

PH0011 720

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:
COUNTY:
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

MAR 15 1974

1. NAME

COMMON:  
National Academy of Sciences

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
2101 Constitution Avenue, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN:  
Washington

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: Congressman  
Walter E. Fauntroy, D.C.

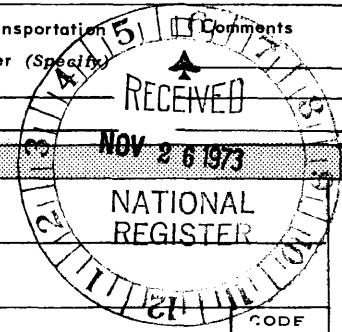
STATE District of Columbia	CODE 11	COUNTY: District of Columbia	CODE 001
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious	
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scientific	



4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:  
National Academy of Sciences

STREET AND NUMBER:  
2101 Constitution Avenue, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN:  
Washington

STATE:  
District of Columbia

CODE  
11

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:  
Recorder of Deeds

STREET AND NUMBER:  
6th & D Streets, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN:  
Washington

STATE:  
District of Columbia

CODE  
11

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: Proposed District of Columbia additions to the National Register of Historic Places recommended by the Joint Committee on Landmarks

DATE OF SURVEY: March 7, 1968  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
National Capital Planning Commission

STREET AND NUMBER:  
1325 G Street, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN:  
Washington

STATE:  
District of Columbia

CODE  
11

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The National Academy of Sciences building located in Foggy Bottom across from West Potomac Park near the Lincoln Memorial is an original interpretation of the neo-classical style. Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue designed the 1922-24 building consisting of the three story rectangular block with full basement, 260' along its east-west axis and 40' wide, and the three-story high cruciform shaped Great Hall, attached at the center of the north side of the rectangular block. Around the Great Hall were seven small, one- or two-story-high rooms. It was envisioned that wings would be added so that the building would be square with two light courts on either side of the Great Hall. In the 1960's the east and west sides of the square were added when wings, 35' wide and 140' long were attached to the north side of the original block. These two-story wings are connected to the Great Hall by passages which enclose two courtyards. In 1969-70 a large rectangular addition, approximately 155' long on its east-west axis and 100' long on its north-south axis was attached to the north side of the Great Hall. The three additions were designed by Harrison and Abramovitz.

The building is located on a rectangular lot, 520' wide on the east-west axis and 440' wide on the north-south axis. The lot is bound by Constitution Avenue on the south; 21st Street, N.W., on the east; C Street, N.W., on the north; and 22nd Street, N.W., on the west. Goodhue's rectangular building is approximately in the center of the lot, and the additions extend to the north. The north wall of the auditorium is close to the northern boundary of the lot. The 1922-24 rectangular building is on a raised marble terrace with marble retaining walls. Originally three rectangular reflecting pools were located in front of the main entrance on stepped terraces. These pools are now filled with earth. On the south, southeast, and southwest, the building is surrounded by wooded terraces landscaped by Charles Downing Lay of New York in consultation with Goodhue. Sunken parking ramps with marble retaining walls are located in the northeast and northwest corners of the lot. A parking area is located northwest of the building;

The terrace of Goodhue's building rests on 33 huge tubs of steel filled with concrete after being driven to bedrock. The building rests on 74 concrete piers, 5 feet square, sunk to bedrock. The foundations were required as the site had originally been a stream bed and tidal flat. The building has a steel frame faced with marble.

The exterior of Goodhue's building is much admired for its refined simplicity, its integration of architecture and sculpture, and its architect's original interpretation of the neo-classical style required by the building's role as a "frame" for the Lincoln Memorial. The neo-classical requirements did not apply to interior features and Goodhue's rich interiors enhanced by artistic decoration have eclectic features derived from Byzantine, medieval, and Renaissance architecture.

The main (south) facade suggests the neo-classical style due to its proportions and stylized detailing rather than in the employment of classical columns or in being specifically modeled on particular classic buildings. The nine bay facade faced with warm white, smooth ashlar Dover marble from New York is divided in three horizontal divisions consisting of foundations, central

(Continued on Form 10-300a)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |                                       |  |
|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |  |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1922-24; west wing 1962; east wing; 1965

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate) Auditorium, 1970.

