

JOHN CARL WARNECKE FAIA

file

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November 20, 1995

Melanne Verveer
Deputy Chief of Staff to the First Lady
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Melanne,

The Warnecke Institute of Design, Art and Architecture is dedicated to a comprehensive approach to design which embraces an architecture of continuity and diversity while seeking unity with our man-made and natural environments. This is the philosophy of architecture that I pioneered in the 1950s and utilized while working with President and Jacqueline Kennedy in the design of Lafayette Square in 1962. This is the philosophy of design I proposed in 1963 for uniting Lafayette Park and the White House.

Following the closing down of Pennsylvania Avenue, the Warnecke Institute decided to move forward and complete my earlier concepts which embraced this philosophy of architecture. What better way to express the Warnecke Institute goals than to apply its design philosophy to this important project originally conceived thirty years ago.

Attached is a summary of quotations from outstanding historians, writers, and architects familiar with the functions and requirements of this project entitled, "Capturing the Spirit of the Design." In addition, I have added quotations of my own writings based on clarifying this philosophy of architecture as applied to this design. It is hoped that you will pick up the theme and spirit of this design that embraces this philosophy of architecture.

Also attached is an outline of the index of the full report on the design now being completed. This report will soon be presented to Roger G. Kennedy, the Park Service group, and others responsible to President Clinton for undertaking this work.

Sincerely,

Jack
John Carl Warnecke, FAIA
JCW/bb:301

enclosures

*The Saga rolls on —
I hope to have the
opportunity of seeing you
soon in Washington. Let the
First Lady know if you like this.*

HISTORY COMPLETES THE
VISION OF THE
WHITE HOUSE

Index and Nature of John Carl Warnecke's report that relates the evolution of these historic environs while developing a process of design that unites the White House with Lafayette Park.

NOVEMBER 20, 1995

PREFACE

In 1994 the Warnecke Institute was undertaking studies on the unique role of President and First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy in the 1962 design of Lafayette Square and their joint interest in the architecture of our Capital and country and the impact that this design has made on the architecture in Washington and other areas throughout this country.

At a time when Modern design dominated architecture throughout the United States, Lafayette Square was the first major restoration project in America to be sponsored by the Federal government. This project was also the first project to utilize restoration with a new type of adaptive reuse of the older buildings. At the same time, the design developed a new land use strategy that combined both historic and new buildings on the same site, The design also utilized a contextual approach which integrated and related the new buildings to the older historic buildings. This contextual approach was a part of my comprehensive philosophy of architecture which I evolved in the late 1940s and 1950s early in my career. It is an approach to design and a philosophy of architecture that embraces continuity and diversity while seeking unity of our man-made and natural environments.

In 1994 and in early 1995, Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis was most interested to hear of these studies of the Warnecke Institute and was thrilled to hear that the Lafayette Square project was being talked about by architects and critics as the most important

projects in Washington since World War II and how the design of the project had influenced the architecture of the Capital more than any other project during the last 30 years.

These studies of the role of the Kennedys were temporarily halted with the several 1994 shootings at the White House and the Oklahoma City bombing which led President Clinton to close down the Avenue.

Instead, the Warnecke Institute concentrated on completing a phase of the original Lafayette Square project that had never been completed. In January 1995, the Institute undertook the completion of the earlier proposal embraced by the Kennedys to construct a tunnel under Pennsylvania Avenue and construct a beautiful grand plaza and promenade to view the White House.

After closing down the Avenue, I decided to move ahead and modify my earlier design of this space without the tunnel while the Park Service continued to study alternate means of handling traffic.

The Warnecke Institute is dedicated to a multiple comprehensive approach to design and architecture which, among other diverse approaches, embraces contextual design for important historic environments. Because of their commitment, the Institute decided to move forward and study how this philosophy would affect the design of this space and to demonstrate how this approach to design is essential in the redesign of Pennsylvania Avenue. What better way could be found both for completing the vision of the Kennedys

and the Warnecke Institute's dedication to this comprehensive approach than to design a project that would display this approach to design and help clarify this philosophy of architecture.

Attached is the index of the three sections of a report now in the process of being finalized that incorporates this contextual approach to design for the redesign of Pennsylvania Avenue. This report will be submitted to Roger G. Kennedy as a plan to be critiqued, studied, altered, and hopefully adopted as a part of the planning process now being undertaken by the National Park Service.

Included in this report is the restudying of the history of the White House which is essential in order to capture the spirit of the new design of the Avenue. In this process, I have collected certain phrases and quotations that capture this spirit of design that I and other historians, writers and architects have expressed in different and perhaps more powerful ways. In addition, I have added quotes from my own writings which I believe are essential to understanding this architectural philosophy and approach to design.

I hope that this document will help clarify the project's philosophy of design and set a clear direction for those responsible to President Clinton for carrying out this design task in the highest and best manner possible.

John Carl Warnecke, FAIA

November 20, 1995

HISTORY COMPLETES VISION OF THE WHITE HOUSE

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THE PLAN THAT WILL UNITE THE WHITE HOUSE & LAFAYETTE PARK

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THE DESIGN MUST RELATE TO OUR HISTORY

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**CAPTURING THE SPIRIT
OF THE DESIGN**

**A Book of Quotations
That Define the New
Pennsylvania Avenue**

by

John Carl Warnecke, FAIA

November 20, 1995

CAPTURING THE SPIRIT
OF THE DESIGN

**Quotations by historians, writers, critics
and architects that relate the essential
functions and character of the redesign of
Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White
House**

THE FOLLOWING HISTORIANS, WRITERS AND
ARCHITECTS ARE QUOTED IN THIS DOCUMENT

Bruce Babbitt
Francis Baily
Jonathan Barnett
Peter Blake
Daniel J. Boorstin
Donald Canty
Grosvenor Chapman, FAIA
David M. Childs, FAIA
Douglas Davis
Benjamin Forgey
George Hartmann, FAIA
Ada Louise Huxtable
John Fitzgerald Kennedy
Roger G. Kennedy
David McCullough
Warren A. Megrian, AIA
Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis
Thomas Stokes Page
Franklin Delano Roosevelt
Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.
Vincent Scully
William Seale
Harry S. Truman
Vitruvius
William Walton
John Carl Warnecke, FAIA
Gilson Willets

CAPTURING THE SPIRIT OF THE DESIGN

Over the past year I have written several items to those responsible to President Clinton on the redesign of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House. During this time, I have undertaken considerable research on the history of the White House and its environs. This investigation included going back and reviewing all the work we originally accomplished on the Grand Plaza and Promenade for First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy in 1963.

In this process I have collected key statements that caught my eye that best expressed the spirit of this project and this design. This is not an ordinary or normal design project. One way I thought one might capture the philosophy and approach to design of this important symbolic place would be to quote certain phrases that caught the special qualities of this place and uniqueness of this design. These would be the special historic insights that other noted Americans familiar with the history and architecture of the White House have expressed either in their writings or in letters to me.

In addition, I have added quotes from my own writings which capture the contextual approach and philosophy of architecture that motivate this design. Although the work and efforts of everyone involved are well-intended, it appears, however, that because of the importance of this national shrine, a large cloud of confusion has emerged as to how this task should be undertaken. What are the

real functions of this design, and how should this design be carried out. As noted architect David Childs expressed in a recent letter to me the answer lies in "the silver lining" within this cloud. "It simply is the rejoining of the two areas surrounding this space."

As one reads these quotes, the design approach and philosophy of design clearly emerges. One can quickly grasp the function, the history and the essence of this place and this design.

My forthcoming report to Roger G. Kennedy for President Clinton and all those involved in the National Park Service entitled, "History Completes Vision of White House," relates the background and history of my previous work on the design of Lafayette Square, Lafayette Park, and the previous studies I have made on the design of the grand plaza and promenade for President and First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy.

I have broken the quotes into the three sections of this report as follows:

- Section I: The Plan That Will Unite the White House and Lafayette Park
- Section II: The Design Must Relate to our History
- Section III: The Future of the White House

The quotations follow in the above order.

THE PLAN THAT WILL UNITE

THE WHITE HOUSE AND LAFAYETTE PARK

SECTION I

The White House Comprehensive Design Plan is a long-range plan that has been in progress over the course of the last 3 years developing a plan to guide the future management and use of the buildings and grounds at the White House, aiming to better serve the public and the President, and to protect the historic character of this national treasure.¹

Roger G. Kennedy, 1995

¹ July 1995 letter to John Carl Warnecke, FAIA from Roger G. Kennedy, Director of the National Park Service.

