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MINUTES

Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial Commission

Meeting — June 20, 2005

Russell Senate Office Building – Room SR-253 Commerce Committee Room –
Washington, D.C.

(Approved September 27, 2005)

Commissioners in Attendance:

Rocco C. Siciliano, Chairman
Senator Daniel K. Inouye, Vice Chairman
Senator Ted Stevens
Senator Pat Roberts
Alfred Geduldig

Commissioners Absent:

Senator Jack Reed
Representative Leonard Boswell
Representative Dennis Moore
Representative Jerry Moran
Representative William “Mac”
Thornberry
Susan Banes Harris
David Eisenhower

Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial Commission:

Andrew Demetriou (Special Counsel)
Louis Galambos (Senior Advisor)

Congressional Staff in Attendance:

Marie Blanco (for Senator Inouye)
George Lowe IV (for Senator Stevens)
Joel Leftwich (for Senator Roberts)
Major Claire Steele (for Senator Reed)
Howard Bauleke (for Representative Moore)
Bryan Whitworth (for Representative Thornberry)
Trevor McKeeman (for Representative Moran)

Others in Attendance:

James McCall (Eisenhower Institute)
Susan English, AIA (Gensler)
Mary Ann Lasch, FASLA (Gensler)
Staci Wilson (Gensler)
Vijayant Khorama (Gensler)
Gloria Crawley (GSA)
Tom Hodnett (GSA)
Thomas Otto (GSA)
Lesly Wilson (GSA)
Wanda Palmer (GSA)
Daniel Feil (Kennedy Center)
Douglas Corum (Headquarters, USMC)
Bruce Ladd

DDEMC:

Carl Reddel
Joyce Jacobson
Eileen Krichten
Richard Striner
Justin Gilstrap
Jennifer Vaughn
Brandon Baumbach

Chairman Siciliano called the meeting to order at 1:50 p.m., welcoming Commissioners, staff, and guests.

Chairman Siciliano called for approval of the minutes of the Commission's meeting of March 9, 2005. Upon motion made by Senator Inouye and duly seconded, the minutes were approved unanimously.

Chairman Siciliano stated that after nearly five years it appeared that the time had arrived for the Commission to select a memorial site. The Chairman asked Susan English and Mary Ann Lasch from the architectural firm of Gensler to present their comparative analysis of the two final site possibilities for the Eisenhower Memorial: the Maryland Avenue site (between Maryland and Independence Avenues and 4th and 6th Streets, S.W.), and the Freedom Plaza Site (on Pennsylvania Avenue between 13th and 14th Streets, N.W.).

Ms. English presented the firm's conclusions first and then answered questions. She directed the Commission's attention to the written report containing seventeen pages of summary findings and twenty pages of appendices. She explained that in preparing this report the firm elicited information from the General Services Administration (GSA), the National Park Service (NPS), and various review agencies and "stakeholders" in the review process.

Commissioner Geduldig asked the Gensler representatives if they were prepared to comment on vehicular traffic in relation to the Maryland Avenue site. Ms. English replied in the affirmative, adding that staff members at all the pertinent review agencies have stated that Maryland Avenue at this location is a minor traffic tributary; no great concerns about traffic flow or parking have been expressed by review agencies and stakeholders.

Ms. English stated that while both sites possess definite potential for a presidential memorial, it was the firm's considered judgment that the Maryland Avenue site possesses the greatest positive potential.

Ms. Lasch stated that three basic criteria were used to compare the two sites: (1) thematic context; (2) program capacity; and (3) review agency support. In the case of each criterion, the Maryland Avenue site was deemed superior.

In regard to the criterion of thematic context, the Maryland Avenue site is near the National Air & Space Museum and the Museum of the American Indian, thereby maximizing the site's availability to visitors and tourists. The site is close to two stations serving the Metro subway system. It is also near several institutions that are rich in thematic associations with the legacy of Dwight D. Eisenhower: the National Air & Space Museum, the Federal Aviation Administration headquarters, and the Department of Education. The site occupies a distinctive setting with a powerful view of the Capitol, which lends dignity to the site. There is no immediate competition for the use of this site for the purpose of memorialization.

In regard to the criterion of program capacity, the site contains both a “no-build zone” that applies to the Maryland Avenue viewshed (due to its significance in the historic L’Enfant Plan) and a “build zone” — unlike Freedom Plaza, at which planning and land-use restrictions preclude the construction of a building. Three landowners have jurisdiction at the Maryland Avenue site: the National Park Service, the District of Columbia, which owns the Maryland Avenue “no-build” corridor, and GSA, acting on behalf of the Department of Education (DOE).

In regard to the criterion of agency approval, Chairman Siciliano observed that in discussions with staff of the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC), the Commission of Fine Arts (CFA), and the District of Columbia Office of Planning, there was unanimous concurrence on behalf of the Maryland Avenue site as the preferable site for the Eisenhower Memorial.

Ms. English then stated that Gensler had developed three conceptual scenarios for comparing and discussing the proposed Eisenhower Memorial.

