



Press Release

Independence National Historical Park and City of Philadelphia

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HISTORIC PRESIDENT'S HOUSE CONSTRUCTION MOVES FORWARD WITH ANNOUNCEMENT OF PROJECT'S CONTRACTOR AWARDS

Sub-Contracts Awarded to Minority and Women Owned Businesses

(Philadelphia – August 21, 2009) Kelly/Maiello Management, LLC, the project team for the President's House commemorative site, today announced the names of the sub-contractors who have won bids on the historic project. A total of 15 construction contracts have been awarded.

Sixty-seven percent of the sub-contracting opportunities in the construction phase were awarded to Minority and Women-Owned Businesses (MBE/WBE) including six African-American owned firms (of which one is also woman-owned), one Hispanic-American firm, one Asian-American firm and five firms owned by women.

The commitment to achieving meaningful minority participation in this construction phase of the project was deliberate and focused. Kelly/Maiello Management, LLC, the lead firm on this design-build project, took comprehensive measures to not only reach out to a broad cross-section of firms but also make recommendations to those firms for capacity-building partnerships, a measure designed to provide experience needed to qualify for future construction projects. The D. J. Keating Company, contracted by Kelly/Maiello, also participated in this process.

Mayor Michael A. Nutter, a supporter of the President's House project even prior to becoming mayor, enthusiastically endorsed the sub-contractor selection process. "My administration is 100 percent behind the goal of significant and meaningful participation from African-Americans for a project that sheds light on obscured facts about the African-American experience in our nation's history. Minority participation in this project is not only logical, but respectful to an important historic legacy," said Mayor Nutter.

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Extensive public outreach to minority businesses was conducted. Avenging the Ancestors Coalition (ATAC) sponsored a “Jobs and Justice Forum” in March 2009 and the City of Philadelphia hosted a pre-bid public meeting on May 7, 2009. Additional outreach included newspaper and radio announcements, follow-up communication to attendees of public meetings via email, postal mail, and telephone, and information disseminated through community organizers. A full review of all bidders was conducted by Emanuel Kelly of Kelly/Maiello Management, LLC. On August 18, 2009, Kelly met with sub-contractors to reiterate the imperative for diversity and inclusion among workers on the project.

“We recognize that minority participation in construction projects is a broader issue than this project, yet this project is an opportunity to affect change,” said Mayor Nutter. “We need all construction management firms to engage in the comprehensive initiatives that Kelly/Maiello and the D.J. Keating Company undertook.”

ATAC spokesperson, attorney Michael Coard, also praised the selection process. “On behalf of Avenging the Ancestors Coalition, I wholeheartedly applaud the efforts of the Oversight Committee and the President’s House project team, in particular Emanuel Kelly and the D.J. Keating Company, for making diversity, inclusion, fairness and equity an absolute priority in the contracting of qualified African-Americans, women, and other minorities,” he stated.

Nigerian-born Lawrence Dibor of Adcon Consultants, Inc., the civil engineering sub-contractor for the President’s House project, connected his selection to the enslaved Africans who worked at the house centuries ago. Dibor, the engineering firm’s president, said, “I am honored to serve as the civil engineer on this prestigious project. It is important to the legacy of my ancestors.”

Site preparation is already underway at the 6th and Market Street site, which will be fenced off during construction. Logistics trailers are now on-site, the visitor viewing platform has been removed and minor preparatory excavation has begun. Visitors can view the site from 6th Street or Independence Mall and information about the project (including details about the 2007 archaeological dig and the history of the President’s House) is available online at www.nps.gov/inde.

President’s House – Freedom and Slavery in Making a New Nation is an important historic project designed to commemorate the executive mansion of the first two United States presidents, George Washington and John Adams, and tell the long-obscured story of at least nine enslaved Africans who toiled at the house during Washington’s presidency.

A President’s House Oversight Committee was convened in September 2005 to help guide the project and ensure its ultimate success. One of its most laudable accomplishments was the facilitation of a highly competitive, nationally distributed Request for Qualifications process to select a design and construction team for the President’s House site. The process concluded in 2006 and yielded the selection of the team headed by Kelly/Maiello Architects and Planners.

An archaeological dig at the President’s House site conducted from March through July of 2007 yielded a series of unexpected findings, including a root cellar below the kitchen, the foundation from a bow window believed to be the prototype for the Oval Office at the White House in

Washington, DC, and an underground passage from the kitchen to the main house, likely used by the enslaved persons and servants working between the two areas. These findings required a change in the original design concept. In July 2007, a task force of experts was convened from around the country to come up with a series of recommendations for ways to incorporate the structural remains into the project. The group included conservators, archeologists, themed-entertainment experts, exhibit developers, and museum professionals.

In December 2007, Kelly/Maiello unveiled modified plans that would incorporate the archaeological findings into the President's House project by way of a multi-sided clear glass enclosure at ground level, through which visitors will be able to see an extensive portion of the original dig with key archaeological findings in their undisturbed configuration.

Upon its completion, the President's House project, a joint initiative of the City of Philadelphia and Independence National Historical Park, will result in a new permanent outdoor installation on the doorstep of the Liberty Bell Center at 6th & Market Streets. Officials have targeted July 4, 2010 for the project's completion.

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