

FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING NO. 2
(Navy Annex)
1301 Southgate Road
Arlington
Virginia

HABS VA-1375
HABS VA-1375

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING NO. 2 (Navy Annex)

HABS No. VA-1375

- Location:** 1301 Southgate Road, Arlington, Virginia. Federal Office Building No. 2 is located on a site bounded by Columbia Pike to the south and east, Southgate Road to the north, and residential properties along Oak Street to the west.
- Present Owner:** FB 2 is under the purview of the U. S. Secretary of Defense. Congress transferred oversight and control of the 280-acre Pentagon Reservation—comprised of the Pentagon, the Navy Annex, and a number of support structures—from the General Services Administration to the Secretary of Defense in 1991.¹
- Present Occupants:** The United States Marine Corps, the United States Navy, the Pentagon Force Protection Agency, Missile Defense Agency, Reserve Forces Policy Board, and the Defense Facilities Directorate/OSD.
- Present Use:** Offices.

Significance:

Initially constructed in 1940-1941 and located on a prominent site adjacent to Arlington National Cemetery, Fort Myer, and the Pentagon, Federal Office Building No. 2 (FB 2)—informally known as the Navy Annex—physically embodies the rapid bureaucratic and geographic expansion of the federal government as the nation prepared for entry into World War II.

One contemporary account described FB 2 as a “‘wartime-type’ Federal office building,” a characterization that alludes to a peculiar position as a building situated somewhere between “temporary” and “permanent.”² Its layout and initial function, as well as its speedy construction, are best understood in reference to light-framed impermanent contemporaries. Conversely, the use of reinforced concrete for the building’s skeleton and the inclusion of modish detailing, most clearly evident in the Moderne entrance portals on the structure’s north side, suggest permanence and a planned usage extending beyond the war. Between 1944 and 1946, the addition of a freestanding eighth wing to the east, connected to FB 2 by bridges, completed the bureaucratic complex. The massing, materials, and siting of this wing relate to the earlier structure, while horizontal concrete bands and a sleek entrance canopy position it along the move from streamlined 1930s modernist trends toward more angular and stripped-down characteristics of postwar modernism.

¹“FY 2001 Secretary of Defense Environmental Award Nomination for the Pentagon Reservation,” Washington Headquarters Services and Pentagon Renovation Office, Washington, D.C.

²“New Office Building for Arlington,” *Washington Star* (hereafter *Star*) 7 Nov. 1940, sec. B: 1.

As “the first Federal office building staffed by Washington personnel but located outside the District,” the conception and realization of FB 2 is situated within a larger dialogue about urban population and automobile congestion, and solutions resulting in significant suburban growth and expansion. The war emergency accelerated residential, commercial, and workplace decentralization already in process in metropolitan Washington.

Notably, the design and realization of FB 2 occurred as part of the Public Buildings Service, which at the time took the form of the Public Buildings Administration (PBA) of the Federal Works Agency (FWA), 1939–1949. This agency succeeded a long existence within the Office of the Supervising Architect of the Treasury, 1852–1939, and predated a move into the General Services Administration (GSA), 1949–present. From nearly any perspective, FB 2’s physical construction and its related contexts mirror the expansion of the bureaucratic machine necessary for the function of any large government, particularly one engaged in large-scale defense preparations.

Historian: James A. Jacobs

PART I: HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1940-1941, floors 1–3 of the Head House and Wings 1–7; 1943, floor 4 of the Head House and Wings 1–7; ca. 1946, Wing 8.

2. Architects:

Brought to realization under the auspices of the PBA of the FWA. Louis A. Simon was Supervising Architect for the design and construction of FB 2.³ The structure was one of the last of hundreds of public buildings that Simon oversaw to completion during his long government career. He received his formal training at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, followed by lengthy European travels.⁴ In 1894, he entered the Office of the Supervising Architect of the Treasury, becoming Chief of the Engineering and Drafting Division in 1915, a position that gave him essential artistic control over nearly all public commissions.⁵ In addition to

³A full-scale drawing of FB 2’s “corner stone” plaque lists Louis A. Simon as the Supervising Architect and Neal A. Melick as the Supervising Engineer. Federal Works Agency (FWA), Public Buildings Administration (PBA), “Inscription on Corner Stone,” 30 Jan. 1941, drawing #505, RG 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, Cartographic and Architectural Records, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), College Park, Maryland. Efforts in 2004 to locate the corner stone onsite yielded no success. This graphic and others in the group were “drawn by” a person signed “Palcho” and executed between 28 Dec. 1940 and 8 Jul. 1941. The Palcho drawings include details for: interior bulletin and directory boards; interior doors; sills and steel sash; concrete work at entrances 1, 2, 3; flagpole base; and the corner stone.

⁴Antoinette J. Lee, *Architects to the Nation: The Rise and Decline of the Supervising Architect’s Office* (New York: Oxford University Press, Inc., 2000), 258.

⁵*Ibid.*

post offices and other federal buildings dotting towns and cities across the country, Simon was also a key player in the planning and construction of the Federal Triangle during the 1920s and 1930s and the architect of record for the Internal Revenue Service Building (1928–1935) in the Triangle.⁶ Although he moved up to the weighty, but less actively creative, position of Supervising Architect in 1934, his invaluable experience in the realm of public building likely kept Simon intimately involved with his staff's projects. Louis A. Simon retired from the PBA in 1941, the year of FB 2's completion, after overseeing the division's movement from the Treasury Department to the FWA.⁷

Well-known architect George Howe succeeded Simon, and was in turn replaced by equally prominent architect Gilbert Stanley Underwood, serving from 1943 until 1949, at which time the functions of the PBA were folded into the General Services Administration.⁸ During Underwood's tenure, the programmatically related, but structurally and architecturally distinct Wing 8 was constructed to the east of the earlier edifice. Given the oversight function of the Supervising Architect, as with Simon before it is not known to what extent Underwood influenced the design of Wing 8, completed by 1946.

3. **Owner:** United States government, from completion to the present.
4. **Original and subsequent occupants:**

Various agencies and offices of the United States Navy and the United States Marine Corps have occupied most of FB 2's office space from 1941 onward.

A cafeteria and its related workers were present on the ground floor of Wing 5 since the building's completion. The cafeteria has recently been eliminated and McDonald's and Subway franchises currently occupy the space.

The number and nature of past concessions in FB 2 is not precisely known, although a first-floor plan created in 1941 and last revised in 1954 depicts the location of a bank in the Head House at the beginning of Wing 5.⁹ There are a number of concessions presently situated on the ground floor of the Head House including a dry cleaners, convenience store, a Starbucks Coffee, and a hair salon.

⁶For information related to the construction of the Federal Triangle, see Sally Kress Tompkins, *A Quest for Grandeur: Charles Moore and the Federal Triangle* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1993).

⁷Lee, 277, 280.

⁸Ibid., 280, 285, for supervising architects and dates.

⁹FWA, PBA, "Federal Office Bldg. #2, Arlington, Virginia, First Floor Plan," 24 Jan. 1941, revised a number of times before the final one dated 12 Mar. 1954, CIDMS Resource Center, (CRC), Defense Facilities Directorate/Engineering & Technical Services Division, FB 2, Arlington, Virginia (hereafter CIDMS Resource Center).

5. Builder, contractor, suppliers:

George F. Driscoll Construction Company, Brooklyn, New York, for floors 1–3 of the Head House and Wings 1–7, 1940–1941.¹⁰

Graham Brothers Construction Company, Richmond, Virginia, for floor 4 of the Head House and Wings 1–7, 1943, and Wing 8, ca. 1946.¹¹

6. Original plans and construction:

The Arlington Site

On 21 September 1940, the *Washington Post* (hereafter *Post*) reported: “government officials are planning construction of the first Federal office building staffed by Washington personnel but located outside the district.”¹² Federal spokespersons explained that the building would be constructed on an expansive site in Arlington County adjacent to Fort Myer.¹³ The approximately eighteen-acre parcel was situated at the northwest corner of the intersection of Arlington Ridge Road and the Columbia Pike. The *Washington Star* (hereafter *Star*) published a site-specific rendering of the building early in November, but the U. S. government did not conclude the purchase of the condemned acreage until 30 November 1940.¹⁴ A topographic survey of the site made in September indicated that the parcel, sharply

¹⁰“Brooklyn Firm Is Low In Bids on Navy Annex,” *Star* 27 Nov. 1940, sec. B: 11. This article reported the George F. Driscoll Company of Brooklyn, New York as the low bidder. A 17 Sep. 1941 letter from John N. Edy, Acting Administrator of the FWA to Harold E. Smith, Executive Office Director of the Budget, stated that the contract was awarded to the low bidder on 17 Dec. 1940, but did not name the company. John N. Edy to Harold E. Smith, 17 Sep. 1941, RG 162, General Records of the Federal Works Agency, Entry 2, Correspondence of Administrators with Executive Agencies, 1939–1942, box 1, Bureau of the Budget, NARA, College Park, Maryland. An undated typescript, grouped with another dated 7 Mar. 1962, entitled “Some Facts About Your ‘Home Away from Home’,” states that the George F. Driscoll Construction Company of Brooklyn was awarded the contract on 17 Dec. 1940. Despite the lack of a date and known author, the typescript includes detailed information corresponding with that found in other sources, suggesting that it is a reliable, although not watertight, source. “Some Facts about Your ‘Home Away from Home’,” undated, and “Federal Office Building No. 2, Arlington, Virginia: Management and History,” 7 Mar. 1962, photocopies obtained from Department of Defense, Washington Headquarters Services, FB 2 Building Manager’s Office, Arlington, Virginia.

¹¹The only source listing the “Graham Brothers Construction Company” of Richmond, Virginia, as the contractors for the fourth floor and Wing 8 is the undated typescript mentioned in footnote 10, entitled “Some Facts About Your ‘Home Away from Home’.” A search of the *Washington Post* online archives produced two mentions of a Richmond-based construction company named “Graham Brothers” being awarded contracts for institutional structures in 1944 and 1949. See “U. of Va. Hospital Contract Affirmed,” *Washington Post* (hereafter *Post*) 28 Sep. 1944: 7 and “\$753,4000 Low Bid for New Hospital,” *Post* 18 Aug. 1949: 2.

¹²Gerald G. Gross, “U. S. to Build Navy Offices in Arlington,” *Post* 21 Sep. 1940: 1.

¹³*Ibid.*

¹⁴“Government Takes Title of Site for New Works Building,” *Star* 1 Dec. 1940, sec. B: 1. The *Post* article dated 21 Sep. 1940 incorrectly reported that the proposed structure was going to be built on a “Government-owned site in Arlington County, Va.” Although the land may have already been slated for condemnation at the time of the article, the government did not take legal title until. See “New Office Building for Arlington,” B-1, for rendering.

sloping downward to the east, was owned by George B. Fraser, who was also named in a period newspaper article as the land “trustee for himself and others.”¹⁵

Although when the surveyors created the topographic map the site itself was devoid of buildings, they did show adjacent structures on surrounding properties.¹⁶ Facing the acreage across the Columbia Pike to the south, South Arlington Ridge Road to the east, and what would become Southgate Road to the north, stood a number of freestanding houses noted as having “colored” owners or occupants. Some of the African Americans living in these structures, and in the adjacent subdivisions of East Arlington (noted on the topographic map) and Queen City (to the east off the map) were likely descendents of former slaves relocated by the federal government to the “Freedmen’s Village,” beginning in 1863.¹⁷ The government established the community for the stated altruistic purpose of moving newly manumitted slaves to a habitable and healthful setting.¹⁸ The structures of the village proper were arranged along an arcing roadway that was located in the southernmost part of what is now Arlington National Cemetery, immediately adjacent to land that would later become Southgate Road and the future site of FB 2.¹⁹ By the 1880s, some Arlington residents and the military voiced a general desire to permanently close the Freedmen’s Village as the site had been under military control since 1872.²⁰ Ultimately, many of the residents moved onto adjacent tracts and subdivisions, later subsumed by the Navy Annex, Pentagon, and related road construction.

