

JOHN F. KENNEDY BURIAL SITE  
ACCESSIBLE WALKWAY REPLACEMENT  
Arlington National Cemetery  
Arlington, Virginia

PROJECT DESCRIPTION, AREA OF POTENTIAL  
EFFECTS, and ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS

ANC Project Point of Contact:

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Construction Engineer Technician

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May 5, 2022



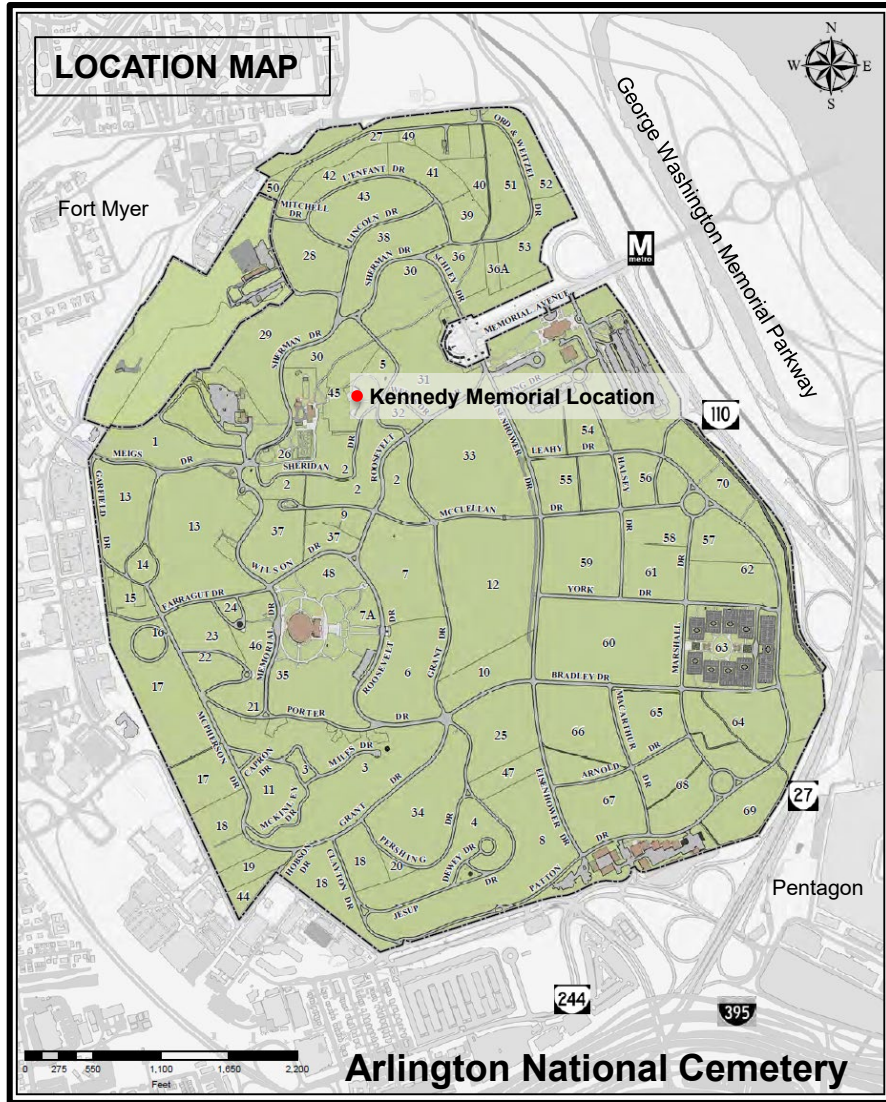
## PROJECT BACKGROUND

Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) first presented this project to the Commission of Fine Arts (CFA) in April 2021, where it was approved without objection. At that time, ANC intended to remove an existing 3.5-foot-wide by 135-foot-long non-accessible flagstone walkway and to replace it with a 6.5-foot-wide accessible walkway with thermal-finished granite paving, to provide a fully accessible connection between the President John F. Kennedy Memorial site walkway and the John F. Kennedy Eternal Flame Terrace. The design required no changes to the historic memorial or landscape. ANC began removing the flagstone walkway in March-April of 2022. While verifying the site topography and the design of the new walkway, ANC determined that a fully accessible and ABA-compliant walkway required modifications to the design, the landscape, and a section of the memorial. Any new walkway placed along the path of the previous flagstone walkway would not meet ABA slope requirements for ramps.

The following package is a proposed modification to the original project, with the intention of providing a fully ABA-compliant accessible walkway that connects the memorial's north walkway to the gravesites and the John F. Kennedy Eternal Flame Terrace, allowing better access for all visitors to this significant historic site.







## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) proposes removing a flagstone path north of the President John F. Kennedy memorial grave terrace and replacing it with a flame-finished granite walkway which meets the American Barriers Act (ABA) of 1968. Installed decades ago as an accessible route to the grave terrace, the existing 3.5 feet wide by 135 feet long flagstone path meets no federal accessibility standards. There are 17 steps between the entry at Sheridan Drive and the grave terrace. The proposed walkway bypasses the steps to the burial terrace and allows ANC to maintain the modern landscape architecture of the Memorial as designed by John Carl Warnecke.

The 6 feet wide replacement walkway is designed to match the existing granite (Deer Isle). The granite pavers will be placed using the same pattern used along the formal approaches to the Kennedy Memorial. To be ABA compliant, the new ramp requires curbs and railings. ANC proposes solid granite curbs and bronze railings of the same material and style as the existing railings and curbs on the Warnecke-designed memorial. A drain system is proposed at the bottom of the walkway; the drain will match existing drains located on the memorial walkways. To meet ABA slope requirements, the path of the replacement walkway cannot follow the exact path of the current walkway. Shifting the path to the north requires removal of one tree. The trees are an important component of the Rachel Lambert Mellon-designed landscape. ANC proposes replacing the tree within the same landscape, on the same hillside adjacent to the walkway.

Furthermore, ANC proposes modifications to the north memorial walkway and stairs. The ABA standards require a level landing to transition from the memorial walkway to the new accessible ramp. The addition of a level landing results in the need for two additional stairs to transition from the landing to the overlook terrace. This in turn requires an extended bronze railing over the entire length of the steps. The project also requires removal of a two foot section of granite curb at the east entrance of the walkway, and removal of a four foot section of hedge at the south end the walkway to accommodate the six and a half foot width of the ABA-compliant ramp entryway. The new ramp could be removed and the landscape restored at a future date. To mitigate damage to the original Warnecke-designed memorial, ANC proposes removing, salvaging, and storing original material, and replacing it with new elements constructed of the same materials.

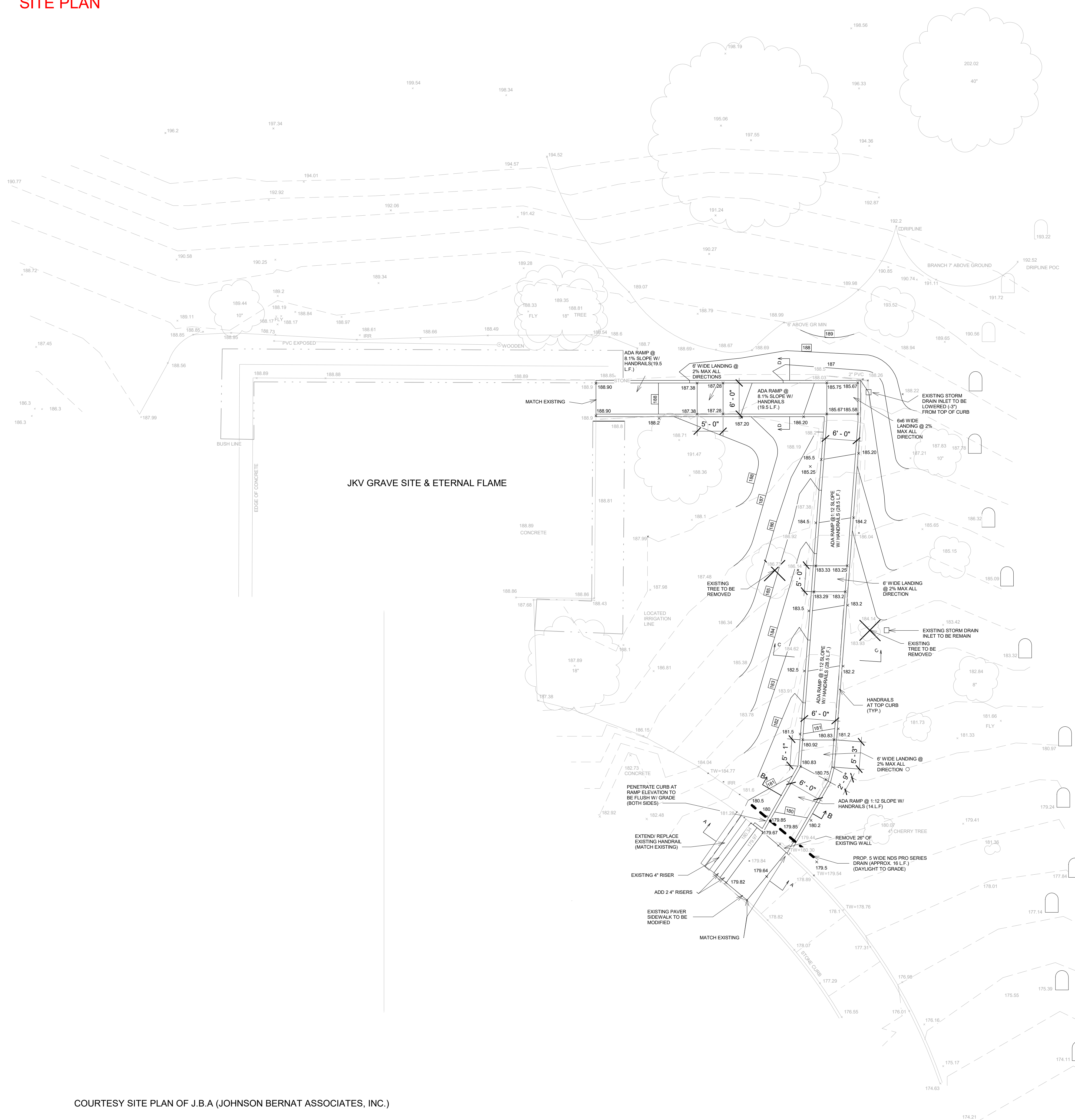
The boundary of the proposed project area is outlined on the map to the left in red.







