

Hirshhorn Sculpture Garden Revitalization Update

Inner Partition Wall Alternatives

At the December 3, 2020 meeting, the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) approved the preliminary site development plans for the Hirshhorn Sculpture Garden Revitalization project, except for the proposed changes to the inner partition wall and the reflecting pool. The NCPC recommended the Smithsonian study other design alternatives for the reflecting pool and provide a comprehensive rationale for the programming needs that require the change in height and material proposed for the inner partition wall prior to any Commission consideration.

The Smithsonian Institution (SI) submitted an information presentation to the NCPC, reviewed at the June 3, 2021, Commission meeting. The NCPC staff report recommended the Commission support the Reflecting Pool Revised Alternative, which maintains the 1974 pool and adds a new water feature and art and performance platform to the south.

The Commission's discussion on the inner partition wall centered on its importance as a contributing feature in the Sculpture Garden's composition, requesting the SI consider an alternative that minimizes or avoids adverse effect.

The SI conducted Section 106 Consulting Parties Meeting #7 across two dates, June 16 and July 7, 2021, presenting a draft Memorandum of Agreement to resolve adverse effects, and exhibits within the Sculpture Garden demonstrating two alternatives for the inner partition wall:

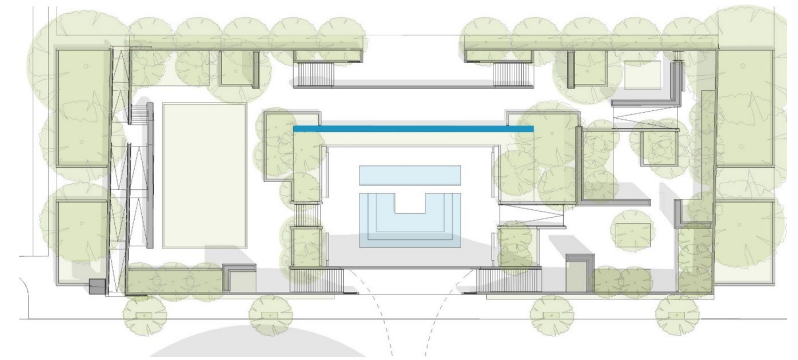
- Alternative 1 - Stacked Stone Wall- Reduced Height, Pylon Shape.
- Alternative 2 - Reconstruction In-Kind.

As suggested by Consulting Parties, the SI offers a third alternative for consideration that reconstructs the inner partition wall in concrete. The height of the wall is lowered 1'9" to meet accessibility and performance goals in the Central Gallery and Sculpture Garden. The width is reduced to maintain the wall proportion.

This document provides an overview of the three inner partition wall alternatives put forward for this project and identifies advantages and disadvantages of each per program goals and from a historic preservation standpoint. The SI requests comments on the inner partition wall alternatives from Consulting Parties per Section 106 regulations.



Rendering of the Central Gallery, Reflecting Pool Revised Alternative with originally proposed Stacked Stone Wall.



Proposed Sculpture Garden plan. Location of inner partition wall annotated in blue.

Submit written comments on the inner partition wall alternatives by October 6, 2021, to BondC@si.edu.



