



Smithsonian Facilities

To: Consulting Parties

From: Smithsonian Institution (SI) – Smithsonian Facilities

Date: October 20, 2021

Re: Hirshhorn Sculpture Garden Revitalization

Thank you for your participation in Section 106 consultation on the Hirshhorn Sculpture Garden Revitalization beginning with our first meeting on April 24, 2019. Consultation occurred on this project over an extended period with seven consulting parties meetings and reviews of several supplemental informational packets. Consulting parties have followed this project through every step of this long process, and the significant changes encouraged through Section 106 and incorporated into the design have minimized adverse effect and maintained historic integrity. The Smithsonian Institution thanks you for your participation and engagement in Section 106 consultation and assistance in the resolution of adverse effects for the Hirshhorn Sculpture Garden Revitalization.

All presentation material can be found on the project webpage (<https://hirshhorn.si.edu/sculpture-garden-revitalization/>) and is available for review as a record of consultation. The Smithsonian kindly directs consulting parties to the following documents and materials:

- Cumulative effects were assessed and presented at the May 27, 2020 and October 7, 2020 consulting parties meetings.
- Draft Assessment of Effects on Historic Resources included cumulative effects, first shared with consulting parties for comment in May 2020. The Assessment of Effects was finalized in July 2021, incorporating comments from consulting parties to consider the project's effects on visual and spatial relationships in the Sculpture Garden.

The final version of the Memorandum of Agreement accompanies this memo, with two options available for consulting parties review:

- Final MOA HMSG – October 2021 - Version with text changes visible in “Track Changes” and comments from the SI in the margins.
- Final MOA HMSG – Clean Copy - Final Version which incorporates all changes to the document.

This memo addresses comments from consulting parties received from the recent review of the inner partition wall alternatives and updates to the Memorandum of Agreement:

- Cumulative effects are now noted with specific text in the preamble and the final Assessment of Effects is included as Exhibit F in the Memorandum of Agreement.
- The Memorandum of Agreement includes text edits to incorporate the “Alternative 3 Lowered Concrete Wall” design for the inner partition wall. There is some consensus among consulting parties that this alternative is aligned with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and minimizes adverse effect.
- Bunshaft and Collins critical visual and spatial relationships are maintained through:
 - Retention of the Bunshaft reflecting pool, also maintained in the Collins alterations. The new water feature and performance platform approximates the dimensions of the Collins center turf panel, maintaining the overall composition, visual and spatial relationships in the Central Gallery.
 - The “Alternative 3 Lowered Concrete Wall” design maintains a higher degree of historic integrity for the inner partition wall, a character defining feature of the Sculpture Garden



Smithsonian Facilities

aligned with the central 8th Street axis. The use of aggregate concrete maintains visual material relationships to the concrete perimeter walls and the Museum building.

- Several mitigation items that were not well defined and therefore difficult to implement have been removed from this project. For example, the Smithsonian will pursue opportunities to publish or speak at conferences about information learned during design of the project, as it is tied to our mission. An undefined requirement to complete this task in the MOA without a number of years or occurrences becomes hard to implement. Other mitigation items were removed as the Smithsonian will pursue these under separate projects currently in Section 106 consultation.
- The Smithsonian is committed to carrying out the comprehensive minimization and mitigation measures in the MOA. Please see the “Final MOA HMSG – October 2021” for more information on the rationale for removing mitigation items.

Final review of the Memorandum of Agreement is open through October 25, 2021, please submit written comments to BondC@si.edu.

