

DESIGN
ADVOCACY
GROUP

of Philadelphia

August 15, 2006

Mr. Dennis Reidenbach
Superintendent
Independence Historical National Park
143 S. 3rd Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106

Re: Security Proposals for Independence Square

Dear Superintendent Reidenbach,

We appreciate that the Park Service has extended the deadline for public comments on proposed security arrangements for Independence Square.

We oppose the seven-foot high fence that is proposed to bisect Independence Square. Until September 11, 2001, we always appreciated the free public access through the arcade structures that flank Independence Hall. They allowed the public to walk where our nation's founders walked and, to the extent possible in modern times, experience the public space in which our independence was declared as the founders might have experienced it.

One of the many consequences of September 11 was that the opportunity to have that experience unfettered is no longer. Instead, bollards and chains, along with additional security personnel, restrict access from street side. While the experience is now significantly compromised, the scale of the bollards is at least relatively unobtrusive. If there has to be restricted access from the Independence Square side, we believe it should be no more obtrusive than that which the Park Service is already managing from Chestnut Street.

The proposed fence, however good looking and 'reversible', will still be a highly visible barrier. The sad irony of having to cage the place where American freedom was invented is more than we should all be willing to tolerate.

As always, we are available to assist the Park Service as you consider alternatives.

Sincerely,



Alan Greenberger
Vice Chair

cc: Mary Bomar, Regional Director NPS
Ann Meredith, IMBARC