## SITE PLAN



COURTESY SITE PLAN OF J.B.A (JOHNSON BERNAT ASSOCIATES, INC.)

T+T ENGINEERS LLC.

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MD, 20759  
301-655-8591  
dhanhtuan@yahoo.com

DocuSigned by:



DocuSigned by:  
Tuan Duc

5/17/2022

[illegible]

ARLINGTON  
CEMETARY  
JFK ADA RAMP  
SITE PLAN

Project number	2022017
Date	05/15/22
Drawn by	Author
Checked by	Checker

S101

Scale	1" = 10'-0"
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5/17/2022 9:55:25 AM









## Area of Potential Effects:

The Area of Potential Effects (APE) for the proposed project is shown on the map to the left as a yellow oval. The APE includes locations where the project may be visible and/or audible. The project involves ground disturbing activities in previously disturbed areas.

The project area is located in Arlington National Cemetery Historic District (Virginia Department of Historic Resources [VDHR] #000-0042).

## Historic Properties Located Within the APE:

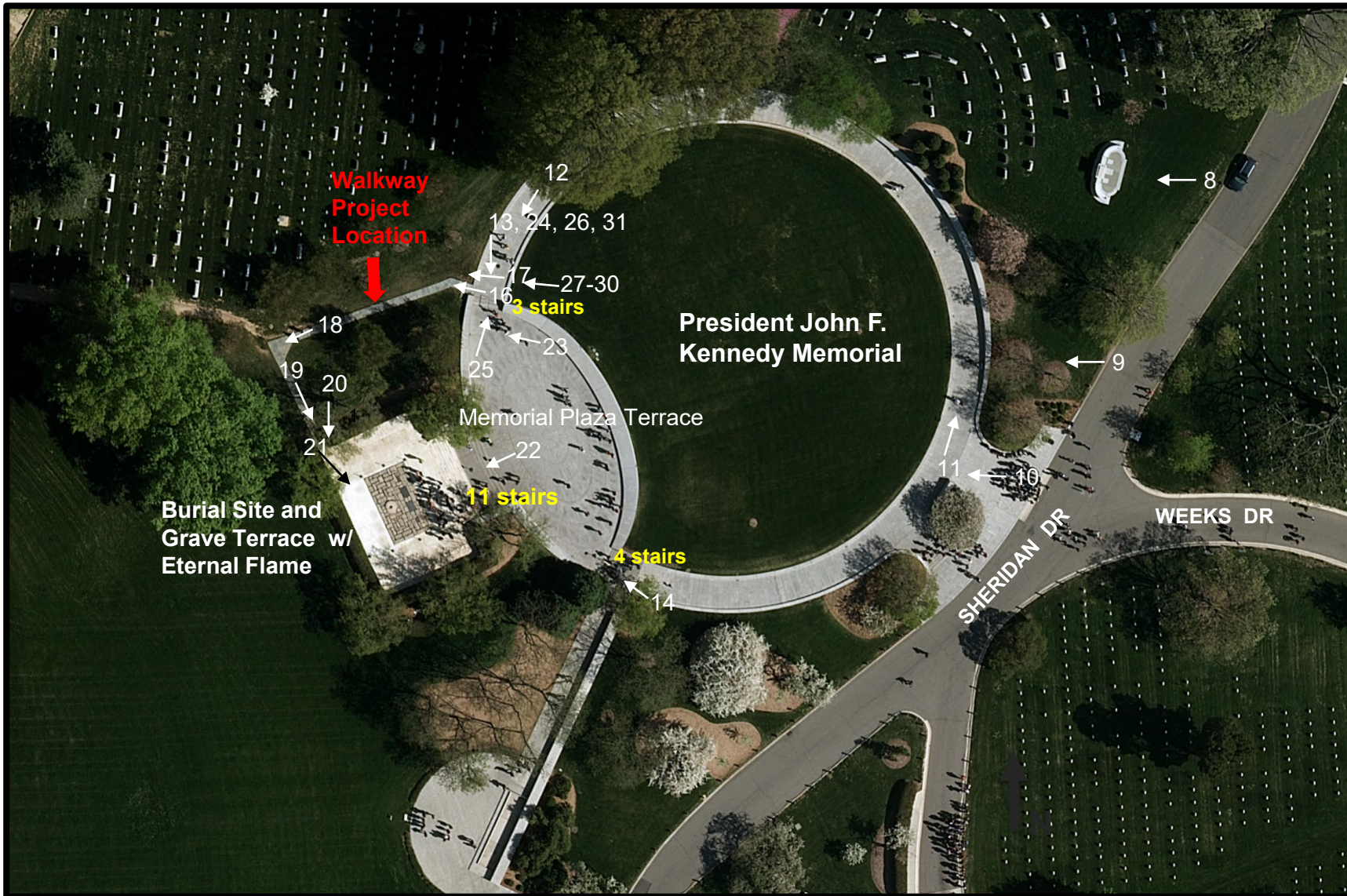
Following is a list of historic structures and features contributing to Arlington National Cemetery's and Arlington House's historic districts, which are located within/adjacent to the APE.

