



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

National Mall and Memorial Parks



February 17, 2016

Ms. Katry Harris  
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation  
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 803  
Washington, DC 20004

Re: Notification of Adverse Effect Finding for the Kennedy Center Expansion  
Connection Project, Washington, D.C.

Dear Ms. Harris,

The National Park Service (NPS) and National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC), in cooperation with the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts (Kennedy Center), are writing to invite the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) to join in consultation regarding the proposed Kennedy Center Expansion Connection Project under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 (54 U.S.C. 306108). As detailed in the enclosed draft Assessment of Effects report, NPS and NCPC have determined that the project will have adverse effects on historic properties.

The Kennedy Center, located at the western edge of the District of Columbia's monumental core overlooking the Potomac River, 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. Due to a critical shortage of dedicated spaces to serve its existing and expanding programs, the Kennedy Center is expanding its facilities through the construction of three land-based pavilions south of the existing structure. NCPC approved the Kennedy Center's design for the land-based pavilions in July 2015.

Currently, the only connection between the Kennedy Center and the Rock Creek Paved Recreation Trail along the Potomac River waterfront is an at-grade connection on the north side of the building. The proposed Kennedy Center Expansion Connection Project would provide a safe pedestrian and bicycle connection between the Kennedy Center and the trail to improve access and to create a new public waterfront link to and from the Kennedy Center and the Roosevelt Bridge. The proposed connection would be located on a site bounded by Virginia Avenue, NW, to the north, the Kennedy Center on the east, the Potomac Expressway and ramp to Roosevelt Bridge on the southeast, and the Potomac River on the west. The Rock Creek Paved Recreation Trail within the project area is administered by the National Mall and Memorial Parks under the jurisdiction of the NPS. NCPC is reviewing the project under its authorities specified in the National Capital Planning Act, and an approval action by NCPC is considered an undertaking subject to Section 106.

Section 106 review, consultation, and compliance with the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) are being coordinated for the Kennedy Center Expansion Connection Project. NPS and NCPC are preparing an Environmental Assessment to identify alternatives and assess the potential impacts of the project. Concurrently, the agencies are conducting consultation under Section 106, which was initiated with both the District of Columbia and Virginia State Historic Preservation Offices. A joint Section 106/NEPA public scoping meeting was held on September 29, 2015, during which the consulting parties were introduced to the project, presented with a draft area of potential effects, and invited to comment on the proposal. A 30-day public comment period was open from September 15 to October 15, 2015. A second consulting parties meeting occurred on December 10, 2015, to present the proposed alternatives to the public and invite comment on the potential effects of the undertaking. Public meetings, as well as the NPS Planning, Environment, and Public Comment (PEPC) database, are being used to involve the public in the Section 106 process. The final consulting parties meeting will take place at 9:00 am on February 23, 2016, at the NCPC offices.

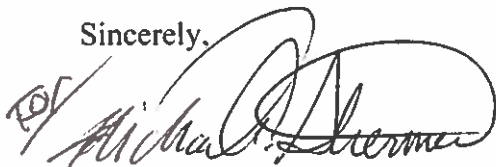
In compliance with 36 CFR Part 800.11(e), the enclosed draft Assessment of Effects report has been prepared for the Kennedy Center Expansion Connection Project. This report provides a project description, identifies the area of potential effects, describes the historic properties within this area, and evaluates the effects of the alternatives under consideration. Graphics include a map and existing conditions photographs of the project area, a map identifying the area of potential effects, and graphic renderings of the proposed alternatives.

NPS and NCPC anticipate that three of the four proposed action alternatives for the Kennedy Center Expansion Connection Project would have adverse effects on historic properties. The adverse effects would include modifications to character-defining features of the Kennedy Center and impacts to the Rock Creek and Potomac Parkway. As currently proposed, all excavations associated with the Kennedy Center Expansion Connection Project would be limited to fill deposits and are not expected to impact archaeological resources. (Archaeological resources were dismissed as an impact topic in the Environmental Assessment.)

NPS and NCPC look forward to working with the ACHP, the District of Columbia and Virginia State Historic Preservation Offices, and other consulting parties to identify ways to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects. NPS and NCPC will seek to execute a Memorandum of Agreement to resolve the adverse effects in accordance with 36 CFR Part 800.6.

For questions or clarifications regarding this notice and to advise the NPS and NCPC as to whether the ACHP wishes to join in consultation, please contact Carlton Hart at 202-482-7252 or [carlton.hart@ncpc.gov](mailto:carlton.hart@ncpc.gov).

Sincerely,



Marcel Acosta  
Executive Director  
National Capital Planning Commission



Gay Vietzke  
Superintendent  
National Mall and Memorial Parks

enclosure

cc: Chris Wilson, ACHP  
Andrew Lewis, DCSHPO  
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