



OCT 31 2016

Kenneth H. P'Pool  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Office  
Mississippi Department of Archives and History  
Post Office Box 571  
Jackson, MS 39205

Re: Gulfport Job Corps Center – Restoration or Replacement of Buildings  
Draft Environmental Assessment

Dear Mr. P'Pool:

This letter is written to you as the Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH) to inform you of the U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL's) intent to publish the attached draft Environmental Assessment (EA) in the *Federal Register* for the above-referenced project during the week of November 1, 2016. We are providing you an advance copy of the EA for your review. DOL has selected the preferred alternative described in the draft EA as Alternative No. 3, which was described during the EA public scoping meeting held on June 14, 2016. Alternative No. 3 involves the retention of three of the existing (street facing) building facades along 20<sup>th</sup> Street and 34<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and construction of new buildings behind the facades to provide a Job Corps facility that will meet our program needs. This alternative was selected based on careful consideration of all major facets of the project requirements, including the mitigation of adverse effects on the historic property, the feasibility and risks associated with design and construction of the various alternatives, adherence to Job Corps program needs, and cost. DOL's consultant, Laird and Smithers, provided the structural analysis of the three existing buildings designated as eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), as well the analysis of the details for retaining the three existing facades. This analysis was instrumental in DOL's selection of the preferred alternative.

DOL provided MDAH with a copy of the structural analysis via UPS on September 29, 2016. Please find enclosed a CD of the façade retention analysis which was submitted to DOL in September 2016. The analysis assessed two possible methods of retaining the facades, both of which are viable in terms of the future design of Alternative No. 3. DOL anticipates discussing the architectural treatment of the facades during the forthcoming Section 106 consultations.

Now that a preferred alternative has been selected by DOL, the public will have the opportunity to comment on the draft EA during the 30 day comment period following publication in the *Federal Register*. DOL will provide hard copies of the draft EA for distribution to MDAH, the City of Gulfport, the 33<sup>rd</sup> Avenue High School alumni group, the Gulfport public library for their review. We also will have a link to the Job Corps' public web site at <http://www.jobcorps.gov/home.aspx>, so that the draft EA can be distributed to other stakeholders as well. As you are aware, the EA cannot be finalized until the Section 106 process is completed. However, since the publication of this environmental document includes pertinent information to facilitate the Section 106 review, we are coordinating the two reviews.

Once the draft EA is published, DOL will prepare the background documentation in accordance with 36 CFR§ 800.11(e) of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's (ACHP's) regulations, "Protection of Historic Properties" (36 CFR Part 800) that implement Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. This information will be distributed to all consulting parties, including MDAH, for its review and comment. In order to facilitate the continuation of the Section 106 review process, this documentation will be used to comply with the requirements of 36 CFR § 800.6, Resolution of Adverse Effects. Subsequent to the MDAH's review and preliminary discussions with DOL, we will invite the consulting parties to first public consultation meeting of this reinitiated Section 106 review. The public notice and schedule of the first consultation meeting will be developed in coordination with MDAH and the ACHP since the ACHP has expressed to DOL its intent in participating in the Section 106 review for the proposed Gulfport Job Corps Center.

DOL appreciates your partnership on this project, and looks forward to working with you and the ACHP to move forward on this undertaking.

Sincerely,



Lenita Jacobs-Simmons  
National Director  
Office of Job Corps

Attachment  
Draft Environmental Assessment  
CD - Façade Retention Analysis

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