

National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: John F. Kennedy Federal Building

Other names/site number: JFK Federal Building

Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

### 2. Location

Street & number: 15 New Sudbury Street

City or town: Boston State: MA County: Suffolk

Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,


I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.


In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national  statewide  local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A  B  C  D

	9/28/2021
Signature of certifying official/Title: <span style="float: right;">Date</span>	
<u>Federal Preservation Officer, U.S. General Services Administration</u>	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

In my opinion, the property <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> meets <input type="checkbox"/> does not meet the National Register criteria.	
	September 22, 2021
Signature of commenting official: <span style="float: right;">Date</span>	
Title: <u>SHPO</u>	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

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#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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#### 5. Classification

##### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

##### Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Government/Government Office

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**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Government/Government Office

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Modern/Transitional

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Concrete, Stone, Glass

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

The John F. Kennedy (JFK) Federal Building, located at 15 New Sudbury Street in Boston, Suffolk County, Massachusetts, occupies a 4.5-acre site bounded by Cambridge Street to the southwest, New Sudbury Street to the northwest, and Congress Street to the northeast. The site adjoins City Hall Plaza, the large pedestrian plaza that is the focal point of Boston's Government Center, connecting the JFK Federal Building to Boston's City Hall, to the southeast. The approximately one-million-square-foot building was constructed between 1963 and 1966 and consists of two primary components: twin, 26-story towers (high-rise section) and an attached, four-story low-rise section. It has served throughout its history as a federal office building. The JFK Federal Building embodies architectural concepts of the Modern Movement, which emphasized simplicity of design and form, minimal ornamentation, and use of modern materials and innovative technology. The building is representative of a common Modern form, with an office tower set immediately adjacent to a low, rectangular building in a landscaped plaza. The JFK Federal Building is an outstanding example of the work of The Architects Collaborative (TAC), led by Walter Gropius, which was responsible for its design, and is an exceptional example of modernist concepts applied to a federal office building. The historic property includes four contributing resources: the building, consisting of the attached high-rise and low-rise sections, the site, consisting of the plaza and associated features, and two objects, sculptures

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commissioned for the property and installed in 1966 and 1968. The property retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association from its period of significance, 1966-1968, the dates of the building's completion and the installation of the second sculpture.

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## **Narrative Description**

### **Setting**

The John F. Kennedy (JFK) Federal Building is located at 15 New Sudbury Street and is bounded by Cambridge Street to the southwest, New Sudbury Street to the northwest, and Congress Street to the northeast, as well as City Hall Plaza to the southeast. The property lies in the center of downtown Boston, between the North End and the Waterfront to the north and east, the Financial District to the south, and Beacon Hill and the West End to the west. The site adjoins City Hall Plaza, an eight-acre terraced public space (Photo 1). The pedestrian plaza, paved in red brick with concrete and stone accents, connects the JFK Federal Building on the north and Boston City Hall on the south. City Hall Plaza is in turn part of the larger Government Center, a 52-acre urban renewal project developed in the 1960s that includes the JFK Federal Building, Boston City Hall, and the Massachusetts States Services Center, as well as several other contemporaneous commercial and government office buildings.

### **SITE**

The JFK Federal Building sits on a 4.5-acre rectangular parcel that is oriented on a diagonal to the cardinal points. At the southwest end of the parcel are paired towers offset to the northwest and southeast and raised on pilotis. This high-rise section of the building is connected by a short three-story connector to the long, low-rise section, which extends along the parcel to the northeast (Photo 2). Approximately 55 percent of the JFK Federal Building parcel is comprised of a designed landscape which includes plazas, walls, paved walkways, stairs, exhaust vents, driveways, planting beds, plantings, an interior courtyard, and other lesser features. The towers rise on pilotis from a roughly square, raised plaza surfaced with dark colored granite pavers laid in concrete in a grid pattern, reflecting the structural grid of the towers (Photo 3). These pavers were installed in 2004 when the high-rise plaza was repaired. Historic photographs indicate that the original bluestone pavers, which were removed in 1974 and replaced with terrazzo, were of a smaller dimension than the current pavers and arranged in an opposite tonal scheme of dark color field with light color accent. The plaza continues at a lower level along the south side of the low-rise section where the paving is red brick laid in a running bond pattern, matching that of adjoining City Hall Plaza (Photo 4).

Low walls of polished grey granite, identical to the cladding of the tower pilotis and basement level cladding of the low-rise section, define the site at the northeast and around the raised plaza at the southwest. The walls are composed of one or two stacked granite panels, depending on the height of the wall, and topped with a pitched coping of matching granite and aluminum railings. Light fixtures are inset into the granite panels at several locations along the walls. According to original drawings, a document box is embedded in the plaza wall at the west side of the site. Poured in place concrete stairs with granite slab steps and aluminum handrails are located north

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of the towers, north of the connector, at the southeast corner of the low-rise and fully wrapping the south and east sides of the raised plaza adjacent to the towers (Photos 5, 4 and 1).

Two large conical features, part of the building's original mechanical system, are located on the raised plaza adjacent to the southwest elevation of the high-rise section (Photo 6). Approximately 8 feet tall and 13 feet around at the base, one serves for air intake and the other exhaust. Both are connected to the building's mechanical systems by way of tunnels running under the plaza. A third smaller conical feature is located northeast of the connector and is an exhaust for the building's emergency generators. These conical features are composed of tilted vertical granite panels arrayed in a circle. The two larger features have exposed aggregate concrete brackets at the base of panels that support a polished granite bench arranged in a continuous ring around the cone shape. The smaller feature, situated in a planting bed, has no appurtenances.

Several modern punched metal and concrete benches and concrete bench and table combinations located on the raised plaza adjacent to the high-rise section. These features are not original to the property (Photo 3).

While the southeast and southwest sides of the site are dominated the by the paved plaza, the northwest and northeast sides are characterized by a multiplicity of features. Here the site is bordered by New Sudbury Street on the northwest side and Congress Street on the northeast side and by public sidewalks. A semicircular entry drive leads from New Sudbury Street to the entrance to the low-rise section. Another drive, also entered from New Sudbury Street, provides access to the loading dock area located under the low-rise section and a small surface parking area between the building and the street. Arrayed along the New Sudbury Street edge of the property are a small hipped roofed guard house and three boom gates, securing the vehicular access points. These all appear to be relatively recent additions to the site. A modern playground is located at the east end of the site and screened from New Sudbury and Congress streets by a concrete wall. A low pipe railing fence is adjacent to the public sidewalk on the northeast end of the site. The pipe railing, which is not original, is also present at several less visible locations, extending the protection of handrails/guardrails where the original installation no longer meets code or providing separation between public sidewalks or circulation areas and landscaping.