The first scenario was a landscaped public plaza. As examples she presented the FDR Memorial, the Law Enforcement Officers Memorial, and the World War II Memorial. She explained that this scenario would lend itself to significant outdoor events and would create the possibility of developing a range of varied physical spaces in which to present different aspects of the Eisenhower legacy.

The second scenario was a site with a pavilion leading to underground space. As examples she presented the Sackler Museum, the Navy Memorial, and Pershing Park. She observed that Freedom Plaza, unlike the Maryland Avenue site, was not suitable for such a memorial due to the restrictions of the Commemorative Works Act.

Senator Stevens inquired about below-grade utilities at the Maryland Avenue site. Ms. English replied that the presence of existing sewers and utilities was an issue only in the “no-build zone” and not a significant impediment.

Senator Stevens also asked if the local fire code would require an access road between the “build zone” and the adjacent Department of Education building. Ms. English replied that the fire code required only an access route and not necessarily a road.

Chairman Siciliano added that he was under the impression that all below-grade needs could be accommodated. Ms. English replied in the affirmative.

Senator Stevens asked if there is any entrance to underground facilities at the Maryland Avenue site. Ms. English replied that an entrance existed to a sunken garden but the entrance was blocked. Chairman Siciliano noted that the Department of Education would support the removal of the sunken garden. He added that the Department of Education had indicated that it might designate their building’s main entrance to be C Street, S.W.

— that is, at the side of the building that faces away from the proposed site of the Eisenhower Memorial.

Senator Stevens inquired about square-footage limitations and set-back security restrictions that might impinge upon the possible size of a building in the so-called “build zone.” Ms. English replied that since the site is zoned “federal” there is no local zoning restriction on size; she added that the maximum perimeter or “footprint” for a building would be approximately 22,000 square feet, with allowance for separating a Memorial structure from the DOE building for reasons of fire access. She added that the ultimate possible size of a building is unknown at this time since decisions will have to be made about the number of floors and below-grade construction.

Senator Stevens inquired about building height restrictions and Ms. English replied that no “technical” restrictions were relevant.

Ms. English then presented the third scenario, a building with a garden plaza. As examples she presented the Cato Institute, the Finnish Embassy, the City Museum, and the soon-to-be-constructed “Newseum.”

Commissioner Geduldig asked about appropriate uses of the “no-build zone” at the Maryland Avenue site. Ms. English replied that this area might accommodate a landscape treatment featuring paving stones and/or a pool.

Ms. English then summarized reactions from the review agencies concerning the three scenarios in relation to the two final site possibilities. In regard to the first scenario (the landscaped public plaza), the agencies regard both sites as acceptable. In regard to the second scenario (the site with a pavilion leading to underground space), the agencies regard the Maryland Avenue site as acceptable and Freedom Plaza as problematical and probably not feasible. In regard to the third scenario (the building with a garden plaza), the agencies regard the Maryland Avenue site as a possibility and Freedom Plaza as unacceptable.

Ms. English then reiterated the firm’s recommendation: that the Maryland Avenue site be chosen as possessing the greatest potential for an Eisenhower Memorial.

Chairman Siciliano asked if the firm had conducted an analysis of the political issues pertaining to both of the sites. Ms. English replied that Freedom Plaza has a number of existing user-constituencies that might regard the Eisenhower Memorial as unwelcome competition for the urban space. Mr. Demetriou asked Ms. English to describe these constituencies. Ms. English stated that Freedom Plaza was redeveloped in the 1970s and 1980s to serve as a focal point for summer activities and musical performances; she added that the site’s importance in inaugural parades and as the “front yard” for the adjacent District of Columbia Wilson building raised a number of “red flags” with regard to the likelihood of political opposition to an Eisenhower Memorial at this location.

Chairman Siciliano opened the floor for additional questions from Commission members.

Senator Inouye asked for a best-case projection with regard to a construction schedule. Ms. English replied that a six-to-eight-month period for site dedication could be followed by a three-to-four-year phase for design and construction.

Commissioner Geduldig asked for a suggested order of procedure in the "site dedication" phase. Ms. Lasch replied that the site approval process would commence the dedication phase. She added that GSA, with the concurrence of the other two public landowners (NPS and D.C. government), would likely be the "lead agency" in developing the application for approval from the review agencies. She noted that working-level concurrence had already been indicated by NPS, DOE and GSA.

Senator Inouye moved that the Commission recommend that the Maryland Avenue site (between Maryland and Independence Avenues and 4th and 6th Streets, S.W.) be selected as the site for the Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial. Senator Stevens seconded this motion. All Commissioners present voted "aye." Senator Stevens stated that Senator Roberts and Representative Moran had given him their proxy votes, and he accordingly voted "aye" on behalf of these Commissioners. Senator Inouye stated that he had Senator Reed's proxy vote and he accordingly voted "aye" on behalf of this Commissioner. Chairman Siciliano stated that Representatives Moore and Thornberry had given him their proxy votes, and he accordingly voted "aye" on behalf of these Commissioners. Chairman Siciliano also stated that Commissioner D. David Eisenhower had expressed the opinion that either of the two sites under consideration would be acceptable. Senator Inouye's motion for selection of the Maryland Avenue site was thus approved unanimously.

