Re: Initiation of Section 106 Consultation, Carnegie Library (Central Public Library) Rehabilitation

Dear Mr. Maloney:

Events DC is proposing to rehabilitate the Carnegie Library located at 801 K Street, NW, on Mount Vernon Square in Washington, DC. The National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) is writing to initiate consultation with the District of Columbia State Historic Preservation Officer (DC SHPO) in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (16 U.S.C. § 470f) and its implementing regulations (36 CFR § 800). The proposed project is an undertaking and subject to the review and approval of NCPC under the National Capital Planning Act.

Project Description and Background

The Carnegie Library building is owned by the District of Columbia Government and is administered by Events DC, the convention and sports authority for the District of Columbia. In 1999, the District granted a ninety-nine-year lease of the library building to the Historical Society of Washington, DC (HSW). Events DC and HSW later amended the lease to reduce the original leased premises of HSW to only portions of the building interior. Mount Vernon Square (Reservation 8) is owned by the United States Government. In 2006, the Secretary of the Interior transferred jurisdiction of Mount Vernon Square from the National Park Service to the District of Columbia Government. Under the proposed project, Events DC will retain administrative jurisdiction over the building and Mount Vernon Square.

The purpose of the project is to rehabilitate and modernize the Carnegie Library building to become a retail and education facility. The building will be leased jointly by HSW (which will continue to operate its research library, exhibit galleries, and administrative offices there) and a retail tenant (which will operate a retail, events, and educational facility in the building). The project is comprised of the following components: a restoration of the building exterior, including repair and cleaning of the exterior stone, repair or replacement of the windows and skylights, and repair of the copper roof cladding; a rehabilitation of the building interior, including removal of non-original infill construction throughout the building, insertion of a central atrium space, upgrade or replacement of the MEP systems, and restoration of certain original finishes and features; and a reconfiguration of the north entrance, stairs, and landing. Although the project is generally limited to the building itself, minor alterations may be made to site hardscape elements to comply with accessibility and other code requirements.

Section 106 and Historic Properties

To prepare for the Section 106 consultation process, Events DC and NCPC have developed the enclosed 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 through the consultation.
process. The proposed APE for this project includes the area from which the project site is readily visible and is generally bound by Sixth Street, NW on the east, L Street, NW on the north, Tenth Street, NW on the west, and H Street, NW on the south. A preliminary list of historic resources within the draft APE includes portions of the Plan of the City of Washington (L’Enfant Plan; L’Enfant-McMillan Plan), Downtown Historic District, and the Mount Vernon Square Historic District. It also includes the following historic resources individually listed in the National Register and/or the District of Columbia Inventory of Historic Sites: Carnegie Library (Central Public Library); American Federation of Labor; Seventh Street, NW, East Site of 1000 Block; Mount Vernon Place United Methodist Church; Tudor Hall (Henley Park Hotel); and Washington Hebrew Congregation (Greater New Hope Baptist Church). The American Federation of Labor property has also been designated as a National Historic Landmark. Additionally, the draft APE encompasses a portion of the Downtown Historic District Amendment and Boundary Expansion, which is currently under consideration for status as a District of Columbia Historic District. The area in the vicinity of the Carnegie Library building has been extensively documented; therefore, it is not anticipated that additional survey to identify potentially affected resources will be required.

At this time, NCPC has determined that the project has the potential to have an adverse effect on the Carnegie Library building. Constructed in 1899-1902, Carnegie Library was listed in the District of Columbia Inventory of Historic Sites in 1964 and the National Register of Historic Places in 1969 as the Central Public Library. The nomination recognized the building’s significance as one of many buildings given to American cities by industrialist and philanthropist Andrew Carnegie to promote free library systems. It also reflects the growth of the D.C. Public Library system from humble beginnings in rented quarters to a Beaux-Arts edifice on Mount Vernon Square.

NCPC is prepared to work with the DC SHPO, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and other consulting parties to finalize a formal determination of effect through the Section 106 consultation process. We welcome the opportunity to identify and evaluate modifications to the proposed project that will avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential adverse effects on historic properties within the APE.

Section 106 and NEPA Coordination

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and in cooperation with Events DC, NCPC is preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) to analyze potential impacts associated with the project. NCPC plans to coordinate the Section 106 and NEPA processes per the implementing regulations (36 CFR § 800.8) of the NHPA. A public NEPA scoping meeting will be held on May 9, 2017, at 4:00pm at the Carnegie Library located at 801 K Street, NW, Washington, D.C. The purpose of this scoping meeting will be to introduce the project and invite public comment on the range of issues to be addressed in the EA.

Next Steps

NCPC and Events DC invite you to attend the first Section 106 consulting parties meeting for the Carnegie Library project scheduled for May 11, 2017, at 4:00pm in the Commission Hearing Room at NCPC’s offices, 401 9th Street, NW, Suite 500, Washington, D.C. The agenda for this meeting will include an overview of the project purpose and background, a preliminary identification of historic properties, and a detailed presentation of the proposed design and alternatives for the treatment of interior spaces.
We look forward to beginning the Section 106 consultation process for this project. If you have any questions, please contact Lee Webb, Federal Preservation Officer, at (202) 482-7240 or at lee.webb@ncpc.gov.

Sincerely,

Marcel Acosta
Executive Director

Enclosures:  Draft Area of Potential Effects Map
             List of Potential Consulting Parties

cc:        Steven Callcott, D.C. State Historic Preservation Office
           Andrew Lewis, D.C. State Historic Preservation Office
### Carnegie Library Rehabilitation
#### Section 106 Initiation – Potential Consulting Parties List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applicant</th>
<th>Events DC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SHPO</td>
<td>D.C. State Historic Preservation Officer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Representatives of Local Governments | Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2C  
Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2F  
Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6E  
District of Columbia Office of the Mayor  
District of Columbia City Council |
| Additional Consulting Parties/Neighboring Property Owners | 635 Mass Ave LLC  
800 K ST Associates LLC  
American Association of Medical Colleges  
Boston Properties  
Committee of 100 on the Federal City  
DC Preservation League  
District of Columbia Department of Transportation  
District of Columbia Office of Planning  
Douglas Development  
Downtown Business Improvement District  
Gould Property  
Historical Society of Washington, D.C.  
Kim Hoagland  
Matthew Gilmore  
Mount Vernon Triangle CID  
Mt. Vernon Place United Methodist Church  
Muriel Watkins  
National Park Service  
National Trust for Historic Preservation  
Oxford Properties  
Penn Quarter Neighborhood Association  
Suntone K9 LLC  
The Meridan Group  
Tudor LP  
U.S. Commission of Fine Arts  
Washington Convention Center Advisory Committee |