On the northeast side of the site, a vehicular entrance to the basement level of the low-rise section is accessed via a short drive from Congress Street. A non-historic hipped-roof guard house and boom gates secure this access point. Low shrubs line the base of the building, and a grass panel extends out to the sidewalk.

A series of round concrete bollards delineates the southeastern boundary of the site in front of the low-rise section (Photo 4) while steel tubes and granite rectangles of various sizes serve as bollards on the northwestern side of the site. These security features were added following the events of September 11, 2001.

The planting areas as defined in the original drawings appear to be largely intact today with minor exceptions where sidewalks were modified or added. Originally specified plant material included trees: Ginkgo, Honey Locust, Oak, and Linden; shrubs: Holly and Yew; and ground

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cover: Winter Creeper (*euonymus*), Spurge, and Periwinkle. Present day planting locations include a tree well located in the raised plaza southeast of the connector between the towers and low-rise section, sidewalk-adjacent planting strips around the raised plaza, planting areas defining the entrance drive, loading dock, and surface parking north of the low-rise section, a strip with mature trees and shrubs at the northeast end of the site, planting strips adjacent to the south elevation of the low-rise (Photo 4), and the interior courtyard of the low-rise (Photo 8). The modern playground, located north of the east end of the low-rise section, presumably replaced several Japanese Yews in a lawn setting, shown on the original plans. Significant plant material, like the specimen Ginkgo assigned to the interior courtyard or the Honey Locust meant for the tree well, are not extant. However, several of the Lindens and Oaks north and east of the low-rise section are present. Additionally, some of the Wintercreeper and Periwinkle appears to have persisted in the interior courtyard.

The site, a designed landscape containing many original features, contributes to the historic property. Alterations to the site since 1968 have been limited. Features contributing to the site include: the plaza areas, the common brick pavers in front of the low-rise section, the polished granite-clad site walls, the three conical mechanical features, the granite and concrete stairs, the aluminum railings, and the planting areas. Noncontributing features include the two guard houses, the boom gates, the playground, the bollards, the pipe railings, the various punched metal and concrete benches and bench and table combinations, and the high-rise plaza pavers, as these are non-original alterations.

The site is one contributing site.

### **OBJECTS (SCULPTURES)**

Two sculptures are present on the site: a 2.5 ton, 16-foot tall, abstract, bronze sculpture by Dmitri Hadzi, titled *Thermopylae*, is located on the plaza adjacent to the southeast elevation of the high-rise towers; and a 12-foot by 5-foot by 14-foot abstract sculpture composed of welded copper sheets on a steel armature by Herbert Ferber, titled *Full Circle: Profile in Courage*, is located in the interior courtyard of the low-rise section (Photos 7 and 8). The sculptures were commissioned for the site and were installed in 1966 and 1968, respectively.

The two sculptures are contributing objects.

### **BUILDING**

#### **Exterior Description**

The overall plan of the JFK Federal Building is irregular. The two conjoined, rectangular towers are located at the southwest end of the building and are offset at the northwest and southeast elevations to allow for maximum sun exposure to interior offices (Photo 9). Each of the towers measures approximately 185 feet by 60 feet, with the long sides facing southwest and northeast toward Cambridge and Congress streets (Photo 10). The towers are 392 feet tall. A three-story connector with a glass-enclosed first level connects the northeast tower, at its northeast elevation, to the low-rise section (Photo 3). The low-rise section is rectangular in plan and is oriented perpendicular to the high-rise section and parallel to New Sudbury Street (Photo 11). The overall dimensions of the low-rise section are 147 feet (along Congress Street) by 446 feet, 8 inches

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(along New Sudbury Street and the plaza) by 105 feet, 8 inches tall. The low-rise section features an interior courtyard at its center, measuring approximately 123 feet by 43 feet (Photo 8).

The high-rise section and connector are steel frame while the low-rise section is of reinforced concrete flat slab construction. The exterior ground story walls of the low-rise section and the podium supporting the northeastern tower and its plaza are faced with polished granite (Photo 12), as are the two-story, exterior pilotis that define the lobby arcade of the high-rise section (Photo 13). The first through fourth stories of the low-rise section and the third through twenty-fourth stories of the high-rise section are clad in pre-cast reinforced concrete curtain wall panels divided vertically by precast concrete “fins.” Horizontal concrete spandrels and uniform ribbons of fixed windows containing clear glass panes visually divide the stories of both building sections (Photo 1). Narrow horizontal sub-spandrels that extend along the tops of each band of windows result in visual interruption of the concrete fins at each story (Photo 11). Windows in the ground story of the low-rise section’s elevations are less uniformly placed, with narrow openings and clear, fixed panes.

Each concrete curtain wall panel measures approximately 12 feet, 8 inches tall by 9 feet, 8 inches wide (the vertical fins separating the panels are spaced 9 feet, 8 inches apart, on-center). Each panel contains two windows. The on-center measurement between the center of each panel and the adjacent fin is 4 feet, 10 inches. The grid that is formed on the exterior of the building by the repetition of the 4-foot, 10-inch dimension is also reflected in the placement of pilotis in the arcade and the columns on the first floor of the interior, as well as in the flooring patterns throughout the first floor of the building. The grid theme is also reflected in the paving pattern of the terrace outside of the high-rise section (Photo 14).

Aluminum louvers distinguish the top two stories of the high-rise towers. The precast concrete fins dividing the curtain wall panels in the lower stories continue through and extend three feet above the tops of the louvers (Photo 2). The roof parapet of the low-rise section consists of solid precast concrete panels. The precast concrete fins from the stories below continue through and extend two feet above the top of the parapet (Photo 11).

Exterior stair rails, window and door trim, and hardware throughout the building are anodized aluminum finished in a medium gray tone that contrasts with the white concrete of the building’s walls (Photo 5). The precast concrete panels and windows at the corners of the building are rounded, resulting in a streamlined aesthetic (Photos 12 and 13).

The entrances to the high-rise section are situated beneath arcades formed by square, granite-clad pilotis that extend up two stories in height. The main lobby elevations, recessed beneath the arcades, feature two stories of clear, polished plate glass with anodized aluminum detailing (Photo 14). Narrow plate glass walls occupy the approximately 17-foot-wide space between the two high-rise towers in the southeast and northwest elevations (Photo 15). These walls extend the entire height of the building and create a delicate visual connection between the towers, while providing natural light to the interior circulation core at each floor of the high-rise section. The result of the arcade (a gateway of sorts between the exterior and interior spaces), the two-story, glass-enclosed lobby, and the glass walls between the offset towers is a feeling of unification

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between exterior and interior spaces, reflecting an important concept in Modern building design. The interior courtyard in the low-rise section of the building, the glass-enclosed corridor between the high and low-rise sections of the building, and the terraces and plazas surrounding the entire building further unite interior and exterior elements.