The simplest answer would be by far the best; that the silver lining in this cloud is that these two areas would be rejoined after having been split by the major highway that Pennsylvania Avenue has evolved into in this area.²

David M. Childs, FAIA,
1995

² David M. Childs, FAIA, in a letter addressed to John Carl Warnecke on July 27, 1995.

Keep it simple...The starting point of any design is to pay close attention to what is already there. A house, a park and a street. These three parts need to be tied together into an elegant composition.³

Benjmain Forgey, July 1995

³ Benjmain Forgey in his July 8, 1995 Washington Post article, entitled "Caution Construction Ahead."

The design of Pennsylvania Avenue is a contextual problem that must unite today's requirements of security with the history and symbolism of the White House.⁴

John Carl Warnecke, FAIA

July 1995

⁴ John Carl Warnecke, FAIA, "History Completes Vision of the White House," 1995.

All the parts and pieces are all there and all that is needed is to integrate them into a unified whole. It is like weaving together two parts of a large beautiful tapestry. The fabric, the threads with all their colors are all there ready to be woven together.⁵

John Carl Warnecke, FAIA

June 1995

⁵ John Carl Warnecke wrote the Park Service and the Enforcement Division of the Treasury Department in is June 19, 1995 article entitled, "Greater White House Access."

A client and a designer create a sort of joint persona. They express what they both want the public to think of them.⁶

Roger G. Kennedy, 1989

⁶ Roger G. Kennedy, *Orders from France* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1989), p. 13.

Subtle and simple things such as the historic planting of the red Salvia flowers determines the historic landscape character required to complete the overall design.

John Carl Warnecke, FAIA

October 1995

Architecture very often comments upon its circumstances by stating a desirable opposite: for example, that aspect of their own epoch which the contemporaries of neoclassical architects felt most poignantly was its turbulence. The quality most evident in the work of those architects was tranquility.⁷

Roger G. Kennedy, 1989

⁷ Roger G. Kennedy, *Orders from France* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1989), p. 13, 426. JCW notes this condition exists following the White House shootings and Oklahoma City bombing. Pennsylvania Avenue is to emerge into a far more beautiful and peaceful setting for the White House.

The basic elements of the design are all in place. This is the original four-block area set aside by L'Enfant which is the view one looks out to from the front door of the White House. The White House, Lafayette Square Park, the historic buildings surrounding the square President and First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy and I helped save, and the new Executive Office Building and Court of Claims Building, that I designed in 1962, all serve as backdrops to the older historic buildings and the White House. The design of the grand plaza and promenade will tie all of these historic elements into a unified whole.⁸

John Carl Warnecke, FAIA

January 1995

⁸ John Carl Warnecke's report to President Clinton in January 1995 prior to closing down the traffic of Pennsylvania Avenue.

THE DESIGN MUST RELATE
TO OUR HISTORY

**THE REDESIGN OF PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE AND ITS NEW BOUNDARIES MUST
BE IN CONTEXT WITH THE HISTORY AND SYMBOLISM OF THE WHITE HOUSE**

SECTION II

They come in ever increasing numbers, by the tens of millions every year. They climb the sweep of marble steps at the Supreme Court, pose for a picture by the Grant statue. They move slowly, quietly past the fifty-seven thousand names in the black stone wall of the Vietnam Memorial. They pour through the Air and Space Museum, the most popular museum in the world now, craning their necks at the technical marvels of our rocket century. We all do. We all should. This is our capital. It speaks of who we are and what we have accomplished, what we stand for. ⁹

David McCullough, 1986

⁹ David McCullough, "Why I Love Washington," *American Heritage*, April/May 1986.

Architecture depends on Order. Arrangement,
Eurythmy (Beauty, Symmetry, Propriety, and
Economy.) ¹⁰

Vitruvius

¹⁰ At the time of Caesar, Vitruvius wrote his ten books on architecture and described the fundamental principles of design and architecture. Architecture continues to develop and change as it adapts to new eras of time, but the definition of architecture established by Vitruvius is still a most helpful guide in defining architecture today.

The private buildings go on but slowly. There are about twenty or thirty houses built near the Point, as well as a few in South Capitol Street and about a hundred others scattered over in other places: in all I suppose about two hundred: and these constitute the great city of Washington. The truth is, that not much more than one-half the city is cleared: - the rest is in woods: and most of the streets which are laid out are cut through these woods, and have a much more pleasing effect now than I think they will have when they shall be built; for now they appear like broad avenues in a park, bounded on each side by thick woods; and there being so many of them, and proceeding in so many various directions, they have a certain wild, yet uniform and regular appearance, which they will lose when confined on each side by brick walls. ¹¹

Francis Baily, 1796

¹¹ In the fall of 1796 Francis Baily also recorded his impressions of the embryonic city. He admired the President's house, the Capitol, and the view from the point where the Potomac and Anacostia join. However, very little in the way of a city was to be seen, as Baily soon discovered.

In 1803 Latrobe is named Superintendent of Public Buildings and he soon designed the first formal entrance for Pennsylvania Avenue to the White House. He also encircled the White House grounds with its first wall, a stone boundary intended more to control livestock than to provide security. Latrobe's drawings show a circular turn around on the north front of the White House and the main formal entrance of 16th Street continuing on right up to the White House circular entry point. ¹²

William Seale, 1992

¹² William Seale, *The White House: The History of an American Idea*, (Washington, D.C.: The American Institute of Architects Press, 1992), p. 38.

The actual number of Secret Service guards in attendance upon the President is never made public. But certain it is that at all receptions a number of such guards are on duty within the house, while several more are stationed outside. The President never steps outside the White House, never travels even the shortest distance, without being followed by one or more officers of the Secret Service.¹³

Gilson Willets, 1908

¹³ Gilson Willets, *Inside History of the White House* (New York: The Christian Herald, 1908) p.183.

The McMillan Plan (1901) projected a remarkable transformation that would give dramatic emphasis to a greatly elaborated series of axes, based upon those planned by L'Enfant. Each vista was to terminate in a fine example of neoclassical architecture. As in L'Enfant's plan, the principal feature was to be the Mall, the Capitol at one end, a memorial to Lincoln at the other, and along sides large neoclassical buildings for the federal offices. The cross-axis, having the White House at its northern end, was lengthened south of the Mall, with space reserved for a monument of an undesignated character.¹⁴

William Seale, 1986

¹⁴ William Seale, *The President's House, Volume II* (Washington, D.C.: White House Historical Association, 1986), p. 656.

The artistic lines of the White House buildings were the creation of master builders when our Republic was young. The simplicity and strength of the structure remain in the face of every modern test. But within this magnificent pattern, the necessities of modern government business require constant reorganization and rebuilding.

The architects and builders are men of common sense and of artistic American tastes. They know that the principles of harmony and of necessity itself require that the building of the new structure shall blend with the essential lines of the old. It is this combination of the old and the new that marks orderly peaceful progress--not only in building buildings but in building government itself.¹⁵

Franklin Delano Roosevelt, 1935

¹⁵ F.D.R. relates to the nation in one of his fireside chats prior to adding on to the east and west wings of the White House.

No work is proposed in scope or detail that will alter the architectural or cultural features or impair the integrity of the building in its role of a National Shrine. In all respects the historic and traditional symbolism of the Nation's most revered mansion must be preserved to the greatest degree consistent with the use of modern materials and equipment that will be incorporated into the project.¹⁶

President Harry Truman's Proposal to
Congress, 1948

¹⁶ For eighty years Congress had opposed demolishing the White House. Finally in the late 1940s, President Truman stepped forward to undertake the complete reconstruction of the President's House. These words by which formed the proposal to Congress assured the government that this would be undertaken with the greatest of care and respect.

History Continues

THE SQUARE IS RETURNED
TO L'ENFANT'S VISION

For nearly 60 years, the 1901 McMillan Plan moved forward to create a monumental government office building square surrounding the White House. The following are quotations that describe John Carl Warnecke's 1962 concept for the design of Lafayette Square and relate how this design returned the square to L'Enfant's vision and how the impact of this design altered architecture throughout Washington and America.

Because the design of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House must unite the White House with Lafayette Park and the Square surrounding the park, it is important to understand how Warnecke's contextual approach to design and philosophy of architecture was first accepted by the public and architectural critics at the time he designed the Lafayette Square project for President and First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy and how later this project altered and changed the direction of architecture in the Nation's Capital and in other cities throughout America. Now, thirty years later, the project's design and the several new directions that were first set in design and architecture is more fully understood. The following quotations by noted historians, writers, and architects trace the story of this evolution and describe the design and its impact in design and architecture.