- Arlington National Cemetery Historic District (DHR #000-0042)
- Kennedy Gravesites (DHR # 000-0042-0033)
- Arlington House (DHR # 000-0001)
- Mary Randolph Gravesite (no DHR #)
- Custis Walk (no DHR #)
- Headstones and Grave Markers (DHR #000-0042-0021)
- Burial Sections 2, 5, 30, 31, 32, and 45

*Satellite View of Project Area.  
APE outlined in yellow.  
Proposed project location in red.*



# SITE PLAN & VIEWS



The President John F. Kennedy Memorial is adjacent to Sheridan and Weeks Drives in Section 45 of the Cemetery. The proposed project location is on the northwest side of the President Kennedy grave terrace and eternal flame.

The memorial site takes advantage of the natural topography by nestling the circular walkway in the hillside, leading up to the plaza terrace with its views out to the National Mall. As a result, the northwest walkway and stairs are not visible from most directions. They are best viewed from the north walkway itself, looking south. Similarly, the current flagstone ramp is tucked in the hillside and not visible from the south or west. It is most visible from Custis Walk and the Mary Randolph gravesite from the north. The flagstone ramp is also shielded by trees to the north, west, and east, further obscuring its location.

## Key:

# → Direction and number of Photograph on following pages.



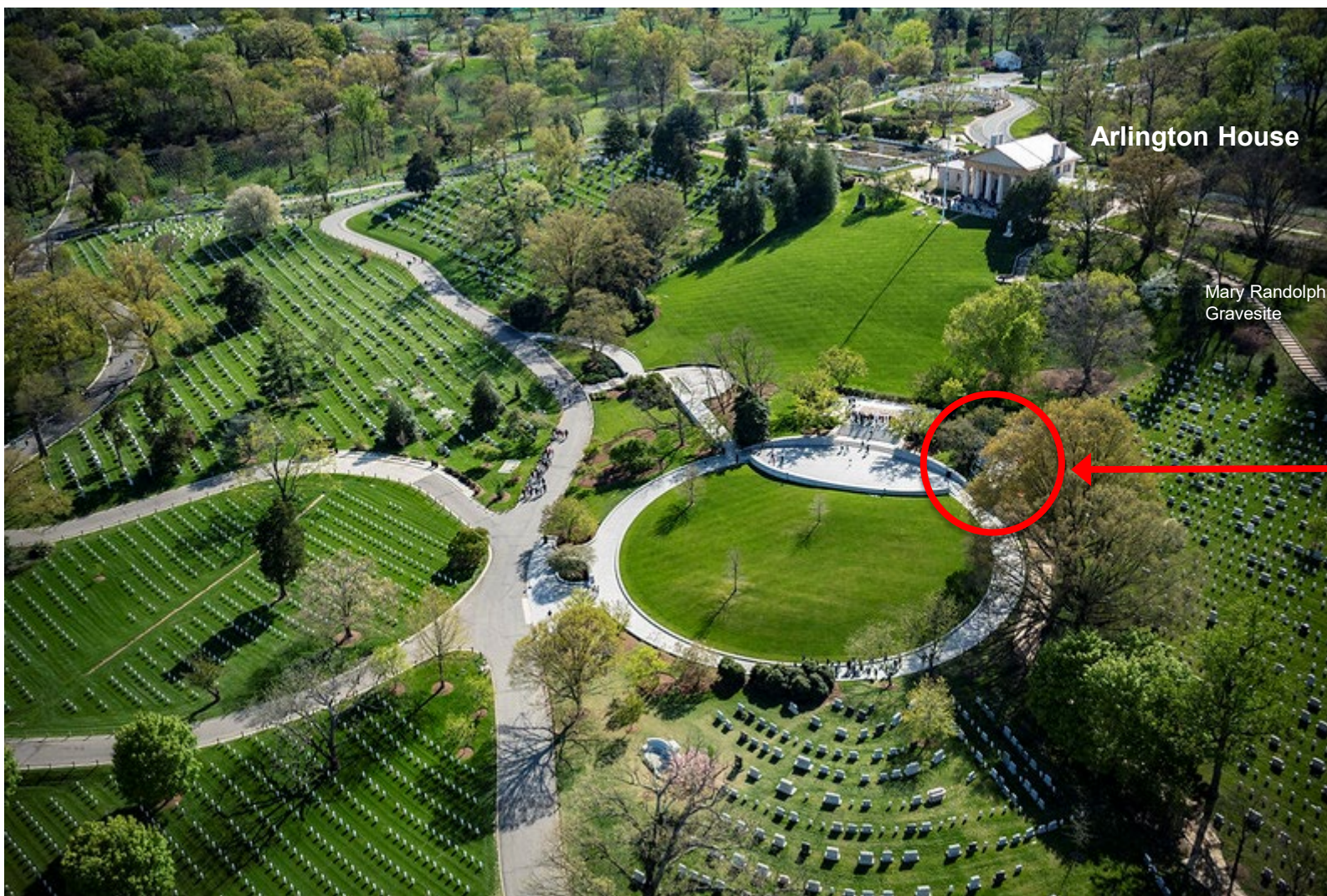
The President John F. Kennedy  
Memorial Gravesite  
area is outlined in **yellow**.



