

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER MEMORIAL COMMISSION MEETING
APPROVED BY COMMISSIONERS JUNE 19, 2013
May 15, 2012: Room S-124, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C.

Commissioners in Attendance:

Rocco C. Siciliano, Chairman
Senator Daniel Inouye, Vice Chairman
Senator Pat Roberts
Representative Sanford Bishop
Representative Mike Simpson
Representative Mac Thornberry
Alfred Geduldig
Susan Banes Harris

Commissioners Absent:

Senator Jerry Moran
Senator Jack Reed
Representative Leonard Boswell

Commissioners' Staff:

Marie Blanco (Sen. Inouye)
Amber Sechrist (Sen. Roberts)
Jackie Cottrell (Sen. Roberts)
Tyler Lund (Sen. Moran)
Jonathan Halpern (Rep. Bishop)
Lindsay Slater (Rep. Simpson)

EMC:

Chris Cimko
Andy Demetriou
Dan Feil
Louis Galambos
Shannon Honl
Laura Mackiewicz
Charlie Range
Carl Reddel
Annemarie Spadafore
Bret Stolle
Rick Striner
Victoria Tigwell

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Advisory Committee:

L. Ralph Mecham

GSA:

Tony Alonso
Tom Hodnett
Chris Prescott
Lesly Wilson
Mina Wright

AECOM:

Joe Brown
Alan Harwood
Jon Miller

CFA:

Fred Lindstrom
Tom Luebke

Architect of the Capital:

Mike Turnbull

NPS:

Karen Cucurullo
Glenn Demarr
Peter May

Gehry Partners:

John Bowers
Sevak Karabachian
Meaghan Lloyd
Paul Locke
Kristin Ragins

NCPC:

Shane Detman
John Hart
Jennifer Hirsch
Bradley Provancha
Christine Saum

O'Dell, Simms & Lynch:

Nikki Day
Phil Denino
Annie Kasper

Gilbane:

Carol Moore
Tom Stokes

TSD Communications:

Eric London
Ricki Seidman

Media:

Allen Abel
Ben Adler
Christine Armstrong
Kriston Capps
Ricky Carion
Emma Dumain
Liz Farmer
Paul Goldberger
Sarah Hoffman
Chris Hopkins
Graeme Jennings
Dex Leong
Katie Ross
Rich Simon
John Wallace
Susan Walsh
Brett Zongker

Others present:

Steve Carey
Milton Grenfell
Debbie Hodes
Dana Litowitz
Howard Segermark
John Shlaes
Alex Siciliano
Stuart Siciliano
Justin Shubow
Christine Thomas
Daun van Ee

Chairman Siciliano called the meeting to order at 11:10 a.m. After greeting fellow commissioners and guests, the chairman noted that this commission meeting is not a public hearing but rather an informational briefing and discussion: an official meeting of the commission to consider proposed changes to the memorial design by the firm of Gehry Partners, since the review and approval of the design submission on July 12, 2011. A vote on the changes proposed at this meeting will occur in the near future.

Chairman Siciliano called for approval of the minutes of the commission meetings held on July 12, 2011 and March 26, 2012. Senator Roberts moved that the minutes be approved and Commissioner Harris seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Chairman Siciliano directed the attention of commissioners to the attached letter from architect Frank Gehry, who could not be present at this meeting due to a previous commitment, and welcomed two partners from Gehry Partners, Chief of Staff Meaghan Lloyd and Project Manager John Bowers. The chairman noted that he had worked with members of the Eisenhower family for twenty-five years and had known John S.D. Eisenhower for fifty years. He also reminded commissioners and guests that David Eisenhower had served on the commission for eleven years. The chairman pointed out that members of the Eisenhower family will be privately shown the most recent changes to the memorial design later.

The chairman invited Ms. Lloyd and Mr. Bowers to address the commission.

Ms. Lloyd read into the record the text of Frank Gehry's attached letter to the commission. She noted that some of the principal changes to the memorial design consisted of changing two sculpted images of Dwight D. Eisenhower — an image of Eisenhower meeting with troops on the eve of D-Day and an image of Eisenhower with a large globe — from bas-relief sculpture to three-dimensional in-the-round sculpture. Earlier plans for a statue of young Eisenhower have been clarified to specify that Eisenhower will be depicted in young adulthood at human scale in an undecided image, perhaps as a West Point cadet. Ms. Lloyd concluded that proposed text possibly for engraving in the memorial is still under review among stakeholders before approval by the Commissioners, but that this presentation is proposing appropriate placement.

