MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS
HELD IN NEW YORK CITY, OCTOBER 24, 1932

The second meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts during the fiscal year 1933, was held at the office of McKim, Mead and White, 101 Park Avenue, Monday, October 24, 1932. The following members were present:

Mr. Moore, Chairman,
Mr. Winter,
Mr. Cross,
Mr. Weinman,
Mr. Swartwout,
Mr. Clarke,
also Mr. H. P. Caemmerer, Executive Secretary and Administrative Officer. There was also present Mr. William Mitchell Kendall, representing the architects, and Mr. John L. Nagle, Engineer, of the Arlington Memorial Bridge Commission.

1. GREAT ENTRANCE TO THE ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY: Mr. Kendall stated he was very much disturbed over the paving to be done at the great entrance to Arlington Cemetery at the turn from the Memorial Avenue right and left to connect with the road running along the east side of Arlington in that concrete is to be used and since there will be spiral lines caused by joints in the pavement instead of metal traffic markers to indicate lines of travel. Mr. Kendall said the paving should be bituminous concrete, which is very dark, the same as the roads in Arlington National Cemetery and the same in appearance as black park roads generally. Mr. Kendall presented a sketch showing modifications desired by him.

Mr. Nagle presented a construction plan of this project and said the contract for it has been let. He said, however, that the drawing does not do justice to the paving as it will ultimately appear. In the first place the spiral lines shown in the plan will be inconspicuous joints which will be

scarcely noticeable after the road is used for a while. This is demonstrated in the Mount Vernon Memorial Highway where after a few months of travel the joints were scarcely visible and are now never noticed unless pointed out. As to the material for paving, Mr. Nagle said that after a great deal of effort Colonel Grant's office has secured about 20 samples of crushed stone of the same granite as was used for the paving of the Arlington Memorial Bridge. By using this stone the texture of the plaza and that of the Memorial Bridge will be uniform. The mortar will be scraped off the top, leaving the pavement exposed in rather pink colored stone. Unfortunately, he said there is not enough money available to pave the entire plaza so that at the present time it is proposed to put in a temporary curb at the turn in the road at the west end of the Memorial Avenue. This curb, he said, was considered very necessary by automobilists in order to prevent them from slipping off the plaza. Mr. Clarke asked if the texture would be rough enough for horses to get a grip on it and Mr. Nagle said that in that respect it will be better than amasite.

Mr. Swartwout said he did not think the curb lines were necessary and that a central line was sufficient. Without the curb line the paving will be more effective and unless they are absolutely necessary Mr. Swartwout said he would be entirely opposed to them.

Mr. Kendall said he had suggested metal disks instead of spiral lines. As to these, Mr. Nagle remarked that it has been found by experience that metal disks are very undesirable in pavement; they wear and become shiny and soon have holes worn into them. Mr. Cross said this was true and the other members of the Commission were of the same opinion. The Commission thereupon decided that metal buttons should be used in the pavement.

The Commission objected to putting in a temporary curb. The Secretary asked what the cost would be to complete the paving on this part of the plaza and thus do away with the temporary curb. Mr. Nagle replied that it would cost $4,000 and while this amount is small, he did not think it can be made available at the present time. The Commission felt, however, that the amount is so small as to make it inadvisable to put in a temporary curb. Rather than the temporary curb the Commission advised using simply gravel on this part of the plaza.

Mr. Clarke said money could be saved by leaving out the two 10-foot lanes of pavement in the center of the Memorial Avenue. Mr. Nagle replied to this that he did not think Colonel Grant would approve of it as it was his desire to have the Memorial Avenue the full 60-foot width, the same as the Arlington Memorial Bridge.

Mr. Kendall called attention to the part of the plan at the extreme west end of the plaza and said he had recommended a grass panel for it. Major Clarke said the panel is too small to justify planting it in grass and that unless it is paved, this part of the plaza should be in gravel. The Commission concurred with Mr. Clarke in this matter.

After further discussion the Commission decided that the integrity of Mr. Kendall's plan should be maintained under all circumstances; that unless Colonel Grant can secure the additional $4,000 needed for this particular paving, the paving should stop at the west end of the Memorial Avenue and from there on the paving should be a bituminous concrete connecting with the roadway extending north and south on the east side of the Arlington National Cemetery. Also the Commission advised using metal buttons instead of the spiral lines.

The Commission considered the Memorial Avenue project and reaffirmed the recommendations made at the meeting on October 4, that there should be one row of trees on each side of the avenue with trees two or three deep back of them, planted informally; that the trees should be white oak at least 50 feet apart. Also there should be a holly hedge eight feet high in front of the row of trees on each side of the avenue, without alcoves. Mr. Kendall said he wants very much to see the alcoves retained in the plan. However, Mr. Moore stated that there is a great crypt underneath the Arlington Amphitheatre providing for several hundred burials but after 10 years there has not been one burial there. It was Mr. Moore's opinion that the alcoves along the Memorial Avenue can be put in later if needed. The Commission concurred with Mr. Moore in this matter. A report was sent to Colonel Grant. (Exhibit A)

2. CHEVY CHASE CIRCLE: Mr. Clarke reported that he had talked with Mrs. Lockwood of the Garden Club of America about the plan for Chevy Chase Circle and that she said it was her opinion that the advice of Mrs. Frank B. Noyes or Mrs. Fairfax Harrison should be followed in matters pertaining to the landscape development of Chevy Chase Circle.

