

OCT 18 1965

Department of Highways and Traffic

October 15, 1965

MEMORANDUM TO THE FILE

SUBJECT: CENTER LEG

Skidmore Owings and Merrill

At 5:30 P. M. on 14th October, General Duke phoned me saying that Mr. Owen of Owen, Skidmore and Merrill had just telephoned him informing him that the Speaker of the House and the Vice President had authorized the straightening out of the Center Leg.

Accordingly, it was the General's wish that we immediately affect a change in our plans for this project.

On 15 October, Mr. Woodbridge telephoned me repeating the above information and indicating that I should get in contact with the Architect of the Capitol.

Soon after Mr. Woodbridge called, George Stewart, Architect of the Capitol telephoned reiterating the above information and asking that I discuss the matter with him this afternoon.

Messrs. Sawyer, Hanson, Mosca and myself visited the Architect's office and met with him and his advisors to discuss the straightening out of the tunnel. He handed me the attached documents indicating in general the limits to which the straightening process can be applied, and the desire of the Pennsylvania Avenue Commission insofar as the construction of the Reflecting Pool and relocation of Louisiana Avenue is concerned. I have accepted the above information as firm and I have ordered Mr. Sawyer to stop work on the curb alignment and to immediately commence work on the revised straightened out alignment of the Center Leg Tunnel. Further drawings will follow from Mr. Woodbridge of Owen, Skidmore and Merrill, and as soon as we can present an alignment of our proposed tunnel, Mr. Stewart will give us his authorization in writing.

T. F. AIRIS, Director
Department of Highways and Traffic, D. C.

FILE TO: Mr. Sawyer
CC: Mr. Grant

ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL
WASHINGTON, D.C.

October 14, 1965

Honorable John W. McCormack
Speaker of the House of Representatives
United States Capitol
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Speaker:

As you know, Public Law 88-381 was enacted July 21, 1964, authorizing the Commissioners of the District of Columbia to construct, maintain, and operate a vehicular tunnel in the City of Washington, District of Columbia, extending from the vicinity of Second and C Streets, Southwest, to the vicinity of Third and Constitution Avenue Northwest, as a part of the Innerloop Freeway System, and authorized that a portion of such tunnel be located under Square W-576, which is a part of the U. S. Botanic Garden grounds, and Reservation 12, which is a part of the U. S. Capitol Grounds.

This Act further provides that the Commissioners of the District of Columbia are authorized to make such use of Square W-576 and Reservation 12 as may be necessary for the construction of the tunnel, subject to the approval of the Architect of the Capitol.

The law does not specify any particular area within Square W-576 or Reservation 12 in which the tunnel must be located. It leaves this matter in the hands of the Architect of the Capitol.

The House Office Building Commission, in lending its approval to this legislation, did so with the understanding that the construction of the tunnel would not disturb the trees in the area of the Grant Memorial directly west of the Capitol Grounds.

The plans now proposed by the Commissioners would require the relocation of these trees in order to permit construction of a straighter tunnel. I am advised that this will effect a savings of \$2,000,000 and will permit the construction of a reflecting pool in accordance with the plan being developed for the beautification of the Mall which has the support of Mrs. Johnson and her Committee on Beautification of the Capital.

There was also some concern expressed in the Public Works Committees of the House and Senate as to the location of this tunnel and its effect on the Capitol Grounds.

Mr. Owings has consulted with me about this proposed change and I have indicated to him that before I would concur in the same, I felt the matter should be discussed with you, as Chairman of the House Office Building Commission, and with the Chairmen and Ranking Minority Members of the Senate and House Public Works Committees. I also thought that since this new plan affects an area adjacent to the Capitol Grounds, it might be well to discuss the matter with the Vice President.

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Public Law 88-381, as indicated, permits the construction of the tunnel in the manner now proposed by the Commissioners. If the change is agreeable to you and to the other leaders whom I have mentioned, I will offer no objection to such change but will authorize it to be made. In any event, no additional legislation is required to make this change.

With warm regards,

Sincerely,

J. George Stewart
Architect of the Capitol



