



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Valley Forge National Historical Park
1400 North Outer Line Drive
King of Prussia, PA 19406-1009

IN REPLY REFER TO:
H42 (VAFO-P)

JUN 13 2012

Ms. Jean Sauer, Chair
Tredyffrin Township Historical Commission
1100 Dupontail Road
Berwyn, PA 19312-1079

Dear Ms. Sauer:

At Valley Forge National Historical Park the National Park Service proposes to issue a Request for Proposals to lease the main house and immediately associated grounds of the Philander Chase Knox estate. The tenant will use the area for private events between April and the end of October, erecting a tent on the lawn east of the house.

The purpose of the lease is to provide managed public access to the house and also to provide revenue for its ongoing maintenance and preservation. One section of the house is currently used as the Park Library, accessible by appointment only. Other parts of the house are used by Park staff for occasional meetings and storage areas, and the remainder of the house is unused and vacant. During our General Management planning process which included public involvement, NPS determined that there is no other feasible park operational or visitor services use for the building, and that it could be made available for alternate uses.

No modifications would be required or permitted to the interior of the house. On the exterior, the proposed project would include the construction of a gravel parking lot within the former walled garden west of the greenhouse and the addition of a new 10' wide access lane between Library Lane and the proposed parking lot. More details may be seen on the enclosed overview.

This letter serves as notification that we have begun the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process and Section 106 process and that we propose to complete a combined draft environmental assessment (EA) and assessment of effect (AOE) for public and agency review this summer.

At this time, we seek any comments from the public on this proposal. The participation of the Historical Commission is important to us, and we encourage your comments and welcome you to forward this request to additional interested parties. Comments may be submitted to the following website: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov>. All public comments will be incorporated in the draft EA/AOE, which will be available later this summer for additional comment. If you have any questions, please contact Deirdre Gibson, Chief of Planning and Resource Management at (610) 783-1047. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Kate H. Hammond
Superintendent