

PROJECT	<b>Smithsonian Institution- Revitalization of the Historic Core (RoHC)</b>	MEETING DATE	9/27/2023
ORGANIZER	<b>Smithsonian Institution, Carly Bond (moderator)</b>	TIME	2:00-4:00pm
LOCATION	Virtual/Zoom		
PANELISTS	Carly Bond- Smithsonian Institution Brenda Sanchez, Smithsonian Institution Christopher Lethbridge- Smithsonian Institution Matthew Chalifoux, EYP-Loring Anthony Bochicchio, EYP-Loring Faye Harwell, Rhodeside and Harwell		
SUBJECT	<b>Consulting Parties Meeting #16</b>		

## MEETING MINUTES

---

**Purpose – This was Consulting Parties Meeting 16 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.**

**The agenda for this meeting was focused on Phase 2 of the Section 106 consultation. The meeting agenda was a review of the draft Assessment of Effects report, which had been developed and shared with the Consulting Parties throughout the Phase 2 consultation process. The final draft Assessment of Effects report was released for Consulting Parties review in August 2023. The objective of the meeting was to review the design issues holistically and finalize the report.**

**Phase 2 of Section 106 consultation will continue through 2023.**

**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 following is a list of the questions and comments with a summary of the responses. Information regarding the project, including the slide presentation, is available through the project webpage: <https://ahhp.si.edu/historic-core>**

## Questions and Comments

The meeting was organized with three Question and Answer periods. The following minutes follow that format and combine verbal and written questions/ comments on related topics for clarity.

### Question and Answer Break #1

1. **Q:** I appreciate that the team has done what it can to minimize the adverse effects of the interior alterations in the South Tower. Are you looking for input from the Consulting Parties on potential mitigation measures?

**R:** Yes. This comprehensive review of the Assessment of Effects report is intended to systematically go through all of the design issues since this project is very complex and the consultation process has taken quite some time. We intend to focus on potential mitigation measures on the October Consulting Parties meeting (25 October) but suggestions for mitigation measures are welcome at any time.

2. **Q:** Speaking of mitigation, the modifications to the mosaic tile floor outside the Regents' Room are substantial. Has any thought been given to photographing and documenting the existing floor before it is modified? Also, would it be possible to salvage and store pieces that are removed as part of the modification for potential use in the future if the mosaic is restored to its current dimensions?

**R:** We have been discussing internally about tracing the decorative elements of the mosaic tile floor and possibly scanning prior to any changes. The documentation process has not been fully developed. We appreciate the idea about salvaging and storing the removed materials.

3. **Q:** On the issue of which granite to use in the perimeter security elements we prefer the Prairie Brown over the Olympic Black. The Olympic Black results in a monolithic appearance at the bench and reads as an extension of the darker elements of the building. The Prairie Brown provides a contrast with the darker metal elements of the benches and looks to be more an extension of the ground plane and lighter in appearance.
- Two written comments agreed with this assessment of the granite options.
  - One comment indicated that in past meetings there was advocacy for the use of Olympic Black to minimize the number of materials/colors being used in the landscape.

**R:** Thank you for the insights.

### Question and Answer Break #2

4. **Q:** On slide #20 what are the horizontal lines in the parging at the base of the Castle? Are you trying to pick up on the joints of the rubble stone foundations?

**R:** We are not intending to mimic the stone. The lines are reveals in the parging that align with key pints in the elevation. They are being utilized to provide some definition to the surface and break up the large surface area visually.

5. **Q:** Is the finish of the areaway retaining wall textured?

**R:** Yes, we are proposing a lightly textured surface to provide visual relief.

6. **Q:** The light grey of color of the retaining wall does differentiate it from the extension of the Castle foundation wall, but this lighter color will create a strong visual contrast when viewed through the windows from inside the building and will be quite glaring. Was there any consideration of using a similar color for both surfaces to minimize the visual contrast? Differentiation could still be provided by the type of material.

- A written comment supported this comment and suggested that a mock-up might be helpful in the evaluation.

**R:** We are trying to utilize lighter color materials in the areaways to increase the light reflectance through the windows into the basement functional areas.

7. **Q:** Relacing wood windows, even non-historic wood windows, with metal windows is a significant adverse effect. We appreciate the effort that has gone into to design the new windows but there will be visual changes due to the muntin sizes and the thickness of the glazing. Will there be additional opportunities to have input on the window designs?

**R:** There will be window mock-ups as the project moves into construction. Consulting parties will be invited to participate and provide input during the review of the mock-ups.

### Question and Answer Break #3

8. **Q:** During past site visits reviewing actual material samples there seemed to be consensus around the use of Olympic Black for cladding the extended base of the Castle. The preferred design alternative shared today utilizes a tinted parging. We believe there needs to be further reviews and discussion.

There are a small number of design issues that do not appear to be finalized- areaway finishes, granite at perimeter security. Perhaps a separate meeting can be held to focus on those issues with the concerned parties that can be brought forward to the full consulting parties.

**R:** We agree that this is a good idea. We will coordinate a separate meeting in the next few weeks.

9. **Q:** While reviewing the design issues one at a time has been important, when evaluating the adverse effect, it will be helpful to think about certain design issues holistically. This includes all the issues associated with the south side areaways-size, finishes, window changes, new doors.

**R:** Thank you.

10. **Q:** Please review the preferred design for enlarging the windows in the areaways. Does the diamond pattern upper sash represent the size of the existing smaller windows?

**R:** The location of the window heads and the width of the opening will remain the same. The sill

will be dropped to enlarge the opening. The existing windowsill is at the line between the Seneca sandstone and the proposed parging. The upper sash as shown is slightly smaller than the existing windows.

11. Q: Are all the new doors intended to be full light doors? What is driving the design?

R: Yes, all of the new doors are intended to be full light doors. This is intended to maximize the amount of natural light penetrating into the basement spaces. There is no code driven requirement for this design.

12. Q: Please clarify the material that will be used to infill the seismic joint around the Porte Cochere on the north side of the building.

R: The seismic joint on this area will be infilled with aggregate concrete to match the adjacent sidewalk. The metal edges of the joint cover will still be visible.

**END OF MEETING**