Two 1941 aerial photographs, both predating the Pentagon construction, show the completed FB 2 as having no apparent ill effect on the blocks east of the site, although their fates were likely already sealed.²¹ In the heavy handed manner of a wartime government, made all the easier through generalized metropolitan segregation and racism, officials cleared the areas between FB 2 and the Pentagon (largely completed by the end of 1942) in order to construct approaches, bypass

¹⁵Basil Ashmutt, “Topographic Survey, Federal Office Building No. 2, Arlington, Virginia,” 10 Sep. 1940, CIDMS Resource Center.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷The topographic map noted that the houses on the east side of South Arlington Ridge Road were part of the “Subdivision of East Arlington (Colored).” Queen City was located on the site of the South Pentagon parking lot. Sherman W. Pratt, *Arlington County Virginia: A Modern History* (Arlington, VA: S. Pratt, 1997), 29, for Queen City and other successor developments.

¹⁸C. B. Rose, Jr., *Arlington County, Virginia: A History* (Arlington, VA: Arlington Historical Society, 1976), 122.

¹⁹Both Pratt (36) and Rose (123) include a map locating the Freedman’s Village to the north of the Navy Annex site. Although the source for the identical maps is not noted, they may have been drawn from a dissertation written on the Village. See Felix James, “Freedmen’s Village, Arlington, Virginia: A History,” thesis, Howard University, 1967. The map also shows the boundaries of the entire reservation once set aside for former slaves. The area beyond the village, but within the boundaries was referred to as the “Arlington Tract,” and presumably divided into nine and ten acre “lots” for small-scale farming. Rose, 124.

²⁰Rose, 124-125.

²¹“Air View of War Department Building Site,” *Star* 27 Aug. 1941, clippings file, Pentagon Building, 1941–1944, Martin Luther King Library, Washingtoniana Division, Washington, D.C. (hereafter MLK); “New Navy Building from the Air,” *Star* 23 Nov. 1941, sec. A: 18.

roadways, and parking areas for the new buildings.²² A 1942 newspaper photograph of nearly razed brick row houses with the Pentagon looming behind bore this caption:

Army 'Blitz' Levels Arlington Area—Government operations rather than a bomb caused this shell of a house and other wreckage near the new War Department Building in Arlington, Va. Workmen yesterday fired several houses, mostly frame, to clear the way for the network of roads which will surround the Federal structure, shown in the background.²³

When referring to the triangular nine-block residential neighborhood inhabited by African Americans, the caption merely noted: “colored families who were forced to vacate are now living in trailers supplied by the Government.”²⁴ Thus ended nearly eighty years of government-mandated action in this area whereby African Americans were located to, relocated within, and evicted from this portion of Arlington County.

FB 2: Conception of a “wartime-type’ Federal Office Building”

In September 1940, a House Appropriations Committee report concluded that the budgetary demands of mobilization made federal sponsorship of “monumental or semi-monumental buildings on expensive sites” an impossible consideration in the foreseeable future.²⁵ The Committee believed that structures modeled specifically on the Navy and Munitions buildings could “supply office space that meets all requirements for practically all types of general Government work.”²⁶ Under the guidance of Louis A. Simon, staff members of the PBA acted in accord with congressional opinion about practical building models when designing FB 2.²⁷

²²A map of the proposed limited-access roadways and related cloverleafs superimposed over these residential blocks was included in “Routes Are Disclosed for Highway System to New War Building,” *Star* 5 Dec. 1941, clippings file, Pentagon Building, 1941–1944, MLK.

²³“Army ‘Blitz’ Levels Arlington Area,” *Star* 18 Apr. 1942, clippings file, Pentagon Building, 1941–1944, MLK.

²⁴*Ibid.*

²⁵Selected quotes from this report appear in James E. Chinn, “Three New U. S. Buildings in Bill before House: Committee Favors Monumental Type Avoidance Hereafter,” *Star* 23 Sep. 1940, sec. A: 1.

²⁶Chinn, A-1.

²⁷The 23 September article about the House Appropriations Committee report conveyed that plans were in process for two new government buildings “similar to the Navy and Munitions Buildings,” with each “estimated [to] cost \$3,200,000” (Chinn, A-1). Although no sites had yet been selected nor intended occupants designated these unnamed buildings became FB 2 and FB 3, and their design was clearly underway well before knowledge of the House report. About a month later, an 18 Oct. 1940 *Washington Star* article observed that FB 2 “will be similar to the present Navy and Munitions Buildings.” It reiterated this point in a published caption for a bird’s eye rendering of the structure in the 7 Nov. 1940 issue. While no PBA documents were found that expressly linked FB 2 with these structures, it can still be logically concluded that they heavily influenced the design. The House Appropriations Committee report clearly identified them. The Navy Department, for whom FB 2 was being constructed, occupied one of the earlier structures, and there is clear formal, structural, and programmatic affinities. See “Arlington Site Is Chosen for U. S. Building,” *Star* 18 Oct. 1940, sec. B: 1; “New Office Building for Arlington,” *Star* 7 Nov. 1940, sec. B: 1; Chinn, A-1.

Constructed side-by-side in 1918 and prominently sited facing Constitution Avenue and backing up to the Mall between Seventeenth and Twenty-first streets, these two structures relieved pressures for additional office space during the bureaucratic defense buildup of World War I. Designated, literally, from the drawing board as “temporary,” their overall forms grew out of an application of “comb” organizational principles of building design.²⁸ This approach provided for a long “head house” with the multiple wings running perpendicular to and extending back from it, originally eight for the Munitions Building and nine for the Navy Building. The comb concept allowed for speedy and efficient construction as only the Constitution Avenue and Seventeenth Street elevations needed to be treated as public backdrops. These were austere rendered in smooth concrete using a restrained classicism that prefigured its later high-style applications in the 1930s. These simple, yet elegant facades contrasted with the rear walls and those facing into the courts between the wings. The visible reinforced concrete superstructure with brick infill and large industrial grade window units of these elevations nodded more to period factory and warehouse design than that of federal office buildings. In addition to thrifty construction, a comb form afforded a great quantity of flexible, and well-lighted and ventilated office space within, and it is not difficult to see why the “temporary” Navy and Munitions buildings became a model for similar construction two decades later.²⁹

In October 1940, the National Capital Park and Planning Commission began reviewing plans described in print as “similar to the present Navy and Munitions Buildings” and a published rendering the following month furnished graphic evidence for a clear link between the projected structure and the Navy and Munitions buildings.³⁰ The rendering depicts a three-story head house oriented northward toward Arlington Cemetery. This elevation provided an ordered public face for the building defined by a regular rhythm of window openings punctuated by three entrance loggias. Seven wings extend back from the head house whose walls are essentially defined by large, factory-like windows stretching between the piers of the modular reinforced concrete structure.

Although FB 2’s exterior expression, overall footprint and plan, and intended function were unmistakably descended from its predecessors, an important contextual distinction must be made between the two generations. Unlike the projected lifespan forecasts made for the substantial Navy and Munitions buildings, on the eve of World War II new edifices modeled on them were, from the start, not considered “temporary.”³¹ The design of the Navy and Munitions buildings,

²⁸Bureau of Yards and Docks, Department of the Navy, perspective rendering, “Navy Department, Temporary Office Building,” Department of the Navy, Naval Historical Center, “Online Library of Selected Images,” “ ‘Main Navy’ and ‘Munitions’ Buildings,” accessed online, 22 Jul. 2004, <http://www.history.navy.mil/branches/org11-2.htm>; “New Navy Building from Air,” A-18, for “comb.”

²⁹For period interior views of the Navy and Munitions buildings, see Naval Historical Center, “Online Library of Selected Images.”

³⁰“Arlington Site Is Chosen for U. S. Building,” *Star* 18 Oct. 1940, sec. B: 1; “New Office Building for Arlington,” *Star* 7 Nov. 1940, sec. B: 1.

³¹Original presentation drawings of the structures refer to them as both “temporary” and “emergency.” See Naval Historical Center, “Online Library of Selected Images.”

decidedly simple and low-cost, was unprecedented at the time in Washington, D.C. for any type of large office structure, and they could only be compared to much more substantial buildings. By 1940, they had clearly moved beyond their temporary status and new structures modeled on them would not necessarily be associated with “temporary” use projections.³² This point was assuredly made by the *Star* on 18 October 1940, reporting:

Building officials said today every effort is being made not to repeat what happened during the [First] World War, when cheap stucco structures were put up on the Mall and in other central locations, thereby creating an eyesore which it took years to eradicate. The two buildings contemplated will not, they emphasized, be of the cheap stucco type, but will be similar to the present Navy and Munitions Buildings.³³

On the eve of World War II, significantly lighter structures with a “house-type wood frame, asbestos board siding and...six inch thick concrete foundations” redefined one extreme on an obviously fluid scale of permanence.³⁴

Focusing on the opposing alternative, an early 1942 issue of the *Post* included FB 2 in a group of “four permanent buildings” completed during the prior year in metropolitan Washington; however, when compared with two of the others —the limestone clad Weather Bureau Building and the elegant War Department Building both in Northwest D.C.—the much more simply articulated FB 2 stood well below them in a visual, if not a structural, evocation of permanence.³⁵ Interestingly, the PBA reused the plans of FB 2 for the fourth building mentioned in the article, Federal Office Building No. 3 (FB 3) at Suitland, Maryland.³⁶ FB 3’s construction started just about the time that FB 2’s ended, and the PBA’s reuse of FB 2’s design expanded on an agency goal seeking to “develop...standardized plans” for quick and simplified construction of “light, airy, serviceable office space to serve the Federal Government in the present emergency.”³⁷

Neither “temporary” nor “permanent,” FB 2 occupied a less concretely defined position between the two. A 1947 *Washington Star* article about Major General Philip B. Fleming, Administrator of the FWA, and his desire for the timely elimination of temporary wartime buildings furnishes some insight about FB 2. The article described three groups of temporary offices: “true” tempors, “hangovers from World

³²These buildings housed the high command of the Navy until after World War II and the consolidation of the branches of the armed forces into a single executive agency, known since 1949 as the Department of Defense, headquartered in the massive World War II-era Pentagon.

³³“Arlington Site Is Chosen for U. S. Building,” B-1.

³⁴FWA, PBA, “Memorandum for the Press for Immediate Release,” PBA-395, 22 Jan. 1942, RG 162, Entry 34, Press Releases of the FWA and its Constituent Agencies, 1939–1949, Box 4.

