



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 23, 2016

## **The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts**

### **Kennedy Center Expansion Proposed Connection to Rock Creek Paved Recreation Trail**

#### **Environmental Assessment Public Comment Period News Release**

(WASHINGTON)—The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts (Kennedy Center) is proposing a pedestrian/bicycle connection between the Kennedy Center and the Rock Creek Paved Recreation Trail. Components of the project partially fall within the Rock Creek and Potomac Parkway (RCPP), which is under the jurisdiction of the National Mall and Memorial Parks (NAMA), a unit administered by the National Park Service (NPS). The National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) is reviewing the project under its authorities specified in the National Capital Planning Act (40 USC § 8722 (b)(1) and (d)). Therefore, in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the NPS and NCPC acting as co-lead federal agencies have prepared the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts Environmental Assessment (EA) in cooperation with the Kennedy Center to examine the environmental impacts of the proposed Kennedy Center Expansion Connection project. Concurrently, the agencies have been conducting consultation in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA).

The purpose of the proposed project is to provide a safe pedestrian and bicycle connection between the Kennedy Center and the Rock Creek Paved Recreation Trail and to improve access and create a public waterfront link to and from the Kennedy Center from the new expansion area on the south, the Potomac River waterfront, NAMA, and the surrounding vicinity. Under the proposal, the NPS would transfer jurisdiction of a portion of NPS administered property and certain air rights to the Kennedy Center. The project is needed because there is no direct access to and from the Kennedy Center to the east, or southeastward to Rock Creek Paved Recreation Trail, NAMA, and the Potomac River. The only pedestrian/bicycle access from the Potomac riverfront to the Kennedy Center is provided by a series of crosswalks across F Street NW and the RCPP, approximately 0.25 miles north of the south parking garage. This lack of a direct and convenient path not only limits visitors' access to both NPS and Kennedy Center amenities, but also creates a disconnect between the Kennedy Center, which is the United States' living memorial to President John F. Kennedy, and those other presidential memorials found within the National Mall. These include: the Washington Monument, Thomas Jefferson Memorial, Lincoln Memorial, and Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial. In addition, Theodore Roosevelt Island, which is also the Presidential Memorial to Theodore Roosevelt and administered by the George Washington Memorial Parkway, is located directly across from the Kennedy Center on the western edge of the Potomac River. Theodore Roosevelt Island is accessible via the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Bridge (I-66). Creating a more direct and convenient link would benefit visitors to the Kennedy Center, NAMA, the Rock Creek Paved Recreation Trail, and the Potomac River waterfront by providing a convenient and logical pedestrian/bicycle connection and expanded interpretation opportunities of the area's presidential memorials.

The EA is being made available to the public for review for a period of 30 days from March 23, 2016 through April 25, 2016. A copy of the EA is available for public review at the following locations:

The Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts  
2700 F Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20566

The National Capital Planning Commission  
401 9<sup>th</sup> Street, NW  
North Lobby, Suite 500  
Washington, DC 20004

Martin Luther King Jr., Memorial Library  
901 G Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20001

Southwest Library  
900 Wesley Place, SW  
Washington, DC 20024

West End Library  
(interim location)  
2522 Virginia Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20037

The preferred system for receiving public comments electronically is through the NPS Planning, Environment, and Public Comment (PEPC) website, where the EA is publicly posted on the internet. The PEPC database is a tool used by the NPS to manage official correspondence and analyze public comment in the planning process. The website address is:

<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/projectHome.cfm?projectID=61730>. You may complete a comment form online. From the list of projects, click on the Kennedy Center Expansion Project. In the left menu, click Document List, then March 2016 Environmental Assessment, and Comment on Document.

Written comments may also be mailed to:

Mr. Tom Whitaker,  
Interim Vice President of Facilities  
The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts  
2700 F Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20566

Mailed comments must be postmarked by **April 25, 2016** to receive consideration.

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information –may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

### **ABOUT THE JOHN F. KENNEDY CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS**

The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts is America's living memorial to President Kennedy, and the nation's cultural center. Under the leadership of Chairman David M. Rubenstein and President Deborah F. Rutter, the nine theaters and stages of the nation's busiest performing arts facility attract 3 million visitors and patrons annually; Center-related touring productions, television, and radio broadcasts welcome 40 million more.

Opening its doors on September 8, 1971, the Center presents the greatest performances of music, dance, and theater; supports artists in the creation of new work; and serves the nation as a leader in arts education. With its artistic affiliates, the National Symphony Orchestra and Washington National Opera, the Center's achievements as a commissioner, producer, and nurturer of developing artists have resulted in more than 300 theatrical productions, and dozens of new ballets, operas, and musical works.

Each year, millions of people nationwide take part in innovative, inclusive, and effective education programs initiated by the Center, including school- and community-based residencies and consultancies; age-appropriate performances and events for young people; career development for young actors, dancers, singers, and instrumentalists; and professional learning opportunities for teachers, teaching artists, and school administrators. These programs have become models for communities across the country. The Center's *Ensuring the Arts for Any Given Child* program works with selected local school districts and seeks to provide a comprehensive arts education to children K-8. The Center also has been at the forefront of making the performing arts accessible to persons with disabilities, highlighted by the work accomplished with its affiliate, VSA.

As part of the Kennedy Center's Performing Arts for Everyone outreach program, the Center stages more than 400 free performances of music, dance, and theater by artists from throughout the world each year on the Center's main stages, and every evening at 6 p.m. on the Millennium Stage. The *Rubenstein Arts Access Program* expands the Center's efforts to make the arts accessible to children, young adults, and to people who have little or limited ability to attend and enjoy the performing arts, enabling audiences to engage in more ways, at more times, and in more places than ever before.

**For more information about the Kennedy Center expansion project,  
please visit [www.kennedy-center.org/expansionproject](http://www.kennedy-center.org/expansionproject).**

Discover the Kennedy Center on social media:



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