

10-23
(May 1929)

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

VIRGINIA CITY NATIONAL PARK PROPOSED NATIONAL MONUMENT

FILE NO.

0-35

PART I

PROPOSED NATIONAL MONUMENTS

VIRGINIA CITY

LAST DATE ON TOP

IMPORTANT

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ARNO B. CAMMERER,

Director.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON

ADDRESS ONLY
THE DIRECTOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

March 18, 1940.

R. F. Lee
Worth
Allen
Allen
Allen

AIR MAIL

Mr. Robert A. Allen,
State Highway Engineer,
State Highway Building,
Carson City, Nevada.

Dear Mr. Allen:

You will recall that the Nevada State Recreational Area Report included among its important recommendations a proposal for a joint study by the State of Nevada and the National Park Service, of Virginia City, to consider cooperative means for permanent preservation of the historic mining town.

I am aware of the many problems which will have to be solved before reasonably permanent preservation can be assured. Not only are the numerous interesting buildings in a bad state of disrepair, but renewed mining operations are encroaching on the town.

The recent release of the motion picture VIRGINIA CITY focuses attention again on this problem. I am prepared to send representatives from our San Francisco Regional Office to study the problems with you, and consider the formulation of a concrete cooperative program.

If this thought appeals to you as timely, I will appreciate your advising me.

Sincerely yours,
(SGD) Arno B. Cammerer

Arno B. Cammerer,
Director.

RFL:hm

SPECIAL

STATE OF NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS

DIRECTORS
E. P. CARVILLE, GOVERNOR, CHAIRMAN
GRAY MASHBURN, ATTORNEY-GENERAL
HENRY C. SCHMIDT, STATE CONTROLLER



CARSON CITY, NEVADA

March 22, 1940

ADDRESS ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO
ROBERT A. ALLEN
STATE HIGHWAY ENGINEER



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IN REPLY REFER TO SUBJECT

R.F. Lee
Mr. Cammerer
Mr. Dornaday
Mr. Wirth
Mr. Kable

r AIR MAIL
Mr. Arno B. Cammerer, Director
National Park Service
Washington, D. C.

u MAR 27 1940

Dear Mr. Cammerer:

I am very glad indeed to have your letter of March 18 in reference to the further study of problems at Virginia City looking to cooperative means for permanent preservation of this historic town. I am sure that Governor Carville and Congressman Scrugham, both of whom were in attendance during the recent Premiere of "Virginia City" would be very, very much interested in seeing this study completed.

Any time that you can have representatives from your San Francisco regional office come up to study the problems with us, we will meet with them and give them every help possible. I would like to have a few days notice and hope that the meeting can be arranged sometime prior to the 10th of April.

Sincerely yours,

Robert A. Allen
ROBERT A. ALLEN
State Highway Engineer
Superintendent, State Parks

RAA/bw

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UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON

ADDRESS ONLY
THE DIRECTOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

March 27, 1940.

Mr. Robert A. Allen,
State Highway Engineer,
State Highway Building,
Carson City, Nevada.

Dear Mr. Allen:

I have received your letter of March 22 and appreciate your promptness in advising that you will be glad to confer with representatives of the Regional Office of the National Park Service and give them every possible assistance in the development of a cooperative study program concerning the preservation of Virginia City.

Our Regional Office in San Francisco has been advised of your desire to have this meeting prior to April 10 and also of your request that you be given several days advance notice.

Your splendid spirit of cooperation is indicative of an assured solution to the many problems with which we are faced in undertaking a permanent preservation of this historic area.

Sincerely yours,

(SGD) Arno B. Cammerer

Arno B. Cammerer,
Director. *AW*

cc-Region IV

ms

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON

ADDRESS ONLY
THE DIRECTOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Kahler
Allen
White
Dunaway

March 27, 1940.

AIR MAIL

MEMORANDUM for the Regional Director, Region IV.

The attached correspondence relative to a joint study by the State of Nevada and the National Park Service of problems concerning the preservation of Virginia City is self-explanatory.