From: [Webb, Lee](#)
To: [Bond, Carly](#)
Cc: [Sullivan, Diane](#); [Flis, Matthew](#); [Lewis, Andrew](#); [Jaime Loichinger](#)
Subject: RE: Hirshhorn Sculpture Garden Revitalization - Inner Partition Wall Alternatives and Comment Period
Date: Tuesday, October 5, 2021 11:31:04 AM
Attachments: [image002.png](#)

External Email - Exercise Caution

Dear Ms. Bond—

The National Capital Planning Commission(NCPC) staff appreciates the efforts of the Smithsonian Institution(SI) and the Hirshhorn Museum team to develop a third alternative for the treatment of the Sculpture Garden's inner partition wall, that reconstructs it with in-kind material, and in the historic location, while lowering the height of the wall by about 21 inches. We appreciate the efforts by SI to continue to seek opportunities to avoid or minimize adverse effects to historic contributing features, while achieving the project's goals. We look forward to hearing the comments from the other Consulting Parties, as we move forward in the Section 106 Consultation process.

--Lee Webb

Lee A. Webb

Federal Preservation Officer | Urban Design and Plan Review Division
401 9th Street, NW | Suite 500 | Washington, DC 20004
202 482 7240 | www.ncpc.gov | lee.webb@ncpc.gov



The Federal Planning Agency for America's Capital

From: Bond, Carly <BondC@si.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, September 14, 2021 5:07 PM
To: Bond, Carly <BondC@si.edu>
Subject: Hirshhorn Sculpture Garden Revitalization - Inner Partition Wall Alternatives and Comment Period

Good afternoon,

In response to comments received during Section 106 consultation on the Hirshhorn Sculpture Garden Revitalization project, the Smithsonian Institution has developed a new alternative for the inner partition wall. Please find attached supplemental material that provides an overview of three alternatives for the inner partition wall. The Smithsonian requests comments on the alternatives from Consulting Parties by **October 6, 2021**.

The Inner Partition Wall Alternatives document includes for consideration:

From: [Bossi, Andrew \(SMD 6D01\)](#)
To: [Bond, Carly](#)
Subject: RE: Hirshhorn Sculpture Garden Revitalization - Inner Partition Wall Alternatives and Comment Period
Date: Monday, October 4, 2021 4:43:17 PM
Attachments: [image001.jpg](#)

External Email - Exercise Caution

Greetings! I very much prefer Alternative 1.

This is vastly more aesthetic, opens up sight lines, and helps to better disseminate sound. With any luck we'll be able to sit in the park & not hear the ice cream trucks nearly so loudly!

Thanks!!

Andrew Bossi, P.E. | he/him
ANC6D01 Commissioner
Southwest Waterfront, DC 20024
Unceded land of the Nacotchtank people
[anc6d.org](#) || [twitter](#)

From: Bond, Carly <BondC@si.edu>
Sent: 14 September 2021 17:07
To: Bond, Carly <BondC@si.edu>
Subject: Hirshhorn Sculpture Garden Revitalization - Inner Partition Wall Alternatives and Comment Period

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Good afternoon,

In response to comments received during Section 106 consultation on the Hirshhorn Sculpture Garden Revitalization project, the Smithsonian Institution has developed a new alternative for the inner partition wall. Please find attached supplemental material that provides an overview of three alternatives for the inner partition wall. The Smithsonian requests comments on the alternatives from Consulting Parties by **October 6, 2021**.

The Inner Partition Wall Alternatives document includes for consideration:

- Alternative 1 – Stacked Stone Wall
- Alternative 2 – Reconstruction In-Kind
- Alternative 3 – Lowered Concrete Wall

The draft Memorandum of Agreement will be updated to reflect appropriate changes. The final draft of the MOA will be released for a short review period.

Please also visit the project webpage to access the Inner Partition Wall Alternatives document.

*Nancy S. Slade
3500 Quesada St. NW
Washington D.C. 20015*

October 5, 2021

Ms. Carly Bond
Historic Preservation Specialist
Smithsonian Institution
Office of Planning, Design & Construction
Architectural History and Historic Preservation
600 Maryland Avenue SW, Suite 5001
Washington, D.C. 20013

Dear Ms. Bond,

I am responding to the request for comments on the proposed alternatives for the Inner Partition Wall for the Sugimoto redesign of the Hirshhorn Sculpture Garden. As presented the three alternatives offer choices which run the gamut. But taking the Sculpture Garden design and parsing it into isolated contributing features of the design and asking for comments on any decontextualized individual feature is inconsistent with looking at the overall relationship of this element to the entire design of the garden as recommended in The Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes.

