National Aeronautics and
Space Administration

Ames Research Center
Moffett Field, CA 94035-1000

BRAC OFFICE

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MOFFETT FIELD
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Reply to Attn of: PFE: 213-8

September 26, 2005

Mr. Milford Wayne Donaldson, State Historic Preservation Officer
Office of Historic Preservation
Department of Parks and Recreation
P.O. Box 942896
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

Re: Hangar One, Moffett Field, Santa Clara County

Dear Mr. Donaldson,

NASA Ames Research Center has responsibility for the U.S. Naval Air Station Sunnyvale, commonly known as the Shenandoah Plaza Historic District at Moffett Field, California. This property is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a National Historic District. The District comprises 124 acres that includes 31 contributing buildings and 3 monuments. Hangar One is the principal building in the historic district. It was constructed in 1932 as the homeport of the Navy Air Ship, U.S.S. Macon. In 1994, the properties that comprise the Historic District were transferred from the U.S. Navy to NASA as part of a Base Realignment and Closure Action.

NASA has been working and coordinating with the U. S. Navy and the EPA to solve a severe PCB contamination problem that was discovered in Hangar One. The PCB contamination has been found to be imbedded within the siding, roof and paint material of the hangar, and is part of the original 1932 construction. The EPA has informed NASA and the U.S. Navy that the contamination represents a public health hazard and must be removed. The Navy has agreed to provide the remedies to remove the contamination under existing Superfund laws.

Possible contamination remedies being investigated by the Navy may result in the demolition of the hangar, or in a substantial change, in the appearance of the hangar. This would represent an undertaking with adverse effects under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Other remedies may include removal of PCB affected components of the hangar, such as the siding and paint. If this remedy is selected by the Navy, a cleaned bare hangar structural frame would be left without siding Under existing Superfund laws, the Navy is obligated to remove the sources of contamination, however, they may not be allowed to perform "reconstruction". Installation of new contamination-free siding may be interpreted by the Navy to be "reconstruction". NASA does not have funds available to install new replacement siding. NASA is not willing to accept the return of Hangar One without siding.

Other initiatives being investigated by NASA include residing of the hangar by a third party with photovoltaic cells that produce electricity. Under this initiative, the sale of electricity would be used to defray the cost of the replacement siding after the contaminated siding was removed by the Navy. This option would also represent an undertaking, however, the effect would be less severe than demolition of the entire hangar. NASA has issued a public solicitation known as an Announcement of Opportunity to explore interest in this concept. Proposal submissions are due October 14, 2005, for this initiative.

Within the next few weeks, the U.S. Navy plans on releasing their Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis (EE/CA) study of various alternatives to eliminate the Hangar One PCB contamination. NASA is currently conducting several Historic preservation activities to mitigate the potential of the Navy's proposed undertaking at Hangar 1, including:

- Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) for Hangar 1
- 3D Interactive Compact Disc for Hangar 1 Historic Recordation
- Inventory-Catalogue of Hangar 1 artifacts/models/photos, etc. contained in Moffett Historical Museum
- Oral histories of individuals who worked in the Hangar during different eras
- Section 106 documentation on the effects of the proposed undertaking on the Historic District

NASA seeks your comments on this undertaking/mitigation measures and other activities currently being developed at NASA Ames Research Center.

Would it be possible to meet with you to discuss these issues? Perhaps a representative from the Advisory Council could also attend. Lida Tan, from the USEPA, who is overseeing the CERCLA action at the Hangar, would also be interested in attending this meeting.

If you have any questions, I can be reached at 650-604-6408 or by email at: keith.venter@nasa.gov

Sincerely,

Keith Venter
Ames Historic Preservation Officer, Planning Group

cc:
Ms. Lee Keatinge, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
Stephen Mikesell, State Historic Preservation Office
Richard C. Weissenborn, U.S. Navy, BRAC Operations,
Lida Tan, USEPA