In order that a cooperative program may be formulated arrangements should be made for representatives of the Regional Office to meet with State Highway Engineer Robert A. Allen and his staff. You will note from the enclosed copy of Mr. Allen's letter that he would like to have this meeting prior to April 10 and asks that he be given several days advance notice.

(SGD) A. A. DENHART

Acting Director.

Enclosure 1708599

ms

0.35
Virginia City

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
REGION FOUR
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA



[Handwritten signatures and initials]
April 2, 1940 *File 5*

1940

Memorandum for the Director

Your memorandum of March 27 requesting a meeting of representatives of this office with those of the State of Nevada for a study of problems concerning the preservation of Virginia City is acknowledged.

Attached hereto is a copy of our letter of this date to State Highway Engineer Robert A. Allen suggesting that, if the arrangements proposed are satisfactory to him, the meeting be held on April 9.

[Handwritten signature of Frank A. Kittredge]
Regional Director
[Handwritten initials]

Enclosure 1835205

UNITED STATES
 DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
 NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
 REGION FOUR
 SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

Regional Office - Region Four
 April 17, 1940

Memorandum for the Regional Director

In accordance with arrangements made by this Office at the request of the Director, conferences with Nevada State officials concerning plans for the preservation of Virginia City were participated in by Chief of Project Control Division Ballard and myself. Chief Mr. Ballard's report of April 10, attached hereto, reviews the problems discussed and possible solutions suggested in our meetings with Robert A. Allen and his assistants on April 9. The following day was devoted to further inspection and photographing of historical features in Virginia City and its environs.

As Mr. Ballard has stated, it was generally agreed that plans for specific projects, and means of Federal cooperation in having them executed, would necessarily have to be delayed until the completion of a more comprehensive master plan for the areas under consideration. Mr. Allen agreed to have this plan and other necessary work undertaken and completed by his staff if we would provide him with an outline suggesting the scope of the proposed plan.

In accordance with this understanding, the attached report has been prepared and copies of it with your memorandum and Mr. Ballard's report should be sent to Mr. Allen.

We concur in Mr. Wagon's recommendation that the next step must be taken by the State authorities in arousing local interest and in the preparation of a master plan. We also concur in Mr. Ballard's recommendation that the plans at present are probably too nebulous to consider any part of Federal participation other than the possible assistance given by technicians in an advisory capacity.

We are not submitting copies of Regional Historian Mr. Allen will hear from you that it has your concurrence. Mr. Allen would like to see the views of the Service as soon as possible.

[Handwritten Signature]
 Acting Regional Director

Enclosure 14767
 CC - Mr. Wagon
 Mr. Ballard
 Mr. Hoyt

ive action; to the planner, however, such a move might appear a desecration! Since such zoning is probably one of the fundamentals of sound town-planning, we can only hope that the problem can be successfully attacked and met.

In discussing the regional aspects of the plan (page 7), Mr. Hagen mentions among several points of interest, the community of Sutro, in Carson Valley. Undoubtedly the planning board, and Mr. Hagen in his future assistance to that body, would treat this feature with its due weight; this reminder of one of the courageous and epic struggles of the West; the long, discouraging, bitter struggle of Adolph Sutro in the construction of Sutro Tunnel, in the face of the joint opposition and power of the Bank of California-controlled mining companies of the Lode; and its final completion. The building of this tunnel marks, for me at least, one of the most important outgrowths of the Comstock Lode; one which holds fascination to the listener in its telling, and a certain respectful awe in viewing the result. While not in the actual "ken" of the visitor to Virginia City, it is inextricably tied into the history of the Lode.

It is probable that Mr. Hagen intends to include photos with his copy of this Report to the Washington Office, illustrative of the points so fully covered in the body of the report.

The above comments are offered as suggestions only; points which Mr. Hagen doubtless already has in mind.

I believe that Mr. Hagen touched a very vital factor, on the second page of the Report, in which he points out the possible difficulty in handling the population of the city, in mining operations, and with small time for the weather. *W. Ballard*
Chief, Project Control
I feel that it is imperative that the town be prepared to the limit to act for itself, through the advisory committee or council, and that "outside" assistance and guidance be held rather modest. From some acquaintance with the town and other small communities, I know that the residents are anxious for advice and assistance from "outside",-- and especially from outside sources. Such planning therefore as is to be carried out, should be carefully approached, leaving the initiative to the local advisory council. I feel that Virginia City is most fortunate in having interested in the planning one like Mr. Allen, for I am sure that he will have the confidence of the local board, besides having a wide historical background of the town, and a practical approach to the problems which will undoubtedly arise.

