



Smithsonian Institution

Smithsonian Institution Archives

Proceedings of the Board of Regents Meeting held on May 5, 1980

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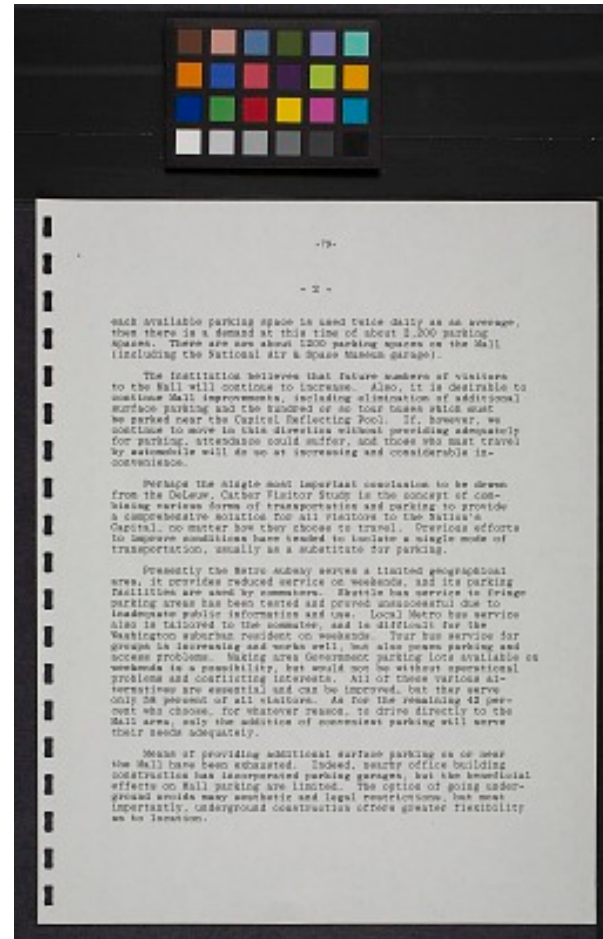
each available parking space is used twice daily as an average, then there is a demand at this time of about 2,000 parking spaces. There are now about 1200 parking spaces on the Mall (including the National Air & Space Museum garage).

The Institution believes that future numbers of visitors to the Mall will continue to increase. Also, it is desirable to continue Mall improvements, including elimination of additional surface parking and the hundred or so tour buses which must be parked near the Capitol Reflecting Pool. If, however, we continue to move in this direction without providing adequately for parking, attendance could suffer, and those who must travel by automobile will do so at increasing and considerable inconvenience.

Perhaps the single most important conclusion to be drawn from the Deleuw, Cather Visitor Study is the concept of combining various forms of transportation and parking to provide a comprehensive solution for all visitors to the Nation's Capital, no matter how they choose to travel. Previous efforts to improve conditions have tended to isolate a single mode of transportation, usually as a substitute for parking.

Presently the Metro subway serves a limited geographical area. It provides reduced service on weekends, and its parking facilities are used by commuters. Shuttle bus service to fringe parking areas has been tested and proved unsuccessful due to inadequate public information and use. Local Metro bus service also is tailored to the commuter, and is difficult for the Washington suburban resident on weekends. Tour bus service for groups is increasing and works well, but also poses parking and access problems. Making area Government parking lots available on weekends is a possibility, but would not be without operational problems and conflicting interests. All of these various alternatives are essential and can be improved, but they service only 58 percent of all visitors. As for the remaining 42 percent who choose, for whatever reason, to drive directly to the Mall area, only the addition of convenient parking will serve their needs adequately.

Means of providing additional surface parking on or near the Mall have been exhausted. Indeed, nearby office building construction has incorporated parking garages, but the beneficial effects on Mall parking are limited. The option of going underground avoids many aesthetic and legal restrictions, but most importantly, underground construction offers greater flexibility as to location.



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