Warnecke Institute of Design, Art
and Architecture, 1995

Because the redesign of Pennsylvania Avenue is a design task of contextual design, it is most important to understand the roots of how contextual design emerged in the period of Modern design in the middle of the 20th century. It is important to go back and see exactly where and how it started, how it emerged, and exactly what its impact will be on the future of architecture and the environs of the White House.

Warren Megrian, AIA

Both Kennedy and Walton gave up and concluded that the old buildings would have to go. Only Jacqueline held out. 'The wreckers haven't started yet' she said, 'and until they do, it can be saved.'¹⁷

Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., 1962

¹⁷ Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. recalls in his book on JFK entitled A Thousand Days.

I consider our history to be a source of strength to us here in the White House...Anything that dramatizes the story of the United States is worth the respect of Americans who visit here and who are a part of our history.

John Fitzgerald Kennedy, 1962

The important thing is to preserve the 19th century feeling of Lafayette Square...I so strongly feel the White House should give the example in preserving our nation's past. Now we think of saving old buildings like Mt. Vernon and tear down everything in the 19th century...but in the next hundred years, the 19th century will be of great interest and there will be none of it left, just plain glass skyscrapers...Before you know it, everything is ripped down and horrible things put up in their place. I simply panic at the thought of this and decided to make a last-ditch appeal.¹⁸

Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, 1962

¹⁸ In a letter to Bernard Boutin, head of the General Services Administration (G.S.A.), Jacqueline Kennedy wrote on March 6, 1962.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

October 15, 1962

Dear Bernie:

I would like to tell you how pleased Mrs. Kennedy and I are with the preliminary architectural studies of Lafayette Square.

I have been reflecting on the significance of this work, not only in the terms of the importance of it to the environs of the White House and our capital, but to what it means in a broader sense to other cities and communities throughout America.

As you know, I am fully cognizant of the progress made by American Architects and Planners in their contribution to our country in contemporary design. This coupled with equal progress made in our cities by their respective governing bodies in forging ahead with vast programs of urban renewal and redevelopment leads me to comment on the manner in which these plans are actually carried out. There are throughout our land specific areas and specific buildings of historical significance or architectural excellence that are threatened by this onward march of progress. I believe that the importance of Lafayette Square lies in the fact that we were not willing to destroy our cultural and historic heritage but that we were willing to find means of preserving it while still meeting the requirements of growth in government. I hope that the same can be done in other parts of our country.

I am particularly pleased that in this case you and the architects were able to express in the new buildings the architecture of our times in a contemporary manner that harmonizes with the historic buildings.

I congratulate you on this fine start.



The Honorable Bernard L. Boutin
Administrator of General Services Administration
Washington 25, D.C.

¹⁹ In this letter JFK steps forth and adopts JCW's approach to design and philosophy of architecture. This letter was drafted by John Carl Warnecke just prior to the public presentation of the design of Lafayette Square on October 15, 1962. JFK added one sentence, "I hope that the same can be done in other parts of our country."

The man who will design John Fitzgerald Kennedy's tomb in Arlington National Cemetery and who is being considered for the commission of the Kennedy Library at Harvard is the architect who has done the most to bring a new design frontier to Washington. John Carl Warnecke was one of the first architects to be given an important Federal job under the Kennedy administration, the redesign of Lafayette Square.

The work of the Warnecke office is marked by an obvious consideration of the traditional in local architecture and respect for the nature of the site and landscape. At the same time stresses the most advanced contemporary design, materials and construction. In Washington, where a strong classical tradition must be fused with new building needs it is hoped that this will produce a superior kind of official architecture and a suitable memorial for Mr. Kennedy." ²⁰

Ada Louise Huxtable, 1963

²⁰ Ada Louise Huxtable writes about John Carl Warnecke in the November 30, 1963 issue of the N.Y. Times following the death of JFK.

In historic places such as Washington, the needs of the present must show respect for the past. In showing respect for the past in the design of new buildings, basic plans, forms masses, materials, colors and textures should be designed in sympathy with the place and its history. At the same time each building should be planned to solve the problems of the present and to express the continuity that provides a link to the future as well as to the past. Although each design grows out of its unique place in history, strong threads of continuity should run through all major works of architecture.. The timeless values of unity, order and clarity and the disciplines of structure and economy underlie any particular design. These together with a profound respect for the universal needs of human beings -- will help us develop an architecture which will provide visual testimony to the dignity, enterprise, vigor and stability of the American government.²¹

John Carl Warnecke, FAIA, 1965

²¹ In June 1965, John Carl Warnecke wrote an article entitled "The Federal City: A Practitioner's View" for the AIA Journal. In this article he spells out the qualities of design that he feels are essential for any government building constructed in Washington, D.C.

...in their partially completed state, one can, I think, see the bones of an architecture which is as American as the New England saltbox and yet completely new to the United States. It may prove to be the pace setter for a revival of an indigenous architecture.²²

Grosvenor Chapman, 1966

²² Grosvenor Chapman, "Lafayette's Neighbor," Washington Post, March 16, 1966. A 1966 article in the Washington Post by Wolf von Eckardt, outlining Vincent Scully's objections to Warnecke's new buildings, which were mostly centered around the harsh appearance of the dark red brick used in the two tower buildings. The article elicited a defense of Warnecke's plans by Grosvenor Chapman.

"ON THE SQUARE

For almost two years Washington has watched two modern blood-red brick office buildings slowly rise incongruously behind the small historic Federal-era houses of Lafayette Square across from the White House.

The first of the buildings, the new Federal Courthouse, was dedicated last week by Chief Justice Earl Warren amidst a well-aired controversy. When Chief Judge Wilson Cowen, of the U.S. Court of Claims, praised the 'imaginative decision' of the architect, a scattering of titters rose from the outdoor audience. Already some critics have blasted the buildings as a 'noble failure,' a 'terrible disappointment,' and as 'hulking forms with strange protuberances.'

'The purpose of my design was the saving of the old historic building.' explains Warnecke. 'The filling in of the holes and the adding of color are yet to come. It's like a painting that hasn't been finished.'

'I think people are tired of the dullness of reproducing historic buildings,' says Warnecke. 'When the square is complete, you're only going to see the top half of the new buildings. The small houses, some natural brick, some painted, will become the dominant visual aspect of the square.'

The Newsweek story ended with Bill Walton coming to JCW's rescue,

"He is a creative guy and one of the better U.S. architects. No other architect had the solution to the difficult problem of Lafayette Square."²³

²³ In the October 2, 1967 issue of Newsweek, a story was written in which most of the story was a criticism of the design.

The first thing that Warnecke did, which seems clearly a correct decision, was to treat both the east and west sides of the Square in a similar way. On the east side of the square he designed a new low building, in red brick, to replace a false-front theater building put up in the 20's. The new building serves to link the Treasury Annex with a row of houses (including the Dolly Madison House) which the Boston architects had planned to remove. On the west side of the square, Warnecke unabashedly chose to fake new versions of the houses that had been replaced by bigger buildings during the 20's, giving a more or less consistent row of facades along the whole west frontage."²⁴

Jonathan Barnett, 1968

²⁴ 1968 article on Lafayette Square by Jonathan Barnett for the magazine, Architectural Record.

The color was obviously chosen to harmonize with the mellow brick of the old houses on the west side of the Square. The photograph shows how successful this color harmony turned out to be...The other question--the problem of architectural expression--was essentially the familiar one of 'keeping in keeping.' Warnecke's design, with its bay windows and mansard roofs, certainly captures something of the crankly silhouette of the 19th century buildings near the square; and, from a scenographic point of view, is quite a successful composition."²⁵

Jonathan Barnett, 1968

²⁵ 1968 article on Lafayette Square by Jonathan Barnett for the magazine, Architectural Record.

The result is probably the most successful large-scale historic restoration in the United States. Unlike Colonial Williamsburg in Virginia, which is really a kind of architectural museum, Lafayette Square is an efficient working office complex right in the center of the nation's capital. One may question some of the details employed in the new buildings Warnecke designed to fill in the existing rows of town houses, and some of the details in the new tall buildings behind them. But these are questions of taste.

The success of Lafayette Square lies in the fact that few people really notice the massive new construction surrounding it.²⁶

Peter Blake, 1975

²⁶ Peter Blake's 1975 article entitled, "John Carl Warnecke-Architect," for the Soviet magazine Amerika, Blake summarized Lafayette Square.

The Lafayette Square scheme was one of the most neglected and innovative urban design concepts in contemporary architecture...I think that it's an accomplishment that deserves wide replication...