An off-center, recessed entrance in the southeast elevation of the low-rise section, which provides access to the first low-rise lobby, is emphasized by flanking precast concrete fins that are approximately twice as wide as the fins that divide the curtain wall panels throughout the building. The fins also project forward from the elevation. A cantilevered concrete roof shelters the entrance at the ground level. The entrance is accessed by two tiers of granite stairs, separated by a granite landing. Polished plate glass comprises the first story elevation of the southeast entrance, with alternating rows of tinted, tempered glass and ribbons of windows containing clear, tempered glass in the upper stories.

A protruding second story along a portion of the southeast elevation of the low-rise section, to the southwest of the recessed entrance, creates a covered exterior pathway that shelters visitors (Photo 11). The rounded corners of this projection mirror the treatment of the corners throughout the exterior of the building (Photos 12 and 13).

A recessed entrance in the northwest elevation of the low-rise section features a similar compositional treatment as the southeast entrance, with wide flanking fins (Photo 16). Polished plate glass comprises the first story elevation of the northwest entrance, with alternating rows of tinted, tempered glass and ribbons of windows containing clear, tempered glass in the upper stories. A smaller pedestrian entrance and three vehicular entrances that provide access to a ground-floor loading dock area are also located in the northwest elevation of the low-rise section.

The only opening in the northeast elevation of the low-rise section is a garage entrance in the basement level. A glass corridor connecting the low-rise and high-rise sections is centered in the southwest elevation of the low-rise section.

The interior courtyard in the low-rise section of the building features three different exterior wall treatments (Photo 8). Concrete curtain wall panels are used in all stories; however, only the second and third stories of the southeast and northwest elevations and the third story of the southwest and northeast elevations mirror the precise panel and window design of the majority of the building's exterior. The lower levels of the southwest and northeast courtyard elevations feature two-story tall, clear, tempered glass panels divided vertically by continuous, two-story tall, concrete fins. Modern pavers, a combination of light red octagonal and square pavers with accent pavers in a light grey, reflect the dimensions of the façade panels around the courtyard. The original square exposed aggregate, cast-in-place concrete tree well remains, but contains a Japanese Maple, rather than a Ginkgo as originally specified. The sculpture, *Full Circle: Profile in Courage*, is located in the center of the courtyard.

A glass-enclosed corridor connects the high-rise and low-rise sections. The southeast and northwest elevations of the corridor mimic the design of the high-rise lobby elevations, featuring two stories of clear, polished plate glass with anodized aluminum detailing (Photos 3 and 5). A

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third story, using the precast concrete panel and ribbon window design of the majority of the building, rests atop the glass corridor. The concrete, third-story enclosure resting atop two stories of glass creates a visual effect of a floating upper story. The third floor of the connector is supported on two 36-inch deep steel girders spanning approximately 50 feet and resting on sliding bronze bearings at one end to permit relative movement between the low-rise and high-rise sections of the building in response to temperature changes and deflection of the tower in high winds.

### **Interior Description**

The main, two-story lobby is located on the first floor of the high-rise section. Three elevator bays in the lobby provide access to office and courtroom spaces in the third through 24th floors of the towers, as well as the ground floor of the building. Storage and building support spaces are located in the basement and ground floors of the high-rise section. Mechanical spaces occupy the two uppermost floors. The low-rise section contains a garage and building support spaces in the basement; building support, storage, light industrial, and office spaces, a mailroom, a fitness center, and a childcare center on the ground floor; a lobby, a lab/clinic, and offices on the first floor; a cafeteria, conference center, and offices on the second floor; and offices, conference/training rooms, and light industrial spaces in the third and fourth floors. Building support spaces generally occupy core spaces throughout the building, with office and other functional workspaces occupying the perimeter of the building to maximize sun exposure. The interior courtyard in the low-rise section also provides natural light to its lobby and other spaces. Glass walls that extend the height of the high-rise section, connecting the offset towers in the northwest and southeast elevations, provide natural light to the central circulation core of the high-rise section. Office, courtroom, conference room, and training spaces throughout the building feature carpeting, sheetrock walls, moveable partitions, and dropped ceilings with acoustical tiles and fluorescent lighting. The majority of the finishes and features in tenant spaces are not original as the interior has been subject to multiple rehabilitation projects undertaken in response to wear and changing tenant needs. Restrooms are generally located near vertical circulation cores in both the low-rise and high-rise sections.

#### *First Floor*

The main lobby of the JFK Building occupies the entire first floor of the high-rise section. The lobby measures approximately 95 feet (along the northwest-southeast axis) by 105 feet (along the southwest-northeast axis). The floor to ceiling height of the main lobby is 29 feet. Two-story, square columns clad in polished granite panels define a grid pattern throughout the space. The columns are identical in size, materials, and spacing to the columns that form the exterior arcade, which in combination with the two-story glass walls of the lobby, results in a unity between the exterior and interior spaces. The columns in both the arcade and the lobby interior are spaced approximately 19 feet to 21 feet apart along the northwest-southeast axis and approximately 23 feet to 27 feet apart along the southwest-northeast axis. These dimensions generally correspond to the horizontal dimensions of the curtain wall panels that make up the exterior walls of the building; the curtain wall panels are 9 feet, 8 inches wide, and the columns are spaced along a grid based on multiples of that dimension. The result of this design is a feeling of order and sophistication.

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The floor of the main lobby is covered with flame-finished granite pavers. A grid pattern in the floor delineates and emphasizes the grid pattern of the columns. Rectangles of dark granite pavers contrast with the surrounding lighter-colored pavers and visually connect the columns.

Three elevator bays comprised of thirteen pedestrian elevators and one freight elevator dominate the lobby space (Photo 17). The elevator bays are located slightly off center, toward the northwest end of the lobby. This off-center arrangement allows for a wide, open pedestrian corridor at the southeast end of the lobby. Polished granite panels clad the walls of the elevator bays. An inscription in the southeast end wall of the central elevator bay reads “Let the word go forth from this time and place, to friend and foe alike, that the torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans – born in this century, tempered by war, disciplined by a hard and bitter peace, proud of our ancient heritage – and unwilling to witness or permit the slow undoing of those human rights to which this nation has always been committed, and to which we are committed today at home and around the world. Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe, in order to assure the survival and the success of liberty. This much we pledge – and more” (President John F. Kennedy, inaugural address, January 20, 1961) (Photo 18). This is not an original feature; it was added when the original tile walls of the lobby were replaced with granite panels in 1994.

Stairwells are centered in the northwest and southeast walls of the lobby. The stairwells occupy the approximately 17-foot-wide space between the two high-rise towers that is defined on the exterior of the building by narrow plate glass walls extending the entire height of the building.

The lobby ceiling is covered with plaster and sheetrock. Decorative, black, rectangular upright fixtures are suspended from the ceiling around each column, which highlights the adjacent walls and ceilings, further emphasizing the grid motif.