The boundary of the  
proposed project  
area is outlined in  
**red**.

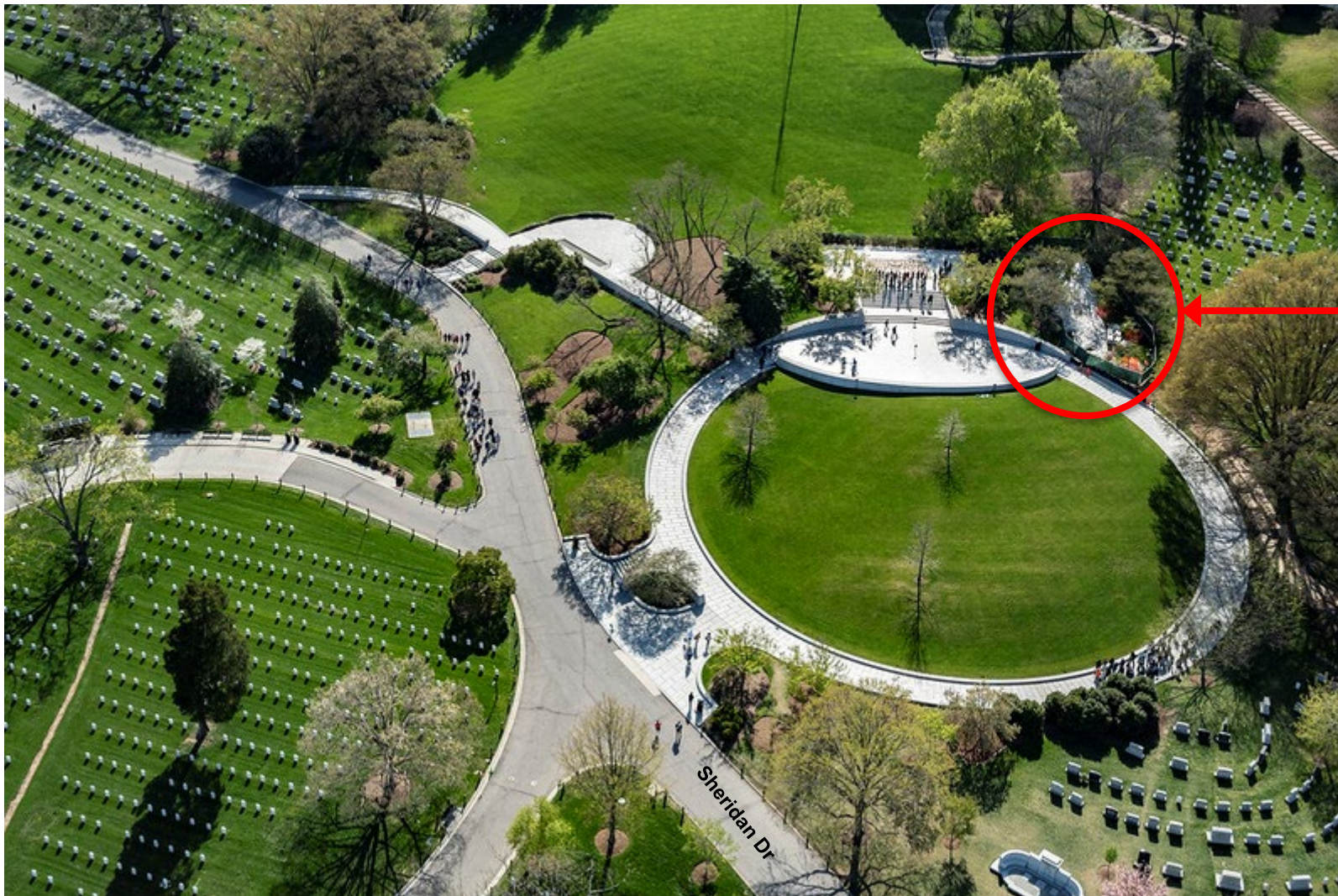
Aerial photograph of Memorial Avenue looking west towards Arlington House at Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Va., April 20, 2022. (U.S. Army photo by Elizabeth Fraser / Arlington National Cemetery / released)