These were very radical ideas in those days. Many of the things that he was doing you just didn't do in those days. You didn't think much about saving nice little old stuff like those houses...Much less did you think of replicating anything old. Everything was novel; everything was modernist...I think it was admirable, remarkable for its time, and has remained admirable...²⁷

Donald Canty, 1981

²⁷ Donald Canty, editor of the AIA magazine, Architecture, subsequently stated in April 1981 some 19 years after JCW had designed the project in a retrospective review of the design of the Square in a meeting of the National Building Museum entitled "Washington Revisited."

We then go on to the execution of the scheme, and this too was controversial. There was a softness even to the large buildings which was not a part of my creed in those days...Building with brick, incidentally, is the new material, the vernacular in Washington...And now we're in the brick era, but this was 19 years ago; and Jack used brick for what I think were very good reasons...The other thing was the modesty of fenestration in this building which was almost unprecedented then...

And then there were what we now, in post-modern parlance, would call historicist touches, that were put on the building in addition to the materials design to give it an identity toward the old, for which it was now a new backdrop. These were fairly widely criticized at the time...²⁸

Donald Canty, 1981

²⁸ Donald Canty, editor of the AIA magazine, Architecture, subsequently stated in April 1981 some 19 years after JCW had designed the project in a retrospective review of the design of the Square in a meeting at the National Building Museum entitled "Washington Revisited."

The architectural profession gave the public fifty years of modern architecture, and the public's response has been ten years of the greatest wave of historic preservation in the history of man.

In Washington alone Lafayette Square's direct influence can be seen in dozens of buildings put up in the last decade. In the Federal Home Loan Bank Building, the historic Winder building, whose facade is at home with the nearby Old Executive Office Building, has been incorporated into a complex of shops, restaurants, a skating rink and the necessary office space. In the recently completed Old Post Office, the historic shell is preserved while the interior has been used for new office and commercial space.

The grandiose Pennsylvania Avenue project born in the 1960's has clearly shifted toward the idea of preservation, as seen in the saving of the Willard Hotel."²⁹

George Hartman, FAIA, 1983

²⁹ Two decades after the design of Lafayette Square in 1983, noted Washington, D.C., architect George Hartman, FAIA, wrote at the time of the Renwick Museum Exhibit, "Lafayette Square Restoration, Architect, and the Presidency."

Lafayette Square today is so pleasant a part of the city we tend to forget that it took the actions of three presidents, and a very determined president's wife--Jacqueline Kennedy--to make it this way.

Today, without even going there, we can call to the mind's eye postcard views of the place: the White House on the south, strikingly white against the sky, and east and west, those tall towers in red brick behind low rows of 19th century buildings. An exhibition that went on view yesterday at the Renwick Gallery reminds us that this happy ending was, for more than half a century, highly unlikely.

The Lafayette Square project, designed by John Carl Warnecke, was an important milestone in preservation, and the urban design strategy of massing large new buildings behind attractive, smaller, older buildings remains highly relevant today.³⁰

Benjamin Forgey, 1983

³⁰ Twenty years after Warnecke completed his design of Lafayette Square, Benjamin Forgey, in reviewing the exhibition of Lafayette Square 1963-1983 - Architecture, Preservation and the Presidency, at the Renwick Museum, wrote in an article in the Washington Post October 22, 1983.

George Hartman considered Lafayette Square to be the most important architectural work in Washington since World War II.³¹

Thomas Stokes Page, 1992

³¹ Thirty years later Tom Page stated in his letter to JCW of November 7, 1992 that George Hartman, now Washington, D.C.'s leading designer who had recently been on an architectural jury with Benjamin Forgey had said this to him.

Warnecke's 1979 addition (Fannie Mae) hidden from the street, is handsome and adroit--it adjoins the colonial detailing but matches the materials, layout and scale of the original building, and enclosed two shady, commodious formal courtyards. This pleasant, humane result is hardly surprising--Warnecke's mid-'60s work around Lafayette Square, saving the 19th-century texture of the place while adding two new government buildings, contributed significantly to the contextualist movement here and nationwide.³²

Benjamin Forgey, 1993

³² Benjamin Forgey said in his August 21, 1993 Washington Post article, "Fannie Mae and Revisionist History."

Such musings were prompted this week as I walked around and about Lafayette Square...Here is a place, a historic place, that has changed, and stayed the same.

The fact that it has 'stayed the same,' that today it looks something like it did a century ago, is due to provident inaction and, three decades ago, to wise human intervention. More than most places in Washington, one can read the square's history in the layers of its architecture. ³³

Benjamin Forgey, 1994

³³ Benjamin Forgey's January 28, 1994 article entitled, "The Well Rounded Square."

Cities change, They do and, as the redoubtable urban theorist Jane Jacobs has pointed out, they must. But unless the changes are cataclysmic, as during an earthquake or a war, we tend almost willfully to ignore them...Warnecke saw right away there as no need to demolish the old buildings on Lafayette Square. He devised a plan to replace the big new buildings behind the rows of houses and thereby, almost incidentally, to create very nice outdoor courtyards between the new and old pieces...

Conceived in 1963, the Warnecke design proved to be a healthy example--countless Washington projects since then have adopted the same basic tactic. As a result, the downtown area has been able to increase in density in accord with economic demand and, at the same time, much of its architectural history has been preserved.³⁴

Benjamin Forgey, 1994

³⁴ Benjamin Forgey's January 28, 1994 article entitled, "The Well Rounded Square."

The courtyard and garden space which has been created between the old and the new on the Jackson Place side, I think, is one of the very nicest enclosed spaces in Washington. I'd love to have a party there. It's absolutely lovely, and, the rear of the old buildings look even more inviting than the front. It's just marvelous. If you've never been there, just wander in. It's absolutely marvelous and inviting and comfortable and the best of Washington.³⁵

Donald Canty, 1981

³⁵ Donald Canty, editor of the AIA magazine, Architecture, subsequently stated in April 1981 some 19 years after JCW had designed the project in a retrospective review of the design of the Square in a meeting at the National Building Museum entitled "Washington Revisited."

Critic Vincent Scully got it just right last week when he asked for a solution that would "remind people we are a nation of laws, and peace." This sounds like the gentle, arcadian L'Enfant-Kennedy-Warnecke plan. We should all ask Clinton to take personal charge of this crisis, reviving both the dream and the words of President Kennedy who inspired him as a young man. Let him appoint a broad-based citizens' committee to assist him, if necessary, but let's get the change made, fast, while the mood is ripe. If we can jointly take this step, the "people's house" and "the president's park" will become one at last--and democracy will find at once its final symbol and its final security.³⁶

Vincent Scully

Quoted by

Douglas Davis, 1995

³⁶ Newsday article, entitled "Viewpoints," June 16, 1995 by Douglas Davis. Davis was architectural critic for Newsweek for eighteen years.

THE FUTURE
OF THE WHITE HOUSE

LOOKING BACK A CENTURY TO HELP OBTAIN A
CLEAR VISION OF THE PRESIDENT'S HOUSE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

SECTION III

What is the future role of the White House in American life and culture? In my view, its role nowadays as a historic place and monument of our traditions is more significant than ever. ³⁷

Daniel J. Boorstin, 1994

³⁷ Daniel J. Boorstin, *Cleopatra's Nose*, 1994.

Where once we ran away from context, we now embrace it. Where once we would have taken a wrecking ball to an historic building, now we pause and ask: Can we restore it with new, stronger, materials? Can we make it relevant, not as just a monument, but as a functioning part of the community?---I believe not only that we can, but that we must."

Today with ever greater challenges of limited time, space and budgets, we must find ways to work this concept into every building and community we design. We must create tools that encourage this connection."

Historic preservation has moved from focusing on a single building to emphasizing a building's neighborhood and community to the integration of history, culture, and the natural environment. ³⁸

Bruce Babbitt, 1995

³⁸ Remarks from a speech delivered by Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt in the 1995 AIA Convention of the American Institute of Architects in Atlanta.

By placing the new buildings behind the historic buildings, we were able to maintain the 19th century character of the square, which he and First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy felt was most important. By designing the new buildings in a simple contextual manner, we saved enough money to restore all the old buildings at no additional cost to the government. Now, this gift and these buildings should be shared with the people to use and learn about our democracy.³⁹

John Carl Warnecke

July 30, 1995

³⁹ Washington Post, Sunday, July 30, 1995, article by John Carl Warnecke entitled "Completing the Plan for Lafayette Square."

