APPENDIX B:

Introduction to the National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places was created by the 1966 National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). The Secretary of the Interior has the responsibility for the maintenance and expansion (through the nomination and listing of historic resources) of the National Register of Historic Places. The National Historic Preservation Act was a timely recognition by Congress that there existed a valid and important public interest in the preservation of historic cultural resources, based on the principal: “…the spirit and direction of the Nation are founded upon and reflected in its historic heritage.” The NHPA was a response to the rapid growth that the United States was undergoing, as well as a long-overdue recognition that much of the changes that was having a serious impact on historic/prehistoric cultural resources were, at least in part, supported and funded by the federal government itself. The NHPA established the National Register of Historic Places, established state historic preservation officers and the procedures used by the states to evaluate eligibility, nominate, document and assess impacts to historic resources.

1. National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) is a listing of resources that have been identified as worthy of recognition and preservation. Listing is “honorary” in that it doesn’t require the property owner to preserve the resource, nor does it prevent the owner from modifying or demolishing the resource if private funds are used. The main types of resources that can be listed in the National Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and/or objects. In order to be listed, the resource must be significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering and/or culture. In terms of recognition, resources can be significant on a national, state, or local level. For the purposes of Section 106 (36 CFR 800), properties that are listed in or are eligible for listing must be considered when there is the possibility that a federal undertaking could impact those resources.

2. There are four major NRHP Criteria used to assess whether or not cultural resources are, in fact, significant and therefore eligible for the National Register of Historic Places:
   A. Cultural resources that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
   B. Cultural resources that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
   C. Cultural resources that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
   D. Cultural resources that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

3. The concept of integrity is central to resource eligibility. A resource can be significant, but unless it has a certain amount of integrity, it can’t be eligible. There are seven aspects of integrity:
   o Location
   o Design
   o Setting
   o Materials
   o Workmanship
   o Feeling
   o Association

Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance. A property that has integrity will have some, or all of the above noted aspects. Ultimately, the question of integrity is answered by asking if the property or resources retains the identity and characteristics for which it is significant. Integrity can be compromised by physical changes in the context of the resource, modification to the form and/or materials of the resource and deterioration of the same. Resources that have been moved are generally not considered eligible, except in certain specific situations.