Participation by the Service should, I believe, be limited for the time being to furnishing such consulting advice as the personnel will permit, for the whole plan is still too nebulous to form any concrete plan of action. It will take some time to lay the ground-work necessary for careful, intelligent planning, and the least of which will be the insulation of the right to the residents themselves. For the Service to enter too strongly into the preliminary stages would, it seems to me, jeopardize the feeling of local accomplishment.

On page 5, Mr Hagen includes in the problems the desirability of zoning ordinances or agreements with private owners, as to restrictions in developments, alterations, and the like, in the preservation of "U" Street. I heard a guess that this will present a considerable problem, and one wonders to just what extent the residents can be induced to "see the light" in this respect. For example, the "modernizing" of an old (and to the visitor, delightful) building, would doubtless appear to the resident a most laudable and progress-

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
REGION FOUR
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA



Mr. [Signature]
 Mr. [Signature]
 Mr. [Signature]
 April 24, 1940.

Memorandum for the Director: MAY 2 - 1940

Reference is made to your memorandum of March 27 in which you requested that Regional Historian Hagen and possibly other technicians from this office meet with Mr. Robert A. Allen to discuss with him plans for the preservation of Virginia City, Nevada. We detailed Chief of Project Control Division Ballard to accompany Mr. Hagen in his inspection of the area. The inspection was completed on April 10 and we are pleased to submit herewith two copies of the report submitted by Messrs. Hagen and Ballard.

We believe these men have done a very comprehensive piece of work in their investigation and in the preparation of their report, and further that it covers the problem as it exists today. There is a great deal of interest shown throughout the entire west in the history of Virginia City. We concur in Mr. Hagen's thought that the importance of this town and the early romance of the West which it typifies are ample reasons to justify its serious consideration for preservation. We do not feel, however, and we believe both Mr. Hagen and Mr. Ballard agree, that the conditions are such as to warrant any consideration of the site as a national historical monument. It does have possibilities for designation as a national historic site if the local and state people become sufficiently interested in its preservation.

We concur in Mr. Hagen's recommendation that the next step must be taken by the State authorities in arousing local interest and in the preparation of a master plan. We also concur in Mr. Ballard's recommendation that the plans at present are entirely too nebulous to consider any sort of Federal participation other than the possible assistance given by technicians in an advisory capacity.

We are not submitting copy of the above report to Mr. Allen until we hear from you that it has your concurrence. Mr. Allen would like to get the views of the Service as soon as possible.

Enclosure 1837674

H. [Signature]
 Acting Regional Director.

CC-Mr. Hagen
 Mr. Ballard
 Mr. Hoyt

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON

ADDRESS ONLY
THE DIRECTOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Stauffer
Lee
Solomon
5711
Summary

May 9, 1940.

MEMORANDUM for the Regional Director, Region Four:

Reference is made to your memorandum of April 24 transmitting two copies of the report submitted by Regional Historian Hagen and Chief of Project Control Division Ballard on Planning for the Preservation and Development of Virginia City, Nevada.

Messrs. Hagen and Ballard have compiled an excellent report on the problems involved in the possible preservation of the historic features of this famous old mining town. They have thoroughly analyzed the problems connected with the preservation of the historic structures and with the treatment of mining operation remains. Such important considerations as community needs and the regional aspects of the proposed preservation program have been pointed out, and the nature of the historical data required to carry out a historically accurate program have been indicated.

I concur in the suggestion that a copy of this report be sent to Mr. Robert A. Allen, State Highway Engineer, Carson City, who held a series of conferences with Messrs. Hagen and Ballard regarding the plans for the preservation of Virginia City during their visit to that place.

(GD) Arno B. Cammerer

Arno B. Cammerer,
Director.

aps:mcb