

MISSISSIPPI Department of  
**MDAH**  
ARCHIVES & HISTORY



PO Box 571, Jackson, MS 39205-0571  
601-576-6850 • Fax 601-576-6975  
mdah.state.ms.us  
H. T. Holmes, Director

April 25, 2008

The Honorable William Martin  
President  
Harrison County Board of Supervisors  
P.O. Drawer CC  
Gulfport, MS 39502

RE: Gulfport Public Library

Dear Mr. Martin:

Our office has been contacted by numerous Gulf Coast citizens regarding the Harrison County Board of Supervisors' intention to demolish the former Gulfport Public Library located on 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue at Hwy. 90. Several of the citizen inquiries concerned whether the County has filed a *Notice of Intent of Public Construction, Public Improvement, or Transfer of Public Property to Private Ownership* form, pursuant to provisions of the State Antiquities Law.

As you may know, Section 39-7-22 (1) of the Antiquities Law requires that "... In the early planning stages and always prior to the letting of bids for public construction, public improvement of any nature, or the transfer of public property to private ownership, state agencies, local governments and all their political subdivisions shall notify the board [*i.e., Board of Trustees of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History*] of the planned action on a form supplied by the board." At the date of this correspondence, the Department has not received a *Notice of Intent* form for the proposed Gulfport Library project.

The intent of the State Antiquities Law is to locate, protect, and preserve publicly owned properties of historical significance. Such properties may be designated as "Mississippi Landmarks" by the Board of Trustees of the Department of Archives and History. Regardless of whether or not the Board ultimately decides to designate a particular property, publicly owned properties must be evaluated for "Mississippi Landmark" eligibility prior to physical alteration or transfer of ownership.

The Honorable William Martin  
April 25, 2008  
Page 2

To assist in compliance with Section 39-7-22 of the Antiquities Law, enclosed please find a *Notice of Intent* form which should be completed and returned to the Permit Committee. It would be very helpful in our review of this project if current photographs of the exterior and interior of the building could be included as well. Also enclosed is a FAQ sheet with a brief explanation of the Mississippi Landmark Program.

Until the Permit Committee of the Board of Trustees has had an opportunity to review the *Notice of Intent* form and respond accordingly, we ask that the Harrison County Board of Supervisors refrain from taking further action in relation to the proposed demolition of the former Gulfport Public Library.

We look forward to working with you to accomplish the requirements of the State Antiquities Law. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Russell Archer, who oversees the day-to-day administration of the Mississippi Landmark Program, at the above address or by phone at 601-576-6912.

Sincerely,



Kenneth H. P'Pool  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

Enclosure