MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM

NR Eligible: yes ___ **no** ___

Property Name: Atomic Energy Commission Building Inventory Number: M:19-41

Address: 19901 Germantown Road Historic district: ___ yes X no

City: Germantown, MD Zip Code: ___ County: Montgomery

USGS Quadrangle(s): Germantown

Property Owner: U.S. Department of Energy Tax Account ID Number: ___

Tax Map Parcel Number(s): 615 Tax Map Number: EU562

Project: I-270/US 15: South of Shady Grove Road to North of Biggs Fo Agency: MD SHA/FHWA

Agency Prepared By: Arch. Hist., MD SHA

Preparer's Name: Anne E. Bruder Date Prepared: 01/09/2007

Documentation is presented in: Project Review and Compliance Files

Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation: X Eligibility recommended ___ Eligibility not recommended

Criteria: X A ___ B X C ___ D Considerations: ___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D ___ E ___ F X G

Complete if the property is a contributing or non-contributing resource to a NR district/property:

Name of the District/Property: ___

Inventory Number: ___ Eligible: ___ yes Listed: ___ yes

Site visit by MHT Staff ___ yes X no Name: ___ Date: ___

Description of Property and Justification: *(Please attatch map and photo)*

The Atomic Energy Commission Building was constructed in 1956 and completed in 1957 based on the designs provided by Voorhees, Walker, Smith & Smith, an architectural and engineering firm. The building's description and significance statement will be found in the attached MIHP form.

The Atomic Energy Commission Building is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under Criterion A as the location of the development of nuclear sciences from 1958 through 1975. The programs, such as the nuclear energy program, were part of President Dwight D. Eisenhower's "Atoms for Peace," which was instituted in 1954. The federal government believed that the new power technology would provide an inexpensive alternative to oil and coal powered energy plants. During this period, atomic energy was also developed for the military to use in power plants for isolated bases and to power submarines and ships. Also under Criterion A, the AEC Building is eligible for the NRHP as the first post-World War II government agency to be located outside both Washington, DC's monumental core and the suburban ring that was constructed during the 1930s. The sensitivity of the AEC's programs made it an ideal candidate for the government's dispersal policy.

The Atomic Energy Commission Building is also eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C, as an example of a mid-twentieth

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

Eligibility recommended X **Eligibility not recommended** ___

Criteria: X A ___ B X C ___ D **Considerations:** ___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D ___ E ___ F ___ G

MHT Comments:

Jim Jarboe 4/11/07
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services **Date**

[signature] 4/12/07
Reviewer, National Register Program **Date**

2007 00504

century office building designed by Voorhees, Walker, Smith & Smith, a prominent architecture firm from New York City. The building's design is based on earlier office and laboratory buildings designs for which the firm was known. Because of previous experiences with large laboratory buildings located in rural sites, the firm provided a design that included a cafeteria and parking lots which enabled those who worked in the building to have easy access if they drove a car, as well as meals, because the building was located in a small, rural community. The building's form takes its design from other nuclear laboratories in that it is abstract and reduced to the simple rectilinear shapes found at the other buildings.

The AEC Building also meets the requirements for Criterion Consideration G. Although the building itself is just fifty years of age, the significant activities that occurred within the building extend to 1975. The nuclear energy program and medical treatments overseen by those working in the AEC building improved the lives of Americans between 1958 and 1975. During this period more than one hundred nuclear power plants were constructed or planned for construction in the United States. Through the Atoms for Peace program during this time, the United States also shared the technology with countries such as India and Canada. The United States Navy and Army also benefited from these developments, as the AEC was able to assist in producing nuclear power plants for military bases, as well as for powering submarines and aircraft carriers. Although not all of the technologies were as successful or well received as the scientists hoped, Americans continue to benefit from energy and medical treatments based on nuclear sciences.

Research conducted did not identify perons of local, state or national significance and the AEC Building is not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B. Criteroin D was not included as part of this study.

The eligible boundary as noted on the attached MIHP form is confined to Montgomery County Tax Parcel 615 as shown on Tax Map EU562.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

Eligibility recommended _____ **Eligibility not recommended** _____

Criteria: ___A ___B ___C ___D **Considerations:** ___A ___B ___C ___D ___E ___F ___G

MHT Comments:

_____ _____

Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services **Date**

_____ _____

Reviewer, National Register Program **Date**

Maryland Historical Trust
Maryland Inventory of
Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. M:19-41

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic	Atomic Energy Commission Building
other	US Department of Energy Building

2. Location

street and number	19901 Germantown Road	__ not for publication
city, town	Germantown, MD	__ vicinity
county	Montgomery	

3. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name	US Department of Energy				
street and number	1000 Independence Avenue, S.W.			telephone	
city, town	Washington	state	DC	zip code	20024

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.	Montgomery County Circuit Court				liber	6087	folio 254
city, town	Rockville, MD	tax map	EU562	tax parcel	P615	tax ID number	00777827

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

_____ Contributing Resource in National Register District
_____ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
_____ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
_____ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
_____ Recorded by HABS/HAER
_____ Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT
_____ Other:_____

6. Classification

Category
_____district
__X__building(s)
_____structure
_____site
_____object

Ownership
__X__public
_____private
_____both

Current Function
_____agriculture
_____commerce/trade
__X__defense
_____domestic
_____education
_____funerary
__X__government
_____health care
__X__industry
_____landscape
_____recreation/culture
_____religion
_____social
_____transportation
_____work in progress
_____unknown
_____vacant/not in use
__X__other: Nuclear Science

Resource Count

Contributing	Noncontributing	
4	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
		Total

Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory
0

7. Description

Inventory No. M:19-41

Condition

X excellent	___ deteriorated
___ good	___ ruins
___ fair	___ altered

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The Atomic Energy Commission Building is a four story, multi-bay building with a basement, constructed of reinforced concrete and clad in red brick on the exterior. Cream color concrete forms the portico entrances and cornice of the roof. Rectangular, single pane windows rhythmically punctuate the exterior façade (these are replacements of the original double sash windows). The building has four east-west oriented wings connected to each other by three north-south wings. These three wings are not aligned, and do not join the east-west wings in the middle of each block, giving the building a stepped appearance from the air. The unaligned wings help to give the interior of the building its human scale because the hallways are not long corridors. It also allows various wings to be closed off from one another. The building's first floor is elevated to accommodate the raised basement, and entry to the first floor is gained by stairs between the entrances and the first floor (Photo 18).

The cafeteria is integral to the building's initial construction period (1956-1957) and is located on the first floor on the east side of the building, as is the Computer Center, which was added in 1969. A warehouse is located between the E and G Wings on the west side of the building. Separated from the main building by the driveway are the water tower, the maintenance/utility building and the auditorium. The main entrance has a columned portico: the undecorated columns are square and support a flat roof that extends about three feet beyond the columns (Photo 1). A driveway encircles the building and connects several parking lots along the perimeter of the building. The roof of the building is also flat. The building has had central heating and air conditioning since its construction. The G, H and J wings and the warehouse between the E and J wings were completed after the November 8, 1957 dedication of the building.

