

Secretary's alternate on the Commission has advised that he will move to add to the agenda of the open session on March 4, 1982, the proposed development concept of the added features for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and thereafter move to suspend the rules and approve such proposed development concept at that session.

As noted above, the locations and designs of the proposed flagpole and sculpture have not been developed. The proposal before the Commission, therefore, represents the development concept of adding the two features to the site, with the specifics of the locations and designs to be reviewed at a subsequent stage.

Coordinating Committee and Joint Committee on Landmarks

The proposed development concept has not been reviewed by the Coordinating Committee and the Joint Committee on Landmarks, since the request of the Secretary of Interior was received too late for referral to either body.

Historic Preservation

The National Park Service will be required to advise the Commission of the applicability of the provisions of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 at the time of the submission of the design for the proposed added features.

Environmental Impact

Pursuant to P.L. 91-190, the National Park Service and the Executive Director determined that an environmental impact statement was not required for the project. The environmental impacts of the two proposed additional features would not appear to change or affect that determination.

Evaluation of Proposal

The proposal places the Commission in the position of responding to a development concept that primarily involves design issues with the design itself not yet available for review. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund is anxious to begin work on the basic Memorial plans as soon as possible to permit dedication on Veterans Day 1982, with the additional features to be added as work proceeds. The Secretary has advised, however, of his concern that the compromise design that has been worked out in response to the intense interest of Members of Congress and other parties will be for naught if the design refinements are disapproved and the additional features are not constructed.

As noted in its previous report, the staff believes the basic design for the memorial is profoundly expressive and highly compatible with and sensitive to its magnificent site near the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument. The simplicity of the basic design contributes

significantly to the expressive qualities of the memorial. The staff would have preferred that no change be proposed in the design. The issues and intense interest of many parties which led to the proposed design refinements are well known, however, and the efforts of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund to reach a compromise that retains the integrity of the basic plan, while responding to the many interests that have been voiced, are recognized.

While the simplicity of the basic design is probably its most compelling characteristic, the plan for the memorial is a bold and strong one. The two walls 200 feet in length of polished granite will create a strong sense of space. It appears that this space can contain a sculpture of an American serviceman without any significant diminution of the visual quality or the experience of the basic plan, and the addition of a flagstaff and an American flag in the site in the west meadow of Constitution Gardens should also be possible without any significant compromise of the basic plan. The acceptability of the two proposed additional features depends, however, on sensitive placement of both and sensitive design of the proposed sculpture. In particular the sculpture should be carefully designed and placed so as not to change the sense of monumental scale created by the two intersecting granite walls. A location some distance in front of the walls should be explored. In view of the importance of the ultimate design details, the Commission should include, in its approval of the concept of adding the two features, the strong recommendation that the features will be located and designed so as not to compromise or diminish the basic design of the memorial. This appears to be the only sound approach under which the Commission can take action at this time in the absence of a specific design for the added features.