The floor and ceiling materials of the high-rise lobby are also found in the glass-enclosed corridor that connects the high-rise and low-rise sections (Photo 19). The focal point of this transitional space is a mural on the northeast interior wall, above the pedestrian corridor. Robert Motherwell executed the mural, titled *New England Elegy*, in 1966 and it was installed the same year (Photo 20). The abstract impressionist painting represents a bereavement for President John F. Kennedy’s assassination. It consists predominantly of irregular black and white shapes and has a sky-blue lower border and a horizontal yellow line through the center.

The corridor continues beyond the glass enclosure and into the low-rise section by way of a low-pitched ramp that measures approximately 37 feet long. At the top of the ramp, the corridor continues for approximately another 45 feet. A 2,369-square-foot laboratory and clinic space, general office space, mechanical shafts, restrooms, and stairwells flank the ramp and corridor to the northwest and southeast.

At the northeast end, the corridor opens up into an escalator lobby (Photo 21). The escalator lobby features resilient tile floors, a dropped ceiling with acoustical ceiling tiles and fluorescent lighting, and sheetrock walls. A grid pattern in the floor mirrors that of the main lobby floor,

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continuing the rectangular grid theme. Two elevators, providing access to the second through fourth floors of the low-rise section, are located at the west corner of the escalator lobby. Stairwells and office space are located to the northwest of the escalator lobby, and additional office space is located to the southeast of the lobby.

A large, glass-walled interior courtyard is located just beyond the escalator lobby. The southwest wall of the interior courtyard forms the northeast wall of the lobby, providing natural light to the lobby space. Narrow corridors illuminated by natural light from the courtyard extend along the southeast and northwest walls of the courtyard, connecting the escalator lobby to the Low-rise lobby (Photo 22). General office space occupies the areas to the northwest and southeast of the corridors.

The corridors open into the lobby of the low-rise section at the northeast end of the courtyard (Photo 23). The lobby is an open, rectangular, two-story space. It is one of the most well-preserved spaces in the building and reflective of the original design intent and mid-century Modernist aesthetic. The focal point of the lobby is an elegant, open stairway featuring precast concrete treads, a stainless-steel baluster, and a hardwood handrail (Photo 24). This stairway is located approximately 6 feet from and parallel to the northeast wall of the courtyard. The stairway provides access to the second-story mezzanine that surrounds the lobby waiting area. An elevator bay clad in granite panels defines the northeast edge of the low-rise lobby space. The elevator bay features rounded corners, mirroring the treatment of the corners on the exterior of the building. An inscription in the southwest wall of the elevator bay reads, "Ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country" (President John F. Kennedy). This is not an original feature; it was added when the original tile walls of the lobby were replaced with granite panels in 1994. Resilient tile floors in the low-rise lobby feature a grid pattern identical to that in the escalator lobby and main lobby. Natural light pours into the low-rise lobby through the glass courtyard walls.

The entrance in the southeast elevation of the low-rise building provides public access to the low-rise lobby from the exterior of the building. An entrance vestibule is located to the southeast of the lobby. An additional elevator bay, restrooms, and stairwells are located immediately northeast of the low-rise lobby. Office space occupies the remainder of the space on this floor, along the perimeter of the building to the southeast, northeast, and northwest of the lobby.

The floor to ceiling heights of the first through fourth floors of the low-rise section are 12 feet, 8 inches, except on the first floor, low-rise lobby. The general layout of spaces on the first through fourth floors of the low-rise section has changed little since 1966.

### *Basement*

The floor to ceiling height of the basement for the entire building is 14 feet. The walls are painted concrete block and the floors are vinyl tile in pedestrian areas and concrete in parking areas.

The basement of the low-rise section functions as a parking garage. Parking spaces occupy the majority of the perimeter and center of the rectangular space. Two elevator bays interrupt the

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central parking area, one near the northeast end of the space and one near the southwest end. A print shop originally occupied the area surrounding the northeast elevator bay; however, this area has been converted to parking spaces. The southwest elevator bay also contains a stairwell. An additional stairwell is located along the northwest wall of the space near the north corner of the building. A building support room measuring 790 square feet occupies the north corner. A freight elevator pit that services the second-floor cafeteria are located along the southeast wall of the space. The vehicular entrance to the garage is located in the northeast elevation, facing Congress Street.

The basement of the high-rise section functions primarily as building support space, with some storage, office, and light industrial usage. A pedestrian corridor leads into this portion of the basement from the west corner of the adjacent parking area of the low-rise section. The area to the southeast of the corridor is occupied by 1,595 square feet of office space, 1,233 square feet of light industrial space, and 2,639 square feet of storage space. The area to the northwest of the corridor is occupied by 298 square feet of light industrial space, and 1916 square feet of storage space. A single elevator, a stairwell, and a restroom are located at the southwest end of the corridor. Approximately 27,800 square feet of open building support space occupies the remainder of the area located beneath the high-rise towers.

#### *Ground Floor*

Below grade, the ground floor is continuous between the low- and high-rise sections. The floor to ceiling height of the ground floor for the entire building is 12 feet. The walls are painted concrete block and sheetrock and the floors are predominantly vinyl tile. The dropped ceiling contains acoustical ceiling tiles and fluorescent lighting.

The ground floor of the low-rise section generally consists of storage, office, light industrial, fitness center, daycare, and mailroom spaces arranged along an off-center corridor that runs from northeast to southwest. The ground floor of the low-rise section originally featured two parallel corridors, connected at the northeast end to form a long U shape; however, the rooms along the northwest corridor were enlarged and currently occupy the area where the corridor was located. The room sizes and shapes on the ground floor are irregular. A secondary corridor wraps around the elevator bay near the northeast end of the space. Restrooms are located immediately adjacent to the elevator bay and within the area that the secondary corridor encircles. A 6,095-square foot fitness center occupies the north corner of the floor. Building support spaces and two stairwells are located immediately southwest of the fitness center. A trucking area occupies approximately 5,239 square feet of space along the northwest wall, adjacent to the building support area. Three vehicular bays in the northwest elevation of the building provide access to this area. A mailroom occupying 572 square feet is situated across the corridor from the trucking area. A childcare center occupying approximately 6,280 square feet of space is located immediately adjacent to the trucking area. An entrance in the northwest elevation of the low-rise section, adjacent to the childcare center, opens into a small lobby containing escalators (Photo 25). An elevator bay and stairwell are located immediately adjacent to the lobby.

The corridor jogs to the northwest near the junction of the low-rise and high-rise sections. A 4,732-square-foot storage area occupies transitional space between the low and high-rise

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sections. This room originally functioned as a GSA self-serve store, where GSA employees could acquire office supplies.

The corridor continues to the southwest and culminates in an area of the high-rise section that contains three elevator bays comprised of thirteen pedestrian elevators and one freight elevator that service all of the floors above. The remainder of the ground floor space in the high-rise section contains building support and storage space.

