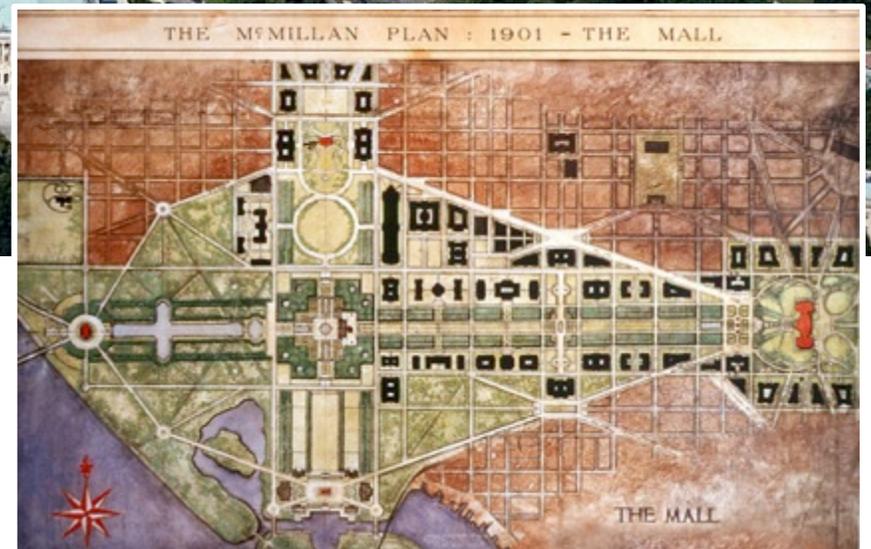


1791 L'Enfant Plan



1901-1902 McMillan Plan

The design geometry and symbolic quality of the Mall and surrounding avenues and public spaces is the legacy of the 1791 L'Enfant Plan and 1902 McMillan Commission Plan. These historic plans envisioned Maryland Avenue as the mirror image of Pennsylvania Avenue.

The Washington Post

AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

THURSDAY, APRIL 12, 2012

Liking Ike, disliking the memorial

What was most disappointing about The Post editorial promoting Frank Gehry's design for the Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial [“The memorial to Ike,” April 9] was its failure to mention the effects on the sensitive Maryland Avenue site and on Washington's urban DNA: the 1791 L'Enfant Plan and the 1901-02 McMillan Plan.

Both plans envisioned Maryland Avenue as the mirror image of Pennsylvania Avenue north of the Mall and radiating out from the Capitol, with equally stunning vistas to and from that symbol of American democracy. The fact that Maryland Avenue has never achieved its intended brilliance, and instead has been cut up, neglected and turned into a parking lot, is not a reason to ignore it. Nor is it a reason to place a 4-acre, 80-foot-high “roofless building” across its axis.

This is not a controversy that can be dismissed solely as a matter of expertise, taste, family objections, architectural style or even urban design. It's about something far more fundamental — something concerning history, memory, the legacy of President George Washington in the design of Washington and the role of modern memorials in the American story told in the capital.

The Eisenhower memorial and the plans for Washington deserve more attention and intelligent discussion than has taken place. With this important design project, we have a rare and wonderful opportunity to create a meaningful memorial and to implement another long-deferred element of the L'Enfant Plan, recognized to be one of the great urban design plans of all time.

JUDY SCOTT FELDMAN, Rockville

The writer is chair of the National Coalition to Save Our Mall.



AL MUTU/APP/GETTY IMAGES

Dwight D. Eisenhower

The New York Times

FRIDAY, MARCH 30, 2012

What Is the Right Way to Honor Ike?

TO THE EDITOR:

Witold Rybczynski raises a legitimate concern that seeking compromise and consensus on Frank Gehry's Eisenhower Memorial could “ultimately weaken the memorial design.” But in dismissing memorial critics, he doesn't seriously consider a crucial point. This design ignores and indeed eclipses an existing revered work of art: the L'Enfant plan for the city of Washington.

In the 1791 plan, Maryland Avenue was envisioned to be the mirror image of Pennsylvania Avenue north of the Mall. Pennsylvania Avenue was cleaned up starting only in the 1970s.

It took the visionary Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan to cut through the red



M. E. PERKER

tape and entrenched interests to make that happen.

The Eisenhower Memorial site on Maryland Avenue is a wonderful opportunity to follow that lead and create a new work of public art that contributes to the historic plan, not turns its back on it.

JUDY SCOTT FELDMAN

Chairwoman, National
Coalition to Save Our Mall
Rockville, Md., March 24, 2012

NATIONAL CAPITAL MEMORIALS AND COMMEMORATIVE WORKS

The Commemorative Works Act of 1986
40 U.S.C. Chapter 89

CHAPTER 89 -- NATIONAL CAPITAL MEMORIALS AND COMMEMORATIVE WORKS

Sec. 8901. Purposes.

Sec. 8902. Definitions and nonapplication.

Sec. 8903. Congressional authorization of commemorative works.

Sec. 8904. National Capital Memorial Commission.

Sec. 8905. Site and design approval.

Sec. 8906. Criteria for issuance of construction permit.

Sec. 8907. Temporary site designation.

Sec. 8908. Areas I and II.

Sec. 8909. Administrative.