The cafeteria is one story tall and has been altered by the installation of new windows on the north façade, as well as the east side of the room. The replacement windows, as well as the interior decorations, recall the Prairie Style made popular by Frank Lloyd Wright. The windows are single pane, but divided into six lights -- three square lights at the top of the windows and three rectangular lights at the bottom of each (Photos 3, 14, and 15).

The Computer Center was completed in 1969 by the successor firm to Voorhees, Walker, Smith & Smith, called Haines, Lundberg & Whaeler (or HLW) and is an example of the brutalism style. Heavy, wide concrete pilasters buttress the walls and in between each is a narrow, full length rectangular window. The flat roof lacks a parapet, but extends down to the top of the windows like an abstracted mansard roof (Photo 2).

The Utility Building is comprised of one main building with two wings that extend to the west. Metal chimneys pierce the flat roof. The building is also clad in red brick and constructed of reinforced concrete. It is located to the southwest of the main facility (Photo 6). The water tower is located at the south end of the property (Photo 7). The auditorium is located on the northeast side of the main building (Photo 13). It is one story tall, also constructed of reinforced concrete and clad with red brick. Its flat, cream colored roof extends beyond the façade walls, while aluminum and glass doors and rectangular windows form the main entrance. The building has no other windows.

Elevators and interior stairs connect the five floors. The original linoleum flooring has been replaced. Each wing consists of a series of offices that are marked by corresponding doors (Photo 16). The Commission Hearing Room is located on the fourth floor. There are also bathrooms, shower rooms and utility closets.

The main entrance is on the north side of the building (Photos 1, 10, 11, 12 and 17). The entrance lobby walls are clad with granite, and the floor is wood parquet. One metal and glass floor-to-ceiling window is in the northwest portion of the lobby.

On the north wall in the vestibule the building's dedication information has been carved. The cornerstone marked "1957" contains a time capsule of information about the Atomic Sciences that was dedicated on November 8, 1957 by President Dwight D. Eisenhower.

8. Significance

Inventory No. M:19-41

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below		
__ 1600-1699	__ agriculture	__ economics	X health/medicine	__ performing arts
__ 1700-1799	__ archeology	__ education	X industry	__ philosophy
__ 1800-1899	X architecture	X engineering	X invention	X politics/government
X 1900-1999	__ art	__ entertainment/ recreation	__ landscape architecture	__ religion
__ 2000-	X commerce	__ ethnic heritage	__ law	X science
	__ communications	__ exploration/ settlement	__ literature	__ social history
	__ community planning		__ maritime history	__ transportation
	__ conservation		X military	__ other: _____

Specific dates 1955-1975 **Architect/Builder** Voorhees, Walker, Smith & Smith

Construction dates 1955-1958

Evaluation for:

__X__ National Register _____Maryland Register _____not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

The Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) Building served as the headquarters for the Atomic Energy Commission, an independent federal commission which oversaw the nuclear sciences, between 1957 and 1975. From 1946 until 1975, the AEC either conducted research and development programs, or regulated research and development for military, scientific, medical and industrial purposes at private and government facilities throughout the country. One architecture and engineering firm had been associated with designing other facilities used by the Manhattan Project and the AEC. Voorhees, Walker, Smith & Smith, Architects and Engineers, designed the laboratory space at Columbia University for the Manhattan Project in 1942, and also designed two laboratories for the AEC in 1947 and 1950. In 1955 the AEC chose the firm to design the AEC headquarters building in Germantown, Maryland. The construction of the building provided a public face and a single location for the Federal Government's "Atoms for Peace" program, which helped to create peaceful uses of the atom for the American public.

The start of the Atomic Age was announced when the United States dropped two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan in August 1945. The United States government began efforts to construct a bomb following the advice of Albert Einstein who wrote a letter to President Franklin Roosevelt in 1939. His letter indicated that German scientists were working to develop an atomic bomb. Physicists and chemists associated with many American universities, including Columbia University, the University of Chicago and the University of California at Berkeley, had been studying the atom since the beginning of the twentieth century. The United States government involved them in the research to develop atomic weapons. As a result of the recommendations of several government sponsored scientific commissions, the United States government initiated the Manhattan Project in 1942, and gave control of bomb development to the Army. The Manhattan Project was housed initially at Columbia University in New York City, under the auspices of the Army Corps of Engineers in the Manhattan Engineer District.[1] Between 1942 and 1945, American scientists working with the Army Corps of Engineers designed the atomic bomb. The United States dropped the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima on August 6, 1945 and the second on Nagasaki on August 9, 1945. Japan accepted the unconditional surrender terms following the bombing of the two cities on August 15, 1945, which ended World War II.

Following the war's end, the United States sought ways to develop practical and peaceful uses of atomic energy. President Harry Truman signed the Atomic Energy Act of 1946, which transferred control of the nuclear sciences from the Manhattan Engineer District to the newly established Atomic Energy Commission (AEC). Because of the world balance of power and the growing threat of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R.), the United States continued to develop atomic weapons. As post-war nuclear technology continued, the AEC constructed National Laboratories, such as the Argonne Laboratory in Lemont, Illinois in 1947, which were involved in developing nuclear weapons.[2] In 1949 the U.S.S.R. exploded an atom bomb in the eastern part of the Soviet Union

[1] Gosling, F.G., *The Manhattan Project, Making the Atomic Bomb*, National Security History Series, Washington, DC: United States Department of Energy, December 2005 (109)

[2] National Laboratories that the federal government built during World War II include Los Alamos in New Mexico, Hanford in Washington, and Oak Ridge in Tennessee.

and the Cold War began. Truman left office in 1953, and Dwight Eisenhower became President. As the former Supreme Commander of the Allied Troops, he understood the consequences of war.

Late in 1953, Eisenhower promulgated a new policy known as "Atoms for Peace." In December 1953, he appeared before the United Nations' General Assembly and proposed his "Atoms for Peace" program, wherein those nations that had stockpiles of either uranium or other fissionable materials would make donations to the International Atomic Energy Agency, a new United Nations organization that would work to identify peaceful projects in nations around the world. On August 30, 1954, Eisenhower signed the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, which amended the 1946 Act to encourage peaceful applications in medicine, industry and science in the United States. The federal government began declassifying many materials about the nuclear sciences. Private industry as well as foreign and local governments began to investigate ways to make use of the new technologies being developed under the auspices of the AEC. One subject among the newly declassified materials from the AEC was about experiments that produced electricity from fissionable materials, which had been conducted by the Argonne National Laboratory in 1951. Applications for new atomic power plants began in 1954 and by 1957, the atomic power plant in Shippingport, Pennsylvania was in production. Another subject that was receiving attention was the use of nuclear medicines to treat illnesses such as cancer. As part of that research, the Argonne Cancer Research Hospital was built at the University of Chicago in 1952, where scientists and doctors studied the effects of radiation on cancer.

