

Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial Commission

July 12, 2011

(Approved by Commissioners May 15, 2012)

Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room SD-124, Washington, D.C.

Commissioners in Attendance:

Rocco C. Siciliano, Chairman

Senator Daniel Inouye, Vice Chairman

Senator Jerry Moran

Senator Jack Reed

Senator Pat Roberts

Representative Leonard Boswell

D. David Eisenhower

Alfred Geduldig

Susan Banes Harris

Congressional Staff in Attendance:

Marie Blanco, Sen. Inouye

Sean Farrell, Sen. Roberts

Adrienne Healey, Sen. Reed

Tyler Lund, Sen. Moran

Ross Maradian, Rep. Boswell

Michael Seeds, Rep. Thornberry

Gehry Partners, LLP:

Frank Gehry

Meaghan Lloyd

John Bowers

Brian Zamora

Molly Forr

AECOM:

Emilia Baker

Gregory Bordinowski

Joe Brown

Joshua Marshall

Jon Miller

National Park Service:

Peter May

Glenn DeMarr

General Services Administration/National Capital Region

Tony Alonso (Office of Planning and Design Quality)

Mina Wright (Office of Planning and Design Quality)

Tom Hodnett (Agency Liaison Division)

Lesley Wilson (Agency Liaison Division)

Chris Prescott

National Archives and Records Administration:

Gilbane:

Carol Moore

Mark Luria

Odell, Simms, & Lynch, Inc.

Rob Hartman

Phil Denino

Nicole Danuu

Danielle Wallace

Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial Commission (EMC):

Carl Reddel

Victoria Tigwell

Dan Feil

Joyce Jacobson

Asia Edwards

Annemarie Spadafore

Laura Milazzo

Shannon Honl

Brady Tolbert

Jonathan Warner

Andrew Demetriou, Esq., Special Counsel

Louis Galambos, Senior Advisor

Richard Striner, Senior Writer

George Tolbert, Meeting Photographer

Others in Attendance:

Ralph Mecham

David Nichols

Paul O'Day

Gilbert Robinson

Andrew Cook

Alex Siciliano

Stuart Siciliano

Chairman Siciliano called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m., welcoming Commissioners, staff, and guests, noting that the newest Commissioner, Representative Mike Simpson, was detained in hearings on the appropriations bill that contains funding for the Eisenhower Commission. The Chairman noted that sixteen months had elapsed since the Commission's last viewing of the overall design of the Memorial, that advances have since been made to the tapestry concept and the site plan, and that large-scale models from Gehry Partners were present in the meeting room for the Commissioners' inspection, as well as a booklet for each Commissioner depicting the changes.

Chairman Siciliano directed the Commissioners' attention to the enhanced "greening" of the site plan and the repositioning of the smaller frontal tapestries, noting that some design elements were not yet final. The Chairman explained that in light of the ongoing evolution of the design, no approval vote would be taken as yet. But the Commissioners would be invited to review and possibly endorse the work to date, either individually or collectively.

Vice Chairman Inouye stated that the work of the Commission had been a long journey, and he thanked Chairman Siciliano for his leadership.

Chairman Siciliano invited architect Frank Gehry to address the Commission.

Mr. Gehry stated that he was astonished to discover how much he didn't know about Eisenhower as he began to design the Memorial, that he was honored by the task of making history with the design of the memorial, and that the design of the Eisenhower Memorial was probably the

greatest challenge he ever had. He stated that the design process was continuous and that he had learned a great deal from the questions and suggestions of the federal approval agencies, adding that he and his colleagues have devoted significant attention to the Maryland Avenue view corridor and the need for transparency in the tapestries, and considered them in his design revisions.

Turning to the work of designing and fabricating the tapestries, Mr. Gehry observed that the concept had been a dream from the beginning, that tapestries such as these had never been created before, and that four potential contractors were competing for the work of creating the tapestries. One of these contractors, an artist in Los Angeles, proposed to create the tapestries by hand, thus creating a more personal work of art.