#### *Low-Rise – Second Floor*

The second floor of the low-rise section is similar in layout to the first floor, with a central escalator, courtyard, and low-rise lobby mezzanine. Offices, a conference room, and a cafeteria occupy the perimeter of the floor. Building support spaces, including elevators, stairwells, and restrooms, are located to the southwest and northwest of the escalator lobby. The cafeteria is situated at the south corner of the floor. The cafeteria has been modernized since opening, and finishes currently include a tile floor, tile and sheetrock walls, a dropped ceiling consisting of acoustical ceiling tiles, and fluorescent lighting. A 4,830-square-foot conference center is located to the immediate northeast of the cafeteria. An additional 657-square-foot conference room is located near the northeast end of the floor. General office space occupies the remainder of the floor.

#### *Low-Rise – Third and Fourth Floors*

The third and fourth floors of the low-rise section primarily contain office space. Building support spaces such as elevators, stairwells, and restrooms are located directly above spaces of the same function on the first and second floors. Conference rooms are located near the southwest and northeast ends of the third floor and occupy 929 square feet and 701 square feet respectively. A radio room occupies the west corner of the fourth floor, immediately adjacent to a conference room that extends along most of the southwest wall. Workshops occupy 888 square feet of space on the fourth floor to the immediate southwest of the courtyard. A fitness center, secure processing area, and locker rooms occupy 2,112 square feet of space on the fourth floor to the immediate southeast of the courtyard.

#### *High-Rise – Third through 26<sup>th</sup> Floors*

The floor to ceiling heights of the third through twenty-fourth floors of the high-rise section are 12 feet, 8 inches. The 25<sup>th</sup> floor is two stories tall, measuring 37 feet in height, and contains mechanical equipment. The vertical circulation core, consisting of elevator bays, stairwells, and restrooms, is located at the center of each floor (Photo 26). Office space occupies the majority of the remaining space on each floor. A 2,243-square-foot courtroom is located in the south corner of the third floor. The finishes in the courtroom are similar to those in offices throughout the building (carpet, acoustical ceiling panels, drywall, and fluorescent light fixtures).

The building, composed of connected high-rise and low-rise sections, is one contributing building.

#### **Alterations**

For the first few decades of its existence, only minimal alterations were made to the JFK

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Federal Building and those occurred primarily in the exterior spaces. After the Boston City Hall was completed in 1969, the final work on the adjoining public plaza was undertaken. During construction, the north section of the plaza adjacent to the JFK Federal Building was used for parking and construction equipment, but afterward that section of the plaza was raised to its current height, terraces installed, and the rows of trees were planted next to the low-rise section of the building, just outside of the JFK Federal Building parcel.

The overall JFK Federal Building site retains its original forms, features, and most of its original material. While some material changes have occurred, these changes have a minimal impact on the site's use and perception. Changes include the removal of the original bluestone field pavers and lighter toned cast pavers of the raised plaza and replacement with the current pavers, which are of a larger unit dimension and in an opposite tonal pattern, but still maintain a grid pattern relationship to the structural columns of the towers. The site retains original hardscape and landscape features from the period of construction including polished granite cladding on raised plaza and site walls; planting beds and tree wells; conical mechanical features; aluminum railings; common brick pavers and, granite and concrete stairs. The sculpture, *Thermopylae*, remains on the plaza in its original location. In the terms of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards; while the site has lost some material integrity, it retains the integrity of its location, setting, design, workmanship, feeling, and association.

In 1968, the interior courtyard was altered slightly during the installation of the sculpture, *Full Circle: Profile in Courage*, which was commissioned by GSA in 1966. Subsequent alterations to the courtyard included the removal of some planter boxes, the installation of three benches, as well as a ramped entrance at the west door to the courtyard. The courtyard's original slate pavers were removed and replaced with concrete pavers in 2005. Originally, a ginkgo tree was planted in a large tree well on the east side of the courtyard; a small maple tree now occupies the well.

Alterations to the JFK Federal Building began in 1980, when some areas of the building were retrofitted to accommodate disabled persons. In 1985, some sections of window glass were replaced with quarter-inch heat strengthened glass, while adjacent panes in the same locations were left in place. Some aluminum battens were also replaced. Locations that were affected include the low-rise lobbies, the interior courtyard, the main lobby revolving door, and the connector.

In 1987, the elevators were modernized. Alterations were minor and applied to the finishes in the freight elevators. In 1988, all of the entrance doors were replaced. This project consisted of removing the aluminum doors and frames and replacing them with new aluminum doors with quarter-inch tempered glass. The brass thresholds were also removed and replaced and automatic door openers with graphic symbols for handicap access were installed on one of the vestibule doors.

From 1990 through 1995, asbestos abatement was performed throughout the building. Asbestos has been used as fireproofing in the high-rise section, but was also used as thermal insulation on the precast concrete panels in both the high-rise and low-rise buildings. Fire sprinklers were also installed in this period.

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The most noticeable alterations occurred in 1994 when the lobby finishes were updated. The elevator shafts in the lobbies of the JFK Federal Building were originally clad with square rust-colored ceramic tiles (Photo 27). In 1994, large polished grey granite panels, similar to the original granite cladding on the lobby columns, replaced those ceramic tiles (Photo 17). The ceramic tiles on the lobby ceilings had been removed in the 1970s and were replaced with a metal channel ceiling system, which was then replaced with sheetrock and plaster during the modernization project in the 1990s. Quotes from John Fitzgerald Kennedy were inscribed in the granite panels in several prominent places in both the main and low-rise lobbies. Additionally, the bluestone floors were replaced with flame-finished granite pavers and the original 4'-10" plaza paver grid was removed and replaced by a roughly 19 x 26-foot grid of new pavers. While this still conforms to the structural grid, it does not show the 4'-10" unit that was repeated in several other elements in the original design.

In addition to the alterations to the lobbies, office areas, corridors and courtrooms were rehabilitated in the 1990s, and some areas have been rehabilitated multiple times. As a result, these interior spaces typically no longer retain original finishes and materials. However, the building was constructed with the intention of providing flexible interior space which could be easily altered to suit the changing needs of tenant agencies. The original materials in tenant spaces, sheetrock walls, lay-in ceiling tiles and carpeting, were standard manufactured products of the period, and likewise the replacement materials are typically updated versions of these standard products. In 1989, the toilet rooms were rehabilitated.

The doors in the connector were removed during the 1990s rehabilitation project as a result of increased security measures implemented in the aftermath of the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building on April 19, 1995. Following the terrorist attack on September 11, 2001, security measures at the JFK Federal Building were again upgraded, as they were at all federal buildings. At that time, bollards were installed around the perimeter of the building and metal detectors were installed in the lobbies. In 2015, the windows were replaced with fixed windows that are visually similar to the original pivoting windows.