As new applications for nuclear sciences were identified and developed, the AEC regulatory and scientific staff continued to grow. Between 1946 and 1957, the AEC's staff was housed among several different buildings in downtown Washington, D.C. AEC officials considered the widely dispersed offices to be a security issue and an inefficient use of time because of the distances between offices. Furthermore, the lack of a single identifiable building associated with the AEC did little to highlight its policies to benefit the public with peaceful uses of nuclear science.

In November 1954, the AEC's General Manager, K. E. Fields advised the AEC's Secretary, J.B. McCool, that it was "desirable for the Atomic Energy Commission headquarters to occupy a single building." At the same time, Fields stated that the Office of Personnel Management had developed "dispersal criteria" that required federal agencies to be located at least ten miles outside of Washington, D.C. and preferably in the northwest or southwest quadrants, west of a line drawn north and south of the White House through Virginia and Maryland.[3] Frederick Gutheim notes that the dispersal policy began during World War II, when some agencies, such as the Social Security Administration, were sent to other parts of the country to operate. Likewise, essential agencies that could not be accommodated in the District were established along transportation routes, such as the Naval Medical Center on Wisconsin Avenue in Bethesda, and the Naval Ordnance Laboratory on New Hampshire Avenue in Silver Spring. In the early 1950s, the advent of the atomic bomb caused the federal government to study how to handle a potential atomic attack. But objections from the surrounding counties in Virginia and Maryland stymied the plan. Objections came particularly from Arlington County, Virginia, where the Pentagon had been constructed in 1941 with little consideration for roads or other services between it and the District of Columbia or northern Virginia.[4] As a result, the AEC limited its search for a site for the new building along a major transportation corridor, particularly in Maryland. Construction of federal agency buildings outside the monumental core between Pennsylvania and Constitution Avenues ceased during World War II. By the mid-1950s, the effects of the Cold War and worries about domestic security required more stringent efforts to protect the federal government's scientific programs. The potential for security lapses was reduced by moving the AEC to the distant countryside.

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[3] K. E. Fields, "New Headquarters Building for the Atomic Energy Commission," Report by the General Manager dated October 6, 1954, and K. E. Fields to J. B McCool, Secretary of the Atomic Energy Commission, Memorandum dated November 24, 1954, Atomic Energy Commission, Record Group 326, Job 1703, Germantown Building, Maryland, File #2.

[4] Frederick Gutheim, *Worthy of the Nation, The History of Planning for the National Capital*, Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1977, pp. 335-336.

In 1953, the Maryland State Roads Commission (SRC) had begun to relocate US 240 from Rockville to Frederick, to replace the Frederick Road (MD 355). The new, four-lane highway would have interchanges that separated the highway from the cross roads. As the new highway passed north of Gaithersburg, it bisected a stock farm owned by Mr. William O. Dosh in the vicinity of Germantown. The SRC's right-of-way requirements left the farmer with a 109 acre parcel of land on the west side of US 240. The construction of the highway added to the attraction of having the AEC building located in Montgomery County. The distance was more than the 10-miles that the dispersal policy recommended, and authorities believed it would provide protection from any nuclear attack. At t he same time, the new highway would permit quick commutes between the AEC and the White House, other federal agencies and Capitol Hill. Unfortunately, the SRC's highway construction did not keep pace with the rapidly changing suburban developments. The anticipated Beltway and other highways connecting Germantown with downtown Washington were not constructed as quickly as the AEC's planners hoped. As a result, connections between Washington and Germantown were difficult.

In order to construct a new building the AEC needed permission from the General Services Administration and an appropriation from the Congress. The appropriation for the AEC building was approved by the 84th Congress in April 1955. By late July the Dosh Farm had been identified as a potential location and a condemnation suit was filed to protect the federal government's interest in the property. The AEC had also chosen the architects to design the new building. They chose a New York firm, Voorhees, Walker, Smith & Smith, who had previously designed laboratories for the Manhattan Project or the AEC itself.[5]

Architects and engineers from Voorhees, Walker, Smith & Smith were responsible for designing laboratory space at Columbia University for the Manhattan Project. The *75th Anniversary* states that many of the architects and engineers who worked on the Manhattan Project laboratory space were unaware of the project's purpose until the bombings.[6] Voorhees, Walker, Smith & Smith had been well-prepared to undertake the Manhattan Project's first laboratory design. Cyrus L.W. Eidlitz opened the firm as a solo practice in 1885. He designed the first telephone building in New York City for the Metropolitan Phone Company.[7] The new technology grew rapidly and he took on his first partner, Andrew McKenzie, in 1900. They were engaged chiefly in designing telephone buildings in New York and northern New Jersey. Stephen Voorhees joined the firm and was made a partner in 1910, and the bulk of the firm's practice continued in design of telephone buildings, including the Barclay-Vesey Building in lower Manhattan. The 1926 building was the headquarters for the New York Telephone Company, and attracted attention in the architectural press. *American Architect* devoted an entire issue to the building's design which placed the central operating system at the core of the building with the offices arranged on the perimeter around the operating core. The designer was Ralph Walker, who was made a partner in the firm in 1926. By the mid-1930s, Voorhees, Walker, Smith & Smith had become quite prominent. Voorhees was elected President of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) for a two year term, 1935 to 1937, and was then selected to be the Chairman of the 1939 World's Fair Board of Design. The firm designed several corporate buildings at the Fair, including the Petroleum Industries, the General Electric, Borden, American Telephone & Telegraph, American Radiator and Equitable Life pavilions.[8]

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[5] "AEC Plans $10 Million Headquarters at Germantown, 25 Miles From D.C., Shelter for President, Congress," *The Washington Post,* July 30, 1955, downloaded from Proquest; "A.E.C. Asks Bids on New Unit," *The New York Times,* April 1, 1956, downloaded from Proquest

[6] Voorhees, Walker, Smith, Smith & Haines, *75th Anniversary*, New York: 1960 (33). Note that the firm has changed names numerous times, but for clarity will be referred to as Voorhees, Walker, Smith & Smith throughout Section 8. By the 1969 AEC building campaign, the firm had become Haines, Lundberg and Whaeler. The firm is now known as HLW International, LLP after the 1960s partners.

[7] *Ibid.,* 1.

[8] *75th Anniversary*, page 18; Stern, Robert A.M., Gregory Gilmartin and Thomas Mellins, *New York 1930, Architecture and Urbanism between the Two World Wars*, New York: Rizzoli (1987) __. *New York Times, "*Ralph T. Walker Is Dead at 83; Hailed as 'Architect of Century,'" January 18, 1973, page 44, downloaded from Proquest Historical Newspapers.

However, the late 1930s was the time when Voorhees, Walker, Smith & Smith began their most important type of design work for research and development laboratories. In 1939, the firm received the commission to design and construct the Bell Telephone Laboratory in Murray Hill, New Jersey and they completed the project in 1942. Ralph Walker worked as the senior partner overseeing the design work by his associate, Charles Haines, who developed the 6-foot design module for the laboratory. This design module was unique in that it made all of the piping and wiring accessible from anywhere in the laboratory. Work groups of varying sizes could use the laboratory space as the needs of each project dictated. The space could house as few as two research scientists and as many as eight if necessary. In the Bell Laboratory project, the architects had adapted the principals they had identified when they had toured the Mellon Institute and Shell Oil Laboratories in 1930.[9] Between 1939 and the 1960s, Voorhees, Walker, Smith & Smith designed laboratories for the automobile, chemical, electrical and nuclear industries, among others.