Aerial photography of the John F. Kennedy gravesite and Arlington House, looking west, at Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Va., April 20, 2022. (U.S. Army photo by Elizabeth Fraser / Arlington National Cemetery / released)





The boundary of the proposed project area is outlined in red.

Aerial photography of the John F. Kennedy gravesite, looking west, at Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Va., April 20, 2022. (U.S. Army photo by Elizabeth Fraser / Arlington National Cemetery / released)





1. View from Arlington House overlook, looking east toward the President John F. Kennedy Memorial Gravesite (project location not visible)



2. View from Custis Walk overlook, looking east toward the President John F. Kennedy Memorial Gravesite (project location highlighted in red)



3. View from Mary Randolph gravesite, looking southeast toward the President John F. Kennedy Memorial Gravesite (project location highlighted in red)





4. View from Custis Walk, looking southwest toward the President John F. Kennedy Memorial Gravesite and Arlington House (project location highlighted in red)



5. View from Custis Walk, looking southwest toward the President John F. Kennedy Memorial Gravesite and Arlington House (project location highlighted in red)



6. View from Sheridan Dr., looking southwest toward the President John F. Kennedy Memorial Gravesite and Arlington House (project location highlighted in red)





7. View from Sheridan Dr., looking west toward the President John F. Kennedy Memorial Gravesite and Arlington House (project location not visible)



8. View from Sheridan Dr., looking west toward the John W. Weeks gravesite, President John F. Kennedy Memorial Gravesite, and Arlington House (project location not visible)



9. View from Sheridan Dr., looking west toward the President John F. Kennedy Memorial Gravesite and Arlington House (project location not visible)





10. View of entryway to the President John F. Kennedy Memorial Gravesite from Sheridan Dr., looking northwest (project location not visible)



11. View of the President John F. Kennedy Memorial Gravesite north walkway, looking northwest (project location not visible)



12. View of the President John F. Kennedy Memorial Gravesite north walkway, looking southwest toward the terrace plaza (project location highlighted in red)

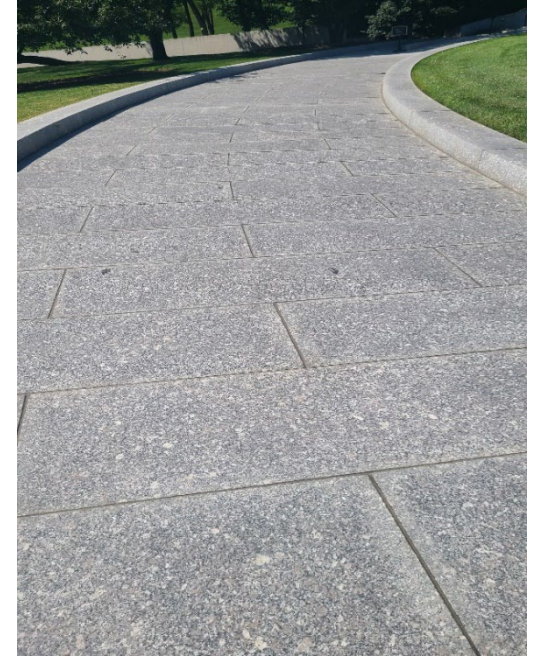




13. North entry to Memorial Plaza (looking south). Three steps separate existing walkway from the plaza. Proposed access walkway intersects with this walk to the right (outside view of this image.)



14. South entry to Memorial Plaza (looking north). Four steps separate existing walkway from the plaza.



15. Proposed new walkway, will be constructed with the same materials as the existing (Deer Isle granite).





16. Existing flagstone path.



17. Granite curb at flagstone path to be removed and stored to make room for ABA-compliant granite walkway.



18. Northwest corner of existing flagstone path.



19. Existing south end of the flagstone path at north entrance to grave terrace.





20. Four foot section of hedge to be removed at the north side of the grave terrace to accommodate the wider walkway.



21. View of grave terrace from the south end of the flagstone path.



22. Eleven steps between memorial plaza and grave terrace that provide limited access to President Kennedy's burial site.