³⁵“The Statistics Show: U. S. Erected 17 New Buildings in D.C. Area During Past Year,” *Post* 2 Jan. 1942: 28.

³⁶For more information about Federal Office Building No. 3, see Maryland Historical Trust, State Historic Sites Inventory Form, “Federal Office Building No. 3 (FOB-3), Prince Georges County, Maryland.” Scanned version including photographs available online at [http:// www.mdihp.net](http://www.mdihp.net).

³⁷FWA, PBA, press release, 22 Jan. 1942.

War I,” and “buildings of permanent construction which are either obsolete or sit on land to be used for permanent buildings.”³⁸ FB 2’s visually simple, yet structurally substantial presence probably placed it into the last category. Evidence suggests that while still in the design stages, some regarded FB 2 as only a stopgap measure for much needed office space, not an enduring solution for future government needs. As one local planner forecasted in November 1940: “when the present emergency is over the building will be used for a document warehouse.”³⁹

Open Plans and the Modern American Office

A projected warehouse usage for FB 2 after the war never came to pass, but notions like it probably spawned an often repeated origin narrative in which FB 2 was built for storage purposes and later retrofitted for offices when active defense-related needs became more acute. This narrative claims no obvious validity as the earliest public mention of FB 2 in 1940 not only referred to it as an “office building,” but also conveyed that it was specifically slated for the Navy, a department “sorely in need of additional [office] space.”⁴⁰ Beyond this reference, a warehouse basis for FB 2’s inception disregards the manner in which architects apportioned and arranged, and workers used office space earlier in the century.

The open-plan office or clerical “typing pool” was a common work environment for the period, and easily accommodated activities fueling personnel expansion in military, general government, and private sector offices. These activities centered on the creation and storage of what was described in 1942 by retired Major General Edward F. McGlachlin as: “a swamp of records and correspondence” meant, in his opinion, to replace institutional memory and accountability with a wall of “self-protection.”⁴¹ Record generation required a great deal of open space for clerical staff and furniture related to filing, and necessitated comparatively few private offices in relation to the total number of workers. In 1922, Harry Arthur Hopf, senior member of a “management engineering” firm, gave an address entitled “Modern Office Planning” that conveyed disdain for the growing multiplicity of enclosed offices, offering: “the principal of the private office is still too much abused in practice. Only executives whose work really demands privacy should be supplied with private offices.”⁴² Additionally, Hopf discouraged the use of full partitions, even between departments, and suggested the use of railings and banks of file cabinets for delineating work areas.⁴³ Within departments, he advocated open rows of small clerical desks positioned far enough apart so that employees could move

³⁸Rudolph Kauffmann, “Razing City’s ‘Tempos’ May Be Long Process,” *Star* 16 Feb. 1947, sec. C: 4.

³⁹Paraphrased in “Arlington Navy Building Move Hit by Planner,” *Star* 19 Nov. 1940, sec. A: 12.

⁴⁰Gross, “U.S. to Build...,” A-1. Original construction drawings are located in the CIDMS Resource Center, FB 2, Arlington, Virginia, most are dated to October 1940.

⁴¹Edward F. McGlachlin, Major General U. S. A., Retired, to the Editor of the *Star*, “Calls for Simplification of Routine in Government and Business,” *Star* 2 Oct 1942: sec. A: 10.

⁴²Harry Arthur Hopf, “Modern Office Planning, with Special Reference to New Building Construction” (address delivered before the Third National Conference of the National Association of Office Managers, Washington, D.C., 18–20 May 1922), Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 13.

⁴³*Ibid.*

between their workspace, the aisle, and filing locations without disrupting other workers.⁴⁴

The offices at FB 2 encompassed just the sort of open space advocated by Hopf, and employed in other period models and examples. Photographs of the office interiors at the Navy and Munitions buildings from ca. 1920 depict an open clerical environment.⁴⁵ This type of office plan survived up to and well beyond World War II, for both private and government structures.⁴⁶ The original 1940 floor plans for Wings 1–7 show a majority of them open with the exception of support columns, stairwells, bathrooms, and mechanical installations.⁴⁷ Drawings from 1944 for Wing 8 not only portray similar open space, but also dot in an “aisle line,” connecting all of the points of entry and the bathrooms on each floor. Whether the aisle was set-off by a different type of floor covering or merely implied through furniture is not known, but this notation clearly indicates an impermanent and fluid division of interior space, allowing for maximized natural light and ventilation as well as functional changeability. A directional sign last revised in 1946 and located in the stairwell at the south end of Wing 4 depicts the eight wings almost entirely open from end to end and side to side, with the exception of the bathroom facilities and stairwells.⁴⁸ Although originally composed of similar interior space, by 1946 the Head House had been mostly divided into smaller offices.

This sort of flexibility and economy in design was a goal of the PBA after its 1939 move to the FWA. In regard to Federal Office Building No. 1 (FB 1), completed in 1940 and located in the Southwest quadrant of Washington, D.C., the first annual report of the FWA remarked:

the solution [to a general dearth of office space] was a General Federal Office Building which could be built with the speed of a warehouse and could be divided as needed by movable partitions into offices of varying sizes. [An approach] functional both in purpose and design.⁴⁹

Created by the PBA on the heels of FB 1 and using the Navy and Munitions buildings as formal launching points, FB 2 contained office areas reflecting period trends for open planning. Distancing twenty-first century notions of divided office space, even in open environments, it is likely that FB 2’s suggested postwar obsolescence occurred in reaction to the PBA’s severe, factory-like design more than a predominance of open and largely undifferentiated work areas. Although almost

⁴⁴Ibid., 14.

⁴⁵Naval Historical Center, “Online Library of Selected Images.”

⁴⁶For examples, see photographs of office interiors for the Hershey Metal Products Co., Ansonia, Connecticut, 1944, and the Esso Building, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1950, available online at the “American Memory” section of the Library of Congress online site.

⁴⁷Drawings located in CIDMS Resource Center.

⁴⁸“Navy Building, Federal Office Building, Arlington, Virginia, First Floor Plan, Feb 15, 1943, No. 1795,” revised 26 November 1946.

⁴⁹United States Federal Works Agency, *First Annual Report, 1939/40* (Washington, D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1941), 76.

certainly not intentional, FB 2's quasi-industrial appearance provided an appropriate architectural image for the record generating and storage functions within.

FB 2: Realization of a “wartime-type’ Federal Office Building”

Congress approved an appropriation amounting to \$3,200,000 for FB 2's construction on 9 October 1940.⁵⁰ A rendering of the structure and a request for construction bids appearing in newspapers early in November indicated that, under Louis A. Simon, architects of the PBA had already completed designs for the building's general form and principal components.⁵¹ Officials opened the submitted bids on 26 November 1940 and the George F. Driscoll construction company of Brooklyn, New York, came in as the low bidder at \$2,589,420; the company was awarded the contract on 17 December.⁵² With the construction drawings completed, work began on FB 2 within the next month.⁵³ Between December 1940 and June 1941, architects and draftsmen of the PBA finalized the design of such details as the built-in bulletin boards and building directories; cast concrete ornamentation at the three principal entrances, including the eagles over the center loggia portals; thresholds, sills, and interior doors; and a flagpole base.⁵⁴

In the original contract, the George F. Driscoll Company and the PBA agreed that FB 2 would be completed by 8 July 1941; however, delays plagued construction, beginning almost immediately because of misunderstandings related to the design and execution of Wing 1's foundations.⁵⁵ Apparently, many of the issues ultimately arising between the company and the government extended from the death of the George F. Driscoll Co.'s founder. As articulated in a September 1941 letter about the construction delays:

shortly after this contract got under way the head of the firm, who had organized it and built it up, died leaving the business to four sons. A great deal of time was lost because of some question in the family as to precisely where the responsibility for the continuation of the business would rest.⁵⁶

⁵⁰Eddy to Smith, 17 Sep. 1941, for date of appropriation; Thomas M. Cahill, “\$183,732,695 in New Building Is Metropolitan Record,” *Post* 2 Jan. 1941: sec. F: 1, for amount of appropriation.

⁵¹“New Office Building for Arlington,” B-1, for rendering. Period drawings dated 19 October 1940 depict the heating and plumbing systems for FB 2. These could not have been executed without completed designs for the buildings structural components. CIDMS Resource Center.

⁵²Eddy to Smith, 17 Sep. 1941, for bid opening and date of award; “Brooklyn Firm Is Low In Bids on Navy Annex,” *Star* 27 Nov. 1940, sec. B: 11, for bid amount.

⁵³Eddy to Smith, 17 Sep. 1941, for immediate start.

⁵⁴See FWA, PBA, drawing nos. 500, 504–507, and 509 for Federal Office Building No. 2, RG 121, Records of the Public Buildings Service, Cartographic and Architectural Records, NARA, College Park, Maryland.

⁵⁵Eddy to Smith, 17 Sep. 1941. As originally conceived the wings were labeled “A” through “G.” Drawings from October 1940 indicating the plumbing and heating systems for the structure place the kitchen in wing “C” and the dispensary in wing “E.” Neither of these facilities have been relocated, and they now occupy wings “5” and “3,” respectively. The wings were originally named “A” through “G,” proceeding from east to west, and were later changed to “1” through “7,” proceeding from west to east. See October 1940 drawings located in the CIDMS Resource Center, for kitchen and dispensary.

⁵⁶Eddy to Smith, 17 Sep. 1941.

In the end, these delays and other problems led to perception of the firm as no longer “able” or “reputable,” at least by the FWA’s Office of the Administrator.⁵⁷ By the middle of September 1941 it was anticipated that FB 2 would be completed “about” 1 October, three months later than initially expected.⁵⁸ This projection proved essentially true and on 10 October 1941, the Headquarters of the Marine Corps became the structure’s first occupants, with personnel continuing to relocate across the Potomac during the next month.⁵⁹ On 1 November 1941, the *Star* reported: “the Bureau of Navigation, the offices of the Marine Corps and other Navy personnel...[were] moving in and gradually easing the squeezed feeling of the main Navy Building on Constitution avenue.”⁶⁰ Three weeks later, 2,500 of a projected 3,500 initial workers had relocated to FB 2.⁶¹ By June 1942, bids were being accepted for the concrete curbing at the site’s driveway entrances, suggesting that most if not all of the structure, and its grading and associated landscaping were either in-process or already executed.⁶²

7. Alterations and additions:

The Fourth Floor

Initial alterations related to FB 2, although not to the structure itself, occurred within the first year of occupancy and was directly related to the war. On 2 October 1942, the *Star* reported: “the Government, which has called on home owners to convert their oil furnaces to coal wherever possible, is following its own advice so far as the heating plant of the new Navy Building in Arlington County, Va., is concerned.”⁶³ The article noted that either FB 2’s heating plant would be converted to coal or that it would be connected into the nearby Pentagon’s new coal-fired plant.