For two- and one-half years we have been revisiting versions of the same plan which was originally proposed in April of 2019 before Lester Collins design was recognized as a historically significant part of an expanded Period of Significance for the garden. The proposed Sugimoto plan ignores the historic Bunshaft /Collins critical visual and spatial relationships in the garden and asks us to choose one of the most important elements in the overall scheme as though it existed in isolation. The elimination of the Collins/Bunshaft design by introducing inconsistent elements (stacked stone), and replacing the stroll garden with three programable divisions of the garden ignores the overall historic spatial and visual relationships of the sculpture garden and its purposeful continuity with the

Gordon Bunshaft Museum. Combining any of these three alternatives with the Revised Reflecting Pool Alternative introduced on July 7, 2021, is the tipping point for the Collins/Bunshaft design – both significantly altering its character defining visual and spatial relationships while also severing the harmony between building and landscape.

With best regards,

Nancy S. Slade, ASLA

cc: Melissa Chiu, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden; Jaya Kaveeshwar, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden; Sharon Park, Smithsonian Institution; Greg Bettwy, Smithsonian Institution; Jaime Loichinger, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation; David Maloney, D.C. Historic Preservation Office; Andrew Lewis, D.C. Historic Preservation Office; Thomas Luebke, U.S. Commission of Fine Arts; Marcel Acosta; National Capital Planning Commission; Lee Webb, National Capital Planning Commission; Steve Callcott, D.C. Historic Preservation Review Board; Christine Anagnos, Executive Director, Association of Art Museum Directors; Judith Pineiro, Executive Director, Association of Art Museum Curators; Theo Prudon, President, Docomomo U.S.; Elizabeth Waytkus, Executive Director, Docomomo U.S., Kirby Vining, Committee of 100 on the Federal City; Rebecca Miller, D.C. Preservation League; Betsy Merritt, National Trust for Historic Preservation; Bill Brown, Association of Oldest Inhabitants

The Committee of 100

on the Federal City



October 4, 2021

Melissa Chiu, Director
Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden
Independence Avenue & 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20560
chiu@si.edu

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James Wilcox
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945 G Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001
www.committeef100.net
info@committeef100.net

RE: September 14, 2021, Smithsonian Request to Comment on Hirshhorn Sculpture Garden Revitalization Project, Inner Partition Wall Alternatives

Director Chiu:

The Committee of 100 on the Federal City responds to the September 14, 2021, Smithsonian request for comments on the most recent development of the proposed revitalization of the historic Hirshhorn Sculpture Garden. We do so as a Consulting Party under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

The September 14 request asks Consulting Parties to “vote” among three proposed treatment alternatives for the Garden Inner Partition Wall. However, what is offered, in fact, is a classic “Hobson’s Choice” (one where only one option – “take it or leave it” - is truly offered). The option Consulting Parties are being asked to support is de facto concurrence in the destruction of the most historically significant element of the Garden – the Inner Partition Wall. The convenient “concrete disease” rationale for Partition Wall destruction (though admittedly true in some areas of the larger Garden retaining walls), is not evident here in high incidence of efflorescence and material loss. The Committee fears the “disease” justification has been used not only as a rationale for destruction of the Partition Wall but for the proposed destruction of most all of the historic architectural Garden elements.

Given where the consultation process now finds itself, Alternative 2 (“Reconstruct in Kind”) is the logical but regrettable choice as it preserves some semblance of the original historic design – if not its historic materiality. A hollow victory indeed. The Committee of 100 has consistently advocated rejecting in toto the Revitalization Plan in favor of a conservation approach that balances better preservation of the extant historic fabric, honors the historically significant Bunshaft/Collins design all the while accommodating new 21st century Institution needs. Careful curatorial conservation of all historically significant buildings and landscapes in the Smithsonian’s care should be approached no differently than the conservation of the invaluable material culture entrusted to the museum system’s collections.

