



January 13, 2012

Dear Interested Party:

Please be advised that the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) will be preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed disposal of a parcel of approximately 1.97 acres located at 29th and K Streets., NW, Washington, DC. The existing use of the parcel is a decommissioned heating plant that was previously used to provide steam to Federal buildings in the District of Columbia. The parcel is also known as the West Heating Plant parcel.

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. 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.

GSA is preparing the EA in accordance with Section 102 of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). NEPA requires Federal agencies to evaluate the potential impacts that the proposed action may have on the human environment. To fully evaluate the potential effects of the proposed disposal action, GSA will assess in the EA the impacts that may result from the reasonable future use of the property. 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.

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.

Pursuant to NEPA regulations, impacts from a no action alternative will also be 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 an opportunity to assist GSA in identifying potential impacts that may occur as a result of the proposed Federal action. Your participation in this process is greatly appreciated. Comments received during the scoping period will be used to refine the resource issues analyzed in the EA.

GSA has identified the following as preliminary impact issues to be evaluated in the EA: Transportation, Historic and Cultural Resources, Public Health and Safety, and Water Resources.

Concurrent with the preparation of the EA, GSA will conduct consultation with the District of Columbia Historic Preservation Office under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), 16 U.S.C. 470f, to identify historic properties that may be potentially affected by the disposal of the West Heat Plant parcel and to seek ways to resolve any adverse effects of the disposal that may be identified through consultation. GSA has determined the West Heat Plant eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and the property is in the Georgetown Historic District.

As part of the effort to evaluate and identify potential impacts through the NEPA and NHPA Section 106 processes, GSA will be hosting a joint NEPA public scoping meeting and Section 106 consultation meeting. The purpose of the public meeting is to offer members of the community, interested agencies, and the general public an opportunity to assist GSA in identifying potential impacts, and potential issues for this proposed Federal disposal action. Your attendance and participation in this process would be greatly appreciated. The meeting will be an informal open house, where visitors may come, receive information, and give comments. The public meeting will be held on January 26, 2012 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., at Georgetown Visitation School, Heritage Room (first building on the left by the gatehouse, 2nd floor), located at 1524 35th Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Agencies and members of the public are encouraged to provide written comments on the scoping issues in addition to, or in lieu of, giving their comments at the public meeting. GSA will accept comments concerning the scope of the EA for 30 calendar days from the date stamped on this letter. Please send written comments to:

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

We hope you are able to attend the upcoming meeting. Should you have any further questions on this action, please contact Ms. Suzanne Hill at (202) 205-5821.

Sincerely,

Cathleen C. Kronopolus
Regional Commissioner
Public Buildings Service