

July 30, 2012

Dear Interested Party:

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) has prepared a Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) to assess and evaluate the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed disposal of the West Heating Plant parcel, located at 29th and K Streets, NW, Washington, DC. The parcel currently contains a decommissioned heating plant that was previously used to produce steam to heat Federal buildings in the District of Columbia.

The West Heating Plant parcel has been identified as surplus and the disposal of the parcel is needed to eliminate the costs associated with the maintenance of the property. This proposed action is consistent with the Presidential Memorandum issued June 10, 2010, entitled, Disposing of Unneeded Federal Real Estate. The memorandum called for Federal agencies to identify and dispose of excess properties. Considerable savings to the Federal Government will result by eliminating the costs associated with the maintenance of underutilized Federal properties.

This Draft EA has been prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR 1500-1508), GSA Order ADM 1095.1F (Environmental Considerations in Decision Making), and the GSA Public Buildings Service NEPA Desk Guide. NEPA requires Federal agencies to provide the public with an opportunity to participate in the process of analyzing the impacts of Federal actions on the human environment. A previous opportunity to comment on the project was provided to the public during a 30-day public scoping period, held from January 13, 2012, to February 13, 2012. A public information meeting was held on January 26, 2012, at Georgetown Visitation School, providing members of the community, interested agencies, and the general public an opportunity to receive information and comment on the scope of the EA. The Draft EA addresses comments received during the public scoping period.

Federal agencies are required by NEPA to evaluate the potential impacts that the proposed action may have on the human environment. The impacts of the two alternatives on the natural and man-made environment are analyzed in the EA. To fully evaluate the potential impacts of the proposed disposal action, GSA has evaluated the impacts that may result from the reasonable future use of the property in the Draft EA. Evaluation of the impacts from reasonable future use of the property is not intended to indicate that GSA would restrict future use of the property should it leave Federal ownership. Additionally, the proposed disposal would not include the control of any reuse of the property other than potential deed restrictions, as are authorized by statute for the protection of human health, the environment, and historic resources. Disposal of the parcel by GSA would remove the property from Federal ownership and the land would become subject to the District of Columbia's land use and taxing authority. All future development or reuse would be subject to local zoning, permitting, and land use controls.

Pursuant to NEPA regulations, impacts from a no action alternative are also analyzed in the EA. The no action alternative is defined as the retention of the West Heating Plant parcel in Federal ownership and the continuation of the current maintenance.

The purpose of this letter is to notify members of the community and other stakeholders of the 30-day public comment period for the Draft EA. A copy of the Draft EA is available via the internet at www.gsa.gov/ncrnepea and at the Georgetown Public Library located at 3260 R Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Your participation in this process is greatly appreciated. GSA welcomes comments on the Draft EA for 30 calendar days from the date of this letter. All written comments should be submitted to:

U.S. General Services Administration, Public Buildings Service
Attention: Ms. Suzanne Hill, NEPA Program Lead
301 7th Street, SW, Room 4004
Washington, DC 20407
Suzanne.Hill@gsa.gov

If you have any questions regarding the Draft EA, please feel free to contact Ms. Suzanne Hill at (202) 205-5821.

Sincerely,

William G. Dowd
Acting Regional Commissioner
Public Buildings Service