Simply put, the Federal Historic Preservation Section 106 consultation process has failed the Hirshhorn Sculpture Garden. We are left with a proposal (likely soon to be approved) that destroys the historic Garden and installs a wholly new design in its place – meritorious that the Sugimoto concept may be. So, why advocate for Alternative 2? Possibly in doing so, we create a kind of *memento mori* of what is about to be lost but clearly does not meet the policy goals of the Smithsonian’s statutory charge under Sections 106 and 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act (P.L. 89-665; 54 U.S.C. 300101 *et seq*).

In summary, The Committee of 100 on the Federal City “votes” for Alternative 2. Having done that, however, either the Hirshhorn Sculpture Garden is historically significant and deserves better treatment than the entire Revitalization Plan proposes; or it is not. As the professional consensus found the Garden to meet that test as an important mid-20th century, American landscape worthy of preserving, we find ourselves drawing to the end of a 2+ year consultation process with a solution contrary to accepted norms of historic preservation professional practice and public policy.

As always, thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,



Kirby Vining, Chair

The Committee of 100 on the Federal City

cc:

- Jaya Kaveeshwar, Deputy Director, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, kaveeshwarj@si.edu
- Greg Bettwy, Chief of Staff to the Secretary, Office of the Secretary, Smithsonian Institute, bettwyg@si.edu
- Carly Bond, Historic Preservation Specialist, Smithsonian Facilities Office of Planning, Design, & Construction bondc@si.edu
- Charles A. Birnbaum, Founder + President, The Cultural Landscape Foundation charles@tclf.org
- Nord Wennerstrom, Director of Communications, The Cultural Landscape Foundation, nord@clf.org
- C. Andrew Lewis, Senior Historic Preservation Officer, DC State Historic Preservation Office Andrew.Lewis@dc.gov
- David Maloney, DC State Historic Preservation Officer David_Maloney@dc.gov
- Thomas Luebke, Secretary, Commission of Fine Arts tluebke@cfa.gov
- Marcel Acosta, Executive Director, National Capital Planning Commission marcel.acosta@npc.gov
- Lee Webb, National Capital Planning Commission, Lee.webb@npc.gov
- Elizabeth Merritt, National Trust for Historic Preservation emerritt@savingplaces.org
- Rebecca Miller, DC Preservation League Rebecca@dcpreservation.org
- Peggy McGlone, Washington Post peggy.mcglone@washpost.com
- Philip Kennicott, Washington Post philip.kennicott@washpost.com
- Christopher Wilson, ACHP cwilson@achp.gov
- Chair, DC Historic Preservation Review Board historic.preservation@dc.gov

October 6, 2021

Ms. Carly Bond
Historic Preservation Specialist
Smithsonian Facilities Office of Planning, Design and Construction
600 Maryland Avenue SW, Suite 5001
Washington, DC 20013-7012

Dear Ms. Bond,

As an official consulting party to the National Historic Preservation Act (“NHPA”) Section 106 review now underway for the Hirshhorn Sculpture Garden in Washington, D.C., The Cultural Landscape Foundation (“TCLF”) is pleased to add the following remarks to the public record.

The discussion of [Inner Partition Wall Alternatives](#), which stems from and specifically references concerns raised by the National Capital Planning Commission, is premature given that **the principal work of this Section 106 review has not been done, namely assessing the impacts on [visual and spatial relationships](#), which are the primary organizational principles of the Secretary of the Interior’s [Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes](#), which underpins this review.** All the decision-making about the proposed work at the Sculpture Garden stems from that analysis. We have raised this matter on at least [three separate occasions](#) since this Section 106 process began and yet it remains unaddressed (the reference to views and vistas on pages 57-59 of the Smithsonian’s [February 24, 2020, presentation](#) is not an analysis of visual and spatial relationships).