Charles Haines joined the firm in 1930, following his graduation from Columbia University. In the announcement of his promotion to Senior Partner and again in his obituary, Haines is credited with the design of the Bell Telephone Laboratory, the Esso Research and Engineering Center in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, the Westinghouse Laboratory in Pittsburgh, the Argonne National Laboratory and the Atomic Energy Commission Building.[10] The firm used a team approach of an architect project manager and an engineer who worked under a senior partner for each project. A Voorhees, Walker, Smith & Smith engineer and partner named Carlton Roberts worked on the Argonne National Laboratory with Walker and Haines and the Savannah River Laboratory.[11] Haines and Walker were also responsible for the design of the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory in Laurel, Maryland from 1952 through 1955, during two building campaigns. Other buildings designed by the firm in Baltimore, Maryland include the Sinai Hospital and the Davison Chemical Company, and in Washington, DC, the A.F.L.-C.I.O. Building.[12] Some of the Maryland work that the firm completed may be due in part to Walker's tenure as President of the American Institute of Architects from 1949 to 1951. Other federal agency buildings that Voorhees, Walker, Smith & Smith designed in the early 1960s that are located in Washington, DC's suburbs include the Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt and the National Institute of Standards and Technology in Gaithersburg. The federal agencies that are housed in these buildings benefited from being set at a distance from downtown Washington, D.C. Their programs are not necessarily secret, but have sensitive elements that were better served in outlying areas, rather than in an urban area.

In addition to his design work for various laboratories, Haines wrote several articles about laboratory design and was also active on the AIA's Committee on Nuclear Facilities. The Committee was active between 1948 and 1958, but there is no information about their activities prior to the 1951 AIA Committee Directory. As early as 1951, Haines was a member of the Committee on Architecture and Nuclear Science (Special Committee), and became chairman of the Subcommittee on Nuclear Science in 1954. The Subcommittee was part of the larger Committee on Research. However, by 1957, it had regained its status as a stand-alone committee called the Nuclear Facilities Committee and Haines remained the chairman. Haines provided a report to the AIA Board of Directors that year that explained that the Committee was maintaining contacts with AEC engineers, scientists and administrators, and sponsoring and preparing informative material for architects. This last item included preparing articles written by various committee members and Elizabeth Thompson, Western Editor of *The Architectural Record*. Two articles appeared in the March and June 1957 issues of *The Architectural Record,* titled "Architecture, Atoms and a Peaceful World – A Series of Articles Prepared with Members of the

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[9] Walker, Ralph, *Ralph Walker, Architect of Voorhees Gmelin & Walker, Voorhees Walker Foley & Smith, Voorhees Walker Smith & Smith,* New York: Henahan House (1957), pp. 180 and 181; Charles S. Haines, "Bell Telephone Laboratories," *National Research Council Report on Design, Construction and Equipment of Laboratories, Laboratory Design,* (Ed. H. S. Coleman), New York: Reinhold Publishing Corporation, 1951, pp. 336-342 (hereafter Haines, *Laboratory Design*).

[10] *New York Times,* "Architect Advanced, Charles Haines Is Appointed as Senior Partner of Firm," December 17, 1956, page 54; and "Charles Haines" (Obituary), October 23, 1986, page D30, downloaded from ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

[11] *New York Times,* "Charlton Roberts, Engineer, Was 53," (Obituary) May 29, 1956, page 27, downloaded from ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

[12] *Voorhees, Walker, Smith & Smith*, "Group Organization," unpublished firm brochure (1955)

Committee on Nuclear Facilities, AIA to Animate Architectural Imagination in a New, Challenging Field." The committee had studied AEC and private facilities around the country, and the articles explained construction of various buildings. The March article states that until 1954, most of the information about nuclear science buildings had been classified and there was little public information about designs. But the new Atomic Energy Act of 1954 allowed for the declassification of the technical materials that opened up the applications of atomic energy to industry and business. The Cyclotron Building at the Argonne National Laboratory, which was designed by Voorhees, Walker, Smith and Smith, is one building that was pictured in the March 1957 article. As a result of the 1954 Act, materials that had previously been classified were declassified and made available to those involved in developing new applications for nuclear power. At the 1958 Annual Meeting, the AIA Board of Directors discontinued the Committee on Nuclear Facilities based on Haines' recommendation. The need for security clearances to work on nuclear facilities had been reduced following the 1954 legislation, and the *Architectural Record* articles pictured the types of buildings that could be constructed. The growth of the civilian industries meant that more architects could be involved in the work.[13] However, in the mid-to-late 1950s, the pace of civilian projects was still quite slow. As the AEC Chairman John A. McCone noted when he toured the Shippingport Nuclear Power Plant in 1958, the nuclear power industry was still experimental and this first plant could be considered "a laboratory tool."[14]

Haines' other articles about laboratory design include an article about the Bell Telephone Company Laboratory in Murray Hill, New Jersey which appeared in the August 1942 issue of *The New Pencil Points*, an article about the Firestone Research Laboratory in Akron, Ohio which is included in the November 1945 issue of *The Architectural Record,* and articles in two handbooks for laboratory design for the National Research Council and the Chemical Business Handbook in 1951 and 1954 respectively. In the first, *Report on Design, Construction and Equipment of Laboratories*, Ralph Walker provided two articles, "Location and General Design Features" and "Interior Arrangements," while Haines wrote an article titled "Bell Telephone Laboratories." In the second, *Chemical Engineering Series – Chemical Business Handbook,* the article was jointly authored by Haines and a Voorhees, Walker, Smith & Smith partner, Perry Coke Smith, and two other members of the firm, Carlton P. Roberts and Frank Roorda titled "Design and Construction of Research Facilities," which was about the Bell Telephone Laboratory.[15] These are not "how to" articles, but explain the firm's design ideas. All of these articles as well as the projects that Voorhees, Walker, Smith & Smith completed demonstrated their ability to design buildings that supported the scientific research that was conducted inside. Haines noted in his Firestone Research Laboratory article that the firm designed buildings from the inside out. In the Beaux Arts tradition, the building's program dictated its design. The firm's work at Argonne and Savannah River National Laboratories made them familiar to the AEC staff responsible for the new AEC headquarters building.

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[13] American Institute of Architects Archive, Washington, DC: AIA Committee Directory (Part III – Department of Education and Research), 1951-1952, 1952-1953, 1953-1954, 1954-1955, 1955-1956, and 1956-1957; 1957 AIA Directory of Standing General Committees and Committee Personnel, pp. 11 and 21; AIA Committee on Nuclear Facilities Report to the Board of Directors, 12 February 1957, pp 91-92; and Minutes, Annual Meeting, Board of Directors of the American Institute of Architects, April 28-May 2, 1958, Reports of Committees, Committee on Nuclear Facilities. Elizabeth Thompson, "Architecture, Atoms and a Peaceful World – A Series of Articles Prepared with Members of the Committee on Nuclear Facilities, AIA to Animate Architectural Imagination in a New, Challenging Field." *Architectural Record* (New York, NY) March 1957, pp 181-192. Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as Amended (P.L. 83-703).

