include the adaptive re-use of all nine buildings within its boundaries, retention of the historic Pasture, preservation of trees adjacent to the Pasture, preservation of Pershing Drive, and preservation of key views. The projected total square footage for this zone is 4,300,000 square feet. 700,000 square feet currently exist on Zone A, making a net increase of 3.6M square feet. This zone will be open to the

public, and will include 20+ acres of publicly available parkland and open space. New buildings will address DC Green building initiatives, and the proposed development will provide over 300 affordable housing units, approximately 100 units for veterans transitional housing, and extensive tax revenues and jobs.

In addition to the retention of all the historic structure, the plan also calls for retention of the historic pasture, preservation of trees along Pershing Drive and in the pasture, and preservation of key historic and non-historic views.

Tim Sheckler introduced the members of the Crescent development team, which was selected to develop Zone A. Matt Bell presented the original proposal as well as the revised “Illustrative Plan.”

Giles Moore then presented the plan for **Zone B**, which totals 8 acres along the southwestern boundary of the Home, with Michigan Avenue to the south and Park Place to the west. Zone B is planned to include 880,000 square feet of new development. The intended use is residential with ancillary retail. The height is planned to be 80 feet with upper floor setbacks. Entrances at the existing historic gates will be opened to serve the new development and the historic loop will not be altered.

Zone C, which totals 25 acres, is located along the western boundary of the AFRH-W site with Park Place to its west. It is planned for Zone C to receive 750,000 square feet of new development, 250,000 square feet less than in the draft Master Plan. The plan for Zone C includes the protection of tree lines intact to 1877 and the green buffer zone along Park Drive. New streets that are consistent with the city streets to the west will be built. The maximum height for Zone C is 40 feet with upper stories set back. The proposed 40’ height was a reduction from the draft Master Plan.

Key Discussion Points

Cliff Valenti, who is a member of the United Neighborhood Coalition (UNC) and was asked by Councilor Graham to attend in his place, expressed his opinion that Zones B and C were not very well thought out and need to be studied and developed. He expressed his concern that the 40’ high residential development in Zone C would look “squatty” when viewed in the context of the houses along Park Place. He encouraged the design of houses with a height visually commensurate with the existing Park Place houses across the street.

Mr. Valenti proposed three scenarios for Zone C:

Scenario 1 – All options for the creation of publicly accessible parkland/greenspace were to be considered. Increased density in Zone A might be acceptable in exchange for parkland/greenspace.

Scenario 2 – Reserve the western half of land that runs along Park Place as publicly accessible greenspace, eliminating the proposed city street grid. Build townhouses on the eastern half of the zone centered around the new publicly accessible greenspace. Keep the historic fence in place, reactivate the two gates for vehicular traffic and add pedestrian openings elsewhere in the fence.

Scenario 3: If publicly accessible parkland/greenspace was not possible, plan a reasonable development that includes the re-location of the historic brick and iron fence eastward where it would serve as a new border to AFRH. Additionally, the height of the buildings should align with the houses on the west side of Park Place (more than the proposed 40’).

Richard Houghton, representing the Committee of 100, stated that the plan for Zone A was well thought out and “beguiling,” however as to Zone C, thought should be given to the question as to what the design’s impact would have on the city as a whole.

Sandra Hoffman expressed her concern that the plans for Zone B and Zone C did not retain sufficient greenspace. She asked for the retention and reinforcement of the parkland connectivity that was a part of the McMillan Plan (Plan of 1901) for the city’s parkland.

Sophia Lynn asked Tim Sheckler if the Home received \$100 million would it continue with the development proposals. A discussion regarding AFRH’s financial situation resulted and Tim related that the Home had undertaken a serious look at its costs for the rehabilitation of the property and its operations. AFRH has identified short term capital needs in excess of \$360 million dollars.

Reyn Anderson and Sandra Hoffman suggested that AFRH take advantage of its historical importance and try to raise money through tourism.

Elizabeth Merritt of the National Trust for Historic Preservation questioned how the view from Scott Statue towards the downtown would be affected by the buildings proposed at the western end of Zone C.

Key Milestones

TS addressed the dates that are presently scheduled as Key Milestone for the Master Plan and Section 106 process. They are as follows:

Meeting with Community Groups	April – July 2007
Complete Final EIS	May –July 2007
Historic Preservation Consultation/PA	April – July 2007
Final Master Plan Submission	Summer 2007
NCPC Approval	Fall 2007

Katherine Kerr of the ACHP suggested that the time frame for the Programmatic Agreement needed to be discussed.

Tim Sheckler explained that the project will be discussed with community members at regular meetings of community groups, as the Home has been done in the past few months. RA requested that there be lengthier meetings held in the community, as was done for the draft Master Plan.

Section 106 Questions

Sophie Lynn requested a listing of the Signatories to the PA. Tim Sheckler responded that the Signatories include: AFRH, DC SHPO, Crescent Development, and NCPC. Tim Dennee stated that signatories are parties with responsibilities relating to execution of the plan. The question was asked as to whether NPS would be a signatory. Tim Sheckler states that the NPS had previously stated that they would not be a signatory to the PA. Gary Scott indicated that he will confirm this.

Next Steps

Tim Sheckler stated that he would be in touch with the meeting attendees via e-mail as to the process and timeframes for submission of comments regarding the updated Master Plan, and would post the presentation materials on the project web site.

No date was set at this time for the next meeting, but Tim Sheckler anticipates holding a meeting in early June. Katherine Kerr asked that the meeting focus on historic issues, since that is the purpose of Section 106 and that the Programmatic Agreement be the subject of the next meeting.