

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

M Marcus

NCPC File No. 6616



ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY ARIEL RIOS BUILDING

Rooftop Antenna

12th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, D.C.

Submitted by the General Services Administration

September 29, 2005

Abstract

The General Services Administration has submitted plans for the installation of a high performance, high frequency antenna (transmitting and receiving) and support poles on the roof of the Ariel Rios Building located at 12th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue NW, with associated equipment to be located in a nearby penthouse. As one node in a communication network of 16 sites nationwide, the project would support the Environmental Protection Agency's goals for Emergency Response (ER) and Continuity of Operations (COOP) during emergency conditions.

Commission Action Requested by Applicant

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

Executive Director's Recommendation

The Commission:

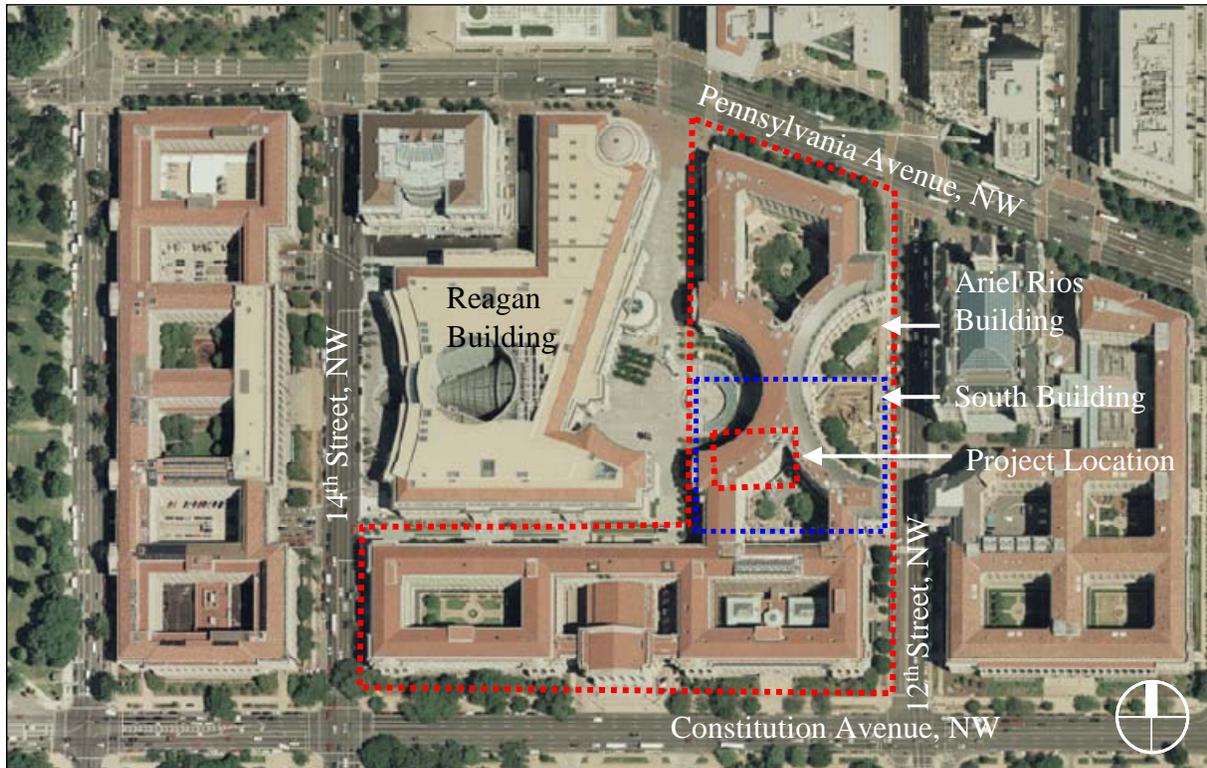
Approves the preliminary and final site and building plans for a high frequency transmitting and receiving antenna, support poles, and associated equipment on the roof of the Ariel Rios Building located at 12th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue NW in Washington, D.C., as shown on NCPC Map File No. 1.25(38.30)41678, for a period not to exceed five years.