There is room for excitement and discovery--
what (Roger) Kennedy calls 'genius'--if it is
applied with true sensitivity and skill. The
design is a thrilling challenge in which we
all have a stake. A splendid new foreground
to this centerpiece of the democracy would be
a most satisfying prelude to the beginning of
a new millennium. ⁴⁰

Benjamin Forgey

September 1995

⁴⁰ Benjamin Forgey, "A Touch of Grass: On Pennsylvania Ave.,
a step in the Right Direction," *Washington Post: Cityscape*, (9/30/95), p.
D1.

Red, white and blue are the colors of our flag that flies high over the White House.

Red symbolizes the life and needs of the times we live in. The red of our blood reminds us that this moment of time is brief. The red flowers planted in front of the White House are seasonal.

White symbolizes our past. The strength of past eras, the images and symbols that remind us of all that came before us. The President's House is White. The White House is a symbol of our history.

The blue sky on a clear day symbolizes our vision of tomorrow. Blue is the vision of continuity that leads us forward to a vision of a future time. This is a vision of unity that links our past, present and future.

John Carl Warnecke, FAIA

October 1995

The conservation of historic environments is increasingly recognized as critical to the economic, social, and cultural well-being of our urban and rural communities. By the turn of the century, 75% of construction dollars will be spent working on existing buildings.

⁴¹

University of Southern California,
1995

⁴¹ The School of Architecture at the University of Southern California, third summer program on Critical Issues in the Conservation of Historic Buildings, Landscapes and Communities. Co-sponsored by The California State Office of Historic Preservation, National Trust for Historic Preservation, Freeman House, Gamble House, American Institute of Architects, Los Angeles and Pasadena/Foothill Chapters, American Planning Association--Los Angeles Section, Pasadena Heritage, Los Angeles Conservancy, Society of Architectural Historians, Southern California Chapter; and the California Preservation Foundation.

Because of this earlier commitment to President and First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy, I have continued to feel obligated to follow up on their courageous efforts and overall concept of the square that we jointly created thirty years ago. This is a simple direct and beautiful solution that will unite the White House with Lafayette Park and Lafayette Square.

John Carl Warnecke, FAIA

July 1995

I look forward to an America which will not be afraid of grace and beauty, which will protect the beauty of our national environment, which will preserve the great old American houses and squares and parks of our National past, while building handsome and balanced cities for our future.⁴²

John Fitzgerald Kennedy

⁴² Quote from speech at Amherst University, October 1963.

The Warnecke Institute is dedicated to a more comprehensive multiple approach to design and architecture created to meet man's ever-changing needs in the 21st century by embracing both continuity and diversity while seeking unity with our man-made and natural environments.

The Warnecke Institute of
Design, Art and Architecture,
1995

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

*file
Pennsylvania
ave*

July 24, 1995

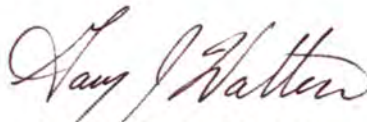
Mrs. Clinton,

Attached is a copy of the letter advising me of the names and disciplines of the professionals included in the early discussions for the permanent design of the closed portion of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House.

The first report to Mr. Panetta by the Secretary of the Interior and the Director of the Park Service took place last week.

The next meeting of the National Park Service led group will take place this Friday, July 28. The meeting will further the process of deciding the interim solutions making Pennsylvania Avenue more pedestrian friendly and also address the aesthetics of the police controlled intersections around the White House.

Two issues that are yet to be resolved are the decisions concerning the closure of Pennsylvania Avenue between 15th Street and Dolley Madison Avenue in front of the Treasury Department and the firmness of the date in Mr. Panetta's letter to the Secretary of the Interior concerning the permanent design completion date.


Gary J. Walters



United States Department of the Interior



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
P.O. Box 37127
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

IN REPLY REFER TO:

D22 (NCA-WHL)

JUL 17 1995

Mr. Gary Walters
Chief Usher
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Gary:

Thank you for your suggestions on participants for the charrette to begin the Pennsylvania Avenue permanent design process. As discussed at our meeting on June 20, we are seeking a small group of the best minds in the country representing a wide variety of design related professional fields.

Enclosed is a list of the suggestions we received from you and others who attended the meeting. If you have any strong feelings about those suggested, beyond the ones we have already received from you, please contact Mr. Denis Galvin, Associate Director, Professional Services at (202) 208-3264. We would appreciate having your views by July 31.

Your involvement in this project is highly valued. I look forward to our work together.

Sincerely,

Roger G. Kennedy, FAIA
Director

Enclosure

PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE DESIGN PROJECT
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Suggestions for Permanent Pennsylvania Avenue Design Charrette

During their meeting on June 20, 1994, members of the Executive Committee for the Comprehensive Design Plan for the White House were asked to suggest participants for a charrette which would begin the permanent Pennsylvania Avenue design project. The following individuals have been suggested as of July 7, 1995:

Landscape Architects:

Diana Balmori
Landscape Architect
Balmori and Associates
New Haven, Connecticut

Joe Brown
President,
EDAW
San Francisco, California

Everett Fly
Landscape Architect
San Antonio, Texas

Carol Franklin
Landscape Architect
Andropogon Associates, Ltd.
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Paul Freeberg
Landscape Architect
New York, New York

John Hall
Landscape Architect
LDR International
Columbia, Maryland

Doug Hayes
Landscape Architect
Arlington, Virginia

Lawrence Halprin
Landscape Architect
Lawrence Halprin and Associates
San Francisco, California

Mark Johnson
Landscape Architect
Civitas
Denver, Colorado

Dan Kiley
Landscape Architect
Charlotte, Vermont

Debra Mitchell
Landscape Architect
Johnson, Johnson and Roy
Washington, D.C.

Laurie Olin
Landscape Architect
Hanna Olin Landscape Architects
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Nicholas Quennell
Landscape Architect
Quennell Rothschild Associates
New York, New York

Herb Schaal, FASLA
Landscape Architect
EDAW
Fort Collins, Colorado

Hideo Sasaki
Landscape Architect
Sasaki Associates
Watertown, Massachusetts

John Simonds, FASLA
Landscape Architect
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

James Urban
Landscape Architect
Urban and Associates
Annapolis, Maryland

Morgan Wheelock
Landscape Architect
Morgan Wheelock Incorporated
Palm Beach, Florida

Architects:

Harold Adams, FAIA
Architect
RTKL Associates, Inc.
Baltimore, Maryland

Charles Atherton, FAIA
Secretary
The Commission of Fine Arts
Washington D.C.

Robert Berkebile, FAIA
Architect
Berkebile Nelson Immenschuh McDowell, Inc. (BNIM)
Kansas City, Missouri

Walter Scott Blackburn, FAIA
Architect
Blackburn Associates
Indianapolis, Indiana

J. Max Bond, FAIA
Architect
Davis Brady and Associates
New York, New York

M.J. "Jay" Brodie, FAIA
Architect/City Planner
RTKL Associates, Inc.
Washington, D. C.

Jean Paul Carlhian, FAIA
Architect
Shepley, Bulfinch, Richardson and Abbott
Boston, Massachusetts

Warren Cox, FAIA
Architect
Hartman Cox Architects
Washington, D.C.

Joe Esherick, FAIA
Architect
Esherick Homsey Dodge and Davis
San Francisco, California

Pliny Fisk
Architect/Landscape Architect
Center for Maximum Potential Building Systems
Austin, Texas

Jan Frankina
Architect
Director of Design and Planning
Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation
Washington, D.C.

Joan Goody, FAIA
Architect and President
Goody, Clancy and Associates
Boston, Massachusetts

Harry Gordon
Architect
Burt Hill Kosar Rittleman Associates
Washington, D.C.

Hugh Hardy, FAIA
Architect/educator
Hardy Holzna Pfeiffer Associates
New York, New York

George Hartman, FAIA
Architect
Hartman Cox Architects
Washington, D.C.

George Homsey, FAIA
Architect
Esherick Homsey Dodge and Davis
San Francisco, California

Hugh Newell Jacobsen, FAIA
Architect
Washington, D.C.

Fay Jones, FAIA
Architect/Educator
Fayetteville, Arkansas

David Lee, FAIA
Architect/Urban Designer
Stull and Lee, Inc.
Boston, Massachusetts

Robert P. Madison, FAIA
Madison Architects
Cleveland, Ohio

Susan Maxman
Architect
Susan Maxman Architects
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

William McDonough
Architect
New York, New York

Cesar Pelli, FAIA
Architect/Urban Planner
Cesar Pelli and Associates
New Haven, Connecticut

Harry G. Robinson, III, FAIA
Architect
Dean, School of Architecture and Planning
Howard University
Washington, D.C.

