



February 8, 2020

CESWF-PEE-C

ATTN: Ms. Leslie Crippen

P.O. Box 17300

Fort Worth, TX 76102-0300

RE: San Pedro Creek Culture Park

Dear Ms. Crippen:

The Conservation Society of San Antonio has been pleased to participate in the review of the San Pedro Culture Park's National Register eligible foundations of the 19th century St. James AME church and Menger Soap Works. Last year the Conservation Society urged the San Antonio River Authority, Bexar County, and City of San Antonio to conserve the full foundation footprint of the historic church as part of the San Pedro Creek Culture Park. We would like to reiterate that position now that a series of potential designs have been proposed.

We understand that the surviving foundations of the 1875 St. James AME Church would not be exposed to the elements in any of these designs. We feel very strongly that visitors experience the full surviving outline of the church, especially in the context of downtown San Antonio, where almost nothing of post-Emancipation African American history survives. We would also urge that a hooded structure be created that would allow visitors to view the 1875 cornerstone *in situ*. If appropriate, we would support the examination of the cornerstone's time capsule.

Of the proposed designs, the Conservation Society prefers Option C. 3. This compromise manifests the full building foundation, provides a creekside walkway, offers open space for programming and events, and contains 100-year flows within the channel. Option C.3 best balances the needs of conserving an exceedingly rare historical site, providing flood control, and offering space to engage visitors to San Pedro Creek Culture Park.

Thank you for the opportunity to tour the site, view the various plan options, and provide our commentary and input.

Sincerely,

Patti Zaiontz, President

pc: Kerry Averyt, Leslie Crippen, Jerry Geyer, Rev, Alvin Smith, Shanon Miller, Betty Bueche, Steve Tomka, Steve Tillotson, Clint McKenzie, Dr. Carey Latimore, Everett Fly, Gary Houston, Lon Taylor