Smithsonian Facilities

**HIRSHHORN
MUSEUM**

Project Goals for the Inner Partition Wall

Accessibility

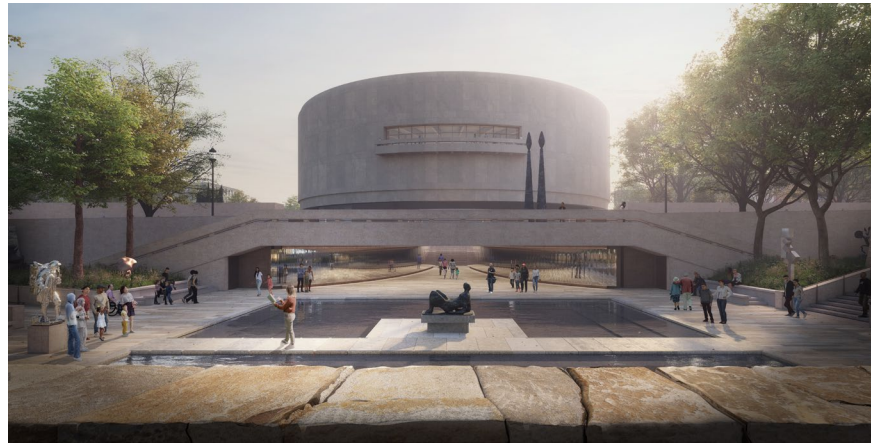
The height of the current inner partition wall along the allée is over five feet, creating a visual barrier that blocks sightlines and prevents equitable views for visitors. Lowering the wall 1'-9" would build upon the work Lester Collins began to make the Sculpture Garden more accessible; the proposed height would improve sightlines for all visitors along the central axis, provide expansive views across the Sculpture Garden, and strengthen the connection between the National Mall and the Hirshhorn museum. Visitors in the allée could engage with performances and exhibitions in the Central Gallery and have an open view to the underground passage improving wayfinding from the National Mall.

Operations

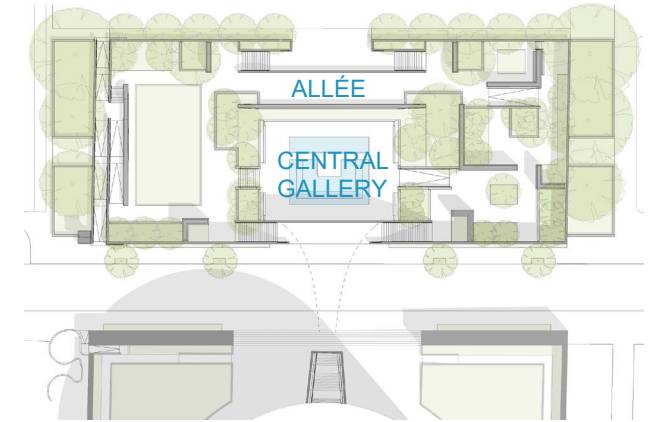
Lowering the height of the inner partition wall would provide an essential function for performance art and events requiring lighting and sound controls. The allée could serve as a staging area for lighting and sound operators. This vantage point would offer the benefits of visibility of the performance area without compromising the visitor experience.

Central Gallery Program

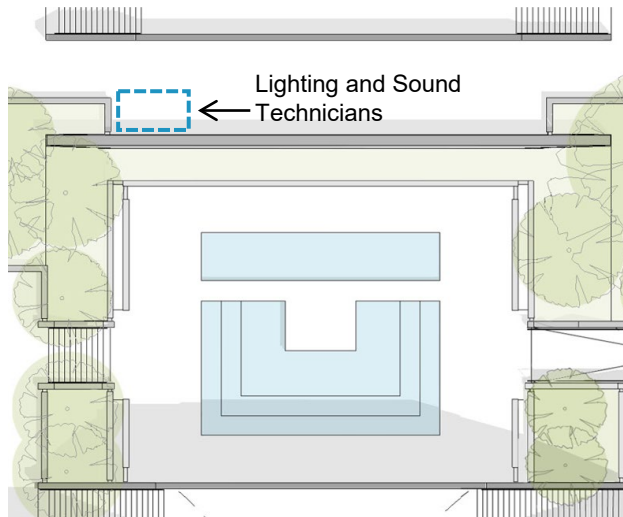
The Central Gallery will be the primary location for presentations of performance art, a current and future focus of the museum's expanding collections and programming. This unique gallery setting is intended to inspire site-specific programming and for exhibiting the Museum's collection.



Improved Sight Lines, Stacked Stone Alternative.



Proposed Site Plan.



Performance Support Area in the Allée.



Views Obstructed by the Current Inner Partition Wall. Proposed height of Alternative 1 – Stacked Stone Wall and Alternative 3- Lowered Concrete Wall noted with the yellow line.

