

The Coalition

Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP)
Heritage Ottawa
Royal Architectural Institute of Canada (RAIC)

Canadian Society of Landscape Architects (CSLA)
Ontario Association of Architects (OAA)

June 23rd, 2015

RE: MEMORIAL TO THE VICTIMS OF COMMUNISM NATIONAL CAPITAL COMMISSION LAND USE AND DESIGN APPROVAL

Open Letter to the National Capital Commission Board of Directors,

We, the undersigned coalition of Canadian organizations, respectfully request that the National Capital Commission **refuse** the application by the Department of Canadian Heritage (PCH) for Federal Design Approval to construct a Memorial to the Victims of Communism on the Judicial Precinct site chosen by the Department of Canadian Heritage and offered by the Department of Public Works and Government Services Canada for this purpose.

We further request that the NCC advise the Department of Canadian Heritage to select an alternative site in the National Capital that conforms with the Canada's Capital Commemoration Strategic Plan prepared by the NCC.

It is our view that the Department of Canadian Heritage proposal should be refused for the following reasons:

1. The use of the subject site for a “land art” commemoration or memorial does not conform to the architectural and landscape design compositional principles of the Long Term Vision and Plan (LTV) for the Parliamentary and Judicial Precincts approved by the Canadian Government in 2006, expressed and demonstrated in the document entitled *Parliamentary and Judicial Precincts Area Site Capacity and Long Term Development Plan- 2006 Update* prepared by Public Works and Government Services Canada, duToit Allsopp Hillier, Diamond Schmitt, McCormick Rankin, Goldsmith Borgal, Schoolen+Company, Weaymouth + Associates, approved by the National Capital Commission.

2. The LTVP intends that the subject site be developed as a major architectural pavilion to complete the “. The LTVP intent that would enhance the symbolic primacy and visual dominance of the Supreme Court.
3. The use of the subject site for a “land art” memorial would seriously compromise the implementation of the functional principles of the LTVP which reserves the site not only for a building to meet the government’s future spatial needs but for underground parking, materials handling and connectivity in support of the Parliamentary and Judicial Precinct’s functional and security requirements.
4. The use of the subject site for a “land art” memorial rather than a major building intended to accommodate the Federal Court (or the materials building) represents a major revision to the 2006 LTVP and requires that an amended Federal Land Use and Design Approval be obtained for the subject site prior to the construction of a memorial on the site.
5. Since the 2006 LTVP, has not been reviewed or amended through a due process of consultation with the federal and municipal stakeholders that approved the 2006 LTVP (Senate of Canada, House of Commons, Library of Parliament, Supreme Court, Courts Administration Service, Federal Court, National Capital Commission , Heritage Conservation Directorate/FHBRO, PWGSC, and the City of Ottawa), the construction of a commemorative memorial on the subject site prior to amending the 2006 LTVP would violate the due process of consultation.
6. The use of the subject site for a commemorative memorial does not conform to the NCC’s. *Canada’s Capital Commemoration Strategic Plan* (2006) approved by the NCC Board of Directors which excludes the subject site as a potential location for Capital Commemorations.
7. The Canada’s Capital Commemoration Strategic Plan has not yet been amended by the Department of Canadian Heritage (responsible for Capital Commemorations) through a process of consultation with the NCC, City of Ottawa and the public to include the subject site in the Canada’s Capital Commemoration Strategic Plan prior to the construction of the commemorative memorial on the subject site.
8. The unqualified NCC Federal Land Use Approval given by the Board of Directors at the NCC Board meeting of November 20, 21, 2013 was clearly premature. It did not reflect the crucial considerations, conditions, consultations and next steps deemed necessary for a final Land Use and Design Approval as outlined in the written NCC Submission report tabled at the November 20, 21, 2013 Board meeting.
9. PWGSC and the NCC own many other prestigious lands that can be dedicated to the memorial to Victims of Communism.
10. The use of the subject site will require expensive decontamination of the site and the relocation of buried infrastructure that are out of proportion with, and cannot be justified for a monument.

We the undersigned Canadian organizations draw the attention of the NCC Board of Directors to the official statements of our organizations, the statement of Ottawa City Council, the statement of 17 former presidents of the Canadian Bar Association and statements of the editorial boards of major Canadian newspapers requesting that the Government of Canada select an alternative, more appropriate site in the Canada's Capital for the Memorial to the Victims of Communism.

We trust that the NCC Board of Directors will recognize the merit of our submission and when it meets to consider this proposed memorial, the Board will refuse the application by the Department of Canadian Heritage for NCC Federal Design Approval to construct a commemorative memorial on the Judicial Precinct and advise the Department of Canadian Heritage to select an alternative, more appropriate site in Canada.

Respectfully submitted,

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Canadian Society of Landscape Architects (CSLA)
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cc.
NCC CEO
NCC Board of Directors
NCC ACPDR
The Honourable Jim Watson, Mayor of Ottawa
Councillors of the City of Ottawa
CBC
CBC Radio-Canada
The Agenda with Steve Paikin
Ottawa Citizen
Globe and Mail
Le Droit
La Presse
The Canadian Architect
The Economist
Macleans
The Walrus