



P. O. Box 30036 • Columbia, Missouri 65205 • <http://parks.missouri.org>

25 September 2015

To: Sharon Miles, Project Manager, National Park Service
From: Missouri Parks Association
Re: Comments on Ste. Genevieve Draft Special Resource Study and Environmental Assessment

The Missouri Parks Association, a citizen organization of about 3,000 members statewide dedicated to the protection, enhancement, and interpretation of state parks and historic sites, appreciates the opportunity to comment on the "Ste. Genevieve Draft Special Resource Study and Environmental Assessment." We are pleased with the quality of the study, with the finding that Ste. Genevieve meets the criteria for inclusion in the National Park System, and especially with the emphasis on the significance of the Common Field, the buildings that front on it, and the archaeological sites within it.

We strongly support Alternative C, which recommends an NPS Unit with a node of resources adjacent to the Common Field centered on the state-owned Amoureux House and adjacent properties and the non-contiguous Delassus-Kern House and a larger affiliated area that includes properties preserved and interpreted by Missouri State Parks, the Foundation for Restoration of Ste. Genevieve, and the National Society of Colonial Dames in Missouri. However, we also strongly recommend the inclusion of the Old Town Archaeological Site within the area proposed for potential NPS ownership.

The Old Town Archaeological Site is a 38-acre site in the Common Field toward the river from the Kern-Delassus House. It is the last remaining portion of the original town of Ste. Genevieve that developed as a settlement stretching some three miles along the Mississippi River, all the rest of which has since been obliterated by changes of the river channel over the years since the late 18th Century. The site has been in private ownership and never excavated archaeologically, but it is known from surface collection of artifacts and other evidence to contain the sites of approximately ten buildings from the old town. As the NPS study indicates, the site is thus significant for interpretation of the first half century of Ste. Genevieve's history—the greater part of the French Colonial period. We believe it is highly desirable that the site eventually come into NPS ownership, where it would be available for additional archaeological study and interpretation.

The Old Town Site could be treated similarly to the Bequette-Ribault and Lasource-Durand houses, in that they have long been privately owned but would be highly desirable for a future NPS core unit focused on the Common Field. Indeed, we were delighted to learn of a resolution of 26 August 2015 by the board of commissioners of the New Bourbon Regional Port Authority, current owners of the Old Town Site, which "wholeheartedly endorses" inclusion of the site as part of the National Park System.

Accordingly, the Missouri Parks Association strongly urges the National Park Service to add the site to the proposed NPS unit in both Alternatives B and C so that it may be included in a Congressional authorization for possible future NPS ownership. We pledge our support to assist in any way we can with this effort.

Sincere thanks for your consideration,

Steve Nagle, President

A non-profit citizens organization -- independent and non-partisan -- dedicated to the protection, enhancement, and interpretation of Missouri State Parks and Historic Sites.