



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

National Mall and Memorial Parks



November 9, 2015

Mr. David Maloney  
State Historic Preservation Officer  
District of Columbia, Office of Planning  
1100 4th Street, SW, Suite E650  
Washington, D.C. 20024

Re: Section 106 Consultation on the Kennedy Center Expansion Connection Project

Dear Mr. Maloney,

The National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) and National Park Service (NPS), acting as co-lead agencies in cooperation with the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts (Kennedy Center), are writing to initiate consultation with the District of Columbia Historic Preservation Office (DC SHPO) on the Kennedy Center Expansion Connection Project in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (54 U.S.C. 306108) and its implementing regulations (36 CFR Part 800.3).

The Kennedy Center, located on the Potomac River at the western edge of the District's monumental core, is a Congressionally designated national showcase for the performing arts and a living memorial to President Kennedy. It was determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places on February 13, 2012, for its association with President Kennedy and as the work of master architect Edward Durell Stone. The center presents musical, dance, and theatrical performances, supports artists in the creation of new work, and serves the nation as a leader in arts and arts management education. Due to a critical shortage of dedicated facilities to serve its existing and expanding programs, the Kennedy Center is expanding its facilities south of the existing building through the construction of three land-based pavilions. NCPC approved the design for the land-based pavilions in July 2015.

Currently, there is no direct connection between the Kennedy Center and the Rock Creek Multi-Use Trail along the Potomac River waterfront. The purpose of the proposed project is to provide a safe pedestrian and bicycle connection that would create a public waterfront link and would improve access to and from the Kennedy Center, the National Mall and Memorial Parks (NAMA), the Rock Creek Multi-Use Trail, the Potomac River waterfront, and the surrounding vicinity. The project area partially falls within the Rock Creek and Potomac Parkway, which is under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service. NCPC will be reviewing the project under its authorities in the National Capital Planning Act, and an approval action by NCPC is considered an undertaking subject to Section 106.

There are four action alternatives currently under consideration for the Kennedy Center Expansion Connection. The Bridge Access with Stairs and Ramp alternative includes a bridge that would span the northbound and southbound lanes of Rock Creek and Potomac Parkway and would be accessed from the Rock Creek Multi-Use Trail by both a ramp and stairs. The Bridge Access with Elevator and Ramp alternative would substitute the stairs in the previous alternative with an elevator. The At-grade Crossing Access alternative proposes to connect the Kennedy Center Expansion Project and the Rock Creek Multi-Use Trail via an at-grade crossing that would traverse the northbound and southbound lanes of the Rock

Creek and Potomac Parkway. The River Terrace Access alternative would include a stair and elevator connection between the Kennedy Center's River Terrace and the Rock Creek Multi-Use Trail.

A graphic illustrating the project area and conceptual studies of the proposed Kennedy Center Expansion Connection alternatives are included in this package to provide preliminary information on the project. In addition, attached please find a preliminary list of consulting parties and a graphic illustration of the proposed Area of Potential Effects (APE). These items are intended as a basis of discussion and are subject to modification as part of the consultation process.

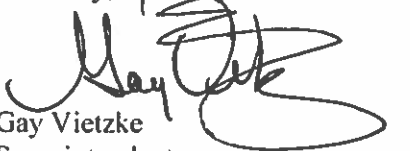
The proposed APE for this project includes the area from which the project site is readily visible, as well as resources that could be impacted due to changes in the character of the site. A preliminary list of historic resources within the APE includes the Kennedy Center itself, the Georgetown Historic District, the East and West Potomac Parks Historic District, the Rock Creek and Potomac Parkway, the Watergate Complex, the Lincoln Memorial Grounds, the Arlington Memorial Bridge and Related Features, the Memorial Avenue Corridor, Lady Bird Johnson Park, the George Washington Memorial Parkway, and Theodore Roosevelt Island. These sites have been extensively documented; therefore, additional survey requirements on potentially affected historic resources are not anticipated.

The NCPC and NPS in cooperation with the Kennedy Center are preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) to analyze potential impacts associated with the Kennedy Center Expansion Connection Project in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The NCPC and NPS plan to coordinate the Section 106 process with NEPA per the National Historic Preservation Act and its implementing regulations (36 CFR 800.8). A public scoping meeting was held on Tuesday, September 29, 2015, from 6:30 to 8:30 PM at the Kennedy Center. This public scoping meeting included an "open house" format and an introduction to the Section 106 consultation process.

At this early stage, we are unable to make a determination of effect. However, the Kennedy Center, NCPC, and NPS look forward to consulting with the DC SHPO and other consulting parties to evaluate the alternatives and identify ways to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential adverse effects on the historic resources within the APE. No impact on archeology is anticipated due to the fact that Phase 1A archaeological investigations for the Kennedy Center Expansion Project (Kreisa and McDowell, 2014) determined that no known American Indian traditional cultural properties exist within the project area.

Thank you for your help. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Kathy Kruse, Vice President for Institutional Affairs, at [kkruise@kennedy-center.org](mailto:kkruise@kennedy-center.org) or by phone at (202) 416-8703.

Sincerely,

  
Gay Vietzke  
Superintendent  
National Mall and Memorial Parks

  
Marcel Acosta  
Executive Director  
National Capital Planning Commission

Enclosures

cc: Catherine Dewey, National Park Service  
Mike Comisso, National Park Service  
Joel Gorder, National Park Service  
Jennifer Hirsch, National Capital Planning Commission  
Judith Robinson, Robinson & Associates  
Elizabeth Estes, Stantec Consulting Services