Mr. Moore said the question at issue is as to the kind of trees to be used. Mr. Clarke said the trees should be oak (willow) or laurel oak and that instead of two rows of trees as shown on Mr. Donn's plan there should be only one row of trees at the edge of the circle. A report was sent to Mr. Donn accordingly. (Exhibit B)

3. AIR MAIL FLYERS MEDAL OF HONOR: Mr. Walker Hancock, sculptor, submitted a revised sketch for the Air Mail Flyers's Medal of Honor. This was brought to the particular attention of Mr. Weinman. It was noted that

Mr. Hancock had improved the lettering materially. Mr. Moore after reading the inscription said it could be considerably improved. There was a repetition of the word "as" and there were commonplace expressions in it. Mr. Moore, therefore, suggested the following inscription, in which the Commission concurred:

PRESENTED
BY THE PRESIDENT
OF THE UNITED STATES
TO

FOR
DISTINGUISHED SERVICE
AS AIR MAIL PILOT
AUTHORIZED
BY CONGRESS
FEBRUARY XIV
MCMXXXI

Mr. Weinman asked that Mr. Hancock be requested to confer with him as to the arrangement of the inscription. A letter was addressed to Mr. Hancock accordingly. (Exhibit C)

4. WASHINGTON MONUMENT GARDENS: Mr. Moore said that he had had a talk with Mr. William Adams Delano about the models made by him, Mr. Olmsted and Mr. Hubbard of the National Capital Park and Planning Commission for the Washington Monument Gardens and had told him of the views of the Commission of Fine Arts as to this project, namely, that after inspecting the models at the meeting on October 4, the Commission decided that they would not present a satisfactory solution of the problem and that in the opinion of the Commission of Fine Arts the plan of 1901 for the Washington Monument Gardens should be adhered to. The Commission wished to know particularly on what the engineers based their opinion that the Plan of 1901 for the Monument Gardens could not be carried out. The Secretary called attention to the huge buildings built

over water in Venice which have stood there for centuries.

The Commission decided that pending the completion of the Mall the Washington Monument Garden project should be held in abeyance as it is the central point in the Plan of Washington. The Commission decided to hold a joint meeting with the National Capital Park and Planning Commission on Friday, November 18, when this subject is to receive further consideration. (Exhibit D)

5. FORT RENO HIGH SCHOOL: The Secretary brought to the attention of the Commission revised sketches presented by Mr. A. L. Harris, Municipal Architect, for the Fort Reno High School. They were given special attention by Mr. Cross and Mr. Swartwout, who noted that Mr. Harris had embodied in the sketches suggestions made by the Commission at the meeting on October 4. However, after inspecting the sketches the Commission decided that it would be impossible to consider them properly without a grading plan. It was shown that the buildings are terraced with a great flight of steps leading up to the auditorium and the gymnasium. This Mr. Cross and Mr. Swartwout regarded expensive and unnecessary. They thought the building ought to be brought down to the street level. In their opinion it would be much better to have a central approach to the building and drop down to the side wings. It was thought Mr. Harris had too literally followed the scheme for the Roosevelt High School. The Secretary said he would arrange to secure the grading plan needed. The sketches are to receive further consideration at the next meeting of the Commission on November 18.

6. STATUARY FOR ARLINGTON MEMORIAL BRIDGE: The Commission inspected enlarged models (two 3-16" scale models, 36 inches high) at the studio of Mr. Fraser, sculptor, to be for statuary which is to be placed at the entrance

of the Rock Creek and Potomac Parkway near the Lincoln Memorial. Mr. Kendall was present during the inspection. The Commission regarded the models excellent and approved them.

Mr. Weinman offered a minor suggestion as to the treatment of the legs of one of the horses. Mr. Fraser expressed his appreciation of this inspection by the Commission and said he wishes to devote further time to the models, completing them in every detail. After this he proposes to make the one-half size model, which will be eight feet high.

A report was sent to Colonel Grant, approving the models. (Exhibit E)

The Commission adjourned at 1:30 p. m. The Commission were guests of Mr. Weinman for luncheon at the Century Club.

C O P Y

October 29, 1932.

Dear Colonel Grant:

The Commission of Fine Arts at their meeting in New York City on October 24, 1932, at the office of McKim, Mead and White, considered a drawing for the square at the entrance to Arlington National Cemetery, as presented by Mr. Nagle, who attended the meeting in your behalf.

