

BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT FOR THE PERIMETER SECURITY UPGRADES AND SITE ENHANCEMENTS TO THE FEDERAL RESERVE BUILDING AT 1709 NEW YORK AVENUE, NW, WASHINGTON, D.C.

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500 through 1508), and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System (FRB) has prepared this Environmental Assessment (EA) to evaluate and document the potential environmental impacts associated with the perimeter security upgrades and site enhancements to the Federal Reserve Building at 1709 New York Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. The EA also examined the No Action Alternative.

BACKGROUND

The project includes the redevelopment and upgrade of the existing perimeter security at the Federal Reserve Building located at 1709 New York Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. The property is more specifically located on the District's Square Suffix Lot No. 0170 0040 and is generally situated to the northwest of the intersection of New York Avenue, NW, and 17th Street, NW, of Washington, D.C. The immediate areas at the front and rear of the existing building are proposed for redevelopment to enhance and improve the security of the north and south perimeter of the building. Development activities as part of the security perimeter upgrade are not proposed for the existing building on the property.

The proposed work will include the installation of K-8 level crash-resistant barriers at the existing landscape/sidewalk demarcation located approximately 33 feet from the front façade of the building. The security perimeter will include a combination of crash-resistant walls and bollards that are approximately 40 inches from the surface grade, a new retractable K-8 vehicle barrier, and a new police kiosk. Features include bollards, sectional planter walls, replacement of the active vehicle barriers, and replacement of the existing police kiosk with a stone-clad kiosk at the garage ramp entrance, construction of new knee walls, and construction of an anti-ram wall along the rear alley.

The project was designed to maximize the use of prefabricated materials in order to minimize on-site disturbance. This process will also likely reduce the on-site construction duration. The modular steel prefabricated bollard assembly will reduce subsurface utility disruptions, minimize visual impacts associated with deep excavations, and allow expedited installation.

During the course of the design, several preliminary schemes were developed, reviewed, and adjusted based on comments and suggestions from the reviewing agencies having jurisdictional authority and the associated parties involved with this project.

The EA indicates that the redevelopment of the perimeter security area will reflect the existing building architecture while preserving the aesthetics of the adjoining properties. At this time, no environmental concerns have been recognized with the long-term use of the upgraded perimeter security features.

DECISION

The decision to issue a Finding of No Significant Impact is based on the following factors:

- There will be no significant environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.
- The District of Columbia Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has reviewed the project plans in accordance with Section 106 of the NHPA and determined that the project will have no adverse effect on historic properties including the L'Enfant Plan of Washington or on views of nearby historic properties (letter dated July 21, 2011).
- The United States Commission of Fine Arts (CFA) has reviewed the project plans and has no objection to the project concept and final design as presented (letter dated July 22, 2011).
- Construction impacts, including additional noise generation and air quality impacts as described in the EA, are short-term and minor.
- Pedestrians and bicyclists may be impacted at the front sidewalk area; however, such impacts will be temporary.

Under NEPA and CEQ regulations, an EA is sufficient and an Environmental Impact Statement is not necessary if the EA supports a finding that the federal action will not significantly affect the human environment. The regulations of the CEQ define "significantly," as used in NEPA, as requiring consideration of both context and intensity of impacts as noted by 40 CFR § 1508.27. The proposed action does not present any major or significant adverse effects.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Pursuant to the Federal Reserve Board's policy to implement the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), I have evaluated the preliminary and final site development plans for the site redevelopment and upgrades to the perimeter security area of the Federal Reserve Building at 1709 New York Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C., and the July 2011 Environmental Assessment prepared for this project. I have determined that the project will not have a significant environmental impact on the human environment and that the project is not a major federal action, and that an Environmental Impact Statement will not be necessary.



Richard Anderson
 Chief Operating Officer and Director
 Management Division
 Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System

8.12.11

Date