

U. S. COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS

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28 May 2026

Dear Mr. Aldawood:

In its meeting of 21 May, the Commission of Fine Arts reviewed a concept design submission for the renovation of and additions to the Embassy of Saudi Arabia, located at 601 New Hampshire Avenue, NW (case number SL 26-100). The Commission approved the concept submission and provided the following comments for the development of the design.

The Commission members expressed appreciation for the effort to renovate this important embassy in a prominent location in Washington, D.C. They recommended selection of Option 3, noting that it would best preserve the Georgia White Cherokee marble central volume and portals of the existing building while accommodating the proposed glass forms and important security improvements. They noted that this option would elegantly balance the existing building's civic character with traditional Saudi architectural principles, achieving a clear and beautiful architectural solution that allows a contemporary expression. They also noted that the design of the delicate metal sunshades respects the building symmetry and architecture while providing privacy and light control, adding a layering of geometric motifs as a lively contrasting element to the stone facades; they also suggested incorporating a version of these shades at the windows of the building's upper story.

For the design of the site, the Commission members recommended that the composition of stairs and flanking cheek walls at the west entrance more closely resemble the existing design, maintaining the original symmetrical composition and white stone color; they supported the use of a light-colored granite to address durability and safety concerns. Finally, they suggested incorporating segments of stone walls in addition to fencing along the perimeter of the site.

The Commission looks forward to further review of this project. As always, the staff is available to assist you with the development of the design.

Sincerely,



Thomas E. Luebke, FAIA
Secretary

Amer Aldawood, Project Manager
Ministry of Foreign Affairs Properties Management
Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia
601 New Hampshire Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20037

cc: Roger Schwabacher, HOK

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 21515
EXHIBIT NO. 17