Chairman Siciliano announced the appointment of Daniel Feil, FAIA, as the Executive Architect serving the Commission. The Chairman explained that Mr. Feil is a specialist in guiding, budgeting, and scheduling the design and construction of large-scale public projects. From 1985 to 2004, he served the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority as project manager for the new terminal at Ronald Reagan International Airport. More recently, he has served the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts as project executive for a major projected expansion of the Kennedy Center "campus."

Commissioner Geduldig asked if the Commission's "legislative timetable" should be revisited in light of its ongoing decisions and activities. The Chairman replied that the only legislative process currently underway was an appropriation for the Commission's ongoing activities.

Chairman Siciliano made a statement for the record expressing the Commission's condolences and sympathy to the widow and two daughters of General Andrew Goodpaster, Chairman of the Military Legacy Subcommittee of the Eisenhower Legacy Committee, which authored the Commission's Legacy report, who passed away recently. Senator Inouye moved that such a resolution be passed. His motion, which was duly

seconded, passed unanimously. Executive Director Carl W. Reddel observed that the last public event to be attended by General Goodpaster was the symposium on Eisenhower and national security co-sponsored by the Commission and the Industrial College of the Armed Forces at Fort McNair. Executive Director Reddel added that the symposium proceedings will be published in book form, and that the volume will be dedicated to General Goodpaster.

Chairman Siciliano informed the Commission that the “living memorial” proposal from the Eisenhower Institute has been received. He observed that this proposal consists of a lengthy document containing diverse approaches and suggestions. He further observed that the proposal needs analysis and refinement. He added that discussion of the living memorial proposal should occur at the next Commission meeting, projected for September. Executive Director Reddel noted that James McCall of the Eisenhower Institute was present, observing that Mr. McCall had played a key role in working with the staff of the Eisenhower Memorial Commission in developing this proposal. Chairman Siciliano added that he had met earlier in the day with Brent Scowcroft, the Chairman of the Board of the Eisenhower Institute, to discuss the matter of refining the Institute’s proposal.

Commissioner Geduldig reported on the deliberations of the Commission’s Public Engagement Liaison Committee. Commissioner Geduldig stated that the Eisenhower Commission will need to discuss the distinctive themes and the particular audiences that the physical memorial should address, especially since architects and others will need specific guidance in this area.

Commissioner Geduldig stated that the Public Engagement Liaison Committee — consisting of himself, Louis Galambos, Carl Reddel, and J.T. Dykman — had met in New York two weeks earlier. Their preliminary deliberations were sent to the Chairman, and led to a number of preliminary recommendations in regard to the physical memorial (as distinct from the “living memorial” component). Specifically, the physical memorial to Eisenhower should achieve three objectives: (1) it should **tell the Eisenhower story**, especially the role of Dwight D. Eisenhower as Supreme Commander of Allied Forces in Europe during World War II, as Commander of NATO forces, and as President of the United States; (2) it should **place the Eisenhower story in the context of the American story**; specifically, it should tell how Eisenhower changed American history as he became one of the best-known and most revered figures in the world; and (3) it should **be designed for maximum public access and interaction**; specifically, when such constituents as eighth-grade student visitors come to the memorial, they should take away some valuable lessons.

Commissioner Geduldig stated that pursuant to the above recommendations, the Public Engagement Liaison Committee had articulated three contextual principles: (1) the memorial should emphasize Eisenhower’s role in **fostering democracy**, both in the United States and around the world; (2) the memorial should emphasize Eisenhower’s role in **preserving the peace** during one of the most trying and dangerous times in American history; (3) the memorial should emphasize Eisenhower’s role in **modernizing**

America through his leadership in space exploration, transportation infrastructure expansion, and other comparable activities.

Commissioner Geduldig concluded by relating three implementing principles, as developed by the Public Engagement Liaison Committee. Specifically, the memorial should **promote greater awareness of Eisenhower's legacy: (1) among professional associations and non-governmental organizations; (2) among educators; (3) in other nations.**

Chairman Siciliano observed that the international dimension of President Eisenhower's memorialization is particularly important and would also have to be developed.

Commissioner Geduldig stated that the aim of the Commission should go beyond memorializing Eisenhower. He stated that it was his personal belief that Eisenhower should be immortalized. Chairman Siciliano replied that memorialization depends upon a physical presence, adding that Eisenhower himself understood this principle and the process of memorialization very well and advocated during his presidency a monument symbolizing the ideas of democracy as embodied in the Five Freedoms*. Commissioner Geduldig stated his hope that the completed Eisenhower Memorial will become one of the premier public attractions in Washington, D.C.

Senator Inouye observed that it would be helpful to legislative efforts on behalf of the memorial to have some projections on the cost of planning and design. Chairman Siciliano replied that this will be one of the significant tasks of the Executive Architect, Daniel Feil.

Senator Inouye observed that the time will come when the Commission will have to decide on a fundamental finance strategy. Executive Director Reddel noted that this issue was of concern to the Public Engagement Liaison Committee when it last met.

There being no further business, Chairman Siciliano declared the meeting adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

* *Freedom of Speech, Press, Religion, Assembly and Petition.*