

RFP for West Boulevard “Survey” Project Comments

The project as detailed in the RFP has little chance of success due to:

1. The incredibly short time frame.

- When this project was discussed in the spring of 2013, the HPC and staff decided that it should be a phased project over the course of at least two years (hence the reference to “Phase I” in the grant request to SHPO). As written, the RFP allows for approximately ten weeks to complete the entire project, with a mere six weeks of that time allotted for the bulk (probably 75%) of the work (Task 2 in the RFP).
- The grant allowed for work to begin as early as late summer/early fall 2013. The delay in getting an RFP out until the end of January/beginning of February 2014 is resulting in the loss of at least six months worth of work time for the current grant cycle.
- A project of this magnitude requires MANY hours to complete. As outlined in the RFP, four tasks includes the pre-field work phase (the gathering and reviewing all existing information and preparing forms and maps for a survey); conducting the field work (which includes completing survey forms, drawing sketch plans, and taking photographs), processing all survey information and entering it in digital format to the SHPO database, and the preparation of a final survey report (which includes the summary of the survey, the actual survey data, and recommendations for future work).

As a professional estimation, a minimum average of up to three hours per resource would be needed to complete the four tasks as identified in the RFP. Using the lowest number of 824 resources as indicated in the RFP (although the National Register nomination lists well more than 900 resources – why the discrepancy?), it would take a minimum of 2,472 hours to complete this project. Do the math – 24 hours per day for seven days a week for ten weeks equals a total number of hours of 1,680. There is just not sufficient time to get the work done.

- It’s winter! The bulk of this project entails field work, and if completed as suggested in this RFP, would occur in March. Usually field work occurs during warmer months in the fall and spring, as well as the summer.

2. The undertaking of a “complete resurvey” of the district’s resources using the approach proposed.

- The use of the word “resurvey” is creating some semantic problems. What the HPC has discussed as a resurvey and what SHPO refers to as a resurvey are different things.
- The HPC has discussed the need for updated information in order to better conduct 11.1 Reviews. That updated information was to include a listing of current materials (siding, windows, etc.), any alterations that may have occurred since the district was

listed in 1994 (including additions), any demolitions that have occurred during that same time period (primarily secondary resources such as garages and sheds), any new construction and infill. In addition to updating this information, a re-evaluation of contributing vs. non-contributing status should be made – so for example, if the update indicates that there is new vinyl siding and windows throughout the house and that in the installation of the new materials the original character-defining historic features or historic fabrics were removed or obscured, it may be recommended that a contributing status be changed to non-contributing. To gather this updated information DOES NOT require a full resurvey using the SHPO Reconnaissance forms.

- Because the grant request to SHPO last spring included the terminology “resurvey” it automatically triggered SHPO’s idea of what a survey (or resurvey) is. A full resurvey using the SHPO Reconnaissance forms, as proposed in the RFP, is not necessary for the information needed by the HPC to conduct the 11.1 Reviews. This approach, while it would provide some of the information needed by the HPC, is intended to provide lots of additional information for SHPO’s purposes of updating their database. Perhaps at some point in time, it would be helpful to them to gather this information, but given the current needs of the HPC and the limitations on budget and time, a resurvey isn’t necessary or prudent at this time.
- At a minimum, it must be decided if this project is intended to gather updated information regarding the resources in the district or if, indeed, a full resurvey is needed to meet the HPC’s needs. If a resurvey is not necessary at this time, a different format should be developed and used to keep the HPC moving forward.

3. The limited budget.

- The budget as granted by SHPO for this project is \$9,000 (originally intended by HPC to be Phase I).
- Using the time estimates above for a full resurvey, the average hourly wages equate to \$3.64. To complete a full resurvey, this project may cost somewhere between \$50,000 and \$75,000.

QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED

A. What is the intent of this project - is it a full resurvey or an updating of information? Which of these approaches is most needed for the HPC to successfully conduct 11.1 Reviews?

B. Should the project occur in phases (regardless of whether it is a full resurvey or an updating of information)?

C. What is realistic for the \$9,000 grant currently in hand?

D. What, if anything, is prudent to complete in a 10-week timeframe?

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Assume that this project will occur in at least two phases, the first of which can occur this spring using the current grant monies.

B. Use the existing \$9,000 grant to hire a qualified professional consultant to complete the Phase I portion of the project. Attempt to complete this work during the proposed timeline, extending the timeline for extenuating circumstances only.

The exact nature of the Phase I work would depend in part of the meeting recommended below in Section C, as it would differ between a full resurvey and an updating of information.

For a full resurvey, Phase I work should include the preparation of SHPO survey forms for each resource to be included and the completion of all information that can be added prior to field work, as well as the preparation of maps and the organization of all existing information.

If an updating of information is the approach to be taken, Phase I work would include the preparation of the format to be used for the project, the gathering and organization of all existing information, and the creation of the forms to be used for the field work.

C. Hold a meeting that includes city staff and the HPC (or representatives from the HPC) to determine what the HPC needs at this time to conduct successful 11.1 Reviews – should a full resurvey be completed or should the focus be on updating information?

D. Hold a meeting with staff, HPC and the selected consultant to discuss the approach to Phase II work, including recommended timelines and budgets, as well as recommendations for the request for the next SHPO grant cycle.

Respectfully,
Bill Kessloff