### **Integrity**

The JFK Federal Building retains sufficient integrity from its period of significance (1961-1968) to convey its historical significance and associations. The JFK Federal Building retains integrity in all of the seven aspects evaluated: location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The building retains its historic location and the immediate setting of the building remains relatively unchanged. The building is situated in Boston's Government Center and is immediately surrounded by mid- to late-twentieth century office and commercial buildings, as well as smaller scale urban buildings of various use and age. The plazas, terraces, and landscaping located adjacent to the building have undergone relatively minor alterations since the 1960s.

The exterior of the building retains much of its original material and new windows installed in 2015 replicate the appearance of the originals. The interior alterations that were completed in 1994 in the public spaces of the building were sympathetic to the original design intent and do

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not conflict with remaining original material. A significant effort was made to use polished granite cladding that is visually similar to the original cladding found in interior and exterior spaces. The majority of the office and support spaces in the building have been rehabilitated with new finishes. However, these spaces were designed to be flexible and the changes do not significantly detract from the building's overall integrity of design, materials, and workmanship.

The experience viewing the building's façade and walking through its lobbies and circulation corridors still summons the historic character of the building. The building continues in its historic use, enhancing integrity of association and feeling. The JFK Federal Building is still used in its original capacity, to house various federal agencies and is still owned by the GSA, the original property owner.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Community Planning and Development

Politics/Government

Architecture

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1966-1968

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1966 (building completion and dedication)

1968 (installation of final sculpture)

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

The Architects Collaborative, under the direction of Walter Gropius and Norman Fletcher

Samuel Glaser Collaborative

Dimitri Hadzi, Sculptor

Herbert Ferber, Sculptor

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The JFK Federal Building is significant at the national level under **Criterion A** in the areas of community planning and development for its association with urban renewal and mid-century city planning, and at the local and state levels for its association with the New Boston initiative, the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA), and regional economic development. The building is also significant at the national level under Criterion A in the area of politics/government for its association with the development of GSA’s national program of federal office building construction.

The JFK Federal Building is significant at the national, state, and local levels under **Criterion C** in the area of architecture for its embodiment of the Modern Movement. It is also significant under Criterion C at the national level as an outstanding expression of Modern design values in a GSA-commissioned building. It is significant at the national level under Criterion C as it represents the work of a master architect, The Architects Collaborative, led by Walter Gropius.

The period of significance for the JFK Federal Building is 1966-1968, which encompasses the building’s completion and the installation of the final sculpture. The JFK Federal Building retains sufficient integrity from its period of significance to convey its historical significance and associations from this period.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

**SIGNIFICANCE**

The JFK Federal Building is significant at the national level under **Criterion A** in the areas of community planning and development for its association with urban renewal and mid-century city planning, and at the local and state levels for its association with the New Boston initiative, the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA), and regional economic development. The first building completed at Government Center, the JFK Federal Building was designed to serve as “the economic linchpin for attracting private office investment” to this area of downtown Boston.<sup>1</sup> While a federal project, the building was a key part of the New Boston initiative launched by Mayor John F. Collins in 1960 to restore Boston’s economic leadership in New England and place as an elite East Coast urban center, at a time when Boston (along with many American urban centers) was hemorrhaging residents, as well as economic and building development, to the suburbs.

The building is also significant at the national level under Criterion A in the area of politics/government for its association with the development of GSA’s national program of

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Kubo, “John F. Kennedy Federal Building The Architects Collaborative 1961-1966,” in *Heroic: Concrete Architecture and the New Boston*, The Monacelli Press, LLC, 2015, 108.

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federal office building construction. The federal construction program surged in the 1960s and 1970s in an effort to address severe inadequacies resulting from the lack of construction of civilian federal buildings and the concurrent growth of federal government during the period surrounding the Second World War. The JFK Federal Building is as an early and highly successful example of a post-war federal project that successfully balanced the government's architectural aspirations with its functional and economic imperatives.

The JFK Federal Building is also significant at the national, state, and local level under **Criterion C** in the area of architecture for its embodiment of the concepts of the Modern Movement, which emphasized modern construction materials and innovative technologies in service of simplified, austere designs, as well as economic and functional efficiency. These characteristics are expressed in the JFK Federal Building's steel frame and precast panel concrete curtain wall, its modern systems, use of modular partitions in the office spaces, and strategic use of glass to connect the interior of the building with the exterior plaza, courtyard, and arcade.

The building's strategic massing responded to design and site constraints and marked an innovative variation on a recognized Modern form - the high-rise tower over a low-rise podium. The "sliding" or offset double tower provided necessary programmatic separation between local and regional workers, as well as adequate square footage on each floor. The siting and massing of the attenuated towers minimized the building's presence along the adjacent plaza, a scheme that Ada Louise Huxtable called "praiseworthy" for its ability to augment daylighting and reduce visual massing.<sup>2</sup>

The JFK Federal Building is also significant under Criterion C due to its extraordinary significance at the national level as an outstanding expression of Modern design values in a GSA-commissioned building, balancing economy, efficiency, programming, and spatial requirements, with the growing need to address the need for aesthetic distinction. A 2003 GSA survey and evaluation of modernist federal buildings recognized the JFK Federal Building as one of the four most significant buildings resulting from the 1962 "Guiding Principles for Federal Architecture."<sup>3</sup>

Additionally, the JFK Federal Building is significant at the national level under Criterion C as it represents the work of a master architect, The Architects Collaborative, led by Walter Gropius. This building was the first tall building designed by Gropius for construction in the United States. The innovative precast panels were developed simultaneously with similar ones for New York City's Pan American Building, on which Gropius also worked. At the JFK Federal Building dedication in 1966, Gropius summarized TAC's collaborative emphasis by stating that

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<sup>2</sup> Ada Louise Huxtable, "New Boston Center: Skillful Use of Urban Space," in *The New York Times*, September 11, 1972, 73.

<sup>3</sup> Robinson & Associates, Inc., *Growth, Efficiency, and Modernism: GSA Buildings of the 1950s, 60s, and 70s*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. General Services Administration, Office of the Chief Architect, Center for Historic Buildings, 2003), 108.

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the new building “is part of this greater whole which sets an example for the present trend to renew our American cities and to make our environment more beautiful.”<sup>4</sup>

The period of significance for the JFK Federal Building is 1966-1968 which encompasses the building’s completion and the installation of the final sculpture. The JFK Federal Building retains sufficient integrity from its period of significance to convey its historical significance and associations.

## **HISTORICAL NARRATIVE**

### **Federal Building Program and GSA**

The JFK Federal Building reflects the sophisticated embrace of modernism within the federal government’s building program and exemplifies modernist design principles, including public-private partnerships, economic and functional efficiency, use of new materials, and strategic, often contentious, relationship to site and economic (re)development.