Mr. Gehry spoke of the sight lines within the Memorial site, explaining that a row of parallel sycamores that he and his staff had viewed at the Princeton Institute for Advanced Study would constitute the model for his treatment of the Maryland Avenue view corridor. He observed that the 75-foot wide space between the rear tapestry and the Department of Education building would create an amazing entry plaza that could be used for many purposes.

Mr. Gehry revealed that he was considering a sculpture of Eisenhower as a boy that would serve as a focal point within the landscaped area. This sculpture would be placed atop a long stone wall on the southern side of Eisenhower Square. Stone bas-relief panels depicting the adult Eisenhower, both Eisenhower the General and Eisenhower the President, would be located on the western and eastern sides of Eisenhower Square, respectively, just outside of the smaller tapestries. The larger tapestry would depict the Eisenhower home in Abilene, thus bringing a representation of America's heartland directly into the heart of the nation's capital. The overall effect would be designed for maximum impact on future generations of children. Studies were under way to explore the feasibility of sound wells within the memorial site that would contain recordings of Eisenhower's voice in conjunction with the stone blocks/panels.

Chairman Siciliano asked if Commissioners had any questions or comments for Mr. Gehry.

Vice Chairman Inouye asked whether the future Memorial would stand up to effects of the open-air environment, including the possibility of natural disasters. Mr. Gehry replied that the engineering issues were all under study, that each iteration of the metal tapestry design was being tested for longevity, and that he wanted the completed Memorial to withstand corrosive and destructive forces for a minimum of one hundred years.

Commissioner Geduldig asked how Eisenhower would be depicted as General and President. Mr. Gehry replied that the matter was still under study, but that the well-known imagery of Ike with the troops on the eve of D-Day was an obvious candidate for the military leadership bas-relief panel.

Commissioner Eisenhower asked about the major design issues that were not yet resolved. Mr. Gehry replied that the tapestry study was 90 percent complete and that the trees were selected. The major issues yet to be resolved were the issues of sculpture, the selection of artists, final imagery, quotations, lighting, and the concept of sound wells. Mr. Gehry observed that the design work was proceeding on schedule and on budget.

Chairman Siciliano shared his hope that the pending \$30 million of partial public funding would be approved.

Mr. Demetriou asked whether there was any difference in the degree of transparency that the different candidates for the design and construction of the tapestries had revealed. Mr. Gehry replied that proposals for loom-made construction made transparency more difficult to achieve, and that the hand-made proposal, which includes the feature of electronic welding, was the most attractive in this regard.

Commissioner Reed asked whether night studies had been performed to address the effect of ambient light from buildings and motor vehicles on the memorial. Mr. Gehry replied that tests had been conducted and that nothing appeared to be a serious problem at the moment.

Commissioner Reed asked whether quotations from Eisenhower would be previewed with the Commission before being considered for use in the Memorial. Chairman Siciliano replied in the affirmative.

Commissioner Moran stated that while he liked the preliminary design in 2010, he loved what he was viewing in the revised design: the vision of the heartland brought to Washington, D.C. He stated that the vision conveyed the unmistakable message that people from humble beginnings could rise to world stature, that such an achievement remained possible.

Commissioner Roberts observed that Ike delivered eight years of prosperity and peace, and that this achievement, which has not been repeated, together with Eisenhower's personal qualities, his unique blend of cordiality, modesty and toughness, should be represented if possible within the memorial. Mr. Gehry replied that such qualities and achievements would be represented as emanations from the central idea of Ike's greatness, a central idea that holds it together.

Commissioner Harris commended Mr. Gehry on the evolution of the design concept, observing that the projected E-Memorial will provide some additional ways to present diverse and extensive elements of the Eisenhower story.

Commissioner Roberts offered a motion in support of the progress toward the completion of the long overdue memorial honoring Eisenhower's presidency, his leadership as Supreme Allied Commander, and his life that reflected traditional American Values. Commissioner Eisenhower seconded this motion, which passed unanimously.

Chairman Siciliano asked for approval of the minutes for the Commission's last meeting on March 25, 2010. The minutes were approved without objection.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:10 p.m.