The Commission explained to Mr. Nagle their entire agreement with Mr. Kendall that the chief consideration was the preservation of the integrity and importance of the square. They were opposed to temporary curbs and to jointings to guide traffic, preferring markings on the pavement where necessary. They favor the homogeneous uniform paving of the entire square, even with a black paving. They hope however that money may be found to carry the color of the paving through the square.

The Commission also discussed the completion of the Memorial Avenue, and as was suggested at the meeting on October 4th, the Commission recommend planting an 8-foot holly hedge on each side of the Avenue, without alcoves, since they can be provided later if needed. Also the Commission recommend planting one row of trees on each side of the Avenue, in back of which additional trees two or three deep should be planted informally. They should be white oak trees, not less than 50 feet apart.

The Commission desire to express their appreciation of Mr. Nagle's sympathetic and very intelligent presentation of the conditions prevailing at this time.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Very respectfully yours,
(Signed) Charles Moore,
Chairman.

Lieut. Col. U. S. Grant 3d,
Executive and Disbursing Officer,
Arlington Memorial Bridge Commission,
Washington, D. C.

EXHIBIT A

C O P Y

October 27, 1932.

Dear Mr. Donn:

I promised Mrs. Noyes that the Commission of Fine Arts would finish their consideration of the Chevy Chase Circle plans at the meeting in New York last Monday. This they did, and I am writing you accordingly.

The pool as planned by you.

A single jet of water, arranged for a low jet for ordinary use and a high jet for festive occasions, if possible.

A single row of willow oaks as large as possible, with the available funds.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) Charles Moore,

Chairman.

Mr. Edward W. Donn,

1920 K Street, N. W.,

Washington, D. C.

EXHIBIT B

C O P Y

November 3, 1932.

Dear Mr. Hancock:

At the meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts in New York City on October 24, 1932, consideration was given to your revised sketch for the reverse of the Air Mail Flyers Medal of Honor.

The Commission are of the opinion that the inscription should be simplified as follows:

PRESENTED
BY THE PRESIDENT
OF THE UNITED STATES
TO

FOR
DISTINGUISHED SERVICE
AS AIR MAIL PILOT
AUTHORIZED
BY CONGRESS
FEBRUARY XIV
MCMXXXI

In making another design showing the inscription as above indicated, Mr. Weinman feels that you will have to study the lettering so as to fill up the space as fully as possible, leaving a border between the rim and the letters as you have shown on the sketch heretofore made. Mr. Weinman also asks that you consult him about the matter.

The Commission of Fine Arts will meet in Washington Friday, November 18. It is hoped the design for the reverse will be approved at that meeting.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Very truly yours,
(Signed) Charles Moore,
Chairman.

Mr. Walker Hancock,
422 East 20th Street,
New York, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Hancock:

The purpose of the revision was to get rid of the duplication of the word "as", and an unfortunate collection of "a's". You will appreciate this.

C. M.

EXHIBIT C

C O P Y

October 27, 1932.

Dear Colonel Grant:

I am pleased to inform you that the Commission of Fine Arts will hold its next meeting in Washington on Friday, November 18, The morning session will be held at the office of the Commission.

In the afternoon the Commission of Fine Arts would be pleased to have a joint session with the National Capital Park and Planning Commission. If this is agreeable to you, the Commission will arrange to be at your office immediately after luncheon, or at about 2:00 p. m. There are several matters relating to the development of Washington that the Commission wish to consider with the National Capital Park and Planning Commission, particularly the Mall development and the Washington Monument gardens. As you know, the Commission of Fine Arts feel that the plan made in 1901 for the Washington Monument gardens should be adhered to. The Commission have heard that engineers have reported the impracticability of carrying out this plan. If the engineers have furnished you with a report on the subject, the Commission of Fine Arts would very much appreciate receiving a copy of it.

A few days ago I had occasion to take some pictures. I am pleased to send you one of them, which I think you will agree is an unusual view showing the Washington Monument, Lincoln Memorial and the Arlington Memorial Bridge from the Rock Creek Parkway.

Very sincerely yours,
(Signed) H. P. Caemmerer,
Secretary.

Lieut. Col. U. S. Grant 3d,
Executive and Disbursing Officer,
National Capital Park and Planning Commission,
washington, D. C.

EXHIBIT D

C O P Y

October 28, 1932.

Dear Colonel Grant:

The Commission of Fine Arts at their meeting in New York City on October 24, 1932, inspected with the architect the two 3-16th scale models by Mr. James E. Fraser for the sculpture at the entrance to the Rock Creek Parkway of the Arlington Memorial Bridge development.

The Commission found the models eminently satisfactory. They were approved accordingly.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Very respectfully yours,

(Signed) Charles Moore,

Chairman.

Lieut. Col. U. S. Grant 3d,
Executive and Disbursing Officer,
Arlington Memorial Bridge Commission,
Washington, D. C.

EXHIBIT E