

U.S. COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS

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28 February 2025

Dear Mr. Hunter:

In its public meeting of 20 February conducted by videoconference, the Commission of Fine Arts reviewed a second concept submission for the phased addition of two buildings to the campus of the District of Columbia Correctional Treatment Facility, located at 1900 Massachusetts Avenue, SE. Expressing appreciation for the responsiveness to its previous advice, the Commission approved the concept submission and provided the following comments for the development of the design.

In their discussion, the Commission members commented positively on the simplification of the design and supported the conceptual approach to this justice system building—an approach that transcends considerations of mere utility with an architectural ambition to express the rehabilitative, healing role anticipated in the facility’s program. Noting that the neighborhood context will be in a state of flux for several years while the Hill East master plan is implemented, they commented that the design as proposed for the correctional facility will contribute meaningfully to the evolving neighborhood. They expressed support for the change in material for the “veil” from Cor-Ten steel to powder-coated aluminum, which they found has resulted in a more delicate, less forceful expression of the concept. However, they recommended further evaluation of the purpose, quantity, location, projection, and design of the horizontal “leaf” canopy elements of the facades, with consideration of eliminating them altogether.

For the site design, the Commission members expressed appreciation for the simplified, more consistent landscape treatment along the sidewalk; they recommended further simplification of the planting plan and palette with consideration of the pedestrian experience. While noting that some of the proposed larger species, such as hydrangeas, would assist in mitigating the scale of the buildings behind, they noted that the proposed skip laurels would be more appropriate for a clipped hedge; they recommended that plant species be carefully selected to support the design vision of a robust natural landscape.

The Commission looks forward to further review of this important project at the design development level. Please continue consulting with the staff which, as always, is available to assist you.

Sincerely,



Thomas E. Luebke, FAIA
Secretary

Delano Hunter, Director
D.C. Department of General Services
3924 Minnesota Avenue, NE
Washington, DC 20019

cc: Dean Hutchison, CORE Architecture
Thomas Faust, D.C. Department of Corrections

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.24-21
EXHIBIT NO.11A