August 1, 2011

**MEMO**

**To: Louis Hutchins, Regional Historian, Northeast Region, NPS**

**From: Jannelle Warren-Findley, ROVA Administrative History project**

**Re:** **CESU Task ASU-43 J450608021​3 Oral History Support Park Admin History ROVA**

**Dear Louis:**

**When Paul Weinbaum and I negotiated an add-on to the original ROVA Administrative History to provide for more oral histories, we planned to increase the availability to the park of the information contained in those interviews. I completed 16 successful interviews, (Curtis Roosevelt, Warren Hill, Joan Spence, Sarah Olson, Cynthia Koch, Duane Pearson, Charlie Clapper, David Hayes, Henry van Brookhoven, Anne Jordan, Carol Kohan, Nancy Dubner, Jerry Rogers, Dixon Freeland, Fran Urban and Paul Weinbaum) some on audio tape by telephone, and some on videotape in the park. I did not complete four interviews (Margaret Partridge, John Maounis, Emily Wright and Ed Macmanus) because of tape recorder malfunctions but have extensive notes for two of them. In addition, I had two oral histories from the park’s collection transcribed (Snell and Rath)and found two additional collections of materials related to the context of the park’s development if not ROVA specifically. Those collections were made by Charles Hosmer as he prepared his books on the history of historic preservation in the US. One can be found in the National Trust for Historic Preservation Collection at the University of Maryland at College park in Maryland; and a few additional interviews are included in the Archives of American Art at the Smithsonian’s American Art Museum in Washington. Unfortunately, three of the most critical interviews – two with George Palmer, longtime NPS administrator who was the second superintendent at ROVA and brought the Home of FDR into the system ; and one with Fred Rath, the first historian on the staff at ROVA – are restricted both at College Park and in Washington and I have had no success whatsoever in trying to get those materials released. The park has an interview with Fred Rath which I had transcribed as part of this add-on project, so we have some information and extensive papers in the park archives about his work. But the Palmer materials, I suspect, are quite revealing about the early days of park establishment and we have been unable to locate Palmer’s sons to see if they would give us permission to use the materials. So that became a complete dead end.**

**Otherwise, the add-on project was successful and added a great deal of information to the park files. The park has copies of all of the tapes and videotapes, as well as the transcriptions in their collection of oral histories.**