

U. S. COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS

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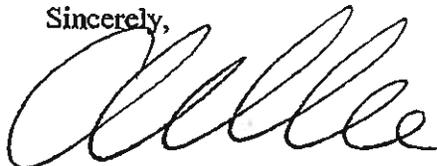
Dear Ms. O'Dell:

In its meeting of 18 February, the Commission of Fine Arts reviewed the draft of the *National Mall Plan*, commending the National Park Service (NPS) on its continuing work. The Commission expressed overall support for the initiative and offered several recommendations as NPS continues to develop the plan. The Commission encouraged NPS in its efforts to preserve the qualities that make the Mall a place for national pilgrimage and calm reflection, commenting on the importance of balancing carefully the need to accommodate innumerable events and activities on the Mall with the need to maintain its dignity and beauty.

In their discussion, the Commission members supported the effort to promote a healthy and sustainable ecosystem for the Mall. They recommended reducing the amount of potable water used in the Mall's water features and suggested that NPS consider using solar energy to provide power for lighting within this historic landscape, perhaps sponsoring a design competition to develop a new solar-powered light fixture. The Commission strongly recommended further consideration of using compacted gravel and stone dust for the Mall's walks; if correctly built, such walks provide effective surfaces with limited maintenance. The Commission also encouraged further development of visitor mobility and transit options on the Mall, and urged NPS to undertake decisive action to rehabilitate the Mall's central lawn panels.

The Commission looks forward to future presentations of the *National Mall Plan* and individual design proposals, such as the possible redesign of Union Square and the rehabilitation of the Mall walkways. As always, the staff is available to assist you with future submissions.

Sincerely,



Thomas E. Luebke, AIA
Secretary

Margaret O'Dell, Regional Director
National Park Service, National Capital Region
1100 Ohio Drive, SW
Washington, DC 20242

cc: Peter May, National Park Service