

STATEMENT OF JON H. SEYMOUR  
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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS AND TRANSPORTATION  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS  
CONCERNING DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
HEADQUARTERS BUILDING  
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Good morning,

Mr. Chairman, as Mr. Bibb stated, I am Jon Seymour, Assistant Secretary for Administration, Department of Transportation. I am happy to be here to testify in support of the project to consolidate the Department of Transportation in a new Federal office building. We have been working very closely with the General Services Administration (GSA) over the past several months to advance the project.

The Department of Transportation (DOT) is currently housed in three locations: the Nassif Building (1,080,838 occupiable square feet) which currently houses approximately 5050 employees and contractor support personnel, Federal Office Building (FB-10A) (533,631 occupiable square feet) which primarily houses approximately 3900 FAA employees and contractor support personnel, and the Transpoint Building (428,480 occupiable square feet) currently housing approximately 2550 USCG military and civilian employees and contractor support personnel.

In the case of the Nassif Building, the lease expired in January 1, 1990, and we are now in a holdover status. GSA is currently pursuing a new 10-year lease which will allow the Department to remain in place until the new building is ready.

The Nassif building has been in the inventory for over 20 years. Improvements will be made as part of the lease renewal. However, extensive improvements would be required if the Department were to remain in Nassif for the long term. These additional and more extensive improvements would require temporary relocation of large organizational entities. This would be disruptive to the employees and will impact their productivity. Major repairs are also necessary for FB-10A, where FAA has experienced annual problems with the major mechanical and electrical systems. With respect to the Transpoint building, the lease expires in May 1993. This lease, we are advised by GSA will not be renewed for the long term although the owner may be willing to house the USCG until the new building is completed. Aside from these problems, additional space will be required to relieve the overcrowding of the current employees and contractors in FB-10A and Transpoint Buildings. To meet these needs, the Department would be forced into even more locations.

The proposed new building will greatly improve the agency's operational efficiency and productivity, reduce administrative costs, and provide a quality work environment for DOT headquarters personnel.

A new building would be designed to meet DOT's requirements as opposed to retrofitting our requirements in existing space. This

will result in reducing DOT's office utilization rate from 147 occupiable square feet per workstation to 125 occupiable square feet per person.

In April 1989, GSA issued an advertisement to determine potential market interest in meeting the Department's space needs. There were four responses:

- o The Portals site at 14th Street and Maine Avenue, SW
- o Union Center Plaza at 1st Street between H and K Street, NE
- o Far East Center/Gallery Place/Hecht Co. at 7th Street between E and H Streets, NW
- o Woodward and Lothrop Warehouse Block at 1st Street between L and M Street, NE

GSA and the Department have studied two basic alternatives for the consolidation of the DOT headquarters. We were assisted by 3D/International, Inc. and the economic consulting firm of GA/Partners. One site alternative considered private development on privately owned land (i.e., the responses to the GSA advertisement for expressions of interest). The second combined Government-owned air rights behind Union Station with two privately-held parcels immediately adjacent to the air-rights.

A number of variations on the two alternatives were computer modeled to determine their economic consequences to the Government. Various project delivery strategies were also considered, including Government-managed design, construction, and finance; and private developer-managed design, construction, and finance. Master schedules were developed to understand the effects of various alternatives upon project completion dates. As a result, the Administrator of GSA together with the Secretary of Transportation agreed to pursue the use of the Union Station Air Rights site location. Subsequently, GSA wrote to CSX and AMTRAK notifying them of the Government's interest in acquiring title to their holdings.

We are currently having discussions with GSA and OMB as to the acquisition site and the best building delivery process. Whether the traditional approach of conducting a design competition, with a contract for construction to follow, or some variation of this approach should be pursued, is still being explored. We are sure of one thing and that is, regardless of the approach, there should be design competition for any construction at this site.

Both GSA and the Department are most sensitive to the concerns of the community regarding increased traffic and noise around Union Station and Capital Hill. We have jointly initiated an environmental impact study. The National Capital Planning

Commission is a co-operating agency in the study. Hearings are scheduled for later this summer to learn about community concerns with the proposed relocation at the air-rights site. This will allow us to fully consider these concerns and the possibility of including mitigating action as part of project plans.

Concurrent with the EIS, a study will be undertaken to begin more detailed definition of the guidelines to be used in the design of the building. During the coming months, the representatives of: the Fine Arts Commission, National Capital Planning Commission, the District's Historic Preservation Review Board, the Architects of the Capitol and community association will be given numerous opportunities to participate in this process.

The proposed project will be designed to house approximately 12,100 DOT employees which allows for a 1% per year growth from current employment levels. The building will provide 2,405,100 occupiable square feet and approximately 1,500 spaces for Government official, visitors and employee parking. If funds are approved, we expect that construction could start early CY 1993 and we could expect that occupancy could begin by late 1996.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to testify in support of the DOT consolidation project. I will be happy to respond to any questions.