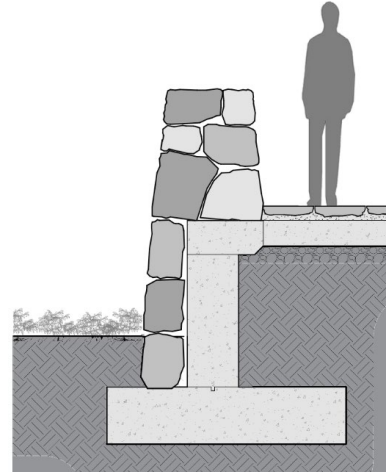
Alternative 1 - Stacked Stone Wall



Rendered View of the Allée.



Rendered View of the Central Gallery.



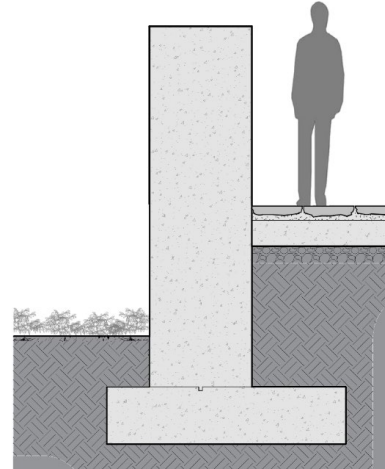
Wall Section.

- Inner partition wall reconstructed in the historic location, at a lower height of 8'-3" measured from the grade of the Central Gallery.
- Stacked stone construction incorporates Swenson Pink granite.
- Lowering the height to 3'-6" measured from the grade of the allée provides a visual connection to the underground passage and Museum building to improve wayfinding and meet accessibility goals.
- Lowering the height enables functional support of performance art and events in the Central Gallery.
- Acoustical echo in the Central Gallery reduced by the pylon shape and textured surface.
- Supports curatorial programming and artistic vision.
- Stacked granite stone at the inner partition wall anchors and unifies the Sculpture Garden's east, central, and west galleries.
- Enhances the focal point from the reopened underground passage and as a backdrop to the Central Gallery.
- Alternative determined an adverse effect on historic resources through Section 106 consultation.

Alternative 2 - Reconstruction In-Kind



Rendered View of the Allée.



Wall Section.



Rendered View of the Central Gallery.

- Inner partition wall reconstructed in the historic location in aggregate concrete, at the existing height of 10'-0" measured from the grade of the Central Gallery.
- Existing inner partition wall concrete suffers from alkali silica reaction, a condition inherent to the historic concrete mixture. Alkali silica reaction cannot be corrected, and the wall will continue to deteriorate. Reconstruction of this feature is required.
- Current height at 5'-3" measured from the grade of the allée prevents many visitors from viewing the Central Gallery. Reconstructing the inner partition wall in concrete at the current height does not meet the project goals for accessibility, wayfinding, and support of performance art in the Central Gallery.
- Current height limits the types of sculpture that can be placed in the allée due to the awkward alignment of the top of wall with human-scaled sculpture.
- Temporary acoustic treatments may be required to support performances in the Central Gallery.
- Alternative avoids adverse effect on historic resources by preserving this feature of Bunshaft's original design.

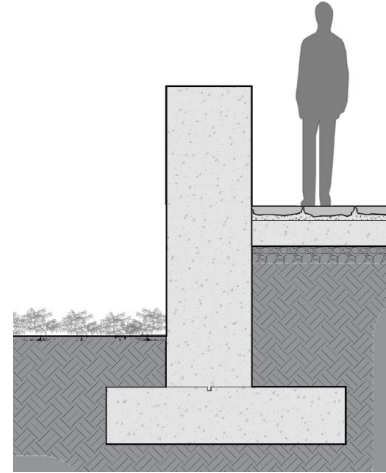
Alternative 3 – Lowered Concrete Wall



Rendered View of the Allée.



Rendered View of the Central Gallery.