Mr. Bowers commented on the larger models of the memorial design that were on display at this commission meeting. He noted that the stainless steel tapestry continues to organize the overall site. He further noted that the stone blocks designed for display of images had been altered in several respects: the sculpted images had been pulled out from the surface of the blocks to stand in front of them as free-standing sculpted figures; the figures are now projected to stand about nine feet high at heroic scale or 150 percent life-size; horizontal lintels have been added to the tops of the blocks that will bear engraved text. Mr. Bowers noted that the tapestry design is still evolving and that a photographic team had been sent to Abilene in March to gather possible images. Over 1,000 photographic images are now under review for possible use in the tapestry. The final proposed art for the tapestry will be presented at a later date.

Commissioner Geduldig asked about studies pertaining to durability issues. Mr. Bowers stated that materials testing is well under way, especially advanced-age testing of stainless steel. Mr. Bowers noted that atmospheric conditions in fifty or one hundred years cannot be predicted with any degree of accuracy. Mr. Bowers reported that the next stage of the testing process will be to

fabricate specific pieces of the tapestry and then test them for resistance to wind, water, and projectiles. Special tests will be conducted on the welds that will hold the tapestry together. In all, the materials testing is about one-half complete.

Chairman Siciliano invited individual members of the commission to comment on the design changes and the overall process of memorial design.

Senator Roberts expressed thanks both to Chairman Siciliano for presiding over a long and arduous process and to Vice Chairman Inouye, as a dear friend who can take on challenges and find answers. Senator Roberts spoke about his own recent role as an honest broker to mediate discussions with the Eisenhower family, with utmost respect, and thanked his staff member Amber Sechrist for facilitating this process. Senator Roberts observed that one really gets to know people in situations such as this and that he feels as if he has gotten to know the Eisenhower family for twenty-five years within the past three months. Senator Roberts stated that many hours have been spent by him and his staff in this process.

Senator Roberts stated his support for the tapestry element in the memorial design, observing that he spoke for Senator Moran on this matter as well. The senator observed that he had supported this element in the memorial design from the beginning and for several reasons. Ike loved Abilene — his roots were there — and Ike stated before 200,000 people at his Abilene homecoming after World War II that the proudest thing that he could claim was that he came from Abilene. Kansas has recently voted Ike the Kansan of the century. Ike is buried in Abilene, his presidential library is located there, and the tapestry tells Ike's story in relation to his childhood home. In front of the Abilene background, as depicted in the tapestry, a statue of Ike as a young cadet will gaze out at his own future. Senator Roberts observed that the value of this memorial will be proven when a kid who has just visited the National Air and Space Museum can be taken across the street and told, "Look at what a small-town kid can achieve in America." Ike saved the free world and gave America eight years of prosperity and peace. He commented that he would like Eisenhower's home to remain in the tapestry imagery. Senator Roberts concluded by expressing his hope that all remaining differences on the Eisenhower Memorial can be resolved as the plan continues to evolve.

Representative Bishop thanked the chairman and staff of the commission for their efforts to bring the newest members of the commission, including himself, up to date. Representative Bishop observed that he had seen Ike in 1960 at the Boy Scouts' National Jamboree at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs. He stated that he was impressed by the success of the memorial design, observing that Ike's character and persona had been "made real." He offered congratulations to Frank Gehry and his staff for their openness, flexibility, and willingness to hear ideas. Concluding with the observation that art can only be appreciated in the eyes of the

beholder, Representative Bishop stated that we are close to a consensus to go forward in building a memorial that is worthy of the American people and worthy of a great hero.

Senator Inouye observed that the commission owes much to Senator Roberts, who was given an assignment that was not easy, but one that was carried out in Roberts' fashion. Senator Inouye observed that Americans' one great weakness is that they forget things soon, so time is of the essence in completing this monument, which will remind future generations of what America had to go through and what great leaders we have had. Senator Inouye thanked Senator Roberts for his work with the family which has now concluded.

Representative Thornberry expressed the opinion that over time the memorial design has gotten better, that the latest revisions do an even better job of explaining why we should honor Dwight Eisenhower. Representative Thornberry stated that he was grateful to Frank Gehry and his team for their willingness to listen and be flexible. He asked whether the existing quotations from Eisenhower that have been presented for possible engraving in the memorial represent proposals that can still be reviewed. Chairman Siciliano answered in the affirmative, stating that the quotations were simply place-holding suggestions presented by a committee of historians including Louis Galambos, Daun van Ee, and Richard Striner.

Representative Simpson observed that as the most recent member of the commission, he was proud to be part of the memorialization effort, and that, having been born in 1950, he grew up with Eisenhower's presidency. He thanked the memorial designers for listening to public concerns and expressed the hope that this effort will be something that unites us, not divides us.