In our letter of July 20, 2021, we pointed out that visual and spatial relationships are not addressed on the Assessment of Effects on Historic Resources and do not appear in either the “No Adverse Effect” or “Adverse Effect” columns on page 13 of the Smithsonian’s [July 7, 2021, presentation](#). We noted that changes in wall heights, geometries in the ground plane and other visual and spatial relationships are inextricably intertwined and contribute to the integrity and significance of the Bunshaft/Collins design. In fact, during the Q&A at the July 7, 2021, presentation, you stated that the “no adverse effect” determination for the “site plan” referred to the “general garden organization” and **you confirmed that “there is not a specific analysis for visual relationships.”**

The assessment of effects on historic visual and spatial relationships that contribute to the garden’s significance and integrity is a primary responsibility in this undertaking and underpins and informs its findings, conclusions, and the MOA. To solicit opinions about options for the inner partition wall is not only premature, but also inappropriate given that the Smithsonian has neglected to perform the required analysis. **Design decisions should not be rendered without this required foundational analysis and context, which we have repeatedly called for.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, consisting of a stylized 'C' followed by a horizontal line that ends in a small loop.

Charles A. Birnbaum, FASLA, FAAR
President & CEO

Cc: Section 106 consulting parties.



October 18, 2021

Ms. Carly Bond
Historic Preservation Specialist
Smithsonian Institution
600 Maryland Avenue, SW, Suite 5001
PO Box 37012 MRC 511
Washington, DC 20013-7012

RE: Additional Comments Regarding the Hirshhorn Sculpture Garden Revitalization Project and the Revised Alternatives for the Inner Partition Wall

Dear Ms. Bond:

Thank you for developing revised alternatives for the Hirshhorn Sculpture Garden's Inner Partition Wall. As you are aware, the treatment of this wall has been one of our primary concerns. We apologize for the delay in providing comments but wanted to consider the views of consulting parties prior to responding. We are writing in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and its implementing regulations, 36 CFR Part 800 to offer the following for your consideration.

Although consulting party support for the new Inner Partition Wall "Alternative 3 – Lowered Concrete Wall," was limited, we consider this approach an improvement over the Smithsonian's preferred stacked stone wall because it will maintain the critically important aggregate concrete that visually and materially ties the museum and sculpture garden together. From a cumulative standpoint, it will also reduce the overall amount and visual prominence of the stacked stone, which is not an original material, by limiting it primarily to newly proposed walls away from the central core of the garden. These revisions will minimize adverse effects in a meaningful way. While an adverse effect will still result from the reduction in the wall's height, the disadvantage of a relatively minor, less visually impactful shortening of the wall would seem to be outweighed by the benefit of maintaining a historically accurate, visually unifying material.

Implementing "Alternative 1 – Replacement In-Kind" would further minimize and even avoid some adverse effects and we continue to endorse this approach as the most appropriate from a purely historic preservation standpoint. However, we also believe the Lowered Concrete Wall Alternative represents a reasonable balance between historic preservation concerns and program requirements

If you should have any questions or comments regarding any of this matter, please contact me at andrew.lewis@dc.gov or at 202-442-8841. Otherwise, we look forward to consulting further to complete the Section 106 review of this undertaking.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Andrew Lewis". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

C. Andrew Lewis
Senior Historic Preservation Officer
DC State Historic Preservation Office

19-0361
cc: Consulting Parties

From: [Steven Shulman](#)
To: [Bond, Carly](#)
Subject: Hirshhorn Sculpture Garden--Interior Partitions
Date: Wednesday, October 6, 2021 5:19:46 PM

External Email - Exercise Caution

Ms. Bond:

I reviewed the material that your office distributed regarding the interior partition walls for the updated Hirshhorn Sculpture Garden. Here is my order of preference:

1. Stacked stone wall
2. Lowered concrete wall

Reconstructed in-kind is a non-starter. Better to let the existing walls deteriorate to the extent that the acoustics and sightlines will improve because of their deteriorated state. Why waste money on reproducing a 50-year-old failed design that does not address the needs of contemporary audiences? Having commissioned and opened new performing arts centers as well as enclosed shopping malls during my career, I believe that the audience experience is paramount. From my reading and research, I believe Mr. Bunshaft created his designs for the people who used them, not as monuments to his brilliance.

