

FINAL FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Intelligence Community Campus – Bethesda, MD (Montgomery County)

1.0 Name of Action: Intelligence Community Campus - Bethesda

2.0 Description of Proposed Action: In compliance with the National Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) which evaluates and documents the potential environmental effects associated with the proposed redevelopment of the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) – Sumner Site located in Bethesda, Maryland as the Intelligence Community Campus, Bethesda (ICC-B) site. The NGA – Sumner Site is currently a secure space and will be vacated by its current tenant (NGA) and available for a new tenant in the fall of 2011. The Sumner Site is currently occupied by roughly 3,000 NGA employees. The Proposed Action will focus on connecting the existing structures at the Sumner Site with construction of a new structure, “The Centrum”, in the middle of the three main existing buildings. Each of the existing structures will also receive renovations and upgrades designed to mitigate Anti-Terrorism and Force Protection (AT/FP) threat conditions, and unify the exterior appearance as one contiguous facility.

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to develop a collaborative intelligence community campus for the relocation of roughly 3,000 intelligence workers in the Washington National Capital area by providing secure administration space at an existing and available government facility (Sumner Site) in the Washington National Capital Area. The Proposed Action is necessary because: 1) there is a shortage of secured administrative building space in the Washington National Capital area; 2) a shared intelligence community campus supports congressional desires for a collaborative community environment and the consolidation of an intelligence community facility strategy; and 3) it supports to reuse of existing government facilities instead of the use of leased facilities, which will continue to increase in cost as the markets recover.

3.0 Project Alternatives Considered: During the Planning Charrette process, several alternatives were eliminated due to cost and/or security issues. The agency could lease space at another location within the general Metropolitan Washington Area; however, the costs are beyond the funding limits of the agency. Also, several site layout concepts of the Sumner Site were considered at the Planning Charrette, and the pros and cons of each proposed campus layout concept were discussed and evaluated by the Planning Charrette team. Evaluation of the proposed site layouts throughout the Planning Charrette process took into consideration facility function and impacts to the surrounding community.

Under the No-Action Alternative, the DIA would not redevelop the Sumner Site and the site would remain unused. It is assumed that the site would continue to receive minimal maintenance by the federal government to keep the facilities functional. Such actions would include the mowing of lawns and the use of water, sewer, and electrical utilities to maintain buildings.

4.0 Environmental Consequences and Mitigation Measures: As discussed in the EA, the environmental impacts of the Proposed Action, the redevelopment of the NGA – Sumner Site located in Bethesda, Maryland as the ICC-B were evaluated in detail, and the potential adverse environmental, health, and socioeconomic impacts were found to be negligible to minor, short-term, and mitigable, if necessary.

Culturally, implementation of the ICC-B project will have an adverse effect upon Erskine Hall (located within the NGA – Sumner Site), which is eligible for listing in the National Register Historic District. The DIA, the Maryland State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), the National Park Service (NPS), National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC), and Montgomery County will enter into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that will insure that the project is implemented in accordance with certain stipulations that take into account the effect of the undertaking on historic properties.

5.0 Factors Considered in the Finding of No Significant Impact: The EA systematically reviews the nature of the Proposed Action and associated risks, issues, and potential adverse effects on the environment are evaluated.

Short-term, minor, adverse impacts from the proposed project include dust, air emissions, and noise from earthmoving and construction activities. Short-term impacts to soils, surface waters, drainage, and stormwater as well as aesthetics, vegetation and wildlife would also be expected. Other short-term, minor, adverse impacts include disruption of water, electrical, and natural gas services, increased construction traffic, and increased child safety risks from the presence of a construction site in a residential neighborhood and the use of hazardous materials associated with construction. Long-term minor adverse impacts to air quality, cultural resources, and soils would result from the redevelopment of the Sumner Site for the ICC-B. Long-term benefits to surface waters, drainage, stormwater management, vegetation, wildlife, and traffic are expected. Long-term changes to the visual aesthetics of the site would be made. These changes would be a mixture of adverse and beneficial effects. Short-term and long-term minor benefits to socioeconomics are expected.

Long-term beneficial impacts with regards to traffic are anticipated under the Proposed Action; however, as required a Transportation Management Plan (TMP) was prepared. The TMP includes specific strategies to encourage change in employee travel modes, trip timing, frequency and length, and travel routes to reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality. The main purpose of the TMP is provide a document that communicates the project's proponent's commitment to reduce the demand for parking spaces and encourage employees to select alternative commuting modes.

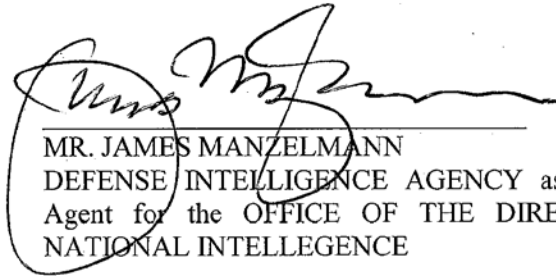
6.0 Public Review: The EA and Draft FONSI were available for review and comment for 30 days, beginning June 3, 2011. Copies of the EA and Draft FONSI or additional information concerning the EA were available by request from Mr. Michael Schuster, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Baltimore District, 10 South Howard Street, Baltimore, MD 21201, email request to Michael.J.Schuster@usace.army.mil, or by phone at 410-962-8160. Copies were also provided to the following two libraries: 1) Montgomery County Library – Bethesda Branch, 7400 Arlington Road, Bethesda, Maryland 20814; and 2) Montgomery County Library – Little Falls Branch, 5501 Massachusetts Avenue, Bethesda, Maryland 20816. The EA and Draft FONSI were also available for public review via the following website: <http://www.nab.usace.army.mil/Public%20Notices/Misc.htm>. Comments on the EA and Draft FONSI were to be submitted to Mr. Michael Schuster at the physical address or e-mail address given above by no later than July 5, 2011.

During the 30 day comment period, the Army received and considered comments from seven public reviewers, consisting of: Harold Pfohl - Glen Echo Heights Citizens' Association President; Mary Fowler - Local Citizen; Montgomery County - Rollin Stanley; Montgomery County - Margaret Rifkin - Environmental Comments; Montgomery County - Margaret Rifkin - Transportation Comments; NCPC Comments - David Levy & Jeff Hinkle; and Peter Reinecke - Local Citizen. Public comments primarily expressed concerns over traffic and transportation issues and the request to maintain the good relationship that the current tenant (NGA) has developed with the surrounding community. Based on the comments received changes were made to the Land Use, Topography and Drainage, Vegetation, and Traffic Sections of the EA. Specifically, the Traffic Section was updated to include a commitment by the DIA to develop a Transportation Management Plan to manage transportation demand, particularly demand for the use of single-occupant vehicles and the roadways and parking spaces needed to serve them. None of the said changes or additions have resulted in additional or increased impacts to environmental or socioeconomic resources.

7.0 Conclusions: On the basis of the EA, which is herewith incorporated, it has been determined that implementation of the Proposed Action would not have significant effects on environmental or socioeconomic resources; therefore, preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not required and the Army will proceed with the implementation of its proposed action.

The principal conclusions of this EA are: (1) implementing the Proposed Action (the preferred alternative) would not result in significant adverse environmental impacts, provided that best management practices (BMPs) to mitigate these potential environmental impacts are adhered to during construction and operation; (2) implementing the Proposed Action would address the current shortage of secured administrative building space in the Washington National Capital area; (3) implementing the Proposed Action would create a shared intelligence community campus that supports congressional desires for a collaborative community environment and the consolidation of an intelligence community facility strategy; and (4) implementing the Proposed Action would support the reuse of existing government facilities instead of the use of leased facilities, which will continue to increase in cost as the markets recover.

Date 9/8/11



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