



City of Portland, Oregon
Bureau of Development Services
Land Use Services
FROM CONCEPT TO CONSTRUCTION

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Historic Landmarks Commission Briefing

BRIEFING MEMO

Date: April 1, 2024
To: Historic Landmarks Commission
From: Staci Monroe Design Review
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Re: David Campbell Memorial Restoration
Landmarks Commission Briefing on April 8, 2024

This memo is in regard to the upcoming Briefing on April 8, 2024, for the David Campbell Memorial. The applicant has provided a memo that explains the project in detail (see attached).

PROJECT OVERVIEW

- Enhance the entire triangle containing the David Campbell Memorial (DCM), a landmark, by creating the Portland Fallen Firefighter Memorial Plaza next to the DCM and connecting the two.
- A Staff level Historic Resource Review (Type I or II) will be required for the alterations and restorations associated with the landmark. The new plaza to the east is outside of the landmark boundary and is subject to Design Overlay requirements, for which it meets an exemption.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION

In its advisory capacity, the Commission can provide expert advice on the overall project and more specific feedback on the future reviews by Staff. BDS Staff provides the following potential areas for feedback:

- **Perimeter wall changes** – Discuss any concerns or support with the partial removal of the perimeter walls to improve accessibility. Staff notes the memorial was designed and built at a time when accessibility for all was not widely considered nor required. Removing portions of the monument's perimeter seat walls will allow a greater number of users to access the memorial, thus potentially increasing the number of people who will act as stewards of the site. Therefore, removal of relatively small portions of the perimeter wall to allow accessibility to all is acceptable as the overall historic character will remain and the site will become barrier-free meeting several approval criteria.
- **Lanterns** – Discuss the changes in the glass color from original amber to clear to allow for displays of different lighting colors and the proposed elevation of the lanterns from the current position to higher above the touch zone to limit further damage.
- **Railing** – Discuss the design and location of safety railing along the elevated edges.

Enc: David Campbell Memorial Association project narrative



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The David Campbell Memorial (DCM) is now 96 years old, having been dedicated on June 26, 1928, 17 years after the death of Fire Chief David Campbell.

The past decade or so has been hard on the site. In 2010, the Portland Fire & Rescue and the David Campbell Memorial Association endeavored to create a fallen firefighter memorial that better represented the 75 other firefighters (besides David Campbell) in a more comprehensive and proper way. This effort targeted a different location, which would be at the expense of the care and attention of the DCM.

For various reasons, that direction changed about 4 years ago. The DCMA now wants to enhance the entire triangle containing the DCM by creating the Portland Fallen Firefighter Memorial Plaza (PFMP) next to the DCM and connecting the two, allowing caretaking efforts to benefit our heritage and our comprehensive memorial.

Here is a view of the DCM in 1931, three years after completion.



Here is a view of the DCM in current times.



Recent years have been hard on the DCM and vandalism has taken its toll. It is time to make repairs as we make efforts to also build the PFMP. We are proposing four changes to the existing DCM.

1. Opening the side-wing walls near the fountain
2. Repairing the floor near the front edge of the fountain
3. Elevating the lanterns
4. Utilizing white lantern lenses illuminated by color-changing lighting
5. Installing railings at vulnerable points on the DCM

1. Opening the side-wing walls near the fountain

This is necessary for four basic purposes.

1. **Pedestrian Movement** - In order to connect the DCM to the memorial plaza, we need to open a path through the walls. To do otherwise would require our project to extend past existing sidewalks or curb lines, which makes the entire project cost prohibitive. PBOT has put extensive time and effort into the current pedestrian and traffic paths and favors a project that does not require modifications nor extend beyond the curb line of the triangle.
2. **Water Drainage** - Over the past 96 years, the south end of the floor, in front of the fountain, has settled a few inches, causing water to stand on the floor through much of the winter. Other drainage solutions might be found, but would likely be expensive and very intrusive on the DCM. Opening the walls allows water to flow out onto the sidewalk and into the storm collection system.
3. **Repair Material** - The material taken from the wall openings would be saved and used for places in the DCM that need repair. It would be very difficult to match the existing stone if pieces salvaged from this modification were not available. This allows originality to be maintained in the DCM.
4. **ADA Access** - Very importantly, opening the walls allows for ADA access to the DCM, something that has not existed for the past 96 years. It also allows a direct connection to the PFMP, thus activating both sites as a single operating unit.

This was presented at the early assistance meeting with the city of Portland and reviewed by Hilary Adam. She indicated favor for this. The image shows the places where the walls would be opened.