- |  |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political           | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban-Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Science  | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture           | _____                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater             | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation      | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |   |  |  |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Joint Committee on Landmarks has designated the National Academy of Sciences at 2101 Constitution Avenue, N.W., a Category II Landmark of importance which contributes significantly to the cultural heritage and visual beauty of the District of Columbia. The National Academy of Sciences was incorporated by an act of Congress on March 3, 1863, to advise the Government on scientific matters, but did not have its own permanent headquarters until this building designed by Goodhue was erected in 1922-24. Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue's design is a free adaptation of the neo-classical style. The facade is one of extreme simplicity and refinement enlivened by bronze panels by Lee Lawrie. On both exterior and interior the building exhibits a unity of architecture and decorative arts. Sculpture by Lawrie, paintings by Albert Herter, and decorations on the dome by Hildreth Meiere are outstanding features.

After the Academy was founded in 1863, it was housed in the Smithsonian. During World War I the National Research Council was established as an entity of the Academy with the purpose of advising on the practical application of scientific discoveries. The Academy, itself, advises on theoretical matters. After the war, President Wilson, by an Executive Order signed in May 1918, made the Council permanent and in so doing increased the need for a permanent headquarters for the Academy and Council.

In 1919 the Carnegie Corporation of New York resolved that, if the Academy could purchase a building site through other means, the Corporation would finance construction of the building and endow the Academy and Council. The U.S. Commission of Fine Arts informally suggested Goodhue as the architect of the building. The Academy's building committee chairman, George Ellery Hale, was a notable solar physicist and an admirer of Goodhue. Hale played an important role in the planning of the building.

Goodhue hoped that a site would be chosen away from the city's monumental central core so that he would not be hampered by restrictions to design the building to conform to the neo-classical mode. Goodhue (1869-1924) preferred the Gothic style as he disliked rigorous symmetry and believed that columns should be structural rather than ornamental. The site purchased, however, was near the Lincoln Memorial, and Goodhue was persuaded to design the within the neo-classical restrictions. He labeled the resulting design "God-knows-what-kind-of-Classic." His formalistic design suggests the classic spirit but without copying.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Atlas and Vertical Files. Washingtoniana Collection. D.C. Public Library.

Brockett, P. "National Academy of Sciences". The Open Court. XL (April 1926), pp. 193-203.

Caemmerer, A.P. Washington: The National Capital. Washington, 1932, pp. 493-497.

Green, C.M. Washington: Capital City, 1879-1950. II. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963, pp. 293-294.

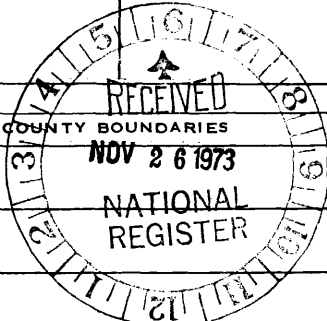
**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		38 ° 53' 34 "	77 ° 02' 53 "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 5.340 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
T. Robins Brown, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION: National Capital Planning Commission DATE: August 1973

STREET AND NUMBER:  
1325 G Street, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN: Washington STATE: District of Columbia CODE: 11

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name X James H. Banks

Title Assistant to the Mayor for Housing Programs

Date 10 1973

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Ewert Allen Connally  
~~Associate Director, National Historic Preservation Services~~  
Associate Director, Professional Services

Date MAR 15 1974

ATTEST: [Signature]  
Keeper of The National Register

Date 3.14.74



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
COUNTY	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
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	MAR 15 1974

(Number all entries)