23. View from the memorial terrace plaza looking west toward the walkway project location (accessible walkway entryway marked with orange cones)



24. View of north memorial staircase, railing, and walkway in proposed project area, looking south toward the terrace plaza (accessible walkway entryway marked with orange cones)



25. View of north memorial staircase, railing, and walkway in proposed project area, looking north toward the north walkway (accessible walkway entryway marked with orange cones)





26, 27, 28. View of north memorial staircase, railing, and landing in proposed project area. ANC proposes removing the original granite slabs and bronze railing, replacing them with a level granite landing, two additional granite stairs, and a longer bronze railing. An existing granite curb at the new ramp entryway will be removed and replaced with granite curbs that accommodate the width of the new ABA-compliant ramp. All existing, original granite and bronze elements that are removed will be salvaged, inventoried, and stored, to prevent damage to elements original to the Warnecke-designed memorial. ANC proposes making the modifications to the Warnecke-designed memorial as reversible as possible.

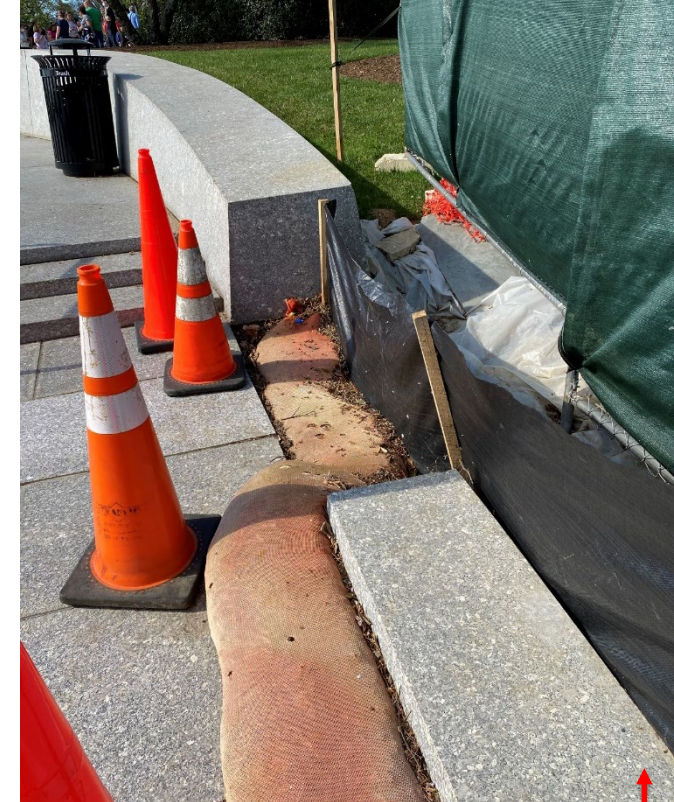




29. View (looking west) of proposed project location for modifications to the Warnecke-designed memorial. ANC proposes removing, salvaging, and storing granite and bronze elements within the yellow polygon. These will be replaced with a level granite landing, two additional granite stairs, and a longer bronze railing, constructed with the same materials as the memorial (Deer Isle granite).



30. Existing opening for flagstone walkway. ANC proposes shifting the opening to accommodate the width and path of the new ABA-accessible granite walkway. A new section of granite curb will be installed (red arrow) to border the two new stairs to the south, and a shorter granite curb section (black arrow) will be installed to the north, to accommodate the larger width of the ABA-compliant accessible granite walkway.



31. Existing opening for flagstone walkway. ANC proposes shifting the opening to accommodate the width and path of the new ABA-compliant accessible granite walkway. Arrow points to section of curb to be removed and salvaged.



## DETERMINATION OF EFFECTS

I assessed the effects of the proposed project. Applying the criteria of adverse effects (36 C.F.R. § 800.5[a][1]), I determined the undertaking will have an **adverse effect** on the characteristics which qualify Arlington National Cemetery historic district for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places.

ANC retains the historic views and vistas within the cemetery after construction of the proposed project. The historic location and elements within the district are maintained. Headstones and circulation patterns remain unchanged. The cemetery continues to convey its historic significance as a military cemetery, and for its landscape architecture and architecture. However, there will be a change in the integrity of the Kennedy Gravesites, by altering and removing portions of the historic Memorial, as designed by John Carl Warnecke, and the cultural landscape, as designed by Rachel Lambert Mellon. Furthermore, the project removes one non-historic feature to replace it with another non-historic feature. The new ramp could be removed and the landscape restored at a future date. To mitigate damage to the original Warnecke-designed memorial, ANC proposes removing, salvaging, and storing original material, and replacing it with new elements constructed of the same materials (bronze and Deer Isle granite). Otherwise, there are no changes to the integrity of location, workmanship, feeling or associations of ANC's National Register district.

