



22 February 2008

Mr. David Sponn  
Project Manager  
National Archives and Records Administration  
Space and Security Division  
Room 2300  
8601 Adelphi Road  
College Park, MD 20740-6001

Re: Draft Environmental Assessment  
John F. Kennedy Presidential Library  
and Museum Addition and Renovation

Dear Mr. Sponn:

The Boston Harbor Association is a non-profit, public interest organization founded in 1973 by the League of Women Voters and the Boston Shipping Association to promote a clean, alive, and accessible Boston Harbor. We were the first organization to call for the clean up of Boston Harbor, and we actively promote public access and programming along Boston's waterfront, beaches, and islands.

The John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum is to be highly commended for its well-maintained HarborWalk and for its outstanding programming which serves to bring the general public to the water's edge in Dorchester. More than most

waterfront facilities, the Kennedy Library and Museum has an active, engaging series of educational programs which is available free of charge to the public, and which helps to foster greater public usage of the waterfront.

In December, 2007, the Library and Museum filed a Draft Environmental Assessment proposing a two-story 28,000 sq. ft. addition on the western side of the existing building and renovation of 10,500 sq. ft. of the existing building. The new addition will relieve crowding in the building, allow for storage of all records and materials, and provide new temporary exhibit space, new classroom, and new office space.

The Boston Harbor Association has reviewed the Draft Environmental Assessment and was one of two parties which attended the 22 January 2008 public meeting on the project. We are highly supportive of the proposed expansion. Our comments follow:

Proposed Project in an Urban Setting: The Draft Environmental Assessment (DEA) notes, "Though the JFK Library is the smallest of the projects, it is perhaps the most monumental, a composition of stark, platonic masses set on an isolated waterfront site at Columbia Point against a dramatic background of Boston's skyline to the north" (page 3-12 of DEA).

We suggest that this description be updated to indicate the vibrancy of Columbia Point and the new plans and development anticipated in the next five

to ten years. The narrative in the DEA does not indicate the presence of the new Peninsula residential development located between UMASS and the Kennedy Library and Museum, nor the campus planning assessment underway at UMASS Boston which may include campus housing, the redevelopment of Bayside Expo Center which may include residential and commercial uses, the planned RFP process for air rights development at the MBTA's JFK/UMASS station, nor the Boston Redevelopment Authority's Columbia Point Master Planning process.

HarborWalk Improvements: At the 22 January 2008 public meeting, the project proponent described in greater detail the phasing of the project, given current funding. Congressional funding has been appropriated which will allow for the following: acquisition of a land parcel from UMASS Boston to accommodate the expansion; stabilization of the rip-rapped bank of the waterfront, thereby alleviating erosion occurring along a portion of the shoreline; construction of a portion of the new HarborWalk segment and HarborWalk signage; and some site preparation.

We strongly support, as part of the first phase of this project, the shoreline stabilization and construction and signage of the new HarborWalk segment, and urge that the Final Environmental Assessment specifically indicate that these aspects will be in Phase I of the project.

Water Transportation: We understand that the pier and dock next to the John F. Kennedy Library and

Museum are operated by UMASS Boston. As the Columbia Point area is further developed, we hope that the Library and Museum will support our efforts to encourage water transportation usage from this dock by both visitors and residents.

Sustainable Development: The Draft Environmental Assessment does not have any section regarding sustainable development, nor any discussion about LEED certification of the new addition.

At the January, 2008 public meeting, the project proponent indicated that federal requirements do incorporate guidelines for sustainability. We ask that the Final Environmental Assessment outline in detail the measures that will be included.

Public Rest Rooms: According to the project proponent, the rest rooms in the Smith Pavilion of the existing Library and Museum are available for use by the general public, regardless of admission fee. We ask that universal signage be placed by the front door of the Library and Museum so that members of the general public are aware of the availability of these facilities, regardless of admission fee.

Best Management Practices: Page 3-9 of the Draft Environmental Assessment indicates that a long-term best management practices operations and maintenance plan will be prepared. We ask that a draft of the plan be included in the Final Environmental Assessment, and that particular

attention be given to ensuring that water quality issues are addressed.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Vivien Li  
Executive Director  
The Boston Harbor  
Association