

Victims of Communism memorial site selected

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The National Capital Commission wrestled with the name, but in the end has provided a symbolic and visible location for a Canadian memorial to victims of Communism.

The site is part of the Garden of the Provinces and Territories at Wellington and Bay Streets.

The memorial will sit on a sloping lawn west of the garden's landscaped plaza, along the edge of the limestone escarpment upon which Parliament Hill is built.

"The central location and the beauty of the site are fitting," said Alide Forstmanis, chair of Tribute to Liberty, the group behind the project.

The memorial will "commemorate the losses and hardships of all those who suffered under Communism, and will pay tribute to Canada which was and is a land of refuge for those who seek liberty," Forstmanis said.

Sylvie Tilden, NCC senior manager for commemorations and public art, said the site was chosen for its ample space for gathering and easy access.

"It creates a nice enclave for something of this nature where you want to be serene and contemplative," she said.

The NCC approved the proposal last September, but only after the group added the word totalitarian and the subtitle: Canada, a Land of Refuge.

"Some (NCC) board members wanted the word communism taken out altogether," Tribute to Liberty spokeswoman Carolyn Foster said.

Private fundraising is under way for the \$1.5-million project. Backers plan a national design competition next spring, with an unveiling expected in 2012.