

The Committee of 100 on the Federal City



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Founded 1923

May 27, 2015

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Glenn DeMarr
National Park Service
National Capital Region
1100 Ohio Drive, SW
Washington, D.C.20242

SUBJECT: World War I Memorial Design

Dear Mr. DeMarr:

The Committee of 100 on the Federal City (Committee of 100), founded in 1923, is the District of Columbia's oldest citizen planning organization. We are pleased to provide these initial comments on the design of the World War I Memorial which is to be located in Pershing Park at 14th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, NW. These comments are preliminary, based on information on the National Park Service PEPC website, the World War One Centennial Commission website, and the discussion and information provided at the May 20 Scoping Meeting for the World War I Memorial Design.

The Committee of 100 on the Federal City has long been concerned with protecting and enhancing, in our time, the various elements of the L'Enfant Plan (1791-92) and the planning and design work of the McMillan Commission (1901-02). Both of these plans have been important in shaping the "Monumental Core" of Washington, D.C. Pershing Park has an important location in the Monumental Core in the western portion of the Pennsylvania Avenue area, just east of the White House complex and President's Park South. The Committee of 100 has a strong interest in the continuing revitalization of Pennsylvania Avenue and adjacent areas between the Capitol and the White House.

The area called Pershing Park was designed and constructed by the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation in the late 1970s, with the Pershing Memorial

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in the southeast corner of the park. Most of the park has continued to serve an important “urban park” function, though affected by the problems which caused terminating the skating rink/outdoor plaza and the concession stand. Since the design process is just beginning, there is not now much to comment on except in general terms.

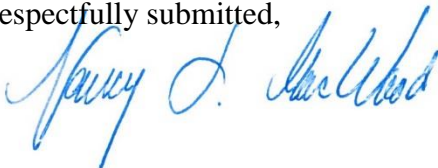
The Committee of 100 would like to receive additional information as it becomes available. We understand that the major review by consulting parties is not likely to begin until fall of 2015. Please let us know if there is any change in that schedule.

The Committee of 100 is concerned that the important “urban park” functions of Pershing Park not be overwhelmed by the design of the World War I Memorial. Our initial sense is that the World War I Memorial can occupy part of the overall park site, probably an enlargement of the present Pershing Memorial, which is already a partial World War I Memorial in itself. However, we believe that a major portion of the site should continue to serve as an urban park, with an area of transition between that area and the enlarged World War I Memorial.

The redesign of Pershing Park needs to consider relationships with Freedom Plaza to the east and with other adjacent open spaces and buildings. We note that some of the existing Pershing Park features are not easily understood and perhaps improvements can be made when the larger World War I Memorial context is provided.

The Committee of 100 on the Federal City appreciates the opportunity to make these initial comments. We look forward to receiving additional information as the World War I Memorial design process moves forward.

Respectfully submitted,



Nancy MacWood
Chair