As the use of the sculpture garden changes through programming, so will the area around the sculpture garden. Extraneous noise from food trucks and other uses of the National Mall and its streets should be minimized and certainly not permitted to reverberate off hard, flat surfaces within the garden. In my experience, angled and rounded walls offered better sound to an audience.

Again, I believe your review and the public's input is useful for "consideration." I do not believe that consideration should supersede the requirements of contemporary and future audiences for the next 50 years.

Sincerely,

Steve Shulman

Steven E. Shulman

Executive Director
Cultural Tourism DC, Inc.
700 12th Street, NW #700
Washington, DC 20005
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October 6, 2021

Carly Bond
Historic Preservation Specialist
Smithsonian Institution
Office of Planning, Design & Construction
Architectural History and Historic Preservation
600 Maryland Avenue, SW, Suite 5001
Capital Gallery MRC 511
Washington, DC 20013

Dear Ms. Bond,

Docomomo US is responding to the September 2021 Hirshhorn Sculpture Garden Revitalization Update regarding the Inner Partition Wall.

While we appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback on three inner partition wall alternatives, we continue to be concerned about the lack of a cumulative review of changes to the sculpture garden. It is problematic to review proposed changes to singular elements of the Bunshaft/Collins design in such a compartmentalized way without addressing the full impact of the changes proposed or documentation to address areas proposed to be altered and the potential impact on important landscape features. This lack of a cumulative review is why we continue to disagree on the proposed changes to the reflecting pool.

Knowing this is a process, we find Alternative 2 – Reconstruction In-Kind and Alternative 3 – Lowered Concrete Wall to both be in keeping with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation and the programmatic goals of the Smithsonian and the Hirshhorn Museum. Docomomo US finds Alternative 1 – Stacked Stone Wall to not be in keeping with the historic composition and materiality of the design. The stacked stone wall dominates over, rather than recedes, in comparison to the concrete wall, and the size and scale of the stacked stone wall does not fit within the wall hierarchy as outlined. We do not find the change in materiality necessary or appropriate for programmatic needs that are temporary.



Docomomo US strongly recommends that a cumulative review of the proposed changes to the sculpture garden be addressed as the next step in this Section 106 process. Reviewing elements in a piecemeal fashion without understanding how these elements relate to each other or how guests will respond to these changes continues to be concerning and makes the future of this nationally significant garden of paramount concern.

Sincerely,

Todd Grover
Vice President Advocacy
Docomomo US

Liz Waytkus
Executive Director
Docomomo US

cc: Melissa Chiu, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden; Jaya Kaveeshwar, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden; Sharon Park, Smithsonian Institution; Greg Bettwy, Smithsonian Institution; Richard Kurin, Smithsonian Institution; Kevin Gover, Smithsonian Institution; Jaime Loichinger, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation; David Maloney, D.C. Historic Preservation Office; Andrew Lewis, D.C. Historic Preservation Office; Thomas Luebke, U.S. Commission of Fine Arts; Marcel Acosta; National Capital Planning Commission; Lee Webb, National Capital Planning Commission; Steve Callcott, D.C. Historic Preservation Review Board; Christine Anagnos, Executive Director, Association of Art Museum Directors; Judith Pineiro, Executive Director, Association of Art Museum Curators; Nord Wennerstrom, Director of Communications, The Cultural Landscape Foundation; Charles Birnbaum, President, The Cultural Landscape Foundation; Theo Prudon, President, Docomomo U.S.; Todd Grover, Advocacy Chair, Docomomo U.S., Kirby Vining, Committee of 100 on the Federal City; Rebecca Miller, D.C. Preservation League; Betsy Merritt, National Trust for Historic Preservation; Bill Brown, Association of Oldest Inhabitants; Alexandra MacKay, Esq., Stites & Harbison PLLC.