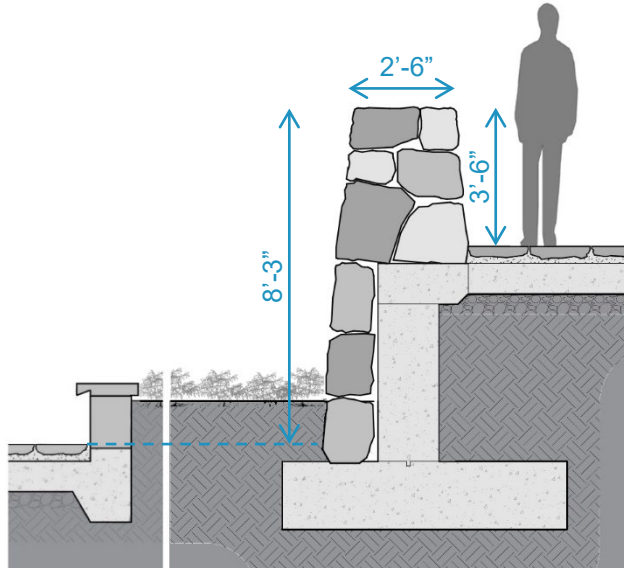
Wall Section.

- Inner partition wall is reconstructed in the historic location in aggregate concrete, at a lower height of 8'-3" measured from the grade of the Central Gallery.
- Reconstructing the inner partition wall in concrete maintains a connection to its original function as part of the perimeter enclosure, unified with the historic aggregate concrete material of the Hirshhorn campus.
- Lowering the height to 3'-6" measured from the grade of the allée provides a visual connection to the underground passage and Museum building to improve wayfinding and meet accessibility goals.
- Lowering the height enables functional support of performance art and events in the Central Gallery.
- The wall width is reduced from 3'-0" to 2'-6" to maintain the historic proportions of the wall.
- Temporary acoustic treatments may be required to support performances in the Central Gallery.
- Alternative minimizes adverse effect on historic resources.

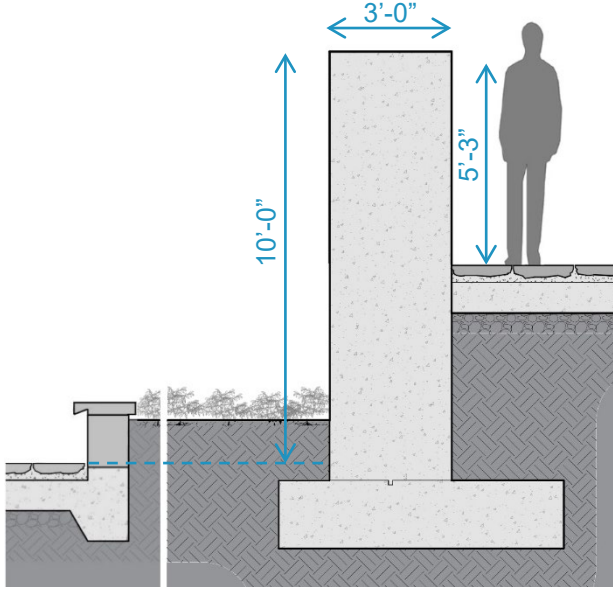
Inner Partition Wall Alternatives

Height and Material Comparisons

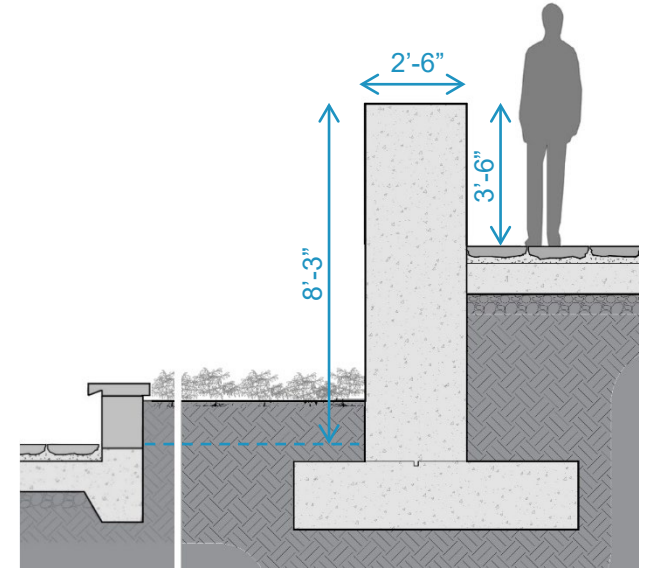
Alternative 1 - Stacked Stone Wall



Alternative 2 - Reconstruction In-Kind



Alternative 3 - Lowered Concrete Wall



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