Early Notice and Public Review of a Proposed Activity in a 100-Year Floodplain and Wetland

To: All interested Agencies, Groups, and Individuals

This is to give notice that the NY Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP), under Part 58, has determined that the following proposed action under Community Project Funding Grants and HUD grant number B-23-CP-NY-1169 is located in the 100-year floodplain and wetland, and OPRHP will be identifying and evaluating practicable alternatives to locating the action in the floodplain and wetland and the potential impacts on the floodplain and wetland from the proposed action, as required by Executive Order 11990, in accordance with HUD regulations at 24 CFR 55.20 Subpart C Procedures for Making Determinations on Floodplain Management and Protection of Wetlands.

The proposed project(s) is located at 1 Delaware Avenue North, Cohoes, NY 12047, within Albany County. The project has three elements, remediation of contaminated soil, stabilization of historic structures and stabilization of the riverbank. No construction of new structures will take place. The project proponent has received Economic Development Initiative funding. The total site is approximately 5.97 acres, of which all are either in the floodplain or the wetland. The floodplain area of the site is approximately 5.67 acres while the wetland area of the site is approximately 0.30 acres. All soil contamination remediation and structural stabilization work will take place in the flood plain while the shoreline stabilization work will take place within the wetland. The project does not propose to disturb the entire site. Approximately 0.23 acres of floodplain will be disturbed for the soil contamination remediation, an additional 0.58 acres of floodplain will be disturbed for access to the individual work sites (and parking for future site use), and 0.26 acres of wetland will be disturbed for the shoreline stabilization work. No ground disturbance is anticipated for the structural stabilization. FEMA maps show the entire upland section of the project to be within the 100 year floodplain, although modeling shows that the site is likely to flood with more frequency. The National Wetland Inventory describes the Hudson River, adjacent to the project site as L1UBHh (Permanently flooded, deepwater habitat greater than 20 acres in size that is created by an impoundment) as the river, in this location, is impounded behind the Troy Dam. Both the floodplain and wetland provide the benefits of stormwater management and energy dissipation, the floodplain provides additional benefits of stormwater infiltration, water cycling, and nutrient removal, while the wetland provides habitat for river related species. The site possesses strong contemporary historical importance as the location of a 20th Century industrial ship building facility; and continues to be a culturally significant area for indigenous peoples who maintain strong connections with the project location and the larger region.

There are three primary purposes for this notice. First, people who may be affected by activities in floodplains and wetlands and those who have an interest in the protection of the natural environment should be given an opportunity to express their concerns and provide information about these areas. Commenters are encouraged to offer alternative sites outside of the floodplain and wetland, alternative methods to serve the same project purpose, and methods to minimize and mitigate impacts. Second, an adequate public notice program can be an important public educational tool. The dissemination of information and request for public comment about floodplains and wetlands can facilitate and enhance Federal efforts to reduce the risks and impacts associated with the occupancy and modification of these special areas. Third, as a matter of fairness, when the Federal government determines it will participate in actions taking place in floodplains and wetlands, it must inform those who may be put at greater or continued risk.
Written comments must be received by OPRHP, on or before July 27th, at the following address: OPRHP, 625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12238, Attention: Elizabeth Martin, Senior Architect. Comments may also be submitted via email (preferred) at Elizabeth.martin@parks.ny.gov. Please note “NEPA – Matton Shipyard” in the subject line. A full description of the project may be reviewed at the project proponent’s website https://eriecanalway.org/get-involved/matton. See sidebar labeled Documents for NEPA Public Notice Review.

Date: July 10th, 2023