Richard Shepard
Architect
Shepard Quraeshi Associates
Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts

John H. Spencer, FAIA, ASLA
Chairman, Department of Architecture (retired)
Hampton University
Hampton, Virginia

Donald Stull, FAIA
Architect
Stull and Lee
Boston, Massachusetts

John Carl Warnecke, FAIA
Architect
John Carl Warnecke and Associates
San Francisco, California

William Warner
Architect
William Warner Architects
Exeter, Rhode Island

Harry Weese, FAIA
Architect
Harry Weese and Associates
Chicago, Illinois

Richard Weinstein
Professor of Architecture
School of Environmental Design
University of California

Urban Planners/Designers:

Maxine Griffith
Urban Designer
Member, New York City Planning Commission
New York, New York

William Hollingsworth Whyte
Urban Planner
New York, New York

Historical Architect

Dr. Richard Dozier
Historical Architect
Florida A & M

Historians

Daniel Boorstin
Librarian of Congress Emeritus
Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.

Simon Schama
Historian/Educator/Author
Department of History
Columbia University
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Vincent Scully
Architectural Historian
Humanities and Social Sciences
CALTECT
Pasadena, California

William Seale
Architectural Historian
Alexandria, Virginia

Lighting Designers:

Nancy Clanton
Lighting Engineer and President,
Clanton Engineering
Boulder, Colorado

William Lam
Architect/Lighting Designer
William Lam Inc.
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Christopher Ripman
Lighting Designer
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Sculptors:

Ed Dwight
Sculptor
Seattle, Washington

Jonathan Fairbanks
Sculptor
Boston, Massachusetts

Event Programmers:

Karin Bacon
Events Planner
Karin Bacon Events Inc.
New York, New York

Colleen Jennings-Roggensack
Executive Director, Special Events
Arizona State University
Tempe, Arizona

Others:

Ralph Appelbaum
Exhibit Designer and President
Ralph Appelbaum Associates
New York, New York

J. Carter Brown
Chairman
The Commission of Fine Arts
Washington, D.C.

Nash Castro
Consultant on Natural and Historic Management
Sutton, New York

Bernadette Cosart
Greening of Harlem Coalition

John Knott, Jr.
Chief Executive Officer
Deweese Island
Isle of Palm, South Carolina

Georges Jacquemart
Transportation planner and traffic engineer
BF&J Buckhurst Fish and Jacquemart, Inc.
New York, New York

Gail Lindsey
Design Harmony, Inc.
Raleigh, North Carolina

Amory Lovins
Engineer
Rock Mountain Institute
Snowmass, Colorado

Patricia O'Donnell
Landscape, Inc.

George White
Architect of the Capitol
Washington, D.C.

file Penna Ave

JOHN CARL WARNECKE & ASSOCIATES

ARCHITECTS AND PLANNING CONSULTANTS, 300 BROADWAY, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94133 (415) 397-4200

July 5, 1995

Mellane Verveer
Deputy Chief of Staff to the First Lady
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Ms. Verveer,

President Clinton's main concern on closing down Pennsylvania Avenue was about restricting access to view the White House. The theme of my enclosed piece is how history will bring ever greater numbers of visitors to view the President's House. The more we dig in our archives, the more fascinating the potential use of this historic area becomes. I will send you more items as we complete them.

Americans love the history of the White House, and this expanded historic place could quickly become a quality attraction. The old historic buildings President Kennedy, Jacqueline Kennedy, and I saved from demolition thirty years ago have all been restored and they are all there in place. Now is the time to start to use them for the benefit of visitors coming to view the White House. This can be achieved at very little cost. We have already completed ninety percent of integrating this historic area with the White House.

Why reinvent the wheel? Now is the time to complete the grand plaza and promenade that President Kennedy, First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy, and I envisioned in the design studies I made thirty years ago. Most important we will achieve President Clinton's wish that ever greater numbers of Americans will want to come and view the White House from this far more beautiful place. Now is the time for President Clinton and First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton to review this design work and quickly authorize its completion.

Sincerely,

John Warnecke
John Carl Warnecke, FAIA
JCW:bb:189:enclosures

Mellane: Doug Davis has told me all about you and your interest in this. Jim staying nearby at (the Metro pol. tax debt - 835/2500 Room 300) I would enjoy meeting you and showing you some of the lovely Pennsylvania Ave. studies I made for Jacqueline Kennedy. I would be glad to show this in the most interested right way. J.

GREATER WHITE HOUSE ACCESS

BY JOHN CARL WARNECKE, FAIA

Copyright
June 19, 1995

With Pennsylvania Avenue closed, President Clinton now has the opportunity of enhancing the beauty of the White House in a far more beautiful and interesting historic place. Equally important the front of the White House will now be a far more secure area not only for our Presidents--but for all people. The media and enlightened politicians were far more concerned about visual access than the uncontrolled traffic. How can President Clinton bring ever greater numbers of Americans to view the White House? It is a simple matter of completing the plan of Lafayette Square that I conceived with President and Mrs. Kennedy over 30 years ago.

With the Avenue closed, we can now unite the Lafayette Square Park and historic buildings with the White House. This can be quickly accomplished because we have already achieved most of it. All we need to do now is finish it. Pennsylvania Avenue can now be transformed into the attractive mall with flower beds and fountains while promenading and viewing the White House that I proposed to Jacqueline Kennedy as part of my design of the square.

President Kennedy said, *"I consider our history, to be a source of strength to us here in the White House....Anything that dramatizes the story of the United States is worth the respect of Americans who visit here and who are a part of our history."* Instead of focusing only upon the White House, visitors can also view and study the historic buildings surrounding the President's Park. It is this historic area which gives the White House much of its power and special sense of place. In recent years, our eyes have been opened to the power of historic tourism that have brought families together. When I think of the interest and joy I had visiting historic Williamsburg with my children, I can quickly understand how educational and popular a visit of this type can become.

Many of these historic buildings surrounding Lafayette Square have never found a real and vital use. Many are used for administration of commissions and groups that meet only periodically. These historic buildings that we restored 30 years ago are all in place and many should be returned to the people as part of their heritage to visit and learn more about the story of this historic place.

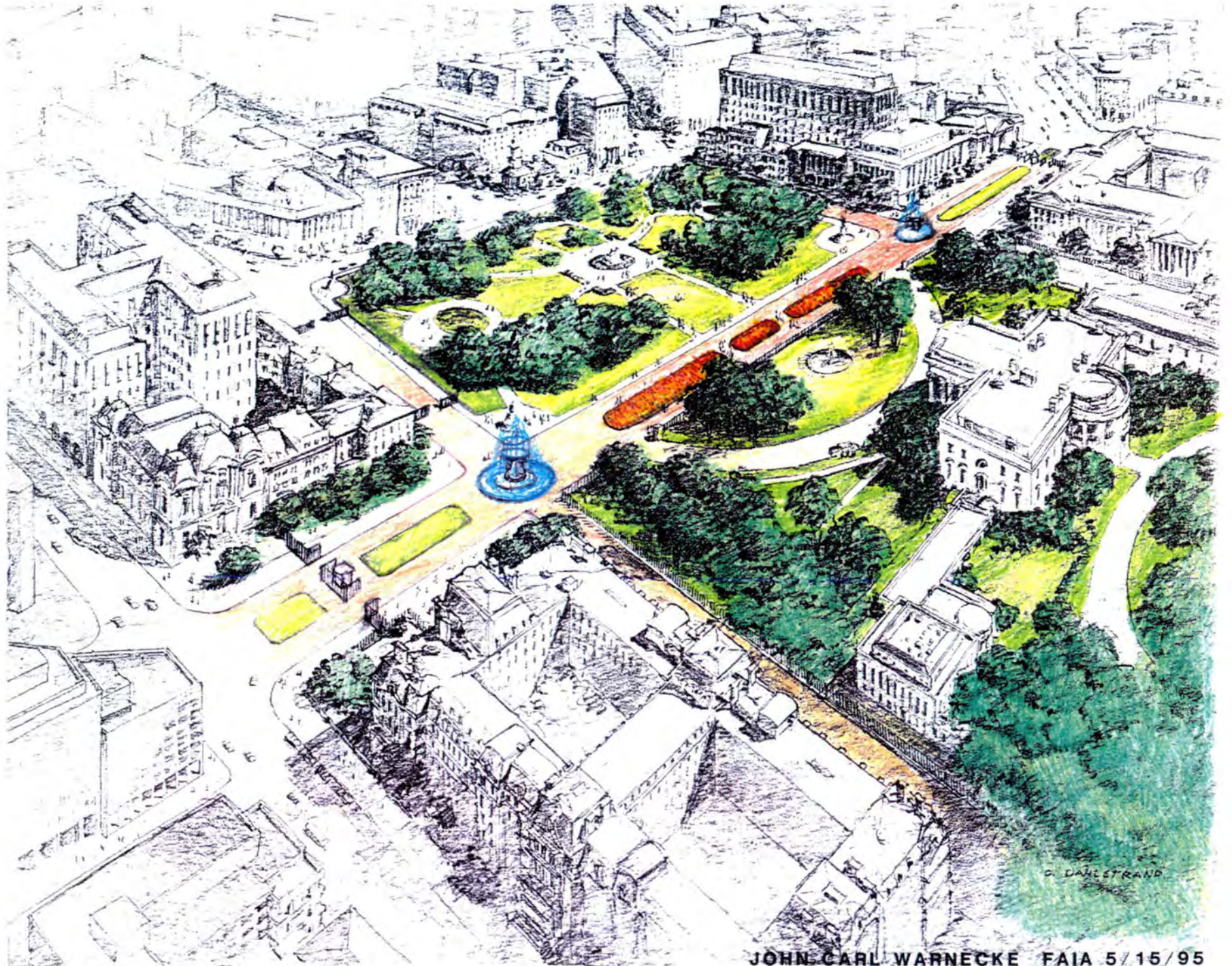
The historic Decatur House has already indicated how effectively these buildings can be used. One can imagine a visitor center and

