
**HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD
STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION**

Landmark/District:	Fort DuPont Ice Arena Replacement	() Agenda
Address:	3779 Ely Place, SE	(x) Consent Calendar
Meeting Date:	September 23, 2021	(x) Alteration
Case Number:	21-495	(x) New Construction
Staff Reviewer:	Andrew Lewis	(x) Demolition
		(x) Conceptual Design

The District Department of General Services, in partnership with Quinn Evans Architects, proposes to replace the existing ice arena at Fort DuPont with a new structure. This proposal was previously reviewed and approved by the Board in 2015 but was never constructed due to budgetary constraints. The revised concept has been reduced by half so that only one ice rink will be constructed instead of two. As before, the new arena will be constructed on the site of the existing building and within the boundaries of the landmarked Fort DuPont Park/Fort Circle Parks Historic District. However, the proposed site is far removed from the remnants of the Fort DuPont Civil War earthworks, was transferred from the NPS to the District of Columbia specifically for recreational purposes and has been improved by the construction of an HPRB-approved Youth Baseball Academy. The existing ice arena, which was completed in 1976 was evaluated and determined to be ineligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and the DC Inventory of Historic Sites.

Consultation with the staff archaeologist was carried out to determine if archaeological survey was necessary. The results of historical map research, GIS cut-and-fill analysis and geoarchaeological assessments indicate that the site was severely impacted by the construction of the current facility and that there is little possibility for the project to have direct effects on archaeological resources.

Fort DuPont Park/Fort Circle Parks/John Phillip Sousa Middle School

Fort DuPont was constructed in 1862 to provide protection to the District of Columbia during the Civil War. In 1912, the federal government retained Fort DuPont and some of the surrounding land to establish a park and to create the “Fort Drive” that was recommended by the McMillan Plan to connect all of the Civil War forts that surround the city. Together, the individual forts and the land purchased to complete the proposed, but never completed Fort Drive, comprise the Fort Circle Parks Historic District.

John Phillip Sousa Middle School is located across the street and just to the west of the proposed site. The building is listed in the DC Inventory of Historic Sites, the National Register of Historic Places and is a designated National Historic Landmark because of its association with the desegregation of public schools and the civil rights movement. However,

the school was constructed in 1950 and is not particularly noteworthy from an architectural standpoint.

Proposed New Construction

As can be seen from the renderings in the information packets, the proposed new two-story building will consist primarily of a large rectangular ice arena with support spaces connected along the west side and an entry lobby that projects outward to the northwest. The proposed materials palette consists mostly of board-formed concrete, glazing and dark gray insulated metal wall panels in both a smooth and ribbed finished. These panels and a pitched roofline over the ice sheet will provide some architectural interest.

Evaluation

The proposed design scheme is generally in keeping with the recently constructed Youth Baseball Academy which was approved by the HPRB in 2012. And as previously indicated, the project site has long been used for recreational purposes and is far removed from the remnants of the Fort DuPont Civil War fortifications. In fact, the fort is nearly one mile away and buffered by dense trees and vegetation that eliminate the potential for direct and indirect effects on any resources associated with the Civil War Defenses of Washington or any other historic properties located within Fort DuPont Park. Likewise, the proposal is compatible with the John Phillips Sousa School which is primarily significant for its association with the desegregation of public schools rather than for its architectural character. Finally, the existing ice arena is not historically significant and no archaeological resources are likely to be affected by implementation of the project.

Recommendation

HPO recommends the Board approve the conceptual design for the proposed ice arena as consistent with the purposes of the preservation act and delegate any remaining review details to staff.

Staff Contact: Andrew Lewis