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# The Washington Post

## Second government agency okays Ike Memorial

By [Peggy McGlone](#) October 16 at 2:09 PM

The Commission of Fine Arts on Thursday approved the concept of the revised Frank Gehry design for the Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial but asked the design team to return with more detail about the plan's landscaping, statuary, pathways and lighting.

Members of the panel — one of two government agencies that must approve the memorial plan before construction can begin — described the edited version of Gehry's design as a "stronger project" and a "substantial improvement" over the previous scheme, which the CFA had previously accepted.

The [new design removes two stainless steel](#) tapestries on the east and west sides of the four-acre site along Independence Avenue to improve the views of the Capitol from Maryland Avenue and to improve the park's relationship with the surrounding buildings.

But the revision retains two free-standing columns (previously, four columns supported the two tapestries).

"The removal of the side panels is brilliant," CFA member Alex Krieger said. "The two columns are important, although I still have questions about their size and material. They do actually help define the perimeters of the park."

Craig Webb of Gehry Partners said the columns are critical to defining the rectangular space of the park and the layered experience of the scheme.

But Commissioner Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk disagreed, saying the design "can live without the two individual columns, which are objects rather than space enclosures."

The free-standing panels generated much criticism at [the National Capital Planning Commission meeting](#) earlier this month. Following a lengthy discussion, the group granted preliminary approval by a vote of 10 to 1. The commission [had denied approval](#) of the original plan in April. The Eisenhower family is among the critics of the design.

Webb and members of the Eisenhower Memorial Commission pledged to return to the CFA as early as next month to present a detailed description of the design's statues, quotations, pathways and tree selection.

Following the vote, Eisenhower Memorial Commission Chairman Rocco Siciliano issued a statement celebrating Gehry's ability to respond to "the many stakeholders in this process while still maintaining the power and integrity of his design."



Peggy McGlone joined the Washington Post in 2014 as its local arts reporter. Prior to that, she covered the arts for The Star-Ledger in New Jersey for more than a decade.