

December 14, 2020

**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

Rehoboth Beach, DE: Notice of Availability of an Environmental Assessment and a Memorandum of Agreement

**AGENCY:** Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBCS), USDA

**ACTION:** Notice of Availability of an Environmental Assessment and a Memorandum of Agreement

**SUMMARY:** Notice is hereby given that the RBCS, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act, is issuing an environmental assessment (EA) in connection with possible impacts related to a project proposed by the Clear Space Theatre, Inc. As required by the National Historic Preservation Act, the RBCS is also implementing a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) in connection with possible impacts related to the proposed project. The Clear Space Theatre, Inc. Development Project proposal includes construction of two new buildings that will be located at the Rehoboth Avenue properties, known as lots 137, 139 and 141, or 413, 415, and 417 Rehoboth Avenue, and is located within the Town limits of Rehoboth Beach, DE. The proposed construction will include a 14,968 square foot, two-story, 256-seat theatre and a second 9,979 square foot, three-story theatre building that will include rehearsal space. Clear Space Theatre, Inc. has submitted an application to the RBCS for funding of the proposal.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. Brian Jordan, Community Programs Loan Specialist 1221 College Park Drive, Suite 200, Dover, DE 19904 (302) 857-3603 email: brian.jordan@usda.gov, or Mr. Wesley Paulson, Executive Director, Clear Space Theatre, 20 Baltimore Avenue, Rehoboth Beach, DE 19971, (302) 227-2270, wpaulson@clearspacetheatre.org.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Pennoni Inc, an engineering and environmental consultant, prepared an Environmental Assessment for the RBCS that describes the project, assesses the proposed project's environmental impacts, and summarizes as applicable any mitigation measures used to minimize environmental effects. The RBCS has conducted an independent evaluation of the environmental assessment and believes that it accurately assesses the impacts of the proposed project. No significant impacts are expected as a result of the construction of the project. An Architectural Report was generated for the property through the University of Delaware, Center for Historic Architecture and Design. The RBCS has evaluated the report and consulted with interested parties to take into account the effects of the proposed undertaking on historic properties. A draft MOA that summarizes the stipulations necessary to avoid, minimize, or mitigate the adverse effects has been developed.

The Environmental Assessment and MOA can be reviewed by appointment at the following location: USDA Service Center, 1221 College Park Drive, Dover DE 19901, Brian Jordan, Community Programs Loan Specialist, 302-857-3603, email: brian.jordan@usda.gov OR By appointment at Rehoboth Beach Public Library, 226 Rehoboth Avenue, Rehoboth Beach, DE 19971, 302-227-8044, email: rehobothlibrary.org.

**Questions and comments** should be sent to Mr. Brian Jordan of the RBCS at the email address Provided above. The RBCS will accept questions and comments on the Environmental Assessment and MOA for 14 days from the date of first publication of this notice. Any final action by the RBCS related to the proposed project will be subject to, and contingent upon, compliance with all relevant Federal environmental laws and regulations and completion of environmental review procedures as prescribed by 7 CFR Part 1970, Environmental Policies and Procedures. A general location map of the proposal is shown below.

Dated: December 14, 2020

