

**SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION MUSEUM SUPPORT CENTER,
POD THREE PENTHOUSE ADDITION
Suitland Road, Suitland,
Prince George's County, Maryland**

Delegated Action of the Executive Director

July 26, 2007

Pursuant to delegations of authority adopted by the Commission on October 3, 1996, I approve the final site and building plans pursuant to 40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1) for a mechanical penthouse addition on the Smithsonian Institution Museum Support Center, Pod Three building bay, as depicted on NCPC Map File No. 3205.11(38.00)-42296.

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The Smithsonian Institution has submitted preliminary and final site and building plans for an upgraded penthouse on the roof of the renovated Pod Three building bay of the Museum Support Center (MSC) in Suitland Maryland. The MSC is a large storage structure in a campus setting which provides collections storage, collections management as well as research space for museums. The MSC building is a complex formed by a series of 5 storage 'Pods' and associated 'Lab' support spaces. Pod three is being renovated on the interior and will have its internal HVAC systems completely replaced. The existing structure remains unchanged except for the new mechanical penthouse and a utility yard for mechanical units. The new mechanical and plumbing requirements of the Pod three systems demand additional space requiring the expanded penthouse structure.

The new penthouse consists of 2,090 square feet of space with an additional ground-level utility yard being 2,500 square feet. The new enclosed rooftop mechanical penthouse will accommodate and tie together the energy recovery systems and air handlers over the reinforced center bay of the Pod. The proposed cladding materials are a painted metal panel system that was selected to match the existing buff beige concrete precast façade color of the main structure. The mechanical penthouse will be sheathed with a low slope metal standing seam roof with an insulated metal panel siding system and frameless aluminum louvers. A high "albedo" (level of reflectiveness) flat roof system with a solar reflectance index greater than 78 will be installed over R-30 insulation on the existing roof. An adjacent service yard will house and shield from view components of mechanical, electrical equipment, and external service pipes. The service yard will provide space for the following:

- Tanks for gaseous and liquid Nitrogen for Mineral Science use and condensing units for freezers and ultra cold units.
- A new emergency generator.
- Electrical cabinets housing switch gear for new electric service.

The utility and service yard is to be enclosed with a screen wall clad with a profiled metal siding system that will be colored to blend with existing exterior envelope finishes.

On December 2, 1993, the Commission approved the master plan for the MSC. No additional staff or parking is required or requested by SI to implement the current penthouse project. Up to 25 employees spend their workday at the MSC.

Staff has reviewed this proposal in accordance with 40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1). Staff found that the SI project demonstrates no significant environmental impacts from the planned action since all construction is situated on or within the existing building site of the current structure. As the project is a proposal outside the District of Columbia, the Commission does not have an independent NEPA responsibility, in accordance with NCPC Environmental and Historic Preservation Policies and Procedures.

In reviewing aspects of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) the SI has determined that there are no cultural resources eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places affected by the project. Although the Smithsonian is not a federal agency as defined in NHPA, it is the policy of the Institution to be guided by the principles of NHPA. The MSC is a facility considered eligible as an archaeological site to be investigated when new construction on open land at the MSC is developed. However, only existing disturbed building site area is utilized by the proposed penthouse project. The small utility yard and service road are located within the same disturbed area. Smithsonian design and construction projects outside the District of Columbia are not subject to review for Section 106 purposes, and the Institution is deemed not to be an agency in regard to Section 106 of the NHPA regulations pursuant to the Smithsonian Facilities Authorization Act, PL 108-72.

Patricia E. Gallagher, AICP
Executive Director