

U.S. COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS

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27 September 2023

Dear Col. Wiker:

In its public meeting of 21 September conducted by videoconference, the Commission of Fine Arts reviewed and approved a concept submission for the 9/11 Pentagon Memorial Visitor Education Center, to be located on Columbia Pike at South Joyce Street in Arlington, Virginia, on a parcel within the jurisdiction of Arlington National Cemetery. Recognizing the considerable progress made since the previous review, the Commission approved the concept design with the following comments.

The Commission members expressed appreciation for the improved conceptual clarity of the design as conveyed in the presentation, particularly for the advancement of the architectural language and the addition of the unifying two-story masonry colonnade, which helps to relate the project to its honorific context. They suggested that the colonnade could be developed further as a space that allows exterior circulation instead of functioning only as a columnar screen. Citing the light and airy quality of the proposed atrium, they emphasized the importance of maintaining this character as the structural system is developed. Observing that windows are proposed on the facade overlooking Arlington National Cemetery, they recommended careful consideration of the operation and design of the café inside and of the detailing and scale of the windows in order to minimize their impact on the sensitive cemetery setting. For the design of the parking lot, they recommended studying the safety and experience of visitors walking from their cars to the building; they advised providing pathways across the lot through shaded areas leading to the main entrance, with benches for respite. In general, they emphasized reducing the overall area of pavement and increasing the number of shade trees, including at the entrance plaza.

The Commission members look forward to further review of this project as the design is developed, including details such as lighting, wayfinding, and signage. Please continue to consult with the staff which, as always, is available to assist you.

Sincerely,



Thomas E. Luebke, FAIA
Secretary

Col. Andrew Wiker, Director of Engineering
Arlington National Cemetery
Arlington, VA 22211

cc: Steve White, Fentress Architects
Chris Sutterfield, Confluence
Michael McCarthy, Pentagon Memorial Fund