**7. Description - National Academy of Sciences**

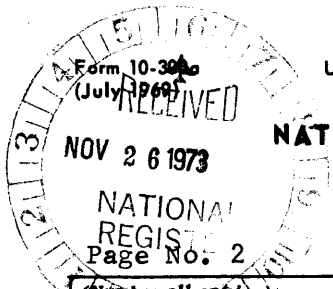
section, and attic. The foundation, faced with large marble panels, rises to the level of the first story window sills, but visually is partially obscured by the retaining wall of the terrace. The foundation has pairs of marble-grill-covered openings in each bay except the center bay where marble steps lead to the main entrance. The central section's key features are its large expanses of wall, the main entrance, and eight bays of windows. The walls are slightly battered and are laid in irregular courses of smooth ashlar. The entrance, in the center bay, is surrounded by plain marble trim surmounted by a marble false pediment with sculpture by Lee Lawrie symbolizing the evolution of man. Above the entrance is a three part, rectangular, bronze framed window and on either side of the entrance are rectangular, marble-grill-covered openings. The entrance and window above it are flanked by low relief pilasters, as are the three bays of recessed windows on either side of the entrance. Each of these window bays contains a first and a second story, bronze framed window separated by a bronze spandrel. Lee Lawrie designed the low relief scenes in the spandrels depicting the Founders of Sciences. The bronze framed windows of the end bays are not recessed and do not have bronze spandrels. A simple full entablature with a frieze with an inscription in Greek separates the central section and the attic. The low attic story, also faced in smooth ashlar laid in irregular courses, has 18 equally spaced rectangular openings behind marble grills. Along the eaves of the low copper hipped roof is a bronze cheneau, or cresting, with owls and lynxes with serpents at the corners. This was designed by Lee Lawrie. Lawrie also designed the handsome lighting fixtures flanking the entrance. Each has a green marble pedestal topped by a woman's bust carrying an electric globe.

The later wings' exterior design is modeled on Goodhue's design. Windows have bronze frames. Unfortunately the deposit of Dover marble had been depleted so that the wings are faced with Vermont Imperial Danby marble. This white marble with gray veins is much colder in appearance than the warm toned Dover marble.

Goodhue's building has a central vestibule and entrance hall leading into the cruciform-shaped Great Hall. Originally there were seven exhibition rooms around the Great Hall, but these were converted into office space during World War II and in recent years have been altered by the attachment of the wings. East of the entrance hall is the original lecture and conference room. To the west is the library and the reading room. The Great Hall originally served as the assembly hall but now serves as a reception area and as a circulation area. From it one enters the new wings and the auditorium. The second and third floors of the older building contain offices and the basement originally contained the kitchen and cafeteria. The new wings contain offices.

Not only did Lee Lawrie design exterior sculptural decoration, but he also designed door knobs and locks, the bronze main doors, some interior lighting fixtures, and the bronze and glass screens at the ends of the entrance hall. First floor rooms in the older section of the building have rich decorative features including stone fireplaces, wood panelling and paintings.

(Continued on Form 10-300a, page 2)



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7. Description - Continued

The most impressive room is the Great Hall with its 60' high pendentive dome covered with Gustovina acoustic tiles decorated by Hildreth Meiere. Scenes on the dome and pedentives symbolize the elements, the planets, divisions of science, and historic discoveries. Originally the Foucault pendulum, now in the Smithsonian's Museum of History and Technology, was suspended from the dome. In the east, west, and south arms of the Great Hall are galleries supported by Verdantique marble columns with capitals of cream lens stone. Above the entrance to the auditorium at the north is a painting by Albert Herter showing Prometheus. The undecorated walls are covered with Akoustolith, an advanced acoustic material in 1922. The floor of gray-green slate is framed by rows of blue slate flanked with narrow strips of Utah light bird's-eye marble.

The main facade of the 1922-24 building is unaltered and most original interior decorative features have been preserved. A number of pieces of furniture which were especially designed for the building are still there.

8. Significance

Ground was broken for the building in the spring of 1922, and the corner stone was laid on October 30, 1922. The building was completed in April 1924 and its architect died three days before it was dedicated by Calvin Coolidge on April 28, 1924.

Originally the building contained exhibition space as well as office and meeting space for the Academy and Council. During World War II the exhibit rooms were converted to offices. The Academy's and Council's functions have continued to expand and in 1962 the west wing was added to provide additional office space. This was supplemented in 1965 when the east wing opened. In 1970 the auditorium was dedicated. These additions were designed by Harrison and Abramovitz. Wallace Harrison was on the original team that designed the building.

9. Bibliography

- Hale, G.E. "A National Focus of Science and Research" Scribner's Magazine. LXXII (November 1922), pp. 515-521.
- "The National Academy of Sciences," Through the Ages. II (February 1925).
- National Capital Planning Commission. Landmarks File.
- Swales, F.S. Pencil Points. V (June 1924), pp. 42-56.
- Whitaker, C.H. ed. Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue: Architect and Master of Many Arts. New York: Press of A.I.A., 1925.