2. Repairing the floor near the front edge of the fountain

In September 2023, severe vandalism occurred with the theft of 14 bronze name plates (of the 36 in place), each representing a fallen firefighter. Extensive damage was done to the floor in front of the fountain. This cannot be easily repaired. While the name plates could be re-produced, they would lose the character that matches the time periods in which they were created and installed. Besides that, the 36 name plates that existed there failed to represent the other 40 firefighters who have died in service. The new memorial plaza will carry all the names of fallen firefighters, along with proper interpretation, leaving the DCM to be representative of Fire Chief David Campbell, as it was intended when built.

Below is a photo of the damage done by the vandalism.



The remainder of the name plates were removed by Portland Fire and the DCMA, restored, and placed in the fire station in which each member served at the time of their death.

Consultation with a stone restoration expert indicates that the bluestone which makes up the majority of the DCM floor is easily acquired and matched to the existing floor. Our request is to repair the floor, matching it to the balance of the DCM floor.

This image shows a view of the floor as it looks today next to the area needing repair, envisioned in the design rendering.



3. Elevating the Lanterns

The lanterns have been the subject of vandalism for many years. Sometime long ago, Portland Fire quit putting glass lenses in because they are constantly broken. They are the subject of much graffiti and attempted electrical power theft. After the recent vandalism that found the name plates stolen, the doors to both lanterns had also been torn off of the lanterns and were not found.

The photo shows the typical condition of the lanterns.

The price tag to repair the two lanterns back to original condition is approximately \$50,000. This includes metal work, glass lenses, and new electrical. This is not a sustainable way to caretake the lanterns. Some kind of protection must exist to safeguard these unique artifacts.

Our suggested solution is to elevate their position so they are not so easily reached. Right now, the door opening seen in the photo is approximately six feet above the floor of the DCM. Stepping up on the bench next to it lessens that reach to about four feet.

Our suggested solution is to elevate the lanterns by placing a 36 inch tall extension piece under the base to raise the lanterns to a height that is out of reach for the casual vandal. The current base is 25 inches square and it can be expanded to 39 inches square.

While anything can be damaged with enough determination, we feel that the ease of access contributes greatly to regular and recurring damage. The solution to the lantern placement might look something like the photo below. The pedestals can be designed to match the lanterns exactly and even be embossed with lettering to help identify the site. They would be made from scratch according to specification. (Please pardon the crude imagery, it is the best we can develop at this time). The foundry that is repairing the metal work on the lanterns is capable of casting the bronze pieces necessary to match the lanterns.





4. Utilizing white lantern lenses illuminated by color-changing lighting

The DCMA has not been able to find anything that specifies the color of the lenses on the DCM lanterns. The photo from 1931 would indicate that they were a darker shade of a color, perhaps red due to the symbolism of the fire service, but there is nothing to verify that.

Much has changed over the past 96 years and lighting options have expanded significantly. We propose using frosted white lenses that would be illuminated by lighting systems that are capable of creating a range of colors. Red would remain the standard color, but we might feel compelled to honor a fallen police officer, should that occur, by illuminating the lanterns in blue during a mourning period. Other considerations make it an ideal time to plan for such flexibility. It should also be noted that without great brightness of the lighting, the lighting will never be seen. In 1928, the intersection was likely pretty dark at night. Today, along with the ambient city lighting in the area, bright LED lights mounted on surrounding utility poles illuminate the entire DCM and PFMP triangle. This is desirable to discourage vandalism and misuse of the site. However, the lanterns will be challenged, on a good day, to overcome those surrounding lighting features. Bright and versatile lighting will help bring the DCM and PFMP to life, and draw attention in a good way.

5. Installing railings at vulnerable points on the DCM

It has long been a concern that the north face, between the lanterns and the stairs, have not protection from a significant drop to the sidewalk below. The drop off on the east and west sides of the DCM floor is 25 inches and 39 inches respectively. It is unlikely that requirements for railings existed in 1928 but today, we know better.

We would like to put a railing of sorts at those points. We would look for a design that was simple and unobtrusive to the balance of the DCM. It would span the space between the lantern base and the stair, then return at a 90 degree angle southward to the top step (on both sides). Each wing of the railing would be 57 inches long, with the two pieces at right angles to one another.

We may have the budget to utilize the same foundry repairing the lanterns to create custom fencing that matches other elements. Budget may require a more simple, commercially available solution.



Below is the place on the DCM needing care and an image of a design idea.



Thank you for helping us restore and breathe new life into this important heritage site and tribute to Portland's Fallen Firefighters.