[14] Richard G. Hewlett and Jack M. Holl, *Atoms for War and Peace, 1953-1961, Eisenhower and the Atomic Energy Commission*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1989 (493)

[15] Charles S. Haines, "Voorhees, Walker, Foley and Smith, Architects," *The New Pencil Points* (August 1942), pp. 35-70; Charles S. Haines, "Industrial Buildings," "Firestone Research Laboratory, Laboratory Building for Firestone Tire and Rubber Company, Akron, Ohio, Voorhees, Walker, Foley &Smith, Architects and Engineers," *The Architectural Record,* November 1945, pp. 82-97; Ralph T. Walker, "Location and General Design Features," and "Interior Arrangement," and Haines, *Laboratory Design,* op. cit. Perry Coke Smith, Charles S. Haines, Carlton P. Roberts and Frank Roorda, "Design and Construction of Research Facilities," *Chemical Engineering Series, Chemical Business Handbook,* (Ed. John H. Perry), New York: McGraw-Hill, 1954.

Voorhees, Walker, Smith & Smith's designs for both the corporate laboratories and the AEC are not Modern glass and steel designs in an urban setting. Rather, because the buildings are in rural locations, the lands surrounding each create a campus-like effect. This is an important design element that contrasts with the scientific work that is being accomplished inside the building. The grounds are planted with grass, trees and shrubs, and the presentation drawings done by the firm show that the landscape designs were as carefully thought out as the building designs. Voorhees, Walker, Smith & Smith's building designs also display local connections. While the firm frequently used brick and reinforced concrete as the basic building materials, at the Bell Telephone Laboratory, the cafeteria is clad in Princeton stone, which ties it to its New Jersey locale, and also provides a variation to differentiate that portion of the building from the laboratories. On the other hand, the firm's designs for the AEC National Laboratories responded to the dangerous nature of the materials that were being used in tests and experiments. The building's forms are familiar: domes, flat roofs, circular and rectangular shapes. The designs are streamlined, abstract and oversized in scale based on the needs of the equipment inside each building. There is little variation in the exterior color if concrete is used, although brick, stone or metals are used to add different colors or textures to the appearance of the buildings. The interiors are human-scaled in the work areas, but this is always juxtaposed against the nuclear equipment. In particular, the reinforced nature of the materials is evident. The walls and roofs are thick, and windows and doors are small to provide protection to the outside world and to limit views of the interior. Inside the buildings, equipment such as mobile shields, manipulators, and glove boxes provide additional protection to the workers.

At the AEC Building, Voorhees, Walker, Smith and Smith considered the needs of the workers, as well as the office designs. Because of the rural location, the small nearby town did not have many of the necessary services to support more than one thousand new employees. As a result, the building included a large cafeteria. The need for an automobile was also recognized and three parking lots were constructed around the building. These were not completely filled and when necessary one could be transformed to a heliport. Since technical experiments were not conducted in the building, there was no need for special laboratory designs. However, because many of the employees were scientists overseeing research and development, Voorhees, Walker, Smith & Smith created the AEC Building based on the office-laboratory designs for which the firm was known. Like some of the National Laboratories and the newly designed atomic power plants, the AEC building is streamlined with little exterior decoration. The four stories of red brick and office windows give the AEC building a human scale, its nine wings require eleven acres of space and recall the over scaled sizes of the other nuclear facilities around the country. Because the federal government constructed the building outside Washington's monumental core, there was sufficient land to include modern amenities.

The AEC building was not completed when Eisenhower dedicated it on November 8, 1957. The south wings were still under construction and there had been some delay as a result of a labor dispute. In the Cold War era of the late 1950s, much of the press' discussion about the AEC building's design focused on its ability to withstand a nuclear blast and provide protection for the atomic "secrets" that were said to be held inside the building. One newspaper article mentioned that the basement of the building contained bomb shelters and that the walls were 16-1/2" thick.[16] However, beyond the curiosity about bomb shelters, there was little to interest the public in the AEC building as a design. No formal critique or review of the building's design appeared in either the architectural press or the newspapers such as *The Washington Post, The Baltimore Sun* or *The New York Times*. Also, Haines and his AIA Nuclear Facilities Committee did not discuss the AEC Building in their articles about nuclear facilities. Rather, the general interest reporters who covered day-to-day events explained the building to the public. The reporters who covered the dedication soon turned to discussing the problems that the workers were encountering.

When planning for the building began, the AEC General Manager, K.E. Fields, and other noted that it was likely a portion of the staff would be lost due to the extended commute. In the year following the move to Germantown, *The Washington Post* did two stories about how AEC staff was adjusting to the move. The complaints came from the lower paid AEC staff, such as the clerk-typists and

[16] "Ike Dedicating Atomic Energy Commission Building," *The Baltimore Sun*, November 8, 1957 and Dale, Edwin L. Jr., "President, Dedicating A.E.C. Building, Warns of Dangers in the Atom," *The New York Times*, November 9, 1957, downloaded from Proquest Historical Newspapers.

secretaries, who missed having places to shop on their lunch hour, and who's extended commute times meant more travel expenses. The more senior AEC staff had early car phones and dictating equipment, so that their time was spent working, even when they were commuting to other meetings. The AEC management tried to make the building more convenient for its employees by installing a branch bank and there were plans to possibly construct a barber-beauty shop and a sundry store. Not all of these ideas came about, but the AEC's construction required the federal, state and country governments to anticipate the impacts of the growth of Metropolitan Washington, D.C. All of the issues raised by the employees in the newspaper articles were problems that the various governments would grapple with in the coming years: roads, goods and services, housing, convenient public transportation and the impacts on nearby towns.[17]

Lewis Strauss served as Chairman of the AEC during the headquarters construction. He came to office in July 1953 and remained until June 1958. During that period he oversaw the design and construction of the new building. More importantly, he was responsible for implementing the programs that would make Eisenhower's "Atoms for Peace" policy a reality. In the mid-1950s, the United States government continued to experiment with the atomic bomb as well as the hydrogen bomb through testing in open sites in Nevada and the Enewetak atoll in the Pacific. Eisenhower was anxious to end these tests because other countries such as the U.S.S.R. were also constructing atomic bombs, and he feared the consequences. In 1958 the federal government was able to agree to a nuclear test moratorium. During the 1950s, the AEC repeatedly performed public relations efforts to reassure the American public that ordinary citizens would not be harmed by the testing fallout.[18] A limited test ban treaty was signed and became effective on August 5, 1963, prohibiting nuclear detonations in the atmosphere, outer space and under water.[19]