The continued “war emergency” also forced the first significant physical addition to FB 2 in 1943. Sustained expansion of the military bureaucracy demanded more office space, which in metropolitan Washington was met through the construction of new temporary structures or additions to existing buildings. Only months before plans for FB 2 were announced in 1940, the FWA oversaw the construction of a fourth-floor “penthouse” on top of the existing Navy and Munitions buildings along Constitution Avenue.⁶⁴ By the end of the year, construction was completed on the

⁵⁷Ibid. At the time he wrote the letter to Harold Smith, John Edy signed as the “Acting Administrator” for the FWA, One day earlier in an inter-office memo to Edy, John M. Carmody, Administrator of the FWA, provided comments about the draft of Edy’s letter to Smith. Although Carmody asked Edy to add a section about the death of the George F. Driscoll Co.’s founder as a partial explanation for the construction delays, he does not contradict Edy’s negative characterization of the company as a result of the delays. See memorandum, John M. Carmody to John Edy, 16 Sep. 1941, RG 162, entry 2, box 1, NARA, College Park, Maryland.

⁵⁸Edy to Smith, 17 Sep. 1941.

⁵⁹“Some Facts About Your ‘Home Away from Home’.”

⁶⁰“Here’s the New Building You’ve Heard About,” *Star* 1 Nov. 1941, sec. A: 18.

⁶¹“New Navy Building from the Air,” A-18.

⁶²“Bids & Proposals,” *Post* 18 Jun. 1942: 30.

⁶³“Arlington Navy Building Being Converted to Coal,” *Star* 2 Oct. 1942, sec. A: 5.

⁶⁴“President Proposes Additional Story on Navy Building,” *Star* 1 Jun. 1940, sec. A: 10.

lightweight additions, described in December 1940 by John M. Carmody, Administrator of the FWA:

The new fourth floor recently added on the Navy Building was, of necessity, constructed of light materials to avoid a dangerous increase in load on the building foundations. This has made it necessary to use non-fireproof materials for the major part of the new structure.⁶⁵

About two years after the construction of the Navy and Munitions buildings' penthouses, plans were afoot to build a similar addition on top of FB 2. The PBA of the FWA passed over the contractors hired to build the Head House and Wings 1-7 in 1940-1941, probably because of the completion delays and other communication problems, and secured the Graham Brothers Construction Company of Richmond, Virginia, for building the fourth floor.⁶⁶ Because it needed to be structurally supported by the existing three-story building, it can be assumed that FB 2's additional floor was fashioned of "light" materials as well. An extant drawing for floor load signs to be located at various points on the new fourth-floor affords further evidence that this type of construction was used for FB 2's new story.⁶⁷ The sign's text read: "load placed on this floor must not exceed the equivalent of 50 lbs. per sq. ft. uniformly distributed over the entire area."⁶⁸ Despite the necessity of lightweight framing in both cases, the setback upper-story additions to the Navy and Munitions buildings were "true" penthouses, while at FB 2 it constituted an entirely new floor with the same plan as on the lower stories and brick veneered exterior walls made flush with those of the earlier structure.

Wing 8

In 1944, plans for an eighth wing indicated that, like the Navy and Munitions buildings of World War I, FB 2 would continue to be used well beyond the conclusion of World War II. The PBA completed detailed construction drawings and a site plan in July and August 1944.⁶⁹ Although an undated typescript located in the building manager's office lists the completion date for Wing 8 as 1948 and this year is generally repeated by present-day occupants, the structure was almost certainly completed by late in 1946.⁷⁰ A second typescript page dated 7 March 1962

⁶⁵John M. Carmody to the Secretary of the Navy [Franklin William "Frank" Knox], 10 Dec. 1940, RG 162, entry 2, box 5, Navy Department, NARA, College Park, Maryland.

⁶⁶"Some Facts About Your 'Home Away from Home.'"

⁶⁷FWA, PBA, "Detail of Floor Load Sign," 23 Apr. 1943, drawing #510, RG 121, Cartographic and Architectural Records, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), College Park, Maryland.

⁶⁸Ibid.

⁶⁹Original drawings for Wing 8 including, plans and elevations of the main entrance, plans for the ground, first, and second stories, heating, plumbing, and ventilation drawings for all floors, and various construction details, most dated 10 or 11 July 1944 are located in the CIDMS Resource Center. These drawings also include an "Approach Plan" for the entire site, with the latest revision date noted as 30 Aug. 1944.

⁷⁰"Some Facts About Your 'Home Away from Home'," for 1948.

indicates that construction on the wing finished up in 1946.⁷¹ Corroborating this admittedly tenuous evidence is an extant directional sign located just inside the rear (south) stairwell in Wing 4, which bears the date 26 November 1946 and was based on an earlier plan, presumably of only Wings 1–7, dating from 15 February 1943.⁷² The sign depicts the first floors of both the earlier structure and the later wing. With plans for the building completed by August 1944, this November 1946 sign provides a convenient *terminus ante quem* for the Wing 8 construction.

The fifteen-month period between these dates might seem lengthy given that the head house and seven wings of the original structure took approximately a year to complete; however, some variables should be taken into account. The skeleton of the earlier building is composed of reinforced concrete, while Wing 8's contains steel posts and beams. This difference means that despite the 1944 design date, Wing 8 may not have been started until well into 1945 as defense needs more pressing than office space lessened with the war's slowdown and ultimate cessation. In addition to the availability of materials, because of the site's sharp grade change at its east end, considerable time needed to be spent in the creation of a terrace for the new wing and a parking lot. This terracing included a substantial retaining wall at Wing 8's northeast corner. Finally, in a point of informed conjecture, given the semi-permanent nature of FB 2, at a point when demobilization began occupying officials, they may have debated the need or expense of an addition to the building, especially because plans were still afoot to build a large new Navy headquarters in Northwest Washington, D.C. At any rate, the Graham Brothers Construction Company, of Richmond, Virginia, completed construction of Wing 8 by November 1946, if not earlier.⁷³

In conceiving of Wing 8, architects and planners located it to the east of Wing 7, across the road encircling the existing structure. This road provided a link between the three principal gates on the site's south side along Columbia Pike and the building's three principal entrances located opposite on the north elevation. Wing 8 ran parallel to Wing 7 and its south wall was aligned with those of the other seven wings. The north wall stopped short of the Head House's, probably on account of the precipitous grade change. The general dimensions, use of similarly colored brick, and the siting of Wing 8 provided programmatic continuity even while it was essentially an independent entity. As built, the first part of FB 2 was a fully articulated structure whose symmetry discouraged extension. Because of this situation, and an inability to extend the perimeter drive around the planned addition

⁷¹"Federal Office Building No. 2, Arlington, Virginia: Management and History," 7 Mar. 1962. An undated, but more recent outline of building "data" and "statistics," for the purposes of establishing a work plan for the cleaning staff, indicates that Wing 8 was completed in 1947. See "Exhibit 1: Building Information, Federal Office Building Number 2," undated, photocopy obtained from Department of Defense, Washington Headquarters Services, FB 2 Building Manager's Office, Arlington, Virginia.

⁷²Directional sign bearing the title block: "Navy Building, Federal Office Building, Arlington, Virginia, First Floor Plan, Feb 15, 1943, No. 1795," with the date November 26, 1946 printed just above the block, located to the left of the door opening from the stairwell at the south end of Wing 4 into the wing's main corridor.

⁷³"Some Facts About Your 'Home Away from Home'."

because of the grade change, the PBA designed Wing 8 as a freestanding structure, with the only physical connections provided by two bridges connecting to Wing 7 and a subterranean utility tunnel.

Although the original portion of FB 2 can hardly be categorized as “classical” or “traditional,” its quiet monumentality and symmetrically ordered facade stands in contrast to Wing 8’s more overtly modernist presence. The strong shift toward avante garde modernist design occurred for reasons both aesthetic and economic. As declared in a 1948 *Star* article: “the era of neoclassicism imposed by Andrew Mellon and Architect Louis Simon on the Federal Triangle, is finished.”⁷⁴ A PBA press release of the same year outlined what would replace buildings of the “era of neoclassicism,” stating: “the design of future Federal buildings will be greatly simplified to achieve economy in construction and maintenance costs. New materials and techniques developed during the war and new uses for the older conventional types will find expression in Federal buildings.”⁷⁵ In addition to construction approaches evident in FB 2’s Wings 1–7, such as vertical utility chases and modular structural systems, the PBA’s postwar plans also included familiar stripped down “wartime-type” elements such as flat roofs.⁷⁶ FB 2’s Wing 8 held formal affinity with what came earlier, but changing architectural standards and aesthetic goals also resulted in an architecturally distinct structure.

Although physically aligned with and materially related to the existing wings, FB 2’s independent status necessitated its own articulated main entrance. The architects of the PBA located a one-story entrance loggia with a cantilevered canopy in its northwest corner, facing the Head House at a turn in the perimeter driveway. This location provided an appropriate counterpoint to the Moderne entrance portals on the existing structure. A one-story extension of Wing 8’s west wall beyond its north wall not only masked an exterior stair descending to a below-ground mechanical room, but also contributed to the composition’s overall horizontal emphasis. This horizontality was further reinforced by a flat roof with overhanging eaves, and groupings of double-hung windows arranged in bands defined by continuous, austere rendered concrete lintels and sills extending around the wing’s exterior. As originally completed, the architects further underscored this effect through the double-hung window units whose top and bottom sash were divided into two horizontal lights.⁷⁷ Because of their mostly utilitarian design, similar buff-colored brick, and expressive design flourishes limited largely to the four primary entrances, the original seven wings of FB 2 and the later eighth wing formed a complimentary and cohesive ensemble.

Modern Systems and Ultimate Demolition

⁷⁴George Kennedy, “Federal Architecture Exhibit Shows Shift to Modernism,” *Star* 7 Oct. 1948: sec. A: 3.

⁷⁵FWA, PBA, “Release,” FWA-PBA 16, 31 Oct. 1948, 1, RG 162, entry 34, box 4, NARA, College Park, Maryland.

⁷⁶*Ibid.*, 2.

⁷⁷Construction drawings depict this type of sash, and extant sash of this design still open from a basement mechanical room to a light well on Wing 8’s north side.

Given the simplicity and durability characterizing FB 2's design and construction, its exterior remains largely intact while most of its interior has succumbed to various changes over time. Regarding basic systems, fluorescent lighting replaced incandescent fixtures in 1955.⁷⁸ In April 1960, the House Public Works Committee okayed a 4.6 million dollar request by GSA in order to air-condition FB 2, with the fourth floor to be fitted first during the next fiscal year.⁷⁹ Seasonal conditions inside the building were probably extreme from its earliest days, as the *Post* noted in 1960: "employees have always been having a hot time at the old annex, it seems. They usually are among the first to be dismissed early on hot summer days."⁸⁰ The air conditioning project was completed in 1963.⁸¹ In the building's original portion, beyond extant terrazzo flooring, and a few steel two-panel doors and bulletin board frames, virtually nothing remains from the 1940s. Most of the original exterior window sash is extant, with the exception of Wing 7, which has been replaced with fixed double-glazed units bearing similar muntin divisions to the earlier windows. This alteration occurred for security reasons in anticipation of the Missile Defense Agency's movement from Wing 8 to Wing 7, pending Wing 8's autumn 2004 demolition, clearing the way for the planned United States Air Force Memorial.

