



NEW HAMPSHIRE DIVISION OF HISTORICAL RESOURCES

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June 28, 2011

Erika Mark
Project Manager
US Army Corps of Engineers
New England District
696 Virginia Road
Concord, MA 01742

Re: Groton Wind Farm Project, Grafton County, NH, RPR #1422

Dear Ms. Mark:

It is our understanding that the Applicant to the above-referenced undertaking has requested the development of a Section 106 Programmatic Agreement in order to receive a United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) permit to begin construction on portions of the project beginning September 1, 2011. This project has been under Section 106 review since October 22, 2009, when the Applicant submitted a Request for Project Review form, initiating consultation with the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources (DHR). Understanding the aggressive schedule needed for the project, the DHR worked closely with the Applicant and the USACE to develop a streamlined survey process for properties within an established three-mile Area of Potential Effects.

In the 20 months since, the DHR has received twelve New Hampshire Inventory Forms in support of the Groton Wind Farm Project. As previously reported, the consultant's first submission of a Project Area Form was returned for substantial revisions; it was resubmitted and approved in January 2011. The NH Determination of Eligibility Committee (DOE) has also reviewed the following Individual Forms, resulting in these recommendations:

Hebron	Pike's Tavern, 5 S Mayhew Turnpike, HEB0008	Eligible
Hebron	Daniel Walker House, 179 N Mayhew Turnpike, HEB0009	Incomplete information or evaluation
Hebron	Elm Mere Farm (Robertie House), 99 N Shore Road, HEB0011	Eligible, Incomplete info or evaluation
Hebron	George House, 479 George Road, HEB0013	Eligible, Incomplete info or evaluation
Plymouth	Adams-Cummings House, 27 Route 25, PLY0018	Not Eligible
Plymouth	1875 House, 618 Fairgrounds Road, PLY0019	Not Eligible
Plymouth	Circle House, 872 Tenney Mt. Highway, PLY0020	Eligible, Incomplete info or evaluation
Plymouth	Bell House, 521 Mayhew Turnpike, PLY0021	Eligible
Plymouth	Kidder House/Pem Farm, 12 Smith Bridge Rd, PLY0022	Incomplete information or evaluation

In addition, two of the three required Historic District Area Forms have been submitted: the Quincy Road Area and the Rumney Depot Area. DHR staff has spent an extraordinary amount of time internally reviewing these forms and answering questions posed by the consultant prior to and after their submission. The forms contain numerous errors and discrepancies and do not follow accepted National Register guidelines or New Hampshire's published standards. Considering these results, the DHR can no longer justify the investment of time and resources in coaching the project's cultural resources consultant.

As you know, the Architectural Historian Consultant's role is to provide information to the Lead Federal agency and Consulting Parties (including the State Historic Preservation Officer) to assist them in the understanding of

the types of resources present on the landscape and to make recommendations as to which properties are listed and/or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The successful completion of the identification phase of the project provides solid and justifiable assessments so that subsequent phases of Section 106 may be implemented. Comparable to other states, in New Hampshire consultants utilize DHR Inventory Forms to provide this information. The DHR has worked hard to streamline the resources inventory process in New Hampshire and to create a user-friendly program. Typically, any consultant who is qualified under Federal guidelines and is familiar with National Register survey and evaluation policies can successfully complete the necessary information and evaluations.

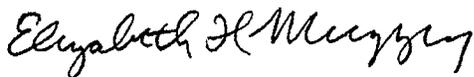
It is important to underscore the fact that thousands of Individual Forms and hundreds of Area Forms have been successfully completed as part of Section 106 reviews in New Hampshire. For example, Historic District Area Forms evaluating villages in the Baker River Valley just northwest of the project area provide relevant information that assisted review of federal undertakings, with little or no additional information required from the consultant. Undertakings have successfully moved through the Section 106 process in a timely manner resulting in the completion of important projects all over New Hampshire.

The DHR is fully cognizant of the Groton Wind Farm's need to begin construction and is frustrated by the cultural resources consultant's progress in identifying historical resources in the project area. As noted above, the DHR is unable to continue the investment of time and resources to provide guidance and assistance that other cultural resources consultants do not request or require. I am sorry to report that the failure to move the Section 106 process beyond the identification phase is unique to our experience working with the architectural historians at The Louis Berger Group on this and previous projects.

Although a Section 106 Programmatic Agreement can sometimes be a useful tool, it appears in this case that it is needed given the consultant's inability to provide approvable work in a timely manner. I am concerned that unless a change in cultural resources consultants is made, our agencies will be facing the same difficulties working under a Programmatic Agreement. Historical resources are an important consideration during the planning and development of any federal undertaking, and there is rarely a reason why their review cannot be completed within any project's schedule. Section 106, historical properties, and project partners are well served by competent resource identification. When the opposite occurs, historical resources and Section 106 are tarnished. The DHR cannot in good faith sign a Programmatic Agreement if its failure is almost assured by the documented performance of the project's cultural resources consultant.

The DHR previously requested the assistance of the USACE working with the Applicant and its Consultant on the identification of resources phase of the project. Although much paperwork has been submitted for review, little productive movement has been made in order to transition to the assessment of effects phase of the project. While we appreciate your continued assistance, we will be requesting the participation of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) during the development and execution of a Programmatic Agreement. We are hopeful that given changes in the project team and the assistance of the ACHP, the Section 106 process will be successfully resolved in a timely manner.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth H. Muzzey
Director and State Historic Preservation Officer

Cc: Iberdrola Renewables, Inc.
The Louis Berger Group, Inc.
New Hampshire Site Evaluation Committee
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation