



Delegated Action of the Executive Director

PROJECT

**Martin V.B. Bostetter, Jr. United States
Courthouse Building Envelope Repairs
Phase II**

200 South Washington Street
Alexandria, Virginia

SUBMITTED BY

United States General Services Administration

NCPC FILE NUMBER

8190

NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER

2501.00(38.00)45245

ACTION TAKEN

Approved preliminary and final
building plans

REVIEW AUTHORITY

Advisory
Per 40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1)

The U.S. General Service Administration (GSA) requests approval of preliminary and final building plans for the second phase (Phase II) of envelope repairs at the Martin V.B. Bostetter, Jr. United States Courthouse (Bostetter Courthouse) in Alexandria, Virginia. The first phase of repairs (Phase I) was approved by Delegated Action to the Executive Director in September 2020 which included improvements related to waterproofing, accessibility, roofing, and lightning protection. The Phase II improvements include repair or replacement of exterior masonry, wood siding, parapet walls, entrance doors and transoms, original and non-original windows, louvers, and interior plaster walls. While interior modifications are not within the Commission's purview, the plaster wall repair is noted for reference as part of the proposed scope of work. The proposed repairs are necessary due to age of the materials, water damage, and sporadic maintenance over time that has not kept consistency with the building's historic character.

The Bostetter Courthouse is located in the City of Alexandria's Historic District bounded by Washington Street (the George Washington Memorial Parkway) to the west, Prince Street to the north, Saint Asaph Street to the east, and Norton Court to the south. The building is a three story structure with a raised loggia primarily clad with brick. It has a side gable front elevation with a central cupola and rear flat roof section which were included in the scope of work for the Phase I repairs. Landscape retaining walls flank the main entrance to the courthouse on Washington Street which consists of a three-bay center entrance pavilion with a portico and steps to transition the grade from the public sidewalk to the building.



Figure 1 Martin V.B. Bostetter, Jr. United States Courthouse

The courthouse is located within the National Register-listed district and recorded as a contributing resource to the Alexandria Historic District which was listed as a National Historic Landmark in 1966. The building has been noted as an “excellent example” of late Colonial Revival architecture and is representative of public buildings in the southern United States. As such, the proposed Phase II repairs are intended to retain the existing appearance and historic configuration of the building through in-kind repairs and replacement. A summary of the scope of work is provided below:

- **Masonry & Wall Repairs:** The current exterior masonry and the stone cornices are in fair condition. Some areas of brick were previously patched with mortar that does not match the original. The proposed work includes cleaning, repairing, and repointing the brick and stone masonry walls.
- **Parapets:** Mortar joints in the parapets have deteriorated over time and misalignment has occurred over time due to the lack of expansion joints. New vertical control joints will be added in discrete locations. Displaced brick and stone will be removed and reinstalled, and limestone caps will be removed and reset.
- **Chimney:** The brick masonry and concrete coping are deteriorating and past attempts to repair and repoint the chimney were inappropriate for the historic masonry. The proposed work will include repointing the joints and cleaning the brick and concrete. Cracks in the concrete cap will also be repaired following the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and Preservation Brief No. 15, Preservation of Historic Concrete*.
- **Penthouse:** The wood siding is deteriorating and will be replaced with cement board siding and painted to match the existing color. All surrounding brick and lintels will be removed, salvaged, and reinstalled. The penthouse work will not be visible from the Area of Potential Effect (APE).
- **Windows:** The upper-level windows were previously replaced and are not considered historic. They have experienced minor deterioration that will be repaired and refinished in-kind. The lower-level windows are original wood and will be restored by a qualified facility. The window glazing will be replaced, and the windows will be reinstalled with the original hardware.

- Entrances: Non-original entrance doors will be removed and replaced with new thermally efficient doors with an in-kind appearance. Existing door hardware will be reinstalled with the doors and the transoms will be refinished and painted to match the existing condition.
- Louvers: Wood and metal sash louvers were added to support the heating and ventilation system for the building. The louvers will be retained and repainted to match the existing conditions.
- Interior Repairs: As noted previously, interior repairs are not within the Commission's purview; however, they are noted as part of the scope of work for the Phase II improvements. Plaster damage from leaks and water infiltration has occurred over time and will be repaired and repainted in-kind.

NCPC commends GSA for its dedication to ensuring the historic preservation and longevity of the Bostetter Courthouse as a functioning Federal Courthouse. While the summary above provides an overview of the work proposed, GSA is committed to implementing extensive efforts to ensure the proposed work minimizes its effect on the historic fabric and character defining features.

In accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), GSA initiated consultation with the Virginia State Historic Preservation Office (VA SHPO) within the Department of Historic Resources (DHR) on September 16, 2020. GSA determined that the second phase of envelope repairs to the Bostetter Courthouse will have No Adverse Effect on any historic properties. In a letter dated October 16, 2020 The VA SHPO concurred with GSA's determination with the condition that the new thermally efficient doors and new exterior storm windows will be submitted to DHR for review and complete photo documentation be submitted to DHR upon completion of the work. Since the project is located on federal land in the environs, NCPC does not have a responsibility to comply with Section 106 of NHPA.

GSA also coordinated the proposed work with the City of Alexandria (City) Historic Preservation staff in the Department of Planning & Zoning. The City had no issue with the proposed Phase II improvements and noted that local permits may be required for sidewalk closures related to the proposed work. The City and the National Park Service (NPS) George Washington Memorial Parkway (GWMP) unit have an agreement for managing Washington Street as part of the GWMP/Mount Vernon Memorial Highway historic property to ensure the roadway corridor is maintained in a suitable memorial character. NPS agreed with GSA's determination that the envelope repairs will have No Adverse Effect on historic properties and confirmed that the work will conform with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*. Therefore, the project will not alter the memorial character of Washington Street and its connection to the NPS scenic parkway.

GSA determined on May 22, 2020 that the Phase II improvements qualify for an automatic categorical exclusion (CATEX) pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) as it meets criteria "j" for the "Repair and alteration of projects involving, but not adversely affecting, properties listed on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, where there is no evidence of community controversy or other environmental issues..." NCPC does not have a NEPA responsibility for this project because it is located in the environs.

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Pursuant to delegations of authority adopted by the Commission on October 3, 1996 and per 40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1), I approve the preliminary and final building plans for the Martin V.B. Bostetter, Jr. United States Courthouse Building Envelope Repairs (Phase II) located at 200 S. Washington Street in Alexandria, Virginia.



Marcel Acosta
Executive Director

12/29/20
Date