During this same period of the mid-1950s, the AEC sought partners for the peaceful uses of the atom, such as nuclear power plants. The nuclear technology was so new that it was experimental. When the AEC began to put together the Atoms for Peace programs, they developed 5- and 10-year plan programs for initial technology development. Between 1954 and 1958, the 5-year plan of developing fuel and reactor models was successful enough that by 1958, the 10-year plan could be started. At Congressional hearings in 1958, AEC Chairman John McCone recommended that the Atoms for Peace Program pursue three different types of reactors that could be constructed as an experiment or as a prototype. The utility companies were working with the AEC to develop data about the technology, rather than constructing new power plants for everyday use. Eisenhower was included in the discussions about the power plant program, but he did not want the government to be responsible for financing the construction of plants. Rather, the utility companies needed to have the financial resources for construction and operation of each new plant. Factors such as the expense of atomic fuel when compared to oil or coal fueled plants, limited the private sector's ability to embrace the technology. Another fuel issue was the length of time that the material would fission before it had to be replaced. Fuel development experiments were conducted by several of the National Laboratories and their corporate partners. By the late 1950s, fuel loads could be used for up to two years before requiring replacement.[20] Experimental and prototype models continued to be constructed throughout the country in the 1960s, and by 1968 the utility companies could afford to choose nuclear power over traditional coal-and oil-fired plants because they were economically feasible. The military was also involved in developing prototype nuclear power plant models at bases such as Fort Belvoir and Washington Navy Yard.[21]

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[17] Elsie Carper, "Maryland Authorities Urge A Federal Building Policy," *The Washington Post*, December 29, 1957 (p. A13); Jean White, "AEC has Problems But is Adapting to Rural Living," *The Washington Post*, July 22, 1958 (p. B1); Jerry Kluutz, "Removal of AEC Quarters to Germantown Raises Numerous Problems for Personnel Living in D.C.," *The Washington Post*, November 18, 1958 (p. A1), downloaded from ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

[18] Hewlett, op cit., p. 165

[19] Scroger, op cit., p. 32

[20] Hewlett, op cit., p.503 and ff.

[21] Personal communication with Mr. Brian Leone, January 11, 2007 and Mr. William Henry Johnson Thomas, December 25, 2006.

The period between 1963 and 1968, while Lyndon Johnson was president, was a time of regulatory growth for the federal government. The National Historic Preservation Act and The Department of Transportation Act were both passed by congress in 1966 and became laws that same year. Johnson left office in 1969 and Richard Nixon became president. A piece of legislation that was not completed before Johnson's term ended, was passed by Congress in 1969, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Nixon signed the act and it became law on January 1, 1970. While the passage of NEPA had an immediate effect on large federal agencies such as the Department of Transportation, the AEC did not believe that the law would have an impact on its programs.

This was the final example of the difficulties that the AEC had encountered as its programs grew in the 1960s. Because of the experimental nature of the programs, the AEC had been both responsible for advising utility companies on technology development and regulating the same companies when changes or violations occurred. For some time members of congress and the executive branch perceived the issue to be a conflict of interest and in the early 1960s, the regulatory branch was physically separated from the AEC offices in Germantown and moved to Bethesda, Maryland.[22] But the construction of nuclear power plants in sensitive ecological areas continued to worry citizens who protested about potential impacts to places like the Chesapeake Bay

In the late 1960s, the Baltimore Gas & Electric Company (BGE) began to plan for the Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant in Lusby, Maryland. The passage of NEPA in 1970 enabled the Calvert Cliffs' Coordinating Committee to first petition and then bring suit against the AEC regarding their NEPA regulations. By the time that the suit was filed in late 1970, the power plant was 30% completed. Although the AEC had obtained information about environmental issues in the construction site from Maryland State and County agencies, they had not considered the potential impacts as required under NEPA. In the District of Columbia Circuit Appeals Court opinion issued by Judge Skelly Wright on July 23, 1971, the AEC was told that it was the federal agency's obligation to comply with NEPA to the fullest extent possible. At the time of the decision, there were 16 operating nuclear power plants, 49 under construction and another 44 in various stages of planning in the United States. The new regulatory requirements required the AEC to reorganize its regulatory divisions.[23]

In 1974, in conjunction with the OPEC's embargo of selling oil to the United States, the federal government began to take steps to balance the country's energy needs with the economic and environmental issues. The decision was made to further separate the development and regulatory functions. While the regulatory branch became a part of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the development functions became part of the Energy Research and Development Administration. Although nuclear energy would continue to play a role in the country's energy policy, it was no longer considered to be tool that the early members of the Atomic Energy Commission had hoped. The AEC was subsumed into the Energy Research and Development Administration in 1975, while in 1977, legislation signed by President Jimmy Carter created the Department of Energy to oversee all of the country's energy requirements.

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[22] ----------, "Move to Bethesda Planned for AEC Regulatory Group," *The Washington Post*, May 19, 1963, p.B3, downloaded from Proquest Historical Newspapers; Scroger, op. cit., p. 22

[23] ----------, "Maryland Atom Plant Gets a Permit," *The New York Times*, January 24, 1971; 'Major Cases Interpreting The National Environmental Policy Act," downloaded 1/8/2007 from www.nepa.gov/nepa/caselaw/majornepacases.pdf; Scroger, op cit, p. 22

Between 1957 and 1975, the AEC building's red brick design provided the public image of the scientific research and development that occurred within the building. The peaceful medical and power programs that the AEC's staff helped to identify and create have continued to benefit the American public.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. M:19-41

See Continuation Sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property	109.11 Acres		
Acreage of historical setting	109.11 Acres		
Quadrangle name	Germantown	Quadrangle scale:	1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

The Atomic Energy Commission Building's eligible boundary is confined to the boundary of its Tax Parcel as identified on Montomgery County Tax Map EU562, Parcel 615 (2006 Map), consisting of 109.11 Acres of land, southwest of the I-270/MD 118 Interchange in Germantown, Montgomery County, Maryland.

11. Form Prepared by

name/title	Anne E. Bruder, Architectural Historian		
organization	Maryland State Highway Administration	date	12/18/2006
street & number	707 North Calvert Street	telephone	410-545-8559
city or town	Baltimore	state	MD 21202

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Maryland Department of Planning
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
410-514-7600

Maryland Historical Trust
Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. **M:19-41**

