

PROJECT	Smithsonian Institution- Revitalization of the Historic Core (RoHC)	MEETING DATE	8/24/2022
ORGANIZER	Smithsonian Institution, Carly Bond (moderator)	TIME	2:00-4:00pm
LOCATION	Virtual/Zoom		
PANELISTS	Carly Bond- Smithsonian Institution Sharon Park- Smithsonian Institution Christopher Lethbridge- Smithsonian Institution Ann Trowbridge- Smithsonian Institution Hugh Meehan- Smithsonian Institution Brenda Sanchez- Smithsonian Institution Marisa Scalera- Smithsonian Institution Matthew Chalifoux, EYP-Loring Faye Harwell, RHI (Rhodeside and Harwell) Anthony Bochicchio, EYP-Loring		
SUBJECT	Consulting Parties Meeting #5		

MEETING MINUTES

Purpose – This was Consulting Parties Meeting 5 for the Revitalization of the Historic Core (RoHC) project of the Smithsonian Institution. The meeting was held in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

In Consulting Parties Meeting 4 (June 15, 2022) the Consulting Parties were informed about the resequencing of the RoHC project, to first focus on the Smithsonian Institution Building (“Castle”). The Arts and Industries Building and the Central Utility Plant may be a future project. Starting with Consulting Parties Meeting 5 the meeting schedule has been revised to hold meetings monthly, allowing each meeting to cover a limited number of issues to offer the Consulting Parties greater opportunity for input as the design is being developed. Consulting Parties Meeting 5 focused on three design issues:

- **Perimeter Security**
- **Seismic Joint Cover**
- **East Wing Elevator Penthouse**

The meeting was assembled virtually and included a slide presentation, which has been posted on the RoHC project website. Attendees were asked to post questions or comments in the chat during the presentation. The majority of questions and comments were reviewed and responded to verbally during breaks in the presentation. The following is a list of the questions and comments with a summary of the responses.

Questions and Comments

Written

1. Q: My apologies for missing the first 15 minutes of the meeting. Was there any update on the legal question of whether interior alterations will be part of the consultation? Thank you.

R: Information on that issue will be covered later in the presentation. (See slide 68)

2. Q: Previous consulting party comments recommended using a single bollard design to minimize the visual effect of the perimeter security, but the revised proposal suggests the fixed and retractable bollards will be of slightly different designs (e.g., rounded vs. flat top). One assumes the flat-topped bollards are necessary so a vehicle can drive over them (when retracted) but have alternative designs that would make the two bollard types more similar been considered? If not, we believe this should be studied.

On a related note – are any renderings (not site plans) available to illustrate what something other than bollards (e.g., a partial decorative wall/grille) would look like behind the circular planting bed in front of the Freer? If so, please share them or develop them since bollards do not seem to be well suited for this central feature.

R: The objective of the design is to have the two types of bollards, fixed and retractable, be as visually similar as possible. We are evaluating the use of a flat-top design for both, but there are examples of round-top retractable bollards including at the Lincoln Memorial.

The visualization does show the grill wall behind the planter, the bollard elements are easier to see through the plantings but there are grills spanning between the bollards. An alternate design utilizing a solid, low wall was studied but was determined to be too much of a visual change and the more transparent grills shown in the visualization were preferred.

The current design effort for the perimeter security design along Jefferson Drive will be taken to a schematic design level in front of the Freer Gallery and the Arts and Industries Building. Further development of the design at these locations will be undertaken as part of future projects. The perimeter security at the north entrance to the Castle will be further developed and constructed as part of the current project.

3. Q: At the Freer, is it necessary to use the low wall at the grille base, or could it just be a continuation of the curb? Also, would it be possible to just have bollards at the curb (eliminate the grille)?

R: These options will be studied further when the perimeter security is incorporated into a future project.

4. Q: Can the wayfinding features on the north side be hardened and integrated as part of the security scheme?

R: The team has been studying opportunities to harden any existing elements in the landscape to serve as part of the perimeter security design, including signage and light fixtures. These objects must be in the proper location to become part of the perimeter security. Design of site

wide signage for wayfinding and general information is in process.

5. Q: At the Castle, the first diagram showed a different location for the bollards and benches than the landscape plan and benches. Could the face of the wall below the benches align with the curb to the west to avoid crowding the public space? And thanks for reducing the scope of the perimeter security!

R: The design objective is to push the benches away from the curb as much as possible to maintain as wide a circulation path as possible along Jefferson Drive. At the same time, the locations of the benches must be coordinated with the other components of the perimeter security system (bollards and the piers of the Porte Cochere) to create an effective security design and still provide access for Smithsonian maintenance vehicles. During the site visit scheduled for 7 September we will identify the proposed locations for the perimeter security elements which will provide a better sense of the design than just a site plan.