Commissioner Geduldig observed that in the course of thinking back over the commission's work of the previous twelve years, he has been struck by the fact that the current design gives form to ideas that the commission had discussed at the outset. Mr. Geduldig expressed the opinion that the latest refinements in the memorial design are a great leap forward and should bring us together. He expressed the belief that the commission is close to a final decision since the current design is a realization of dreams that go all the way back to the origins of the commission.

Commissioner Harris stated that she liked the new sculptural treatment and approved of the Abilene tapestry, observing that years earlier, as an English teacher, she had used a written vignette about Eisenhower in Kansas to teach her students. She stated that this memorial is park-like, with the specific elements expressing Ike's various contributions to America placed in a central focal point. Commissioner Harris expressed her gratitude to the Gehry firm for its care in developing this design and stated that she is ready to move forward to the next step.

Chairman Siciliano invited Executive Director Carl Reddel to address the commission. Executive Director Reddel thanked the members of the commission for their dedication and patience. He observed that the historians' committee that has been considering possible Eisenhower quotations has been careful and judicious, and that their proposals will be carefully reviewed with each Commissioner.

Chairman Siciliano observed that timing is a critical factor, especially at this point in the process, not least of all due to considerations of funding. The chairman stated that Congress has been supportive in giving the commission the time that has been needed to address current issues. Chairman Siciliano stated that the current memorial design is projected for consideration by the National Capital Planning Commission on July 12.

Ms. Lloyd concluded by stating that she and her colleagues at Gehry Partners are honored and pleased by our progress in reaching this point though a long but gratifying process, which, through the interaction of disparate voices, has led to a better understanding of Dwight D. Eisenhower.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

Attachment: Letter to Commission, Frank Gehry, May 15, 2012

Gehry Partners, LLP

Frank Gehry

Brian Aamoth

John Bowers

Anand Devarajan

Jennifer Ehrman

Berta Gehry

Meaghan Lloyd

Tensho Takemori

Laurence Tighe

Craig Webb

May 15, 2012

Dear Commissioners,

I regret that a long planned event prevents me from being at the meeting today in person. I want to share some thoughts about the progress that we have made since I last presented to the Commission.

I have very seriously considered the comments made by my Commissioners, the Eisenhower family, the Department of Education, NCPC, CFA, and noted historians. I love this type of collaboration. It is a process that I think is vital to the success of any endeavor and one that was necessary to make sense of sometimes contradictory characterizations of President Eisenhower. How do you represent a man of such towering achievement whose modesty was one of his core values? I have refined the design to incorporate this feedback, which I believe helps tell the story of Eisenhower with more dignity and more power. While the changes are significant, I sought to weave them nicely into the framework that you have already seen and approved.

The items that I submit to you today are as follows:

1. The selection of the final imagery for the representation of the general and the president
We have chosen the image of General Eisenhower with the 101st Airborne division soldiers before their jump into Normandy and the Karsh photo entitled "The Elder Statesman".
2. The migration from bas reliefs to heroic-scale in-the-round sculpture
After careful consideration, I believe that the sculptures bring the story to life in a more powerful and accessible way than the bas reliefs were able to do.
3. The life-sized sculpture of young Eisenhower at the center of the composition
I still believe that the sculpture of Eisenhower as a young man looking out on his future accomplishments is a powerful image, particularly because of the Memorial's proximity to the Department of Education and the Air and Space Museum where hundreds of thousands of school-children visit when they come to Washington. It will be an inspiration to these kids.
4. The imagery on the tapestry sustaining the unifying theme of Eisenhower's roots in the heartland
Eisenhower was so proud to grow up in Kansas – leaving out this imagery would mean omitting an important part of his story. I think the imagery has a peacefulness and gravitas to it that creates a suitable environment whether you are inside the park or just passing by.

Gehry Partners, LLP

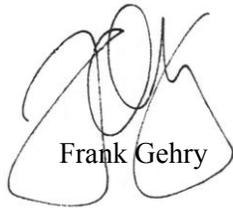
5. The placement of the text

We are working now with all of the stake-holders to select the text. The three dimensional statues gave us an opportunity to add Eisenhower's accomplishments on the stone blocks and his quotations on the lintels on top of them.

The memory of Eisenhower deserves the best that we all can deliver to help future generations understand the impact of this great leader on everything we are as a nation. I would be proud to wear an "I Like Ike" button every day for the rest of my life. He represents what we should all try to be.

I have brought all of my talents to bear on this memorial. I hope that you are as energized as I am by the changes and that we can proudly move forward with the next stages.

Thank you for your consideration.



Frank Gehry