

January 15, 2007

Ms. Susan Spain, Project Executive  
The National Mall Plan  
National Mall & Memorial Parks  
900 Ohio Drive S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20024-2000

Dear Susan,

We appreciate your taking the time to meet with the Guild Executive Board in December and provide us with additional information on your National Mall Plan effort.

We have solicited comments from our members and I have consolidated their comments in the attachment. Our comments are those that I consider appropriate for our organization to make; appearance, facilities, furnishings, programs/recreation and information. I have also included comments concerning present Mall maintenance issues and rules enforcement.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input to your study.

Sincerely,

Ellen Gold  
President  
[EllenGold4@aol.com](mailto:EllenGold4@aol.com)  
301-770-7227

Attachment: Guild Comments on NPS  
National Mall Plan of 11/06

Copy to: Vikki Keys, NPS, Washington  
Mary McVeigh, NPS Denver

## Comments on National Park Service National Mall Plan, November 2006

Appearance: We recommend uniform style pathways throughout the Mall area whether the material used is gravel, asphalt or concrete. The pathway system should be designed so that ad hoc paths are not created over areas that have been seeded for grass. We certainly believe liberal use of shade trees is appropriate for the Mall but we defer to the landscape architects for placement and species selection.

### Facilities:

Bathrooms should be provided at the following sites: Vietnam Memorial, Korean Memorial, White House (the current one in the Ellipse Kiosk is hard for the untutored public to find and its operating hours are erratic) The Third World bathrooms at Constitution Garden and Haines Point need to be razed. At present they are better than nothing – but not much! Some of our guides bypass the Constitution Gardens bathrooms if they are guiding foreign visitors – such is their condition. Bathrooms below ground level would be extremely desirable but we are aware that funding may preclude this approach. All bathrooms should be available to the public at the same time the site is open. Custodial staff should be available at least 80% of the time the site is open.

Cooling/Warm-up Stations would be a desirable addition to the Mall.

Lighting A complete Mall survey of the lighting design for adequacy should be undertaken. At the Lincoln Memorial the steps from the street level to the lower plaza should be better lighted. Possibly, installation of lights placed flush in the end walls would provide sufficient light. At present it is difficult to safely descend the steps in the dark.

Benches Additional benches of uniform design throughout the Mall area would be a welcome addition. Constitution Garden would be a prime candidate for additional benches.

Trash Cans There never seems to be enough trash cans. Perhaps disposable containers could be used to support large Mall events e.g. 4<sup>th</sup> of July, Labor Day concerts.

Eating Venues Additional eating venues are needed. The new kiosk to the west of Bacon Drive is an example of the type facility that will enhance the visitors' experience. Uniform in style ice cream/drink wagons will add to the Mall experience for visitors.

Presentation Space We suggest establishing areas around the Korean and Vietnam Memorials so groups as large as 50 can be offered tour commentary on site adjacent or within view of the memorials. This will keep walkways clear for the public.

Information The entire Mall badly needs additional signs so that visitors can orient themselves. Where is X Memorial? Where is the nearest Metro stop? How far away? Never a day goes by at the Lincoln Memorial when our Guild guides do not get asked directions. Signage or lack of it is considered a major deficiency.

Programs/Recreation No change in present practice is suggested. However, can't we reschedule the Smithsonian Folklife Festival for sometime other than the two hottest weeks in the year?

Enforcement There needs to be a security person presence throughout the Mall. This is especially true at the memorials. The "Silence and Respect" signs that were placed several years ago at the Guild's suggestion are fine, but the needs to be enforcement of these regulations. Automobile and bus parking regulations should be reviewed and enforced. It is very frustrating to see buses arrive on the Mall and take up prime pickup/drop off spots for the full eight hours. Recommend review of enforcement signage Mall wide, revise as necessary and then enforce.

Maintenance Funds should be budgeted to properly maintain the Mall facilities. Too often, lights are burned out at the Memorials, fountains are inoperable. A year or so ago the TVA waterfall in the FDR Second Term Room was inoperative for several months. At times groups will opt to skip the FDR Memorial if they know the waterfalls are inoperative. Suggest procure backup spares so that the fountains are fully operational except of course in freezing weather.