



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 20 2012

Ms. Michelle H. Kichline
Chair

Tredyffrin Township Board of Supervisors
1100 Duportail Road
Berwyn, PA 19312-1079

Dear Ms. Kichline:

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 at Valley Forge National Historical Park. 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 Plan process, concluded in 2007, which involved extensive public participation, NPS determined that there is no other feasible park operational or visitor services use for the building, and that it was suitable for leasing. The current proposal is an implementation of the plan's recommendation.

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 valet-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 and assessment of effect for public and agency review later this summer.

At this time, we seek any comments from the public on the general proposal. Although as a federal property, the park is not subject to municipal planning and zoning processes, my staff and I greatly value the excellent working relationship we have with the Tredyffrin Board of Supervisors and township staff, and we are particularly interested in your thoughts. We also welcome you to forward this request to

additional interested parties. Comments at this time will help to shape the draft proposal; a final proposal will be issued for public comment later this summer.

I would be please to meet with you and/or to make a presentation to the Board of Supervisors about this proposal. Additionally, comments may be submitted to the following website:
<http://parkplanning.nps.gov>. If you have any questions, please contact me at (610) 783-1037 or Deirdre Gibson, Chief of Planning and Resource Management at (610) 783-1047. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kate H. Hammond".

Kate H. Hammond
Superintendent

Enclosures

cc: Mimi Gleason, Manager, Tredyffrin Township