museum that would relate and exhibit the continuous, ever changing use of all these historic lands and buildings. Restaurants and sidewalk cafes would make this visit ever more pleasant and enjoyable for families. As architectural critic Donald Canty stated, "*The courtyard and garden space which has been created between the old and the new on the Jackson Place side is one of the very nicest enclosed places in Washington. It's absolutely lovely...and the best of Washington.*" With very little cost to the government, this could quickly become one of America's greatest tourist attractions.

In 1962, I had the opportunity to tell President Kennedy how he could design the proposed new large office and courts buildings that were about to be built on both sides of the square, and by placing the new buildings behind the historic buildings, we could maintain the 19th century character of the Square which he and First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy had been valiantly fighting for. By designing the new buildings in a more simple contextual manner, we saved enough money to restore all the old buildings at no additional cost to the government. Now, this gift and these buildings should be shared with the people to use and learn about our democracy.

President and Mrs. Kennedy would be most pleased to know these historic buildings we saved would someday be put to such good use. President Clinton and First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton should review and approve the last remaining design work of Pennsylvania Avenue and quickly order its completion.

4023NO3:6/19/95



JOHN CARL WARNECKE FAIA 5/15/95



UNITED STATES SENATE
OFFICE OF THE MAJORITY LEADER
WASHINGTON, D. C.

BOB DOLE
KANSAS

February 6, 1995

Dear Jack:

Many thanks for sending Elizabeth and me a copy of your proposal. While not an architect or planner, I was certainly impressed with your vision.

I can't begin to imagine the maze of hoops that such a proposal must jump through, and hope you will keep me informed of the White House reaction to the plan. If you have not done so already, I would also suggest contacting the National Capital Planning Commission.

Best of luck, and please keep in touch.

Best regards,

BOB DOLE

John Carl Warnecke
300 Broadway
San Francisco, California 94133

COMPLETING THE DESIGN OF LAFAYETTE SQUARE

IN FRONT OF THE WHITE HOUSE

John Carl Warnecke, FAIA

The essence of the design that must replace the street surface of Pennsylvania Avenue on the north front of the White House is that it must stress continuity and be in context with this historic place. The result must feel as if it has always been there. It must incorporate the traditional forms and ways that gates, low walls, open entrance points, fountains, and flowerbeds were designed in the 19th century. It must not be a personal expression of the mid and late 20th century calling attention to itself. It must be subtle, quiet and fit into its historic surroundings. It must unify all the existing historic aspects of this special place.

The White House, the 200-year old feature of the design, is there and in place. The landscape space within the White House grounds is also there and in place. The President's Park, for the people, in the heart of Lafayette Square is there. The historic buildings surrounding the square have all been saved and restored and are there and in place. The new Executive Office Building and Court of Claims, that I designed in 1962 are both there as backdrops to the older historic buildings. All one needs to do now is complete this composition with a beautiful new plaza and promenade and other details that tie all of these loose ends into a unified whole.

In contrast to this contextual approach, it has even been suggested

that we have a competition for this design as was done for the Vietnam Memorial in which 1400 architects competed in a design competition. This was an excellent approach for this type of memorial because it was new and the sole object in which a design was sought. In addition, it would be totally surrounded with a natural landscape. The personal design and expression of Maya Lin produced an outstanding design that has received worldwide recognition.

The conditions surrounding Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House are entirely different. Anything that is added should take a position that fits into this scenario in the more quiet way we designed the new large buildings in context with the older historic buildings. All the elements of the landscape should fit quietly into this area as it had always been there.

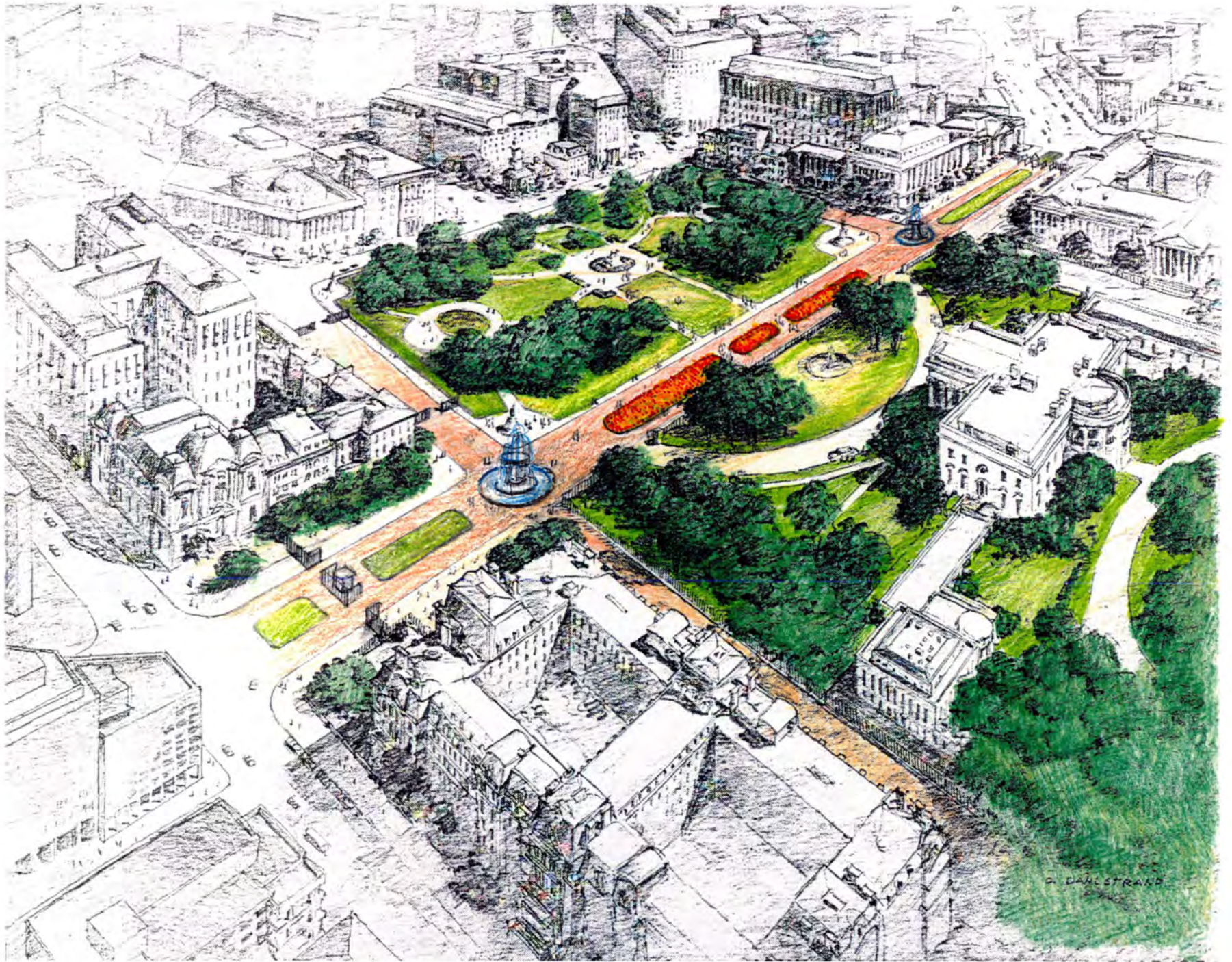
This contextual approach to design that I utilized in the design of the large new Executive Office Building and the Court of Claims is an approach that I pioneered in the mid twentieth century, and it was an approach I had utilized in other historic environments on college campuses and state capitols for a decade and a half before President Kennedy asked me to help him find a solution to this problem of renovation and design he was facing in 1962. As a well-known architect in the modern period of design, I was alone in this approach. However, President and Jacqueline Kennedy both understood it, and they were quick to accept my concept of placing