In 1999, the United States Congress authorized future expansion of the hemmed-in Arlington National Cemetery over FB 2's site, as well as those "memorials compatible with the Cemetery."⁸² Three years later, Congress endorsed a plan to develop the eastern portion of the acreage as a memorial to the United States Air Force.⁸³ The initial design responded to a planned location to the north of Arlington Cemetery, but the Marine Corps believed that it would be too near and compete with the Iwo Jima Memorial.⁸⁴ The Air Force Memorial Foundation abandoned the earlier scheme, and proceeded with a new design on the site of Wing 8 that includes three spires one of which rises to a height of about 270'-0". The official groundbreaking for the memorial occurred on 15 September 2004, and workers razed Wing 8 by December of that year. Sometime in the next decade, the federal government plans on demolishing the rest of FB 2 for cemetery expansion.⁸⁵

B. Historical Context

The Bureaucratic Expansion of the Federal Government

Since the country's founding, the size and scope of the United States federal government has necessarily grown larger to keep pace with an expanding population and their varied needs and activities; in particular, war-related events heavily effected

⁷⁸"Some Facts About Your 'Home Away from Home'."

⁷⁹Jean White, "Cooling Off Navy Annex to Be Costly," *Post* 1 Apr. 1960, sec. C: 10.

⁸⁰*Ibid.*

⁸¹"Some Facts About Your 'Home Away from Home'."

⁸²Ralph E. Newton, Acting Director, Real Estate & Facilities, Department of Defense, Washington Headquarters Services, to Susan E. Smead, Virginia Department of Historic Resources, 8 Jan. 2004, Washington Headquarters Services, Washington, D.C.

⁸³*Ibid.*

⁸⁴Minutes, Commission of Fine Arts Meeting, 20 Mar. 2003, 17, National Building Museum, Washington, D.C.

⁸⁵Newton to Smead, 8 Jan. 2004.

government's scale. It follows that government's enlargement increased the number of people residing in and around Washington, D.C. For example, between 1860 and 1870, Washington's population rose 79 percent from 61,122 to 109,199, in large part because of the Civil War.⁸⁶ The twentieth century also saw steep increases, first around World War I and then in the 1930s with the government's New Deal programs and the country's defense mobilization toward the decade's end. Although the country could not enter "full-scale mobilization" on account of its official neutrality, it could still appropriate monies for "protective mobilization" purposes.⁸⁷ In the decade leading up to 1940, Washington's population moved upward thirty-six percent from 424,378 to 663,091, in large part because of these initial mobilization actions.⁸⁸ A December 1940 *Post* article underscored the enormous scale of local mobilization efforts in dubbing the previous twelve months: the "year of the national defense program."⁸⁹ Although the city's housing shortage and its associated ad hoc solutions rank among the most popular memories of crowded World War II-era Washington, the *Star* reported in 1941 that, in actuality, the low inventory of available office space for defense-related activities was "more critical than [the] residence dearth."⁹⁰ The construction of FB 2, and other semi-permanent and temporary office structures, attempted to relieve a spatial deficiency, which if left unchecked might have seriously impinged on the government's ability to address the gathering war emergency.

The World War II-era defense buildup in Washington, D.C., included an array of high ranking and other military personnel, but also general government support staff, a large portion of which was concerned with the creation, storage, and maintenance of correspondence, reports, and other governmental records. Beginning in the nineteenth century, the production and organization of records generated jobs that contributed to the rise of the white-collar middle class.⁹¹ As with private institutions, clerks were also integral to government's expansion, and by World War II some felt that the federal bureaucracy had become too large. Edward F. McGlachlin, Major General U. S. A., Retired, wrote to the *Star* in 1942:

red tape...is in part the result of a bureaucratic tendency to self-protection through written records of literally every subject taken up...It is encouraged by the desire of some chief clerks to inflate their importance by an increase in the number of their subordinates. The very existence of the accumulated records persuades responsible officials that they need

⁸⁶H. P. Caemmerer, *Washington: The National Capital* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1932), 51, for 61,122, and 57, for 109,199.

⁸⁷Frank N. Schubert, *Mobilization: The U. S. Army in World War II* (Washington, D.C.: U. S. Army Center of Military History, 1994), 8-13.

⁸⁸Gerald G. Gross, "New Defense Workers Flock to Washington in Year of Unprecedented Development," *Post* 29 Dec. 1940: 25.

⁸⁹*Ibid.*

⁹⁰"D.C. Office Shortage More Critical Than Residence Dearth," *Star* 15 Oct. 1941, sec. A: 1.

⁹¹For information related to the rise of the middle class including the appearance and spread of white collar work, see: Stuart M. Blumin, *The Emergence of the Middle Class: Social Experience in the American City, 1760-1900, Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Modern History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

not rely upon their memories...Worship of meticulous accuracy and thoroughness does not pay.⁹²

Major General McGlachlin faulted the military, other government offices, and the private sector in contributing to the lumbering growth of bureaucracy in America, but it is still surprising that a career military officer commented negatively on the situation given the war emergency and related employment of defense workers in Washington, D.C.

The Geographic Expansion of Washington-based Federal Departments and Agencies

Although a sharp increase in federal staff and their work activities and a desire for more economical construction shaped how the PBA conceived and realized this “‘wartime type’ Federal office building,” general congestion in the District’s Northwest quadrant most impacted decisions about its siting. By the end of the 1930s, acute crowding in the District forced two possible solutions: the full removal of certain agencies and bureaus from the metropolitan area or their relocation to less built-up areas in the suburbs.

In November 1940, Hugh Potter, former president of the National Association of Real Estate Boards, proposed at its annual meeting: “‘wherever feasible’ administrative work of Government bureaus should be moved from the Capital to other cities.”⁹³ Protest by the Washington contingent, arguing that the city “was established originally as the administrative center, a city devoted to the affairs of government,” blocked passage of a formal resolution articulating Potter’s proposal, but the idea did not disappear.⁹⁴ A half year later in May 1941, J. C. Nichols, the chief of the Office of Production Management, believed that “certain non-defense Government agencies [should] be moved...[in order] to relieve the growing congestion of the Capital.”⁹⁵ Not without a little irony, Nichols suggested that the relocation of government functions to other cities would preserve the “sacred government character of our city.”⁹⁶ Following Nichols in addressing the Home Builders’ Institute of America (later the National Association of Home Builders), John M. Carmody, Administrator of the FWA, cautioned that Nichols’s ideas about moving agencies were not so easily put into practice as “many Government workers...moved their families here [Washington] and built or established homes. It would mean...‘not tearing up roots, but trees.’”⁹⁷ Despite the misgivings of Carmody and others, the government ultimately decided to pursue, in part, this pathway for alleviating wartime congestion in the capital. A March 1942 press

⁹²McGlachlin, A-10.

⁹³“Washington Realtors Fight Decentralizing of Federal Activity,” *Star* 15 Nov. 1940, sec. A: 23.

⁹⁴*Ibid.*

⁹⁵O.P.M. Official Urges Removal of Some Agencies from D.C.,” *Star* 15 May 1941, sec. B: 14.

⁹⁶*Ibid.* J. C. Nichols is best known as the primary developer of the highly influential and now-famed Country Club District in Kansas City, Missouri, largely developed during 1910s and 1920s. Given his continued activity in development and house construction into the post-World War II period, it is not surprising that he would back the distribution of government jobs throughout the country, a situation with the potential to benefit his business interests.

⁹⁷*Ibid.*

release issued by the FWA reported: “the war emergency has necessitated the removal of some of the bureaus not essential to the war effort to make room for the expansion of bureaus essential to the war effort.”⁹⁸ In the end, a number of agencies deemed as “nonessential” eventually transferred out of Washington, but overall, suburban decentralization proved a more efficient route for addressing pressures for office space while keeping government agencies near their symbolic and administrative center.⁹⁹ Additionally, as noted in an August 1940 *Post* article, thirty-one percent of the region’s population already lived outside the District, and that alone was good reason to pay “greater attention to the suburbs from a regional planning standpoint.”¹⁰⁰

While not part of the National Capital Park and Planning Commission’s formal plans for constructing “a roomier, less congested and more handsome central area for the District,” FB 2’s siting still reflects the implementation of a regional planning consciousness in the Washington area.¹⁰¹ A September 1940 *Post* article referred to the decision to build FB 2 in Arlington as a “radical departure,” but also admitted that it was “inevitable because the Capital proper is nearing the saturation point in public building construction.”¹⁰² Government officials obviously considered outlying areas as solutions for allaying the compounding mobilization-related space shortages, but at this time certain departmental offices probably needed or wanted to remain in the District, within the sphere of federal influence. For example, the Navy’s high command remained in the two-decade-old “Navy Department” building, one of FB 2’s models, in its central location on Constitution Avenue until postwar reorganization culminating in the establishment of the Department of Defense.¹⁰³ While stripped down to the barest essentials, FB 2 furnished defined and flexible accommodation for the Headquarters of the Marine Corps, enough space to manage the technical requirements supporting the work of the Navy’s Hydrographic Office, as well as a convenient overflow for the crowded Navy offices in the District. Still, in a pre-Pentagon, pre-Department of Defense landscape, government officials envisioned FB 2, or the “Navy Annex,” as temporary offices for a department whose new and modern headquarters would be constructed after the war in the monumental center of the District of Columbia.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁸FWA, PBA, Press Release, 6 Mar. 1942, RG 162, entry 34, NARA, College Park, Maryland.

⁹⁹*Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰“Nolen Fears City May Grow Like Topsy,” *Post* 4 Aug. 1940: 12.

¹⁰¹“Planners Map Less Jammed, Stateliner D.C.,” *Post* 21 Sep. 1941: 10.

¹⁰²Gross, “U.S. to Build...,” A-1.

¹⁰³Department of the Navy, Naval Historical Center, “Online Library of Selected Images,” “‘Main Navy’ and ‘Munitions’ Buildings,” accessed online, 13 Jan. 2005, <http://www.history.navy.mil/photos/pl-usa/pl-dc/nav-fac/mn-mun.htm>.

¹⁰⁴The idea for a new Navy Department home had percolated for a number of years before the war and stood as part of a broader campaign to construct modern office space for government departments and agencies. In 1939, the *Washington Star* published an image of the model for the planned Navy Department and War Department buildings as well as an aerial photograph of the area in Northwest Washington south of Virginia and north of Constitution avenues slated for their construction. These two structures were to be part of a planned precinct located west of the Ellipse and dubbed the “Northwest Rectangle,” which officials envisioned as balance for the recently completed Federal Triangle to the east. The war and construction of the War Department’s fantastical headquarters structure, the Pentagon, across the Potomac River in Arlington routed this grand scheme. Only two contributing structures, the Department of the

Seen as a reasonable action by many, FB 2's siting was not universally supported. The *Star* reported in November 1940 that at a meeting of the United States Chamber of Commerce regarding parking and transportation concerns, Gordon Whitnall, "city planning expert," used the construction of FB 2 as an example of a potential planning problem.¹⁰⁵ He believed that many of the 5,000 workers moving to the Arlington building would choose to make their residences nearby for the duration of the emergency, and then have to move again after it was over.¹⁰⁶ He concluded: "the Government is rushing headlong into placing the building there, without thought to the future effect it will have."¹⁰⁷ Whitnall need not have worried about the movement of suburbanized workers back into the city after the war, as the expansion of Washington's suburbs continued unabated for the next sixty years, ultimately relieving the city's congestion to a fault and creating enormous headaches for suburban municipalities.