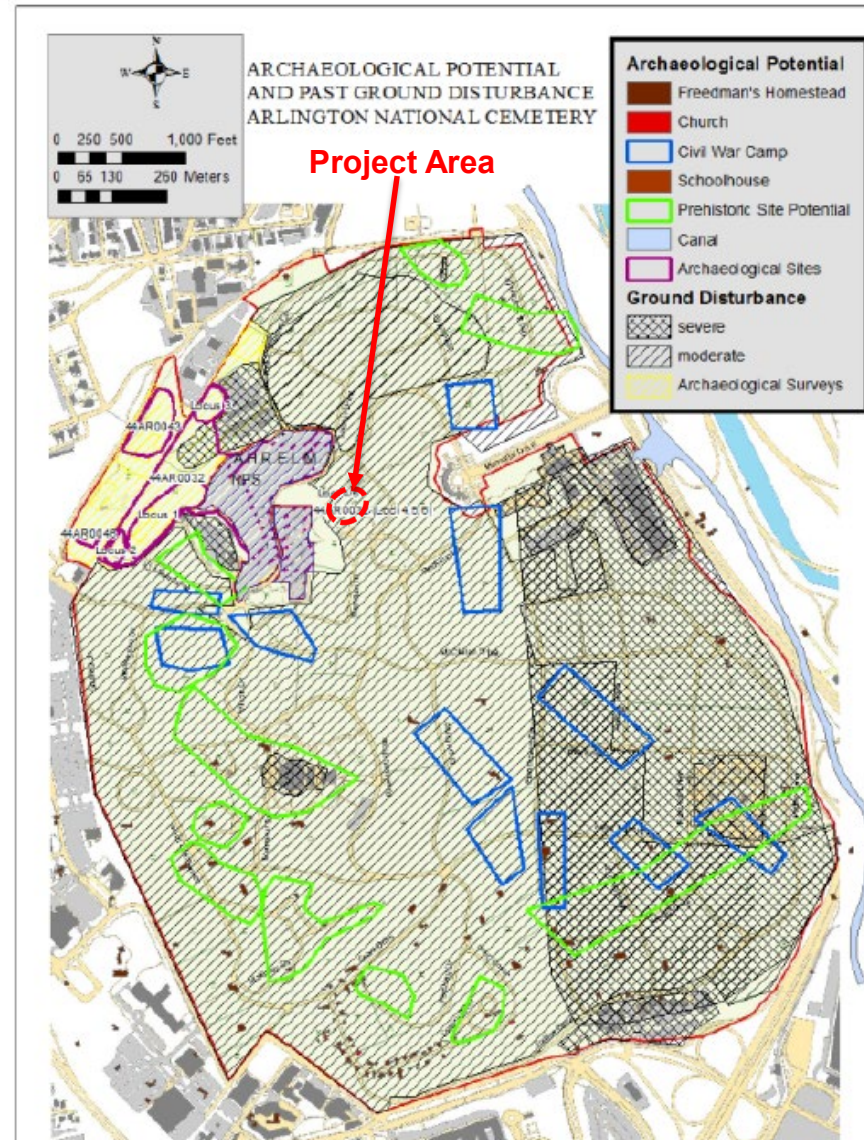
Arlington House (The Robert E. Lee Memorial) National Register Historic District is west of the project area. From the house and hillside, the proposed walkway is not completely visible. However, the walkway is visible from the Mary Randolph gravesite and the Custis Walk, which both contribute to ANC's historic district. The walkway is more apparent during winter months when leaves fall from surrounding trees and other plants are not in bloom. However, this change has no effect on the character of the two historic districts.

The proposed undertaking would have **no adverse effect to archaeological resources**. All construction would be located in areas of the APE that have been surveyed and found not to contain archaeological resources and/or have been disturbed through prior development of the cemetery or adjacent infrastructure (reference "Archaeological Potential & Past Ground Disturbance Map from Attachment D, Application of National Register of Historic Places Criteria".) It is not expected that undiscovered cultural resources would be found during implementation of the undertaking. However, in the event of an unanticipated discovery during ground-disturbing activities, all work would cease, and the ANC Cultural Resources Manager (CRM) would be contacted. The CRM would immediately notify the Virginia Department of Historic Resources and other appropriate agencies, and standard procedures would be followed to protect the artifacts and determine their significance.

To mitigate the effects of the project, ANC proposes utilizing materials that match the memorial's historic construction (Deer Isle granite and bronze railings). Original components of the historic memorial will be salvaged, inventoried, and stored. The one tree impacted by the creation of the new ABA-compliant walkway will be reinstalled or replaced-in-kind on the same hillside.

Caitlin Smith, AIC PA  
Cultural Resources Manager  
Arlington National Cemetery





*Archaeological Potential & Past  
Ground Disturbance Map  
from Attachment D, Application of  
National Register of Historic  
Places Criteria" for Arlington  
National Cemetery*



# ARLINGTON National Cemetery

HONOR ★ REMEMBER ★ EXPLORE



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