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Site

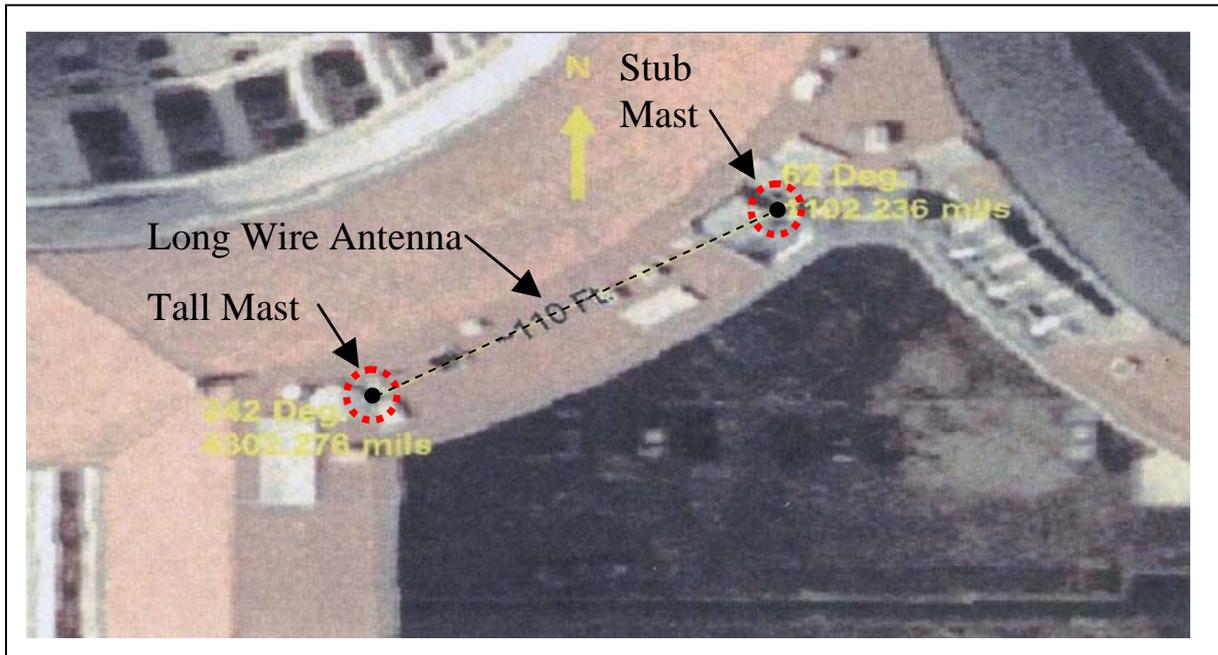
The Ariel Rios Building is located within the Federal Triangle, between Pennsylvania and Constitution Avenues NW to the north and south, and between 12th and 14th Streets NW to the east and west. The proposed project would be located on the roof of Ariel Rios South. The building shares a site with and borders the Ronald Reagan Building to the northwest, and faces the Old Post Office and the Internal Revenue Services Building to the east across 12th Street.



Location: Aerial View

Proposal

The proposed installation would support EPA's goals for Emergency Response (ER) and Continuity of Operations (COOP) during emergency conditions provide. The wire antenna, approximately 110 feet long, would be supported by a mast 20 to 25 feet high at its high end, and by a stub mast at its low end. It would connect to an insulated radio frequency (RF) output tuner in a penthouse which would enable the wire to resonate to frequencies from 2 to 30 MHz. The antenna would be the one of 16 remote locations in EPA's high frequency (HF) network for transmitting and receiving radio communication. The antenna would provide voice, data and phone patch capability to support emergency operational, fail-safe backup and COOP communication. Therefore, it would be made operational for testing at regular intervals, and otherwise, is not intended to operate except to provide backup communications during national emergencies. No additional employees or other facilities are required with the new antenna.



Close Up at Roof Location

To Mitigate Occupational Exposure, Compliance Report Recommends the measures shown here:

Warning Flags on Support Wire

Notice Signs on Masts

Relocate Stub Mast; Increase height to 13 feet

Details at Roof Location with Recommendations

PROJECT ANALYSIS

Executive Summary

The **staff recommends approval** of the proposal as described in preliminary and final building plans for the installation of a wire antenna and supporting equipment. The submission is consistent with the Commission's preference for collocation of antennas when possible. The proposed antenna and mast would be minimally visible from limited areas at the perimeter of the Wilson Building Courtyard near the Reagan Building due to their location on a roof sloping towards an interior courtyard. The proposal was evaluated in accordance with the Commission's policy set forth in Section I of the "Guidelines and Submission Requirements for Antennas on Federal Property in the National Capital Region," approved, January 7, 1988, as amended in August 2001. The applicant has submitted certification that the proposed project conforms to Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and Occupational Health & Safety Administration (OSHA) standards regarding radio frequency emissions. Staff understands that with a mission to provide fail-safe backup COOP communication, the antenna use would be limited to testing carried out at regular intervals except when drafted into service during national emergencies. Staff understands that when turned off and not operating, there would be no radiation exposure. Since the proposed project is located inside of the Monumental Core, staff recommends that this approval be limited to five years.

CONFORMANCE

Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital

Staff has determined that the proposed project is consistent with the *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital: Federal Elements*, in particular the Federal Environment Element. The proposed project will "require adequate communication of potential risks where occupational/controlled exposure may be present".

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

Pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Commission staff has reviewed the submission and has found the applicant specified that the proposal is consistent with the Commission's Categorical Exclusion provisions at Section 8 of the Commission's Environmental Procedures. The submitted RF information for operation of the antenna confirms the elements coincide with all environmental impact criteria of the Federal Communications Commission.



West Elevation: Antenna Viewed from Reagan Building Plaza

National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)

The building is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places and is a contributing structure within the Federal Triangle Historic District. GSA has completed Section 106 consultation, which they initiated with a letter to the DC SHPO stating that the project would not compromise those qualities allowing the property to be eligible for inclusion in the National Register. The DC SHPO concurred with GSA's findings on July 5, 2005.

CONSULTATION

Coordinating Committee

The Coordinating Committee reviewed the proposal on September 14, 2005. The Committee forwarded the proposal to the Commission with the statement that the project has been coordinated with all agencies represented, the participating agencies were: NCPC; the District of Columbia Office of Planning; the District Department of Transportation; the Department of Housing and Community Development; the Fire Department; the General Services Administration; and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.

Commission of Fine Arts

The Commission of Fine Arts (CFA) staff has reviewed the project, found no objections, and determined that the project would not require a formal presentation to their Commission.