Both Arlington County, Virginia, and Prince Georges County, Maryland, experienced significant growth during World War II, even while the complexities and impending difficulties of out-migration were fully comprehensible. The *Star* proclaimed in March 1941: "Arlington entering greatest expansion in history."¹⁰⁸ In addition to FB 2 and the Pentagon, the county found itself home to a number of temporary structures and a large quantity of defense housing, the best known being the massive development of Fairlington (part of which is located in Fairfax County) and the equally vast Park Fairfax just over the municipal line in Alexandria. By 1945, Arlington's in-process suburban boom was well recognized and the *Post* observed: "Arlington County, kicked back and forth by the District of Columbia and the State of Virginia and finally accepted with some misgivings by Virginia, has decided it's no stepchild but an heiress."¹⁰⁹ That northern Virginia's brisk suburban expansion stemmed from the war-related bureaucratic and associated geographic expansion was also clearly understood, as explained by the *Post* in August 1946:

of decided bearing on the growth of all three Virginia areas [Arlington, Alexandria, and Fairfax] was the wartime concentration of Federal buildings in Arlington. With the Pentagon as a hub, the Government rapidly added the Navy Annex, Arlington Hall and Arlington Farms and

Interior and the War Department Building (now part of the Department of State complex) were ever completed. See U. S. General Services Administration, "Historic Federal Building Database," the "State Department," accessed online, 20 Aug. 2004, www.gsa.gov. For period articles about a new Navy Department headquarters envisioned for postwar Washington, D.C., see: "Latest Plan for New Navy Department," *Star* 17 Sep. 1939, sec. B: 12; "Where War and Navy Departments Will Rise," *Star* 12 Nov. 1939, sec. B: 2; "New Navy Home Project Being Studied Again," *Star* 2 Aug. 1944, sec. B: 1.

¹⁰⁵"Arlington Navy Building Move Hit by Planner," A-12.

¹⁰⁶*Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷*Ibid.*

¹⁰⁸"Arlington Entering Greatest Expansion Period in History," *Star* 30 Mar. 1941, sec. B: 1. For more about the federal office expansion and its effect on Arlington County, see also "City Planner Joins Opposition to Site for War Building," *Star* 7 Aug. 1941, clippings file, Pentagon Building, 1941-1944, MLK.

¹⁰⁹"Arlington Is Modern 'Cinderella,'" *Post* 27 May 1945, sec. M: 5.

the military posts of Fort Myer and Fort Belvoir expanded enormously. All that took land off the tax books, swelled the resident population and made the transient population a major problem.¹¹⁰

Aside from an unsurprising, but clear misunderstanding of the chronology of federal construction in Arlington—the Navy Annex preceded the Pentagon by a year—this passage provides a good idea of the ways in which office buildings generated by wartime needs and momentum expanded government beyond the District’s borders, to the detriment and benefit of outlying municipalities. Although conveniently overlooking the fact that many builders and developers were turning significant profits from the influx of people into Arlington, by 1949 the overburdened county viewed the federal government’s presence there as a cause of its problems and requested financial assistance in building schools.¹¹¹ The *Post* reported in 1949 on W. A. Early, Superintendent of Arlington’s schools, who asserted that the county’s growth “is almost entirely due to expanded Government activities...including the Pentagon and the Navy Annex...While attracting thousands of new residents to Arlington, the Government has swallowed up much of the taxable land.”¹¹²

Although further removed from the District center and slower to develop, the 1941 decision to locate eight new office buildings at a new “federal center” in Suitland, Maryland, caused similar worries for Prince Georges County officials as those expressed relative to Arlington.¹¹³ The conclusion “that Washington was overcrowded, and that the Government would do better in surrounding territory—territory where people might live near their work,” forced Prince Georges County to consider the ramifications and costs related to road construction, utilities, policing, and education.¹¹⁴ The federal government’s frenzied World War II expansion accelerated the implementation of bureaucratic decentralization as a means of relieving real and perceived congestion at the District’s center. This acceleration saddled outlying areas with thousands of new residents and an array of shortcomings related to housing and facilities for education and sanitation, among others. On account of its proximity to the District and the presence of two major employment centers in the form of FB 2 and the Pentagon, these problems were felt most acutely in the 1940s by Arlington, and none provided more consternation than the dilemma of increased traffic.

In September 1940, the House Appropriations Committee reported on a bill that concerned imminent federal construction in the Washington area, which in part concluded: “a change in program is needed both in the interest of conservation of

¹¹⁰Dorothea Andrews, “Arlington Rides Crest of Capital Overflow,” *Post* 4 Aug. 1946, sec. B: 2.

¹¹¹In 1960, The Pentagon and Navy Annex housed a high enough percentage of people relocating to Northern Virginia for the developers of “Heritage Hills” in Fairfax County to tout “only 10 min.” to either building as a major sales feature for their houses. See Advertisement, “To Suit Your Taste: Heritage Hills,” *Post* 17 Sep. 1960, sec. C: 8.

¹¹²Elsie Carper, “Congress Asked to Help Nearby Virginia Schools,” *Post* 14 Oct. 1949, sec. B: 1.

¹¹³Both FB 2 and FB 3 were part of the same Congressional appropriation and received equal appropriations of 3,200,000 apiece. Cahill, “\$183,732,695 in New Building Is Metropolitan Record,” F-1.

¹¹⁴“U. S. Buildings at Suitland Flood Prince Georges with Problems,” *Star* 21 Mar. 1941, sec. B: 1.

funds and the avoidance of excessive traffic congestion. Some activities must be housed in suburban areas on less expensive land and with less traffic problems.”¹¹⁵ While not as problematic as in the city proper, commuter traffic in the parts of Arlington nearest the District provided considerable hassle for drivers. With FB 2’s initial introduction of about 3,500 workers in the last months of 1941, it was estimated that around 85,000 automobiles per day used the roads in its vicinity that linked Arlington and Washington.¹¹⁶ Nine months earlier in a preemptive attempt to keep ahead of increases in traffic associated with FB 2, the Public Roads Administration of the FWA sought to use defense construction monies for a road across the Arlington Cantonment between the Columbia Island traffic circle at Memorial Bridge and Military Road.¹¹⁷ An image published the following August of the planned freeway and related roadways also depicts a protean Pentagon squashed asymmetrically near Memorial Bridge at the entrance to Arlington Cemetery.¹¹⁸

Late in 1941, a decision positioning the massive new War Department building and its roughly 20,000 occupants on a parcel nearer FB 2 than initially suggested led to a significantly grander transportation scheme. Engineers planned an extensive network involving fifteen miles of roadways, ramps, overpasses, and cloverleaves, all to be paid for from the War Department coffers.¹¹⁹ This traffic network was so complex that planning officials conceived of a system of “highway lights that also will serve as directional ‘beams’ to guide motorists on their proper course [to] be installed in the maze of dual [four lane] roadways, cloverleaves and grade separations planned for the new Federal Government department areas in Arlington County.”¹²⁰

Although the issues related to the system of roadways in the vicinity of FB 2 and the Pentagon were “probably the toughest transit engineers here have ever faced,” their solutions apparently kept Arlington traffic moving smoothly.¹²¹ A 1946 *Post* article favorably compared accommodation for automobiles in Northern Virginia against unfortunate congestion in Washington, stating:

Washington faces knotty traffic problems. Arlington, which started to grow after the automobile came on the scene, has made allowances for

¹¹⁵Selected passages from the report appear in Chinn, “Three New U. S. Buildings in Bill Before House,” A-1, A-3.

¹¹⁶“Routes Are Disclosed for Highway System to New War Building,” *Star* 5 Dec. 1941, clipping file, Pentagon Building, 1941–1944, MLK.

¹¹⁷“Road Planned to Ease Jam at Arlington,” *Post* 31 Mar. 1941: 26. See also “Army Dream Hinges on \$8,000,000 Roads,” *Star* 21 Aug. 1941, clippings file, Pentagon Building, 1941–1944, MLK.

¹¹⁸“Army Dream Hinges on \$8,000,000 Roads,” *Star* 21 Aug. 1941, clippings file, Pentagon Building, 1941–1944, MLK. This image shows a protean Pentagon squashed asymmetrically near Memorial Bridge at the entrance of Arlington Cemetery.

¹¹⁹“Routes Are Disclosed for Highway System to New War Building,” for road system description and accompanying image; “New Federal Area to Provide Beam Lights to Guide Drivers,” *Star* 20 Nov. 1941, sec. B: 1, for road system, lighting, and funding source.

¹²⁰“New Federal Area to Provide Beam Lights to Guide Drivers,” B-1. It is not known whether the lighting system was fully put into place, nor whether it was successful in assisting navigation in what is still a confusing web of roads.

¹²¹“New War Building Creates Huge Transportation Problem,” *Star* 12 Jul. 1942, A-13.

traffic. Off-street parking is a part of the county plan. Express highways are already built or projected.¹²²

Overall, the siting and function of FB 2 clearly stemmed from larger patterns of out-migration already in motion; however, as the first metropolitan instance of federal office construction beyond the District for Washington-based workers exemplifies the accelerated expansion and bureaucratic decentralization related to the area's World War II defense mobilization.

Cooperation between the Public Buildings Administration and the Navy Department

The PBA of the FWA undertook the responsibility for constructing FB 2. The PBA was the successor agency to the Office of the Supervising Architect (OSA) of the Treasury, which up to 1939 was essentially responsible for the design and construction of most government buildings. Despite its fiercely guarded autonomy, the OSA's movement from the Treasury to the FWA was a necessary one. In the nineteenth century, the OSA mainly concerned itself with custom houses and a handful of other federal types, but by the twentieth century they were tasked with creating federal buildings for a myriad of agencies; a design office independent of the Treasury made sense in order to balance these expanded conditions.¹²³ In 1939, the public buildings service was relocated and became the PBA of the FWA. In terms of operation, the transition was a seamless one as Louis A. Simon, Supervising Architect, and his entire staff merely transferred from one area of government to another with more or less the same mission.¹²⁴

At the time of FB 2's inception, the PBA both evaluated the needs of departments and agencies requesting more offices or new buildings, and directed all aspects of defense-related construction in metropolitan Washington, including such actions as: maintaining clear communication with the Bureau of the Budget about appropriations, awarding contracts and managing building contractors, and assigning space in both new and existing buildings.¹²⁵ In most cases, the standard office work of federal employees required few, if any, special accommodations nor detailed and

¹²²Andrews, B-1.

¹²³Lee, 274.

¹²⁴Ibid., 277.