6. Q: Perhaps the bollards at the circle could be just inside the curb, within the planting bed.

R: The Freer Gallery utilizes the circle for sculpture displays and other programming. The proposed location of the bollards/ perimeter security is partially based on avoiding interfering with the programming in the forecourt.

7. Q: First, thanks to Faye for a very comprehensive presentation and explanation. Could she reiterate whether the new bollards at AIB are retractable?

R: The bollards at the Arts and Industries Building are not retractable, they are fixed. Retractable bollards are utilized in locations where vehicle access is required, or program uses require a more open space.

8. Q: Will the existing lamp post (several) be removed and replaced with only (2) Olmsted Light Fixtures, or will there be both?

R: The Olmsted light fixtures will be utilized along the south side of Jefferson Drive, complementing the Olmsted fixtures along the north side of the Drive. This implements a recommendation of the Mall wide lighting design guidelines. Historic light fixtures will be retained. The "Victorian" pole fixtures that were installed as part of the Haupt Garden will be replaced with a matching design but will be limited to the area of the garden.

9. Q: I appreciate the material color shift to the cooler, darker granite for the curbs and low walls, which is more congruent with the existing landscape elements and lets the sandstone architecture take precedence.

R: The team has been studying a range of colors for the granite and stone components of the landscape. The objective is to select a granite(s) that can be utilized for multiple purposes.

10. Q: In front of the Castle, it would be nice to study reducing or even removing the extent of built-in benches, which still seem alien to the landscape (unlike the freestanding ones at the porte-cochere)

R: The team will continue to study the perimeter security design to the north of the Castle.

11. Q: At Porte Cochere, I feel the seismic joint cover should match the sidewalk since that better represents the historic character where the drive would have come up and passed through the Porte Cochere.

R: In developing the seismic joint design at the Porte Cochere the team did research the history of the paving materials in this area. Historic photographs show that the paving has changed over time, including the use of larger size unit pavers (possibly bluestone). This research will be shared in a future consulting parties meeting with a discussion of possible paving designs in the porte cochere, including maintaining the exposed aggregate sidewalk system.

12. Q: Will the new aprons have any major impacts on absorbing/moving water away from the building? Is it at all problematic for the sandstone?

R: The joint covers are not designed to serve as a waterproofing system, but the seismic "moat" that they cover will have drains that will connect to the site storm drainage system. The construction of the moat, areaways, and light wells around the building will offer the opportunity to improve the waterproofing of the foundation walls and the overall site drainage system.

13. Q: In the first Commons location, is the joint cover raised above the existing apron?

R: The seismic joint covers will be located in approximately the same plane as the existing aprons, it appears higher in some of the images due to the renderings.

14. Q: How will the joint cover be attached to the base of the building, and will it do damage to the sandstone?

R: The generic detail included in the presentation shows the cover mechanically fastened to the building. This is critical for the performance of the system; the cover needs to move with the building during a seismic event. We are developing the details of the connections around the building. All of the connection points will be below current grade, attaching to material that is not currently visible.

15. Q: The color for the cover should associate it with site paving rather than the building materials. In other words, not a reddish granite but perhaps the same concrete that's there now, or a grey/tan stone that blends with the ground.

R: This feedback matches closely the comments the team has been having on site viewing the proposed materials. Opinions vary, and the varying conditions around the base of the building have made the discussions even more complex. The site visit to view the materials is an important opportunity to advance this discussion, seeing the proposed materials in situ offers a much better sense of the visual impact as opposed to photographs.

16. Q: Given the existence of the concrete apron, it might be better to make it more consistently wide-- even if bigger than 18"-- since there are so many different conditions a slightly less variable design might be less impactful. We look forward to working through these details in future meetings.

R: The guiding principles for the design of the seismic joint are to make the geometry as simple

as possible, maintaining a straight line for the active element of the cover improves the performance, and keeping the overall dimension of the cover as small as possible. Maintaining a more constant dimension may be studied further.

17. Q: Can you show us where the elevator will be on the interior plan?

R: We do not have interior plans included as part of this presentation.

18. Q: Will this PowerPoint presentation be made available to consulting parties?

R: Yes. All presentations for the project are posted on the project webpage.
(www.sifacilities.si.edu/historic-core)

19. Q: Are there going to be any perimeter security material samples or related sample shown on Sept 7th or will it be limited to seismic control joints?

R: The materials that will be available for viewing on 7 September will be for the seismic joint covers. Layouts for the proposed locations of the perimeter security elements will also be available for viewing.

END OF MEETING

The slide presentations from Consulting Parties Meeting 5 (08/24/2022) is available on the project webpage. Written comments are welcome. Please submit to BondC@si.edu.