The transformation of federal building programs from classicist to modernist was gradual. For nearly a century, the Office of the Supervising Architect, created within the Treasury Department in 1852, managed the design and construction of federal buildings. Except for a brief period between 1897 and 1912, during which the Tarsney Act allowed the Treasury to utilize outside design services, staff architects of the Office were solely responsible for federal designs until the mid-1920s.

The Public Buildings Act of 1926 enabled the Treasury to contract private architects and engineers, and it required the Treasury to implement a policy for federal building construction based on need and business consideration rather than political pressure. The Act accelerated federal construction programs.<sup>5</sup> Franklin Roosevelt’s New Deal Program relocated the Public Buildings program to the Public Buildings Administration within the newly formed Federal Works Agency in 1939. The growth of the federal buildings program during this period reflected a significant expansion of the federal government, which absorbed state and local authorities as it took on business regulation, social reform, agricultural subsidies, electrification, land reclamation, and public works projects.<sup>6</sup>

From the start of federal construction programs, nearly all government buildings were classical in style. Variants of classicism, including Beaux Arts, remained fashionable for federal buildings throughout the New Deal era. Beginning in the 1920s, federal buildings were increasingly built in a simplified classical style, featuring classical forms and symmetry with reduced

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<sup>4</sup> Walter Gropius, 1966 Dedication Speech. Walter Gropius Papers. Harvard University Library, Cambridge, Massachusetts. Gropius 1966).

<sup>5</sup> Robinson & Associates, Inc., *Growth, Efficiency, and Modernism: GSA Buildings of the 1950s, 60s, and 70s*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. General Services Administration, Office of the Chief Architect, Center for Historic Buildings, 2003), 20-22; Stephanie Smith, *General Services Administration Prospectus Thresholds for Owned and Leased Federal Facilities*, Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, October 3, 2005, pages 1-2; <http://digital.library.unt.edu/govdocs/crs/permalink/meta-crs-7678:1> (accessed 17 May 2008).

<sup>6</sup> Robinson & Associates, Inc., 23-24; Carole Rifkind, *A Field Guide to Contemporary American Architecture*, (New York: Plume, 1998), 105.

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ornamentation. Simplified Classical buildings' "monumentality, presence, and permanence ensured a continued place of prominence in the cities and towns, but the lack of architectural ornament satisfied the contemporary taste for sleekness of design."<sup>7</sup>

In 1949, in an effort to reconsolidate the increasing decentralization and inefficiency of rapidly expanding federal workforce, offices and expenditures, President Truman undertook a reform program.<sup>8</sup> He signed the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949, establishing the General Services Administration (GSA) to streamline the acquisition resources needed by federal agencies to accomplish their missions. He also signed the Public Buildings Act of 1949, which authorized \$40 million for site acquisition and planning of 575 building projects.

Within GSA, the Public Buildings Service (PBS) was established to replace the Public Buildings Administration. According to the Establishment of the Office of the General Services Administration, GSA became the Federal government's "architect, engineer, builder, landlord, and house-keeper."<sup>9</sup> Serving as the property management arm of the federal government, PBS was responsible for the design, construction, maintenance, repair, remodeling, and enlargement of federal buildings.

A study commissioned by the PBS in 1954 concluded that the nation's federal office buildings were obsolete.<sup>10</sup> The Public Buildings Act of 1959 ameliorated the severe shortage of federal space and charged GSA with anticipating future federal office space needs. Following the 1959 Act, federal design and construction rates increased dramatically.

After President John F. Kennedy was inaugurated in January 1961, there was a massive increase in the design and construction of federal buildings. At the end of 1962, GSA had constructed numerous new buildings, acquired sites for new projects, completed repairs and/or improvements on existing buildings, and furnished building management services in 7,240 federally owned or leased buildings that housed over 533,000 Federal employees.<sup>11</sup>

Stylistically, classicism gradually gave way to cautious modernist influences throughout the 1940s and 1950s, and by the mid-1950s federal buildings embraced some aspects of modernism as a means to represent an increased emphasis on economic and functional streamlining.

Instructions issued to contract architects and engineers in 1959 stipulated that a fixed "limit of cost" would be authorized for site expenditure, design, construction, equipment of buildings, as well as the administration and supervision of each project. In addition, the instructions stated, "All buildings constructed by GSA will be functionally efficient and economical in construction, operation, and maintenance. This dictates selection of the type of construction and use of

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<sup>7</sup> Robinson & Associates, Inc., 12, 22-25.

<sup>8</sup> Robinson & Associates, Inc., 28.

<sup>9</sup> Reprinted in Robinson & Associates, Inc., 29.

<sup>10</sup> Smith, 2; Robinson & Associates, Inc., 38.

<sup>11</sup> Robinson & Associates, Inc., 38, 41.

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materials, systems and equipment that are economical, functionally suitable and, where pertinent, aesthetically acceptable.”<sup>12</sup>

As a result, the majority of federal office buildings of this era were designed with an emphasis on stark functionality rather than on aesthetics or permanence. Federal office building designs increasingly imitated non-distinctive private commercial buildings. Many of the same architects designed both public and private projects, making it difficult to distinguish between the two.<sup>13</sup>

### **Federal Modernism and the “Guiding Principles”**

In an attempt to reverse these trends without establishing a fixed set of aesthetic parameters for federal building designs, a broad policy on quality of design emerged in 1962 when President Kennedy’s Ad Hoc Committee on Federal Office Space promulgated the “Guiding Principles for Federal Architecture.” The initiative called for design that reflected “the dignity, enterprise, vigor, and stability of the American National Government.”<sup>14</sup>

The Assistant Secretary of Labor at the time, Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, wrote the “Guiding Principles for Federal Architecture” included in the report:

1. Designs should incorporate the finest in American architectural thought. Including local and regional architectural traditions and influences of the area where the building is located is encouraged. Incorporating pieces of fine art, preferably by living American artists, should be a priority. Buildings should also be functional for users, including the handicapped, and should incorporate materials, methods, and equipment of proven dependability, making them economical to build, operate, and maintain.
2. The development of an official style should be avoided. The architectural profession should dictate the trend of government buildings, and the government should be willing to pay more to avoid excessive uniformity of design for Federal buildings. Design competitions may be held, and the advice of prominent architects should be sought prior to awarding important design contracts.
3. The choice and development of the building site should be considered the first step in the design process of Federal buildings, with special attention paid to nearby street layout and public places. Buildings should be located so as to permit a generous development of landscape.<sup>15</sup>

In 1962, PBS also issued design objectives for GSA buildings, including a high ratio of net usable space to gross area; maximum flexibility of space assignment and utilization; maximum economy and efficiency in the operation of buildings; constant improvement

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 36-37, 93.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Robinson & Associates, Inc., 44-45.