Name Atomic Energy Commission Building
Continuation Sheet

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Atomic Energy Commission Building, M:19-41
Germantown USGS Quadrangle
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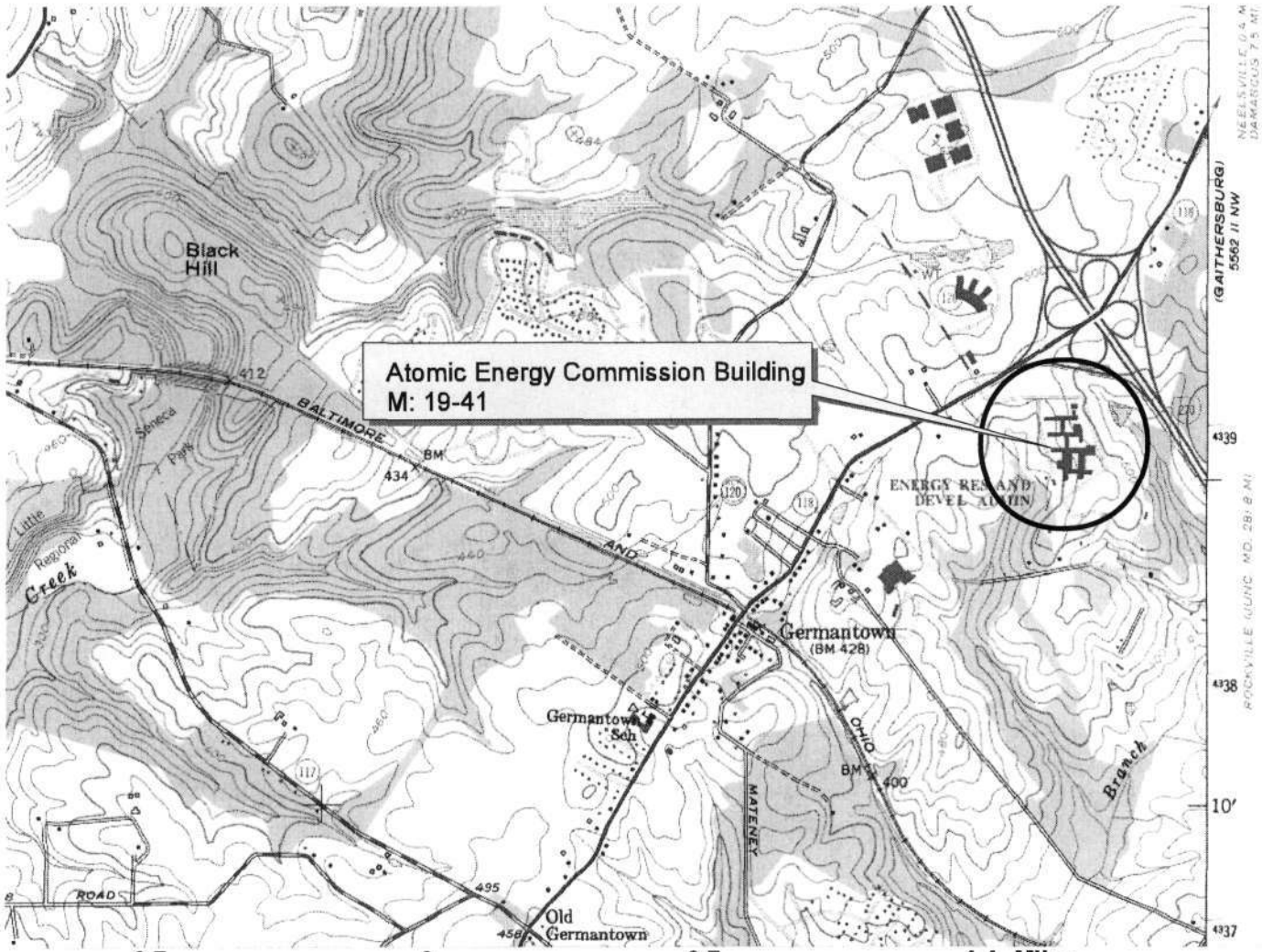

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USGS Topo Quad Index

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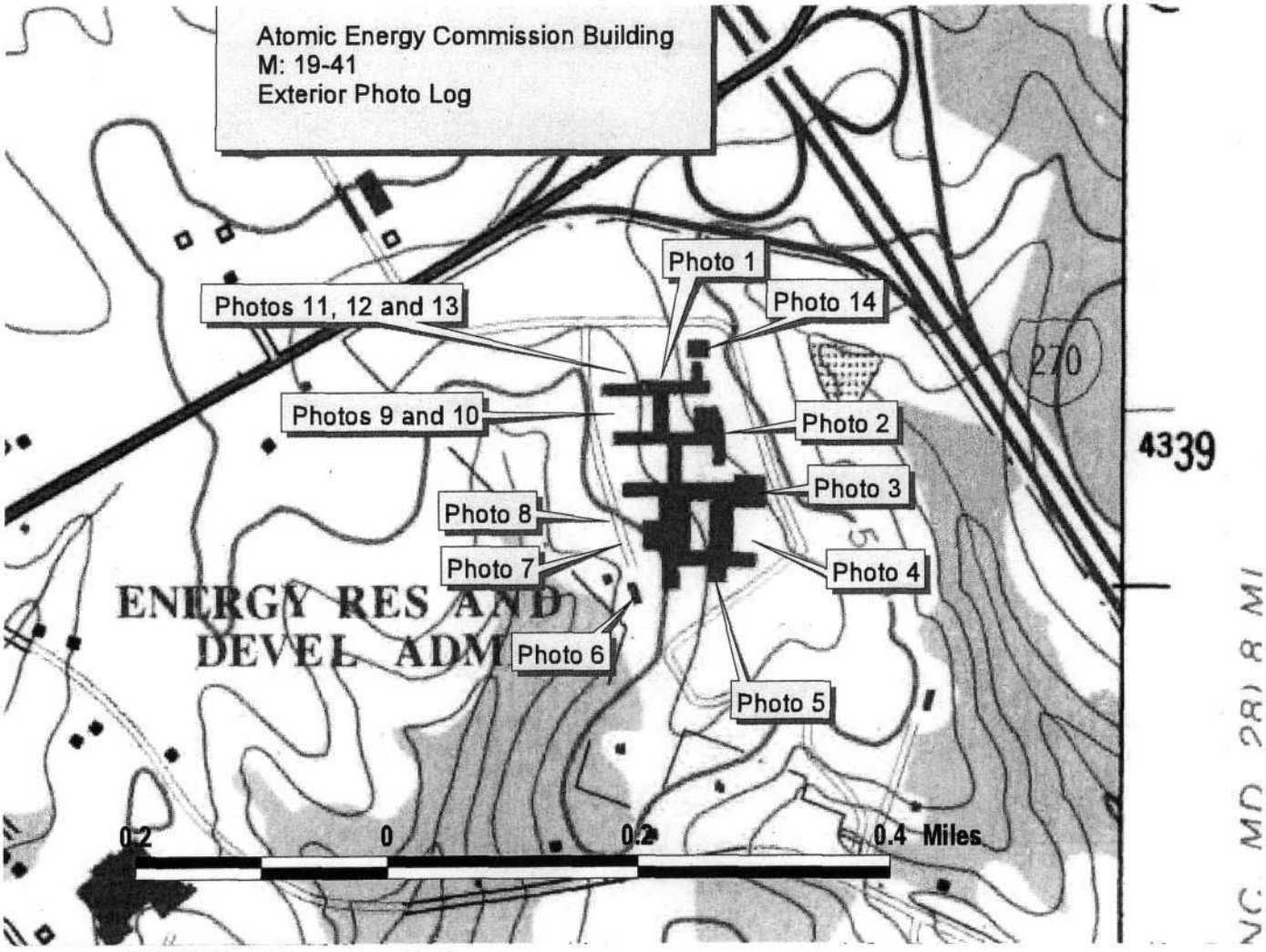
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M: 19-41
Exterior Photo Log
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Photos 11, 12 and 13
Photos 9 and 10
Photo 2
Photo 3
Photo 8
Photo 7
Photo 4
Photo 6
Photo 5
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ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION
BLDG, GERMANTOWN
MONTGOMERY CO., MD
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10/2006 MDSHPO
MAIN ENTRANCE OF AEC BLDG.
LOOKING SOUTH AT NORTH FAÇADE

1/18

M: 19-41

ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION BLDG.

