



August 17, 2026

Ms. Tammy Stidham
Associate Regional Director - Lands and Planning
National Park Service
1100 Ohio Drive SW Washington, DC 20242

RE: Lafayette Park - Consulting Party Meeting #1

Dear Ms. Stidham,

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in the Section 106 review concerning the proposal to build a permanent ten-foot-tall metal fence around Lafayette Park, across the street from the White House. This letter is a follow up to the National Park Service's (NPS) commitment to "circle back" and provide additional information about the designation of the Lafayette Square Historic District, which includes Lafayette Park.

At the August 12, 2026, Lafayette Park - Consulting Party Meeting #1, The Cultural Landscape Foundation (TCLF) pointed out that the National Historic Landmark [designation of 1970 for the Lafayette Square Historic Designation](#) has not been updated to include the [Additional Documentation and Boundary Increase & Boundary Decrease of 2022](#). **Consequently, the proposal presented at the Section 106 review was based on incomplete data**, nevertheless the meeting did get into specific design proposals.

The amendment of 2022 was prepared by the National Park Service and unanimously approved by the D.C. Historic Preservation Review Board on [September 29, 2022](#), and approved by David Maloney at the D.C. State Historic Preservation Act on [October 5, 2022](#). However, according to remarks by Mr. Maloney at the August 12, 2026, Section 106 consulting party meeting, the National Park Service never forwarded it to the National Register of Historic Places.

During that meeting I [directly addressed Secret Service representative Andrew Stohs](#) (starting at 35:58) and ultimately asked: "How can we possibly get into a fence design and adverse effects if we don't know what the period of significance and what the areas of significance are? Is this the cart before the horse?" Later in the meeting both Mr. Maloney and Sarah Batcheler, Assistant Secretary at the CFA, agreed said NPS should update documentation to provide an accurate and more thorough assessment of the park's historic significance. You said: "We can definitely look at those, Charles, and circle back on that question."

The amendments of 2022 include this vital information that is essential to the Section 106 review to identify "adverse effects" and how to "avoid, minimize, or mitigate" those negative impacts:

Periods of Significance

The district reflects two overlapping periods of significance. Under **Criterion A**, in the areas of politics and government and social history, the Lafayette Square Historic District continues to serve as the backdrop and setting for nationally significant events and trends. As the foremost location for staged and spontaneous political protests, and as home to influential public and private organizations focused on public policy in the United States, the district's Criterion A period of significance extends from **1791 to the present**.

The district's period of significance under **Criteria B, C, and D** encompasses the years from **1791 to 1970**. This era captures the district's design significance (Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Community Planning and Development), as well as the periods when known historic figures were closely linked to sites and buildings within the district. In addition, the district's archeological resources are encompassed in this period.

Criteria Consideration G: A property achieving significance within the last 50 years if it is of exceptional importance.

This district is one of the most significant in the country. Unlike most historic sites, its significance derives not only from its role in the past but also from its ongoing role. Lafayette Square and its buildings continue to be inextricably related to the American Presidency and to the Executive Branch of the United States government. It will continue to be the ceremonial center for the reception of national and international figures and will continue to attract local residents, government and private business employees, visitors from across the country and around the world, national and foreign dignitaries and diplomats, and visiting heads of state. From women's suffrage to Black Lives Matter, Lafayette Square also remains a nationally visible and symbolic site of demonstration and protest, where people both draw on and continue to shape American history through First Amendment activity. For these reasons the district has a Criterion A period of significance that begins in 1791, when the park was initially established as part of the presidential grounds, and extends to the present.

The resources that compose the Lafayette Square Historic District were initially listed as a National Historic Landmark on August 8, 1970. These resources would not exist today were it not for the efforts of President John F. Kennedy, First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy, the preservation design plan developed by John Carl Warnecke in 1962. By raising the profile of historic preservation and demonstrating executive-level support for heritage preservation at Lafayette Square, Presidents Kennedy and Johnson and their wives signaled a high-level acceptance of modern historic preservation policy and helped pave the way for the enactment of the National Historic Preservation Act in 1966. Therefore, this district meets **Criterion Consideration G**. Buildings erected as

part of the Warnecke Plan are influential examples of contextual design of the 1960s. These include the in-fill buildings along Jackson Place, NW, the New Executive Office Building, and the Howard T. Markey National Courts Building.

Would you please tell when the National Park Service plans to forward the amendment of 2022 to the National Register of Historic Places? This project has already gone to the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts with incomplete data and is scheduled for review by the National Capital Planning Commission on [September 3, 2026](#).

Many thanks for your assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, consisting of a large 'C' followed by a smaller 'B' and a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Charles A. Birnbaum, FASLA, FAAR
Founding President & CEO

cc:

David Maloney, D.C. State Historic Preservation Office
Andrew Lewis, D.C. State Historic Preservation Commission
Adrew Stohs, U.S. Secret Service
Sarah Batcheler, Assistant Secretary, U. S. Commission of Fine Arts
Thomas Luebke, Secretary, U.S. Commission of Fine Arts
Arthur Spitzer, Senior Counsel, ACLU of the District of Columbia
Claire Sale, AECOM