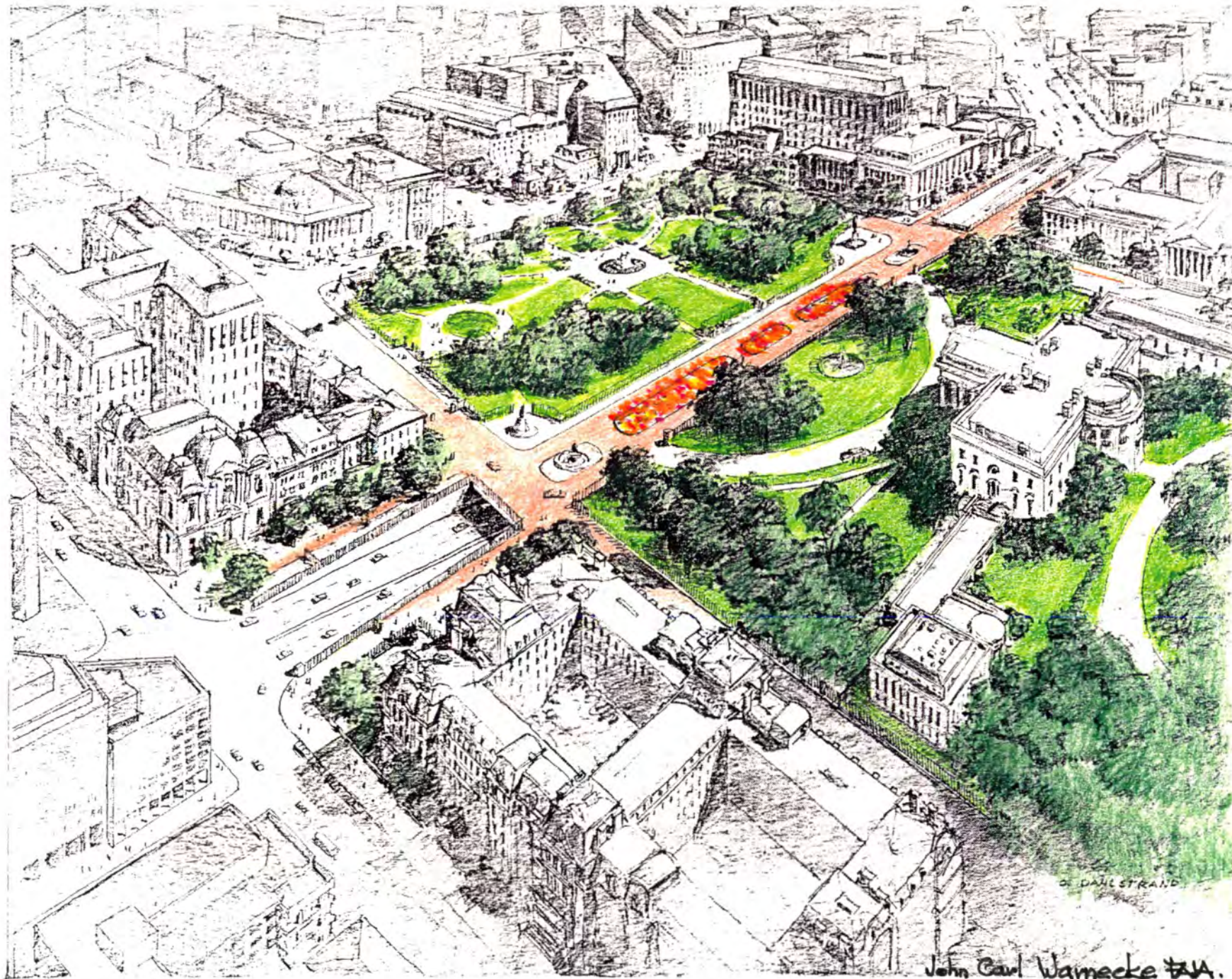
the new large buildings to the rear of the older historic buildings.

One month before JFK was assassinated, the President spoke at Amherst University in which he carried out the new design theme of Lafayette Square and his hopes for a better America. He stated in his speech, *"I look forward to an America which will not be afraid of grace and beauty, which will protect the beauty of our national environment, which will preserve the great old American houses and squares and parks of our National past, and which will build handsome and balanced cities for our future."*

Today contextual design and restoration are major forces in architecture both in the United States and throughout the world.

4025:06/07/95





John Carl Wamecke F.A.A.

O. DAHLSTRAND

~~Hillman~~

Melanne

FYF

Em

Washington, D.C. Hillary Rodham Clinton August 2, 1995

Dear George,

Thank you for your followup memo about the future of Pennsylvania Avenue. I agree with your wise counsel and agree we are presented with an

important opportunity for the White House
and the city. I have learned there
has been a Committee studying the
area around the White House for
over three years, and have asked
for some information. At the appropriate
time, I will want to continue our
discussion. With appreciation, William

PHOTOCOPY
HRC HANDWRITING

→ CC Melanne
Let's discuss
O back to me
R to Geo. S

July 18, 1995

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Hillary Rodham Clinton

FROM: George Stevens, Jr.

Since I outlined the idea about Pennsylvania Avenue in such short form last night – and since you seemed enthusiastic about it (or extremely polite, or both), I thought I would summarize the idea in writing.

Your answer to the question of what François Mitterand will be remembered for was the same as mine would be. "Great buildings" – most notably, I.M. Pei's brilliant modernization of the Louvre which addressed and solved the problem of adapting a classic building and a public vista in a fashion that is both functional and brilliant.

President Kennedy and Jackie are remembered in a cultural way for his deciding to do something about Pennsylvania Avenue and for their determination in stopping the planned destruction of the historic houses on Lafayette Square.

I believe the decision President Clinton found necessary to make concerning the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue is like the Chinese maxim – the symbol for misfortune is the same as the symbol for opportunity.

I see an opportunity here for a show of leadership and for an historic contribution to the life of this city.

I believe if you were to invite I.M. Pei to lunch and were to take a brief walk with him on Pennsylvania Avenue, he would have ideas about how to make the necessity of closing Pennsylvania into an opportunity to make our Capitol city even more beautiful and friendly to its citizens and visitors.

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I know that you met I.M. Pei on your trip to Paris. I have known him since he was chosen to design the Kennedy Library in Boston. He is, in my view, a perfect and unchallengeable choice as a person from whom to seek advice from and to conceive and execute a solution.

One of I.M.'s gifts, perhaps because of his Chinese birth and heritage, is a sense of timelessness. He is the man who found the solution for putting a modern building, the East Wing of the National Gallery of Art, between the classic dome of the U.S. Capitol and the original National Gallery building. And he designed the bold pyramid at the Louvre and saw it through, notwithstanding his not being a French citizen and the intense skepticism that stood in the path of the project.

One of I.M.'s great strengths is understanding the relationship between a building and its surroundings. I am confident he would bring the right team together, including the right landscape architect, and that he would invest it with the most important quality of all – taste.

I went over to look at Lafayette Square and there are those huge cement abutments blocking the street and the park. Right now the solution is somewhere in the hands of the bureaucracy and the solution arrived at is likely to be ordinary.

As certain as I am that this is a wonderful idea for you and the President and for the country, I'm equally certain that someone will say, "It's not that simple." Or, "there may be a jurisdictional problem." That is what they said about Pennsylvania Avenue and about Lafayette Square, but the interest of the President and First Lady can move these projects in the right direction.


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I believe this is an opportunity to show strong leadership and to achieve a lasting legacy for generations to come. And, it is a winner politically.

All good wishes,

A handwritten signature in red ink, appearing to be "Boye", written over a large, loopy red scribble.

GS:kb