(Continued on Form 10-300a, Page 3)

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INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

STATE	
COUNTY	
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(Number all entries)

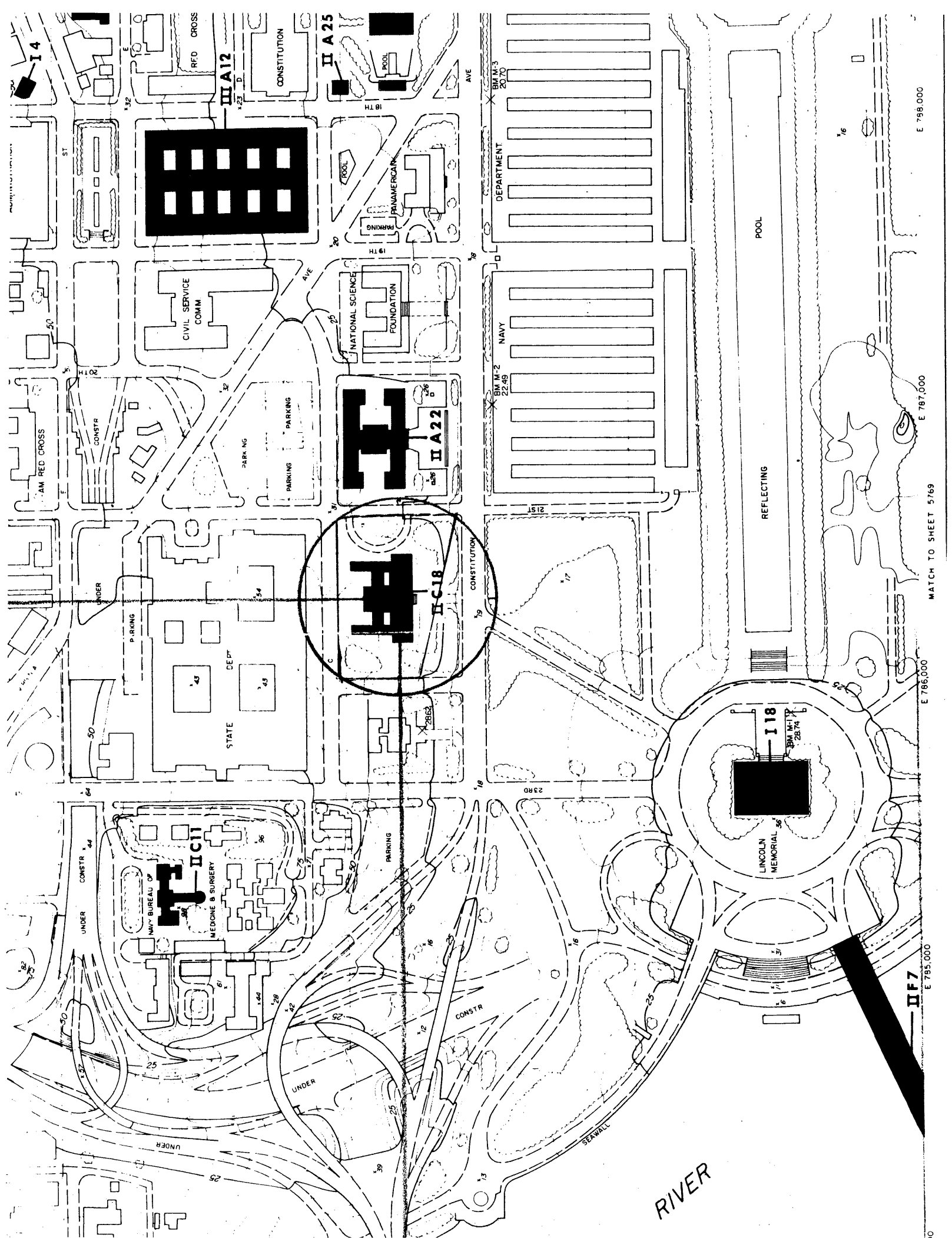
9. Bibliography (continued)

(White, J.) A History and Descriptive Guide: The Academy Building. April 1971.

Withey, H.F. and E.R. Withey. Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased). Los Angeles. Hennessey & Ingalls, 1970, pp. 239-240.

W.P.A. Washington: City and Capital. I. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1937, pp. 522-526.





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MATCH TO SHEET 5769  
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