Sec. 8902. Definitions and nonapplication

(a) Definitions.--In this chapter,

(1) the term "commemorative work" means any statue, monument, sculpture, memorial, plaque, inscription, or other structure or landscape feature, including a garden or memorial grove, designed to perpetuate in a permanent manner the memory of an individual, group, event or other significant element of American history, except that the term does not include any such item which is located within the interior of a structure or a structure which is primarily used for other purposes.

(2) THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA AND ITS ENVIRONS.- The term "the District of Columbia and its environs" means those lands and properties administered by the National Park Service and the General Services Administration located in the Reserve, Area I, and Area II as depicted on the map entitled "Commemorative Areas Washington, DC and Environs", numbered 869786501 B, and dated June 24, 2003.

(3) RESERVE.- The term "Reserve" means the great cross-axis of the Mall, which generally extends from the United States Capitol to the Lincoln Memorial, and from the White House to the Jefferson Memorial, as depicted on the map referenced in paragraph (2).

(4) SPONSOR.- The term "sponsor" means a public agency, or an individual, group or organization that is described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and exempt from tax under section 501(a) of such Code, and which is authorized by Congress to establish a commemorative work in the District of Columbia and its environs.

(b) Nonapplication.--This chapter does not apply to commemorative works authorized by a law enacted before January 3, 1985.

Sec. 8901. Purposes

The purposes of this chapter are--

(1) to preserve the integrity of the comprehensive design of the L'Enfant and McMillan plans for the Nation's Capital;

(2) to ensure the continued public use and enjoyment of open space in the District of Columbia and its environs, and to encourage the location of commemorative works within the urban fabric of the District of Columbia;

(3) to preserve, protect and maintain the limited amount of open space available to residents of, and visitors to, the Nation's Capital; and

(4) to ensure that future commemorative works in areas administered by the National Park Service and the Administrator of General Services in the District of Columbia and its environs--

(A) are appropriately designed, constructed, and located; and

(B) reflect a consensus of the lasting national significance of the subjects involved.

NATIONAL CAPITAL MEMORIALS AND COMMEMORATIVE WORKS

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(b) Chairman.--The Director is the Chairman of the National Capital Memorial Advisory Commission.

(c) Advisory Role.--The National Capital Memorial Advisory Commission shall advise the Secretary of the Interior and the Administrator of General Services (as appropriate) on policy and procedures for establishment of, and proposals to establish, commemorative works in the District of Columbia and its environs and on other matters concerning commemorative works in the Nation's Capital as the Commission considers appropriate.

(d) Meetings.--The National Capital Memorial Advisory Commission shall meet at least twice annually.

Sec. 8905. Site and design approval

(a) Consultation on, and Submission of, Proposals.--A sponsor authorized by law to establish a commemorative work in the District of Columbia and its environs may request a permit for construction of the commemorative work only after the following requirements are met:

(1) Consultation.--The sponsor must consult with the National Capital Memorial Advisory Commission regarding the selection of alternative sites and design concepts for the commemorative work.

(2) Submittal.--Following consultation in accordance with clause (1), the Secretary of the Interior or the Administrator of General Services, as appropriate, must submit, on behalf of the person, site and design proposals to the Commission of Fine Arts and the National Capital Planning Commission for their approval.

(b) Decision Criteria.--In considering site and design proposals, the Commission of Fine Arts, National Capital Planning Commission, Secretary, and Administrator (as appropriate) shall be guided by, but not limited by, the following criteria:

(1) Surroundings.--To the maximum extent possible, a commemorative work shall be located in surroundings that are relevant to the subject of the work.

(2) Location.--A commemorative work shall be located so that--

(A) it does not interfere with, or encroach on, an existing commemorative work; and

(B) to the maximum extent practicable, it protects open space, existing public use, and cultural and natural resources.

(3) Material.--A commemorative work shall be constructed of durable material suitable to the outdoor environment.

(4) Landscape features.--Landscape features of commemorative works shall be compatible with the climate.

(5) MUSEUMS.- No commemorative work primarily designed as a museum may be located on lands under the jurisdiction of the Secretary in Area I or in East Potomac Park as depicted on the map referenced in section 8902(2).

(6) SITE-SPECIFIC GUIDELINES.- The National Capital Planning Commission and the Commission of Fine Arts may develop such criteria or guidelines specific to each site that are mutually agreed upon to ensure that the design of the commemorative work carries out the purposes of this chapter.

(7) DONOR CONTRIBUTIONS.- Donor contributions to commemorative works shall not be acknowledged in any manner as part of the commemorative work or its site.

Sec. 8906. Criteria for issuance of construction permit

(a) Criteria for Issuing Permit.--Before issuing a permit for the construction of a commemorative work in the District of Columbia and its environs, the

EXISTING: Current conditions emphasize Independence Avenue instead of L'Enfant's Maryland Avenue.



IMPROVED: Improvements to the site for the Eisenhower Memorial would realize L'Enfant's diagonal 160-foot-wide Maryland Avenue, with Independence Avenue intersecting it as Constitution Avenue does with Pennsylvania Avenue in a mirror image relationship north of the Mall.



Can the site accommodate the Eisenhower Memorial while protecting the L'Enfant concept of Maryland Avenue?

This is one sketch concept of how the Memorial could keep open Maryland Avenue while also accommodating a memorial that includes commemoration of Eisenhower's role as General, President, and originator of important government agencies, using specialized paving (such as at the two National Gallery of Art buildings), and an underground passageway for interpretative and visitor amenity elements.

