

Apple's 'most ambitious' retail store set for US capital

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People stand around the 1903 Carnegie Library renovated by Apple, set to reopen with a retail store operated by the tech giant and historical exhibits on the top floor

Half store, half museum, Apple's new location in the US capital within a historic landmark is being described as the "most ambitious" project for its retail operations.

Apple invited journalists Thursday to view the renovated Carnegie Library in downtown Washington, just blocks from the White House and the Capitol Building, ahead of its public opening on Saturday.

The project launched in 2015 entailed a meticulous restoration of the marble-facade 1903 [building](#) originally designed as a [public library](#) and paid for by industrialist Andrew Carnegie, who died in 1919.

Apple funded the renovation and will use one of the three floors for its [retail store](#) and [education programs](#), with the remainder dedicated to local historical exhibits.

"This is really our gift to the city," said Apple development team leader Mike Brown.

"We've looked around DC for a long time for a location that was worthy of our nation's capital."

Apple declined to reveal how much was spent on the renovation, which was reported to cost more than \$30 million.

Brown said the project was "the most ambitious" for the iPhone maker because of the size of the building—some 6,000 square meters (64,000 square feet)—and its historical significance.



Journalists gather in the main atrium of the Carnegie Library for a preview two days before the grand opening of the building which will include an Apple store and space maintained by the Historical Society of Washington

Located in the city's Mount Vernon Square, the building will reopen with a research library, three galleries and a museum store owned and operated by the Historical Society of Washington.

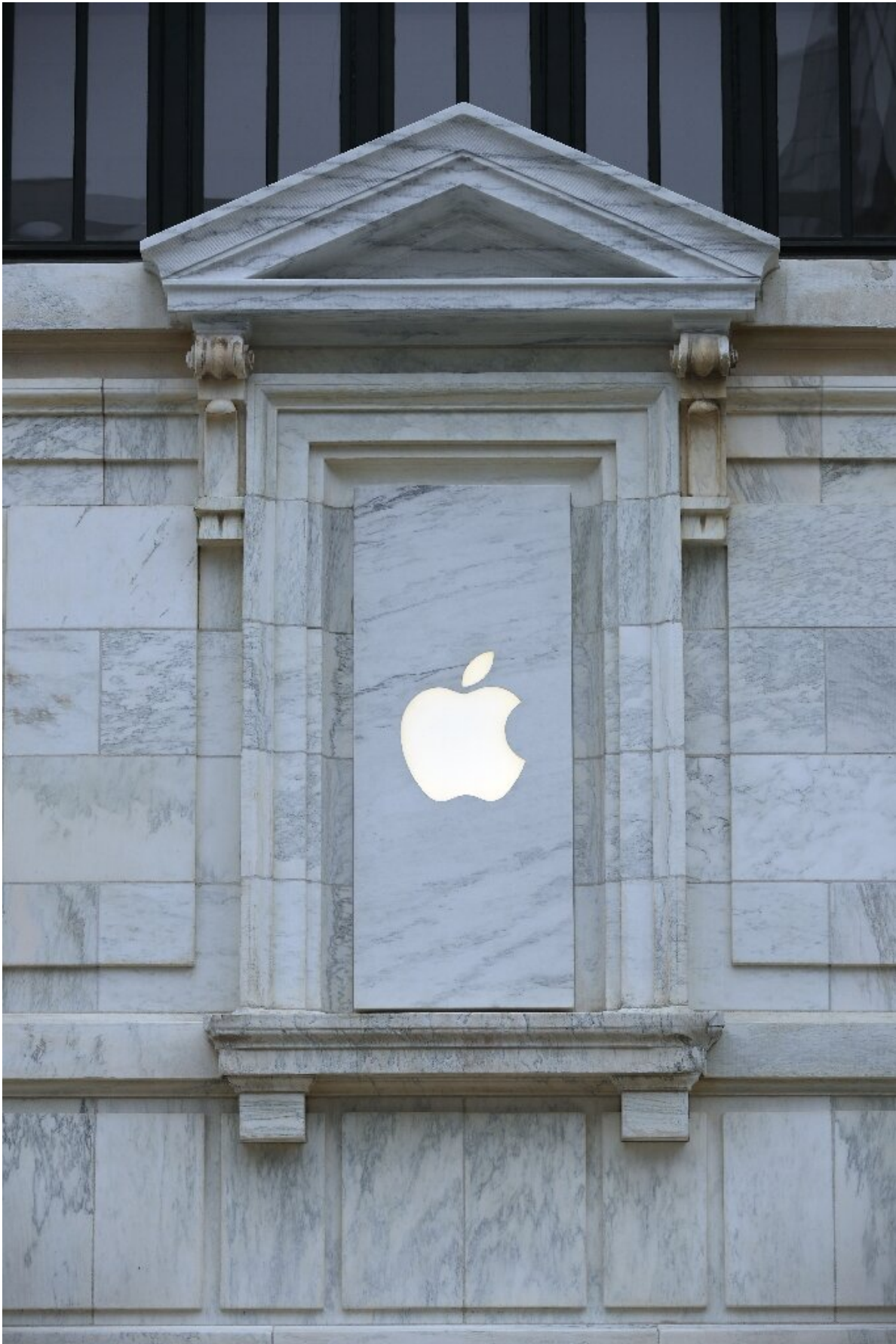
"I love the synergy between old and new, the juxtaposition of the historic fabric and contemporary design," Apple chief design officer Jony Ive said in a statement.

Apple worked with conservation experts to preserve the historic facade, adding new elements of the original Vermont marble, and restore 20th

century design elements in the interior space.

"We have a tremendous amount of respect for the history and the original intention of this building," said Chris Braithwaite, head of Apple retail and design.

Apple sought to avoid commercial promotion, with the only elements two modest-sized, and removable, corporate logos on the facade, according to Brown.



The famous Apple symbol is kept minimal on the outside the new Carnegie Library set to open as an Apple retail store and history museum

Stefan Behling, one of the architects on the project with the London firm Foster and Partners, said Apple sought to maintain the character of the original [design](#) in the renovation.

"This space that we're in is a beautiful historic space and we renovated it painstakingly. You can see the words 'Shakespeare,' 'Newton' exactly the way it was," Behling told AFP. "Apple hasn't changed it."

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