

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

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NCPC File No. 6395



**ENGINEERING AND PHYSICS LABORATORY
FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION
PRELIMINARY AND FINAL SITE AND BUILDING PLANS
White Oak, Montgomery County, Maryland**

Submission by the General Services Administration

September 25, 2003

Abstract

The General Services Administration has requested approval of preliminary and final site and building plans for the engineering and physics laboratory for the Center for Devices and Radiological Health (CDRH) at the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) consolidated campus in White Oak, Montgomery County, Maryland. The lab is part of Phase III of the campus build-out and is designed in the contemporary design vocabulary approved as part of the master plan. The proposed four-story building is consistent with the FDA revised master plan approved by the Commission on June 6, 2002.

Commission Action Requested by Applicant

Approval of preliminary and final site and building plans pursuant to Section 5 of the National Capital Planning Act (40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1)).

Executive Director's Recommendation

The Commission **approves** the preliminary and final site and building plans for the CDRA engineering and physics laboratory at the FDA White Oak, Montgomery County, Maryland campus, as shown on NCPC Map File No. 3201(38.00)-41240.

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BACKGROUND AND STAFF EVALUATION

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed four-story laboratory will contain laboratory space for the Center for Devices and Radiological Health (CDRH), as well as office, conference and other support space for researchers and staff. Two floors of the CDER laboratory adjacent to the proposed lab will accommodate additional laboratory space for CDRH.

Location

The FDA consolidated campus is located in the western portion of the former Naval Surface Warfare Center White Oak Installation (WOI) in Montgomery County, Maryland. The FDA site will be located in the general proximity of the former Naval Ordinance Lab (NOL) research and office buildings located off of New Hampshire Avenue and will encompass 130 acres of the larger 710-acre White Oak site (GSA maintains ownership over 660 acres). The golf course along New Hampshire Avenue will continue to be operated by Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) and will form the foreground views to the new FDA campus.

Site

The proposed engineering and physics lab will be located directly between the CDER lab and CDER office buildings currently under construction. Approximately 2 acres of the larger 130-acre site will be devoted to the proposed lab building.

Development Program

Applicant: General Services Administration.
Architect: Kling/RTKL Associates, Inc.
Cost: \$38 million has been appropriated for the project.
Schedule: Completion date of spring 2006.

Building Design

The CDRH engineering and physics lab will be four-stories in height and have 143,000 gross square feet. The facility will house labs, office space and support space for researches and staff. Additional labs for CDRH will be located on two floors of the adjacent CDER lab, and the two facilities will be connected on the third floor. Ultimately, there will also be a third floor connection to the future CDRH office building to the east. Because some of the research activities have sensitive vibration requirements, one lab will be located outside of the larger building footprint and will have a clearstory space visible above grade. The lab will be a key entry point for the underground campus service tunnel, as well as for pedestrians using the north parking areas. The lower level portion of the building which extends beyond the above ground portion will have a green roof with skylights to illuminate the lower level. The loading and the service tunnel access will be partially hidden below grade.

The design of the proposed lab building, as well as the other labs on the FDA campus are largely driven by specific, specialized requirements for laboratories. The materials used for the lab will be similar to those used for the adjacent CDER lab building – metal panels, ribbon windows and aluminum curtain walls (see perspectives). The one-story lab feature to the north will have a metal fascia and roof, and will be adjacent to the green roof feature of the lower level which doubles as a terrace. The main entrance to the building will be located at the northwest corner of the building and will have a metal canopy.

Because construction will take place around the facility in subsequent phases of development on the FDA campus, the disturbed areas around the building will be seeded to prevent erosion. Approximately 135 employees will work in the facility. No additional parking is proposed as a result of this project; existing surface parking will be used. The existing parking lots around the campus will provide 1,143 parking spaces for the buildings now under construction, as well as well as the new facility.

EVALUATION

The proposed CDRH lab will be the second laboratory building on the evolving FDA White Oak campus. All of the laboratory facilities on the FDA campus, including the proposed lab, are designed with a contemporary vocabulary consistent within the approved design vocabulary for the FDA campus. The facility is consistent with the 2002 revised master plan. Staff recommends approval of the laboratory.

CONFORMANCE

Master Plan

The engineering and physics laboratory is consistent with the master plan for the FDA White Oak campus, which was initially approved in 1997 and revised in 2002.

National Historic Preservation Act

GSA, the Maryland Historical Trust and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation signed a 2002 Memorandum of Agreement governing GSA's development of the FDA White Oak campus. No further Section 106 review is required for this project.

National Environmental Policy Act

Pursuant to the regulations implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), GSA determined that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was required for the originally developed master plan of 1997. The Commission reviewed and commented on a Draft EIS in May 1996 relating to the current White Oak site. GSA completed the Final EIS in April 1997 and a Record of Decision was signed in July 1997.

The proposed project executes two environmental implementation elements of the Master Plan site design itself. These include:

- Participation in the LEED™ (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) system of building and energy development for its master planning efforts. GSA is a leading proponent of this certified building process for federal projects. The LEED Green Building Rating System™ is a priority program of the U.S. Green Building Council. It is a voluntary, consensus-based, market-driven building rating system based on existing proven technology. It evaluates environmental performance from a "whole building" perspective over a building's life cycle, providing a definitive standard for what constitutes a "green building". LEED™ is based on accepted energy and environmental principles and strikes a balance between known effective practices and emerging concepts. Different levels of green building certification are awarded based on the total credits earned. The system is designed to be comprehensive in scope, yet simple in operation. The GSA current goal is to achieve silver rating in all its new building construction in the National Capital Region.
- A significant natural resource inventory and forest stand delineation plan has been achieved at the White Oak site and over 275 individual trees have been identified in the 130-acre project area. Thirty-six unique and individual specimen trees have been highlighted in the plan for preservation and each tree will be re-evaluated individually for its specific health, age, and aesthetic qualities which will determine its final feasibility for use in the new Master Plan development.

Other trees will be maintained in stream buffer areas that contribute to the maintenance of class-use III surface waters of the Paint Branch watershed. This watershed is an important element of the Anacostia River watershed area and serves to support a naturally reproducing population of Brown Trout and the highest quality aquatic biotic populations in the Anacostia (Cummins et al. 1991). Fifty-three percent of the stream miles of Paint Branch have an adequate riparian forest buffer (300-foot total width), which is confined almost exclusively to the upper two-thirds of the subwatershed. This forest cover helps to preserve groundwater recharge areas and maintain the seeps and springs critical to the temperature regime required by trout, as well as, helping to maintain the highest quality of stream flow found in the Anacostia Watershed.

Federal Capital Improvements Program

This project is included in the Federal Capital Improvements Program, Fiscal Years 2001 – 2005, adopted by the Commission on August 3, 2000. This project is part of the FDA Consolidation at White Oak in Montgomery County. The total estimated cost of the FDA Consolidation is \$641 million with funding programmed in Fiscal Years 2003-2008.

Comprehensive Plan

As part of the ongoing consolidation, the proposed building is consistent with applicable policies in the Federal Facilities and the Federal Employment Elements of the Comprehensive Plan which specify:

Consideration should be given first to the use of existing underdeveloped Federal Facilities in selecting new locations or relocating Federal activities before additional lands are purchased and prior to leasing space.

Agencies or activities with common or complementary functions should be consolidated in common or adjacent space to improve administration, employee management and productivity.