¹²⁵John M. Carmody to the Secretary of the Navy [Frank Knox], 10 Dec. 1940, RG 162, General Records of the Federal Works Agency, Entry 2, box 5, NARA, College Park, Maryland, for the FWA suggesting that the Navy implement smoking restrictions in the penthouse additions to the Navy Building, recently completed by the PBA; John N. Edy, Executive Assistant and Budget Officer, FWA to Harold D. Smith, Director, Executive Office Bureau of the Budget, 4 Apr. 1941, RG 162, entry 2, box 1, Bureau of the Budget, for financial concerns and appropriations, in this case the Navy made renovation requests to the PBA for the Navy Department, who in turn requested an amended appropriation through the Bureau of the Budget; Harold D. Smith to John M. Carmody, 17 Sep. 1941, RG 162, entry 2, box 1, suggesting that the PBA of the FWA as responsible for space assignments in new federal offices; John N. Edy, Acting Administrator of the FWA to Harold E. Smith, 17 Sep. 1941, RG 162, entry 2, box 1, Bureau of the Budget, for the PBA relative to the letting of contracts and dealing with contractor problems during the course of construction (with specific reference to FB 2); B. [Ben] Moreell to John M. Carmody, 29 Sep. 1941, RG 162, entry 2, box 5, for a characterization of the relationship between the Navy and the PBA of the FWA

prolonged communication with the PBA; however, at times the PBA solicited considerable input from the planned government tenant. As part of the FWA, the PBA was not initially tasked with buildings for the War and Navy departments, nor the Veterans Administration, but the scale of defense mobilization after 1939 shifted much of the organizational and construction burden onto the better-equipped PBA.¹²⁶

Late in the 1930s into the 1940s, the FWA and various branches of the military found themselves thrown together on projects ranging from roads and bridges to military posts, defense housing, and office building construction. A June 1940 letter from President Franklin D. Roosevelt to John M. Carmody, Administrator for the FWA, indicates why it was necessary for the agency as a whole and military to be in close contact. He explained:

in order that we may be assured of the adequacy of our highway system to meet the needs of our national defense I would like you, in collaboration with the Advisory Commission to the council of National Defense and the War and Navy Departments, to have the Public Roads Administration of your Agency make a survey of our highway facilities from the viewpoint of national defense and advise me as to any steps that appear necessary.¹²⁷

Within the FWA, the PBA and its sister-program the Public Roads Administration were most intimately involved in these unfolding cooperative relationships. It was clear that balancing their interests and actions with those of the military was often fraught with discord, but in the end the pressures of the war emergency tended to promote compromise. A 1941 letter from Admiral Ben Moreell, Chief of the Navy's Bureau of Yards and Docks, to Carmody in regard to the construction of defense housing stated: "it was, indeed, a pleasure to...learn that all of the seeming difficulties concerning the relationship between the Navy Department and the Federal Works Agency...[have] been settled."¹²⁸ Beyond general exchanges and project planning, the back-and-forth interaction between the Navy, specifically, and the FWA also extended to usage policies for completed structures. This type of communication is demonstrated in a 1940 letter from Carmody to the Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox, requesting that the Navy seriously consider a "no smoking" policy for the new fourth floor penthouse built on top of the Navy Building on Constitution Avenue, as it was composed of highly combustible materials.¹²⁹ Overall, the nature and rapidity of defense-related construction in the United States forced the FWA,

¹²⁶Lee, 273. For example before FB 2, the War Department Building in Northwest Washington, D.C. was conceived in the mid-1930s, but not realized until 1939-1941, under the oversight of the PBA's Louis A. Simon and consulting architects William Dewey Foster and Gilbert S. Underwood.¹²⁶ Underwood later became the Supervising Architect of the PBA.

¹²⁷Franklin D. Roosevelt to John M. Carmody, 21 Jun. 1940, RG 162, entry 2, box 5, NARA, College Park, Maryland.

¹²⁸B. [Ben] Moreell to John. M. Carmody, 29 Sep. 1941, RG 162, entry 2, box 5, NARA, College Park, Maryland.

¹²⁹John M. Carmody to the Secretary of the Navy [Frank Knox], 10 Dec. 1940, RG 162, entry 2, box 5, NARA, College Park, Maryland.

particularly the PBA, and the Navy Department to engage in open communication for the duration of the emergency, and swiftly and effectively resolve problems that might arise.

During the construction of FB 2, the FWA remained in contact with the Navy for guidance in outfitting two wings of the structure for the Navy's Hydrographic Office. Located within the Bureau of Navigation, this office "prepared and published maps, charts, and nautical books required in navigation."¹³⁰ In a March 1941 letter to Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox, John Carmody, Administrator of the FWA, discussed "a set of seventeen plan sheets showing arrangements that would be desired in wing[s] 'A' and 'B'...if occupied by the Hydrographic Office."¹³¹ Carmody offered Knox two construction scenarios for meeting this office's stated needs of strengthened floors, internal partitions, air conditioning and enhanced ventilation equipment, and other mechanical changes in two wings of FB 2. It is clear that Carmody not only expected, but directly asked for the Navy's guidance in specifications for this outfitting. Although surely not as involved as the Hydrographic Office's detailed structural and mechanical upgrades, the Headquarters of the Marine Corps, another of FB 2's original occupants, likely stipulated the need for partitioned rooms and separate offices necessary to support the varied activities pursued by this military branch's central command.

On October 10, 1941, the Headquarters of the Marine Corps moved into FB 2; by the end of November, 2,500 of an estimated 3,500 immediate occupants had relocated across the Potomac.¹³² In reporting on this process, the *Star* commented: "the Bureau of Navigation, the offices of the Marine Corps and other Navy personnel...[were] moving in and gradually easing the squeezed feeling of the main Navy Building on Constitution avenue."¹³³ In addition to these groups, John Carmody temporarily allocated space in FB 2 for the War Department's World War Records Division, at least until the Pentagon's completion.¹³⁴

¹³⁰National Archives and Records Administration, overview for RG 37, "Records of the Hydrographic Office," accessed online, 13 Jan. 2005, http://www.archives.gov/research_room/federal_records_guide/hydrographic_office_rg037.html.

¹³¹John M. Carmody to the Secretary of the Navy [Frank Knox], 18 Mar. 1941, RG 162, entry 2, box 5, NARA, College Park, Maryland.

¹³²"Some Facts about Your 'Home Away from Home'," undated typescript, filed with "Federal Office Building No. 2, Arlington, Virginia: Management and History," 7 Mar. 1962, both Department of Defense, Washington Headquarters Services, Building Manager's Office, Arlington, Virginia, for October date; "New Navy Building from the Air," A-18, for 2,500.

¹³³"Here's the New Building You've Heard About," *Star* 1 Nov. 1941, sec. A: 18.

¹³⁴Smith to Carmody, 17 Sep. 1941, for War Department allocation and nature of the agreement. Smith did not itemize the intended War Department occupants. The "World War records division" appeared among the aforementioned groups in a caption for an aerial photograph of the completed structure. "New Navy Building from the Air," A-18.

PART II: ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: Planned and constructed using a “comb” design composed of a head house and seven perpendicular wings, Federal Office Building No. 2 is representative of a building form popular in the Washington, D.C. area for large office structures during the period bookended by World War I and World War II. The overwhelmingly utilitarian nature of the original structure (Wings 1–7) and the later Wing 8, which is programmatically related but essentially autonomous, is relieved by high-style detailing conceived within varied strains of modernism. Factory-like fenestration and flat roofs contrast with streamlined cast concrete loggia portals and planters, on the original structure, and with a cantilevered entrance canopy and horizontal banding on the postwar wing addition. Taken in total, FB 2 merges the functionality of contemporary “tempo” buildings with a restrained physical and structural presence appropriate for government agencies.
2. Condition of fabric: Overall, good. The brick and concrete exteriors remain in fine shape. Given that the original interiors were mostly open office pools, with only the most utilitarian of amenities, it not surprising that they have been partitioned and repartitioned numerous times over the decades as needs changed. Some surviving original features include terrazzo flooring at each of the original structure’s three principal lobbies, as well as some extant two-panel steel interior doors and early directional signage on the upper levels. The interior of Wing 8 was fully gutted, rebuilt, and occupied in the autumn of 2001. Following the 2004 HABS documentation, the building was demolished between September and December 2004.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions:

Head House and Wings 1–7: 781’-0” x 421’-0”

Wing 8: 80’-0” x 404’-4 1/2”

2. Foundations:

Head House and Wings 1–7: The foundation walls are of reinforced concrete. They are clearly evident on the ground-level stories of Wings 5, 6, and 7. The top of the concrete wall maintains a mostly continuous horizontal line around the rest of the building, taking the form of a water table on the exterior of Wings 1, 2, 3, and 4 as none have habitable, below-grade.

Wing 8: The load-bearing brick curtain wall extends to grade.

3. Walls:

Head House and Wings 1–7: Above the reinforced concrete foundations, the exterior walls are entirely composed of yellow brick laid-up in common bond alternating one row of headers with five rows of stretchers. All of the perimeter exterior walls—the Head House’s north wall, Wing 1’s west wall, Wing 7’s east wall, and the south walls at the end of each wing—are defined by planar brick walls punctuated by a regular, even relentless pattern of large unarticulated window openings. The exterior sections of the head house’s south wall facing into the courts between the wings contain evenly spaced window openings similar in size to the others in the perimeter walls. Unlike the other perimeter walls that are composed solely of brick, these walls are divided by continuous bands made up of simple, rectilinear concrete segments positioned at the top of the window openings on each story. These bands turn ninety degrees and travel along wing walls facing into the courts. Although some window openings similar to those used elsewhere for the perimeter walls are evident in the wings’ exterior walls and all are the same height, the majority of openings are about three times as broad as the others. These openings suggest more a factory or warehouse than an office building. This perception likely led to the design decision rendering the wings’ south-facing walls and their southernmost vertical bays facing into the courts like those of the other more public perimeter elevations. Devising a more dignified southern aspect for the building was a concern for although the main facade of the building faced northward, the three original gateways to the site were located on its south side and entered from the Columbia Pike.

One three-story bridge spans each of the six courts between the wings, roughly near their midpoints. Originally partially open, they are now fully enclosed, covered in vertical siding and lighted by paired sash bearing two horizontal lights.

Wing 8: The exterior walls are entirely composed of yellow brick laid-up in common bond alternating one row of headers with five rows of stretchers. The building is encircled by nearly continuous bands composed of simple cast concrete segments aligned with the lintels and sills of the window openings. The apparent continuity of the concrete bands is broken in three places. On the building’s east elevation they “return” along the jambs of windows positioned in two extensions, each of which is approximately 28”-7” long and pulled out 4’-2” from the plane of the wall. On the interior, these extensions partially house the structure’s bathroom facilities. On the building’s west elevation the bands return along the jambs of windows positioned on either side of the south exterior entrance. This break occurs because of a stairwell, whose landings are located midway between the floors,

indicated on the exterior by an offset door and square windows. The west wall's rhythm is also interrupted by the installation of ventilation grates and brick infill in spaces formerly occupied by twelve windows (four per floor).

Two enclosed bridges connect the west wall of Wing 8 to the east wall of Wing 7, with the exception of the subterranean utility tunnel these provide the only enclosed passages between the main structure and its detached wing. The north bridge is two stories and connects the first and second floors of the two wings, allowing the circumferential drive to proceed beneath unimpeded. This bridge is carried on two large steel I-beams supported by Wing 8's wall on its east end and two trusses towards its west end. One of the trusses is located immediately adjacent to Wing 7's wall and likely placed there in order to relieve any added stresses on the existing building, a concern given that the fourth floor had already been built on top of the structure in 1943. Similarly spaced supports carry the south bridge, which is contains only one story and connects the wings' second floors. Both bridges are enclosed and lighted by bands of windows bearing two horizontal lights, and sheathed in vertical siding.

4. Structural systems, framing:

Head House and Wings 1-7: Reinforced concrete columns and beams with solid brick infill.

Wing 8: Steel-frame construction with solid brick infill. The building's steel frame is set onto masonry piers and footings, with solid brick infill along the perimeter.

5. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors:

Head House and Wings 1-7: There are three formal entrances to FB 2, all of which are located on the building's north side opposite Wings 2, 4, and 6. At each of these entrances, a set of broad stairs terminates at an open loggia bearing four rectilinear portals. From this sheltered exterior space, four sets of fully glazed double doors open onto an interior vestibule; each set of doors is positioned in line with the portal openings. Four more sets of glazed double doors open from the vestibule onto a lobby. Cast concrete architectural detailing accentuates each of these entrances, and were the only modish exterior elements in this otherwise straightforward and plain building. At the center loggia, each portal and the second- and third-floor window directly above are contained within a single smooth frame with a quarter-round edge. Stylized cast concrete eagles with outstretched wings and perched on "floating" keystones are positioned in front of simple recessed plaques between the portals

and the first-floor windows. A simpler spandrel arrangement of a square set in a recessed panel separates the first- and second-story windows. This entrance is further marked by an on-center flagpole whose sleek base was designed by the PBA architects and meant to sit in the middle of a automobile turn-around, either never constructed or later removed.

The essentially identical east and west loggias are simpler in execution, with the cast concrete elements restricted to the first floor, but are also more overtly Moderne in expression. The exterior stairs are flanked by planters with brick bases and smooth concrete upper sections cantilevered out over the lower and further articulated with incised "speed lines." At the top of the stairs, flat-roofed canopies are cantilevered out from the wall and appear to be supported by the extruded concrete surrounds for the portals. These extruded parts of the surrounds are rounded on the exterior and are also incised with Moderne speed lines at regular intervals. Five slightly recessed circles line up across the top of the surround. In a spirit similar to the keystones on which the eagles perch at the center loggia, the portal jambs of the east and west loggias are incised with vertical lines, suggesting fluted classical columns, albeit in a clean, stylized manner.

In a final decorative flourish, each of the entrance loggias located in the north wall include three overscaled light fixtures resembling hanging lanterns, although in addition to the chain at the top, they are also discretely fixed to the escutcheon at the rear. One fixture is positioned on the wall between the four portals. A small rectangular window is located in the north wall to on each side of the three loggias, with a similarly sized one opening onto the loggia from each of its side walls.

Each of the seven wings contains one south-facing entrance protected from the weather by a canopy composed of two thin supports upholding a frame with a segmental arched profile and covered in a synthetic fabric. Each wing also has an exterior door one-third of the way into the court. Both these doors and the ones in the south walls are positioned at the bottom of interior stairwells. A number of the Head House's exterior segments of wall facing southward into the courts also contain exterior doors, some linked with stairwells and others accessing loading docks.

Wing 8: There are three exterior entrances for Wing 8. The principal entrance is located in the structure's northwest corner at a place where a 20'-6" section of the north wall extends 4'-3" beyond its plane, creating a pavilion of sorts. The entrance is sheltered by a recessed loggia composed of three openings defined by two rectangular piers partially supporting the concrete ceiling at the point

where it cantilevers approximately 6'-8" out from the plane of the west wall. A one-story extension of the west wall beyond the north face of the pavilion is both practical and visually expressive. The wall hides an outdoor stair descending to the basement-level mechanical room, and along with the cantilevered canopy and concrete banding, reinforce the composition's emphasis on horizontality. Taken as a whole, the extruded northwest pavilion, cantilevered canopy, and wall extension all contribute to monumentalizing the entrance as much as possible in what is essentially a structure with an innately functional appearance. The brick wall extension and loggia piers have been sheathed in synthetic panels, and the loggia's interior walls covered in one-foot square gray-black marble tiles. Some of the original light fixtures are extant in the loggia ceiling and canopy. They are square, flush units with metal frames, now rusted, holding translucent glass panels fabricated in a bulls-eye pattern. There are two identical sets of entrance doors framing an entrance vestibule. Both sets contain four units, each bearing two fixed square lights in aluminum frames, the outer units are fixed and the inner automatically slide open when approached.

A second exterior door is located at the south end of the west wall. On account of the site's grade change, sloping to the southeast, this door is located in a recess a half-story below the ground floor. The door's extremely understated presence is augmented by a canopy composed of two thin supports upholding a frame with a segmental arched profile and covered in a synthetic fabric. A third door is located at ground level in the middle of the east wall. Similarly to the secondary entrance on the west wall, this door is recessed into the structure and fronted by a canopy. A small one-story building with double doors is located immediately north of the canopy. Both of these entrances contain double steel doors with a single fixed vertically-oriented rectangular light.

b. Windows:

Head House and Wings 1-7: Nearly all the windows on the north, south, east, and west perimeter walls, as well as those in the southernmost bays of the wings, contain large eight-over-eight double-hung steel sash. These openings bear unobtrusive sills and nearly imperceptible lintels. As the predominant type in the courts, the wide openings in the wing walls are fitted with multipane steel windows with three operable awning-type sash. Although the openings in the Head House's walls facing into the court are roughly the same as those in the perimeter walls, they contain smaller versions of the factory-like awning windows used elsewhere in the

courts. All of the windows in Wing 7 and many on the fourth floor of all the wings have been replaced with fixed units bearing muntin arrangements similar to what they replaced.

Wing 8: With the exception of the windows located in a well which light the basement mechanical room, all of the exterior window sash in Wing 8 are fixed. Most of the units made to look like six-over-six double-hung sash, with the muntins imbedded between the two layers of glass. The windows in the mechanical room are wooden, double-hung one-over-one sash. This original sash is representative of the building's other now lost original units, which were doubled (two-over-two, with horizontal muntins). The operable sash was replaced for security reasons when the building was rehabbed late in the 1990s. It is likely that officials used the original eight-over-eight double-hung steel sash of the Head House and Wings 1 and 7 as a guide for designing Wing 8's new windows.

6. Roof:

Head House and Wings 1-7: Although originally not overshooting the exterior wall plane, a flat roof now overhangs the wall on all sides by roughly two feet.

Wing 8: The roof is flat and overhangs the structure's exterior walls.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Plans:

Head House and Wings 1-7: A comb design of seven wings of four and five stories extending back from a perpendicular Head House is employed for the principal structure making up FB 2. A broad, double-loaded corridor extends continuously in the Head House from Wing 7 at the east end to Wing 1 in the west end. Three principal entrance lobbies at wings 2, 4, and 6 are integral with this corridor; each contain an elevator and are flanked by two stairwells. Double-loaded corridors extend southward back into the wings from the larger Head House corridor. These passages terminate in stairwells in the south walls of the wings, which provide exterior access at the ground floor. Two-thirds of the way back from the Head House is another stairwell with exterior access to the courts between the wings. Bathroom facilities are located adjacent to these stairwells, as are the corridors connecting to the bridges spanning the courts between the wings on the second, third, and fourth floors. Because of the grade change, wings 5, 6, and 7 have a full height ground story that, with the exception of Wing 5, have the same plan as the upper stories. The ground floor of Wing 5, accessed by means of a broad stair descending from the Head House corridor, is considerably wider than its upper stories and the other wings

(93'-6" as opposed to 61'-0"). The extra width accommodates FB 2's cafeteria and kitchens. A boiler room is positioned on the ground floor under the center lobby and northern portion of Wing 4.

In its original state, all of the wings and the head house had fully open office space. Since 1941, the interiors have been partitioned and repartitioned a number of times. The Head House and Wings 1-7 are all organized with offices and suites opening from a single, centered double-loaded corridor.

Wing 8: As it was conceived as an independent entity, Wing 8 is essentially a rectangle four bays wide (80'-0") as opposed to the other wings' three bays (61'-0"). Plans from 1944 show the ground, first, and second floors essentially open with the exception of three stairwells, a "gear" room, and two sets of bathrooms and a janitor's closet on each floor, and an additional transformer room and guard room with private bathroom on the first floor. Since that time, each floor has been variously partitioned and repartitioned, and was entirely gutted and rebuilt late in the 1990s. Currently, the plan includes both single and double-loaded corridors. There are also large common areas nearly spanning the width of the wing, in some places lined on one side with private offices or cubes. Some areas with two double loaded corridors contain windowless rooms in the center.

2. Flooring:

Head House and Wings 1-7: The original terrazzo floors survive in the three principal lobbies, as well as at the bottom of the stairs near the former cafeteria and in the concession area located in the middle of the Head House's ground floor. Floor coverings of differing epochs and types, but mostly composed of asphalt tiling and industrial carpeting, appear elsewhere in the building.

Wing 8: The floors of Wing 8 are concrete carried on steel joists. Most of the areas are covered with commercial-grade carpet or vinyl tiles and flooring.

3. Wall and ceiling finish:

Head House and Wings 1-7: Some of the corridor walls are sheathed in horizontal tiles, that were once a terra cotta color and now painted white. Other walls appear to be sheetrock or drywall. Most of the ceilings are dropped with square floating panels and grid fluorescent fixtures suspended in an aluminum framework.

Wing 8: Drywall has been used for the interior walls and encase the posts. The ceiling is dropped with square floating panels and grid fluorescent fixtures suspended in an aluminum framework.

4. Doorways and doors:

Head House and Wings 1-7: Doors of virtually every type can be found in this portion of FB 2. Original two-panel steel doors, some with the upper panel filled with translucent glass and others with a louvered lower panel, survive in a number of places. The stairwells are closed off with steel fire doors bearing a single fixed vertical light in each door.

Wing 8: Plate glass doors are used in the public and more important spaces in the structure. Flush wood doors are predominantly used throughout the interior and set into simple steel frames. Steel fire doors with a single fixed, vertically-oriented light open onto all of the stairwells.

5. Trim and woodwork:

Head House and Wings 1-7: Finish materials of every imaginable type can be found throughout the structure. Chair rails fashioned from wood or even plastic abound in many of the major corridors. Marble tiles bearing the dimensions of 1' x 1' are used on the walls in some of the lobbies. In some corridors, dark wood frames and six panel doors appear, likely installed in a questionably successful effort to make the building appear more elegant. Some of the staircases retain their original tubular steel rails, while others, particularly those opening onto the main corridor in the Head House were replaced at some point later with sleeker aluminum ones.

Wing 8: The interiors are simply articulated with no woodwork and very little trim. Vinyl toe molding runs along the bottom of the walls.

Simple tubular steel railings and open balustrades are used in the stairwells. The railing and balustrade of Stair 81 in the southwest corner provides the only instance, albeit a very intriguing one, of an attempt to move beyond the structure's functional aesthetic approaches. At an unknown point in time, the section of the stairwell located between the ground and first floors was "decorated" with rope and canvas. The railings are encased in canvas with a single seam running along their undersides. Braided rope is wound around the railing at points where it changes direction and on either side of connections with the vertical support posts. The upper portions of the support posts are encased in "woven" canvas and "held" in place by braided rope. It has been suggested by building occupants that this articulation may have signified that the office of an important officer was located at the top of this flight of stairs.

6. Mechanical: Given the size and history of change in the building, it is impossible to make sweeping conclusions about the mechanical systems. Many of the utility lines run above the dropped ceilings as the building's

superstructure is concrete and brick, although water mains, ductwork, electrical lines, and other system components are easily seen along the corridors of the building.

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PART IV: PROJECT INFORMATION

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