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Richmond, VA 23219

January 6, 2017

Mr. Marc Holma
Division of Review and Compliance
Department of Historic Resources
2801 Kensington Avenue
Richmond, Virginia 22802

RE: Cultural Resource Phase IA Reconnaissance Report/ Ashland Bypass (ASBP)
Southeast High Speed Rail Tier II Environmental Impact Statement, Washington, DC to Richmond
Segment. DHR #2014-0666

Dear Marc,

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) are continuing environmental studies associated with the Tier II Environmental Impact Statement for the Washington, DC to Richmond (DC2RVA) segment of the Southeast High Speed Rail corridor (Project). The limits of the Project extend from Control Point RO (MP CFP-110) in Arlington south to the CSX Transportation ("CSXT") A-Line/CSXT-S-Line junction at MP A-11 in Centralia, Virginia (Chesterfield County), a distance of approximately 123 miles. This project is receiving federal funding through the FRA, requires permits issued by federal agencies such as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and will traverse federal land including parcels owned by the U.S. Marine Corps and the National Park Service (NPS), among others. Due to the involvement of several federal entities, the undertaking requires compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), as amended.

The project Area of Potential Effects (APE) was approved by your agency on February 2, 2015, and the general approach to cultural resource studies has been the subject of numerous telephone calls, meetings, and emails. During our February 18, 2016 meeting, the DHR concurred that a Phase IA reconnaissance study of the two potential bypasses around Fredericksburg (Segment 21) and Ashland (Segment 22) would be a suitable first step to assessing cultural resources along the corridor given the preliminary nature of these alternatives. The report would present recommendations on future Phase IB identification studies should these alternatives be selected for the project.

This current submittal contains the results of our Phase IA cultural resource study on the Ashland Bypass (ASBP). Enclosed you will find two copies of the report entitled *Archaeological and Architectural Phase IA Study for the Washington, D.C. to Richmond, Virginia, High Speed Rail Project, Ashland Bypass (ASBP) Segment, Hanover County*. The report was authored by Heather Dollins Staton and Earl E. Proper,

members of the DC2RVA project team, and meets the standards set forth in both the Secretary of Interior's Standards and Guidelines (1983) and the Virginia Department of Historic Resource's (DHR) *Guidelines for Preparing Identification and Evaluation Reports* (2011).

The current study was designed to provide preliminary information on the APE and outline the potential for the area to contain National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)-eligible cultural resources for planning purposes. As such, this initial study included a background review to identify previously recorded resources within the project footprint and within 0.5 miles of the architectural APE, a historic map review, a vehicular and partial pedestrian reconnaissance of the APE and surrounding viewshed to inspect the ASBP segment in consideration for archaeological potential and to note above-ground resources over 48 years in age (the age limit was developed to correspond to the anticipated 2017 project completion date), the development of a list of architectural properties to be recorded during subsequent Phase IB identification-level studies, and maps showing the areas where archaeological Phase IB identification-level survey would be needed.

In total, 119 above-ground resources over 48 years old were noted from the roadway during the vehicular survey (see Table 6-1 in the enclosed report). Of these, the DC2RVA Team identified 17 resources (042-0340, 042-0342, 042-0556, 042-0777, 042-5048, 042-5731, 042-5732, 042-5733, 042-5734, 042-5745, 042-5746, 042-5749, 042-5751, 042-5752, 042-5767, 042-5768, and 500-0001/088-5413) that were included in the reconnaissance-level architectural surveys for other segments. As such, a revisit is not required as part of the current Phase IA study and they are not recommended for future Phase IB survey. One additional resource (Willow Springs, 042-5761) was determined not eligible for the NRHP in 2016; because of the recent determination, a revisit during the Phase IB survey is not necessary. Of the remaining 101 resources, 12 are previously recorded and 89 are unrecorded. Two of the previously recorded resources (Maplewood, 042-0051 and Montevideo, 042-0392) were determined eligible for the NRHP by DHR staff in 1994 and one previously recorded resource (Bridge #1003, 042-5014) was determined not eligible for the NRHP in 1998. These three resources should be revisited during the Phase IB survey to ensure that they retain characteristics exhibited during those previous eligibility determinations. The remaining nine previously recorded resources (042-0091, 042-0096, 042-0343, 042-0361, 042-0372, 042-0393, 042-0402, 042-0592, and 042-5760) have not been formally evaluated for the NRHP. In addition to the two resources recommended eligible and the one resource recommend not eligible by DHR staff, the Team recommends that those nine unevaluated resources and the 89 newly recorded resources should be surveyed as part of the Phase IB study.

The Phase IA archaeological survey included both the bypass corridor and six road crossing modification areas. In general, the APE is defined by agricultural fields and forested lots, with scattered rural home sites and small residential developments. Obvious disturbance within the ASBP segment APE is confined to portions of the six road improvement areas. Most of the agricultural fields and forested lots appear to

have the potential to contain archaeological sites. Therefore, as a result of the Phase IA archaeological reconnaissance survey, the Team is recommending that approximately 100.5 acres of the overall 162.1-acre ASBP segment requires Phase IB archaeological testing (62 percent). Mapping depicting these areas can be found in Appendix C of the enclosed report.

We invite your agency to concur with these recommendations within 30 days of receipt of this letter. If you have questions about historic property studies for this project, please do not hesitate to contact me at (540) 899-9170 or via email at kbarile@dovetailcrg.com.

Sincerely,



Kerri S. Barile, Ph.D.

President, Dovetail Cultural Resource Group

CC: Emily Stock, DRPT
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