



CHAIR

LAURA M. RICHARDS, ESQ.

May 29, 2009

VICE-CHAIR

GEORGE R. CLARKE, ESQ.

Ms. Perry Wheelock, Chief
Division of Resource Management
National Mall and Memorial Parks
National Park Service
900 Ohio Drive, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20024-2000

SECRETARY

RICHARD HOUGHTON

TREASURER

FRANCIS M. CLARKE, III

Dear Ms. Wheelock:

TRUSTEES

WARD BUCHER
W. KENT COOPER, FAIA
ANDREA C. FERSTER, ESQ.
CARROLL GREEN
KEVIN LOCKE
NANCY MACWOOD
MEG MAGUIRE
HON. JAMES E. NATHANSON
LORETTA NEUMANN
CHARLES J. ROBERTSON
MARY PAT ROWAN
RICHARD WESTBROOK
EVELYN WRIN
JOHN YAGO
BARBARA ZARTMAN

Thank you for sending us a copy of the *Repair and Control Settlement at Thomas Jefferson Memorial Seawall, North Plaza, and Transition Areas: Environmental Assessment/Assessment of Effect Report* (April 2009) for review. As you know, the Committee of 100 on the Federal City is currently involved in the review process for the National Mall Plan, including the Section 106 Consultation Process. We are interested in projects that deal in some way with the National Mall. The condition of the deteriorating plaza and seawall in front of the Thomas Jefferson Memorial is a serious problem and we are pleased that the National Park Service is addressing this matter.

We have reviewed the report and the four alternative courses of action outlined, including the “no build” alternative and three other alternatives. We believe **Alternative B: Rebuilt Seawall**, the National Park Service Preferred Alternative, is a reasonable course of action that hopefully will resolve the problem. We do not have any detailed comments on this approach.

CHAIR EMERITUS

DON ALEXANDER HAWKINS

The Committee of 100 on the Federal City is interested in design actions that will better link various areas of the National Mall, and will link locations in the National Mall with adjacent areas of the Monumental Core and nearby areas of the city in terms of direct connections and also in terms of symbolic visual linkages. Such linkages often build on the concepts of the L’Enfant Plan (1791-92) and the McMillan Commission (1901-1902). The report noted above has a discussion of the views from the steps of the Jefferson Memorial, with emphasis on views north to the Washington Monument and the White House. Views of the Capitol are also mentioned (pages 10 and 70-71).

We note that the repair of Jefferson Memorial North Plaza provides an opportunity to emphasize the view northeast to the Capitol. At present, the northeast/southwest vista line along Maryland Avenue crosses the more pronounced and visible north/south vista line between the Jefferson Memorial and the White House at a location on the North Plaza of the Jefferson Memorial. This location where the vista lines cross is not really very recognizable at present and therefore not many visitors are likely to recognize this important relationship.

We suggest that, in the design for the reconstructed North Plaza, some design indication be made in the plaza surface to indicate the point where these two important vistas cross, thereby making this important symbolic relationship more visible. We believe that such a small design feature could aid in helping visitors to the Jefferson Memorial appreciate its visual relationship with both the White House and the Capitol. Some other steps, outside of the Jefferson Memorial area, may also be necessary to enhance this vista toward the Capitol.

The Committee of 100 on the Federal City appreciates the opportunity to comment on this report. Please contact us if you have any questions on our comments.

Sincerely,

John Fondersmith

John Fondersmith, AICP
Representing *The Committee of 100*
on the Federal City

6417 Western Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20015

(202) 966-8431

john.fondersmith@verizon.net

cc: Laura M. Richards, Esq., Chair
Committee of 100 on the Federal City