MONTGOMERY CO., MD

A. BRUDER

10/2001

MD SHPO

EXTERIOR OF COMPUTER WING.

LOOKING WEST AT EAST FACADE

2/18

M:19-41
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MONTGOMERY CO., MD
A. FARNDER
10/2006
NMD&NPO
EXTERIOR OF CAFETERIA LOOKING
WEST AT EAST FACADE

3/18

MD 19-41
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MONTGOMERY CO, MD
A. POUNDS
10/2006
MD SHPO
SOUTH WING OF AEC BLDG.
LOOKING SOUTH AT EAST AND NORTH
FACADES OF F9G WINGS.

4/18

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A. FRUDER
10/2006
MD SHPO
SOUTH ENTRANCE LOOKING NORTH.

5/18

M-19-41
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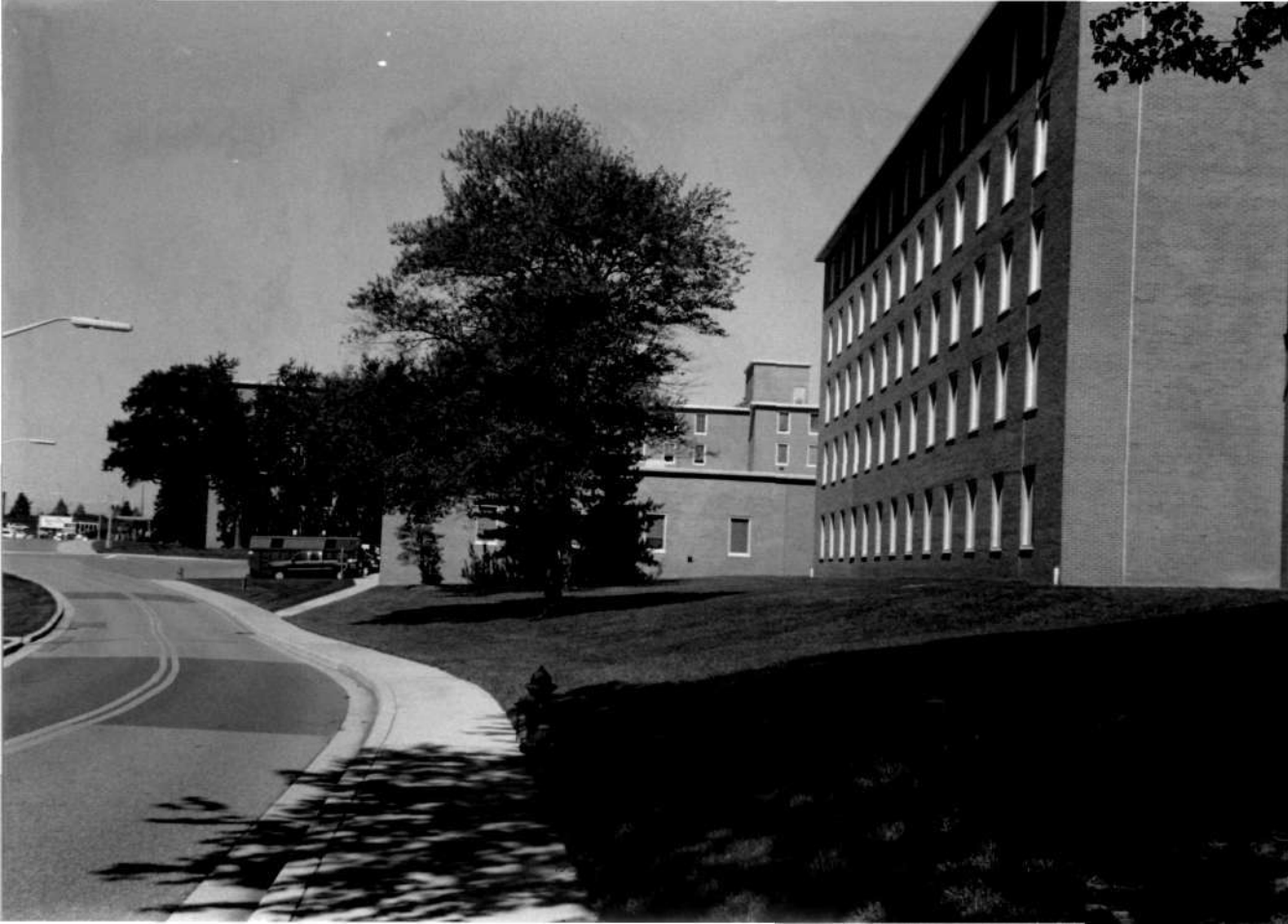
EAST AND SOUTH FACADES FROM
SOUTH EAST

6/18



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10/2006
MD SHPO
WEST FACADE AND DRIVEWAY
LOOKING NORTH - TWING & WAREHOUSE

7/18

M:19-41
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MONTGOMERY CO., MD
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10/2006
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WEST FACADE (MAIN ENTRANCE) AND
DRIVEWAY LOOKING SOUTH
TOWARD WATER TOWER
8/18

M: 19-41
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MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MD
10/2006
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WEST FACADE LOOKING EAST.

9/18


15

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SOUTH EAST

10/18

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NORTH FACADE, MAIN ENTRANCE
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11/18


1957

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10/2006
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MAIN ENTRANCE WITH CONNECTION
LOOKING SOUTHWEST.

12/18

M-19-91
ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION PLAQUE
MONTGOMERY CO., MD
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10/2006
MDSHPO
AEC ENTRANCE WITH DEDICATION

13/18

MD-19-41
ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION BLDG.
MONTGOMERY CO., MD
A. SEIDEL
10/2006
MDSHPO

AEC AUDITORIUM LOOKING AT WEST AND SOUTH FACADES FROM SOUTH WEST

14/18


EXIT

M:19-41
ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION BLDG.
MONTGOMERY CO., MD
A. PRENDEZ
10/2006
MD SHPO
REC. CAFETERIA LOOKING WEST AT
CHECKOUT COUNTERS.

15/18

M:19-41
ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION
MONTGOMERY CO., MD
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10/2006
MD SHPO
AEC CAFETERIA DINING ROOM
LOOKING NORTH.

16/18

M-19-41
ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION FILM
MONTGOMERY CO., MD
A. FRIMER
10/2006
MD SHPO
AEC ELEVATOR LOBBY NEAR
CAFETERIA LOOKING WEST.

17/18

M:19-41
ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION FILE
MONTGOMERY CO., MD.
A. PERINDER
10/2006
WDSAPO:
AEC ENTRANCE STAIRS NEAR
MAIN ENTRANCE - A WING

18/18