



**U.S. NAVAL OBSERVATORY  
NATIONAL MASTER CLOCK FACILITY  
Massachusetts Avenue at 34<sup>th</sup> Street, NW  
Washington, DC**

**Delegated Action of the Executive Director**  
September 2, 2004

Pursuant to delegations of authority adopted by the Commission on October 3, 1996, I approve the preliminary site and building plans for the National Master Clock Facility at the U.S. Naval Observatory, as shown on NCPC Map File No. 71.20(38.00)-41440.

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The Department of the Navy has submitted preliminary site and building plans for the National Master Clock Facility at the U.S. Naval Observatory. The 5,000 square foot, unoccupied building will be located on the main drive north of the south entrance gate. The building will house Cesium Fountain Clocks and associated support equipment in a single-story structure which must meet stringent temperature, humidity, and vibration control standards. The mission of this facility is critical in meeting the precise timekeeping requirements of the Department of Defense and the entire civilian aviation system.

As part of the project, seven structures will be demolished. It was determined that six of these structures contribute to the National Register-eligible Naval Observatory Historic District. Through consultation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act with the District of Columbia Historic Preservation Officer (DCSHPO), the Navy and DCSHPO developed and signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to mitigate adverse effects. The stipulations of the MOA focus on the retention and interpretation of the scientific importance of these much-altered structures. Staff has determined that the project qualifies as a categorical exclusion as specified by Section 8 of the NCPC Environmental Procedures. The Coordinating Committee reviewed this item at its meeting on September 15, 2004 and forwarded the proposal to the Commission with the statement that the project has been coordinated with all agencies represented. The participating agencies are: NCPC, the District of Columbia Office of Planning; the District Department of Transportation; the Department of Housing and Community Development; the National Park Service; the General Services Administration; and the

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority. The Navy will be submitting the project to the Commission of Fine Arts for review at its meeting on October 21, 2004.

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Patricia E. Gallagher, AICP  
Executive Director