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of office space to improve employee morale, reduce personnel turnover, and increase employee efficiency; and protection of life and property.<sup>16</sup>

In 2003, to promote responsible portfolio management, GSA analyzed and evaluated its modernist building inventory to identify the highest quality and most distinctive federal buildings from the period. More than 600 GSA-owned buildings were constructed between 1950 and 1979. While many of these buildings continued to be indistinguishable from private sector office buildings, a number of notable exceptions emerged.

GSA's 2003 nationwide study of its Modern-era buildings recognized the JFK Federal Building in Boston, along with the U.S. Tax Court designed by Victor Lundy, the HUD building by Marcel Breuer, and the Chicago Federal Center by Mies van der Rohe, as the most important buildings resulting from the Ad Hoc Committee recommendations and its "Guiding Principles."<sup>17</sup>

The JFK Federal Building marks a significant evolution of federal architectural undertakings and is an early example of a project that successfully balanced the Guiding Principles with the functional and economic requirements set by GSA. GSA viewed the JFK Federal Building as a building that met all of its practical needs, "while also providing an architectural landmark which complements the new Boston Government Center."<sup>18</sup>

As a result of his proven and illustrious track record of developing influential architectural thought, through both his canonical professional design work and his teaching at Bauhaus and Harvard, GSA selected Walter Gropius to design the JFK Building. The selection of Samuel Glaser to work with Gropius added additional knowledge of the local, modernist construction context to the design team.

Gropius avoided dogmatic adherence to a style by combining elements of the international style with elements of the concrete architecture that dominated Boston architecture of the 1960s. His use of concrete, steel, and glass, the development of precast concrete panels as part of a facade system cantilevered to facilitate rounded corners, and technologically advanced electrical and mechanical systems, functional massing and flexible spatial schemes were all done in adherence to modernist design philosophy. New materials and streamlined construction techniques were sometimes combined to present a modern but distinctive presence. The precast concrete panels were similar to those simultaneously developed for the Pan American Airways Building in New York, on which Gropius also worked.

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Robinson & Associates, Inc., *Growth, Efficiency, and Modernism: GSA Buildings of the 1950s, 60s, and 70s*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. General Services Administration, Office of the Chief Architect, Center for Historic Buildings, 2003), 108.

<sup>18</sup> Robert L. Kunzig and Albert A. Gammal, Jr., building summary titled "The John Fitzgerald Kennedy Federal Building, Boston, Massachusetts," on file at GSA Public Buildings Service New England Region, JFK Federal Building, Boston, Massachusetts.

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Gropius, like the federal government by which he was commissioned, recognized in modernism a diminishing distinction between public and private buildings, which had implications for aesthetics, program, and layout. Grand public lobbies gave way to exterior plazas connected to the interior via transparent materials. The covered arcade, courtyard, and glazed ground level of the JFK Federal Building accommodated this trend. Individual offices gave way to open, flexible spaces with moveable dividers.

Modernist techniques and materials, such as steel, aluminum, glass, plastic, and concrete supplanted classical materials, because these materials were extremely economical and suitable for abstract formal and spatial trends of the times. Gropius utilized empirical and academic research, as well as experience, to balance these distinctly modern trends and efficiency and cost standards with the need for dependability. Gropius also progressively advocated for the use of art in building programs.

The selection and development of the site was in response to the immediate context of the proposed government center. To that end, the design process facilitated the development of an extended plaza and the creation of a harmonious urban composition. The planning and design of the JFK Federal Building, like that of Boston's Government Center and the urban renewal project that enabled its building undertakings, has a much more contentious cultural and historical relationship to its extended site.

### **GSA and Urban Renewal**

Throughout the 1950s federal officials and city planners across the United States proposed the revitalization of urban environments through large-scale demolition and reconstruction. GSA located some of its federal building projects in declining areas targeted for revitalization, hoping that private enterprise would follow on the heels of an influx of federal employees. The most significant mid-century modernist GSA commissions, including the JFK Federal Building, had close relationships to innovative planning and contentious urban renewal strategies.

Marcel Breuer's design for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) (1965-68), which was the first building designed under GSA's "Guiding Principles", was also a benchmark within the national urban renewal movement. The HUD building was a key element in the master plan of the Southwest Washington, D.C., Urban Renewal Area, which was one of the earliest urban renewal efforts in the United States and the first such effort in Washington, D.C. The Lyndon Baines Johnson Department of Education Building (FOB 6, 1959-61) also reflects the direct participation of the federal government in the redevelopment plans for Southwest Washington. FOB 6 was the first large-scale federal building located to the south of Independence Avenue and served as a "dramatic northern boundary" for public buildings in National Capital Planning Commission's proposed Southwest Rectangle and the Southwest Urban Renewal Plan.<sup>19</sup> Regional GSA buildings, such as the Strom Thurmond Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse in Columbia, South Carolina (1979), were also designed under the impetus of urban renewal plans.

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<sup>19</sup> "Work May Begin In Spring on SW Federal Building," *The Washington Post and Times Herald*, July 24, 1958, C18; D.C. Redevelopment Land Agency, Annual Report (1962).

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Under the Public Buildings Act of 1959, which sought to address the dearth of federal office space needed after the Second World War, GSA originally proposed a regional headquarters in Boston's Copley Square at the site of the current Hancock Tower. A proposal dated September 11, 1959 and signed by Lawson B. Knott, then Acting Commissioner of PBS, requested that the construction of a federal building consisting of approximately one million square feet and costing approximately \$33 million be approved under the Public Buildings Act of 1959 due to a recognized lack of existing suitable rental space for federal agencies in Boston. The proposal stated that the building was "authorized pursuant to Public Buildings Purchase Contract Act of 1954 (Public Law 83-519)" and that funds had already been appropriated for site acquisition and building design. It was anticipated that the proposed building would "provide increased operational efficiency, greater convenience to the public and will permit consolidation at a single location of agencies now housed in diverse lease locations with resultant savings of about \$900,000 per annum."<sup>20</sup>

However, after John F. Collins was elected as Boston's mayor in 1959, he convinced the GSA to revise its plans and join the Government Center Project that was being planned at Scollay Square in order to provide office space and attract white collar workers and private investment.<sup>21</sup> Collins also proposed the project be carried out as a federally-aided renewal development project financed in part through an early land acquisition loan, the first such loan in the country, which enabled accelerated schedule for acquisition, relocation, and demolition. The JFK Federal Building was a beneficiary of this fast tracking. According to Michael Kubo, "Mayor John F. Collins worked closely with the GSA to bring the project from Copley Square to the new Government Center envisioned to replace the derelict Scollay Square." The first building completed at Government Center, the JFK Federal Building was to serve as "the economic linchpin for attracting private office investment" to this area of downtown Boston.<sup>22</sup>

### **Scollay Square and Government Center**

According to Lizabeth Cohen, "Boston's Government Center arose from three interconnected narratives: the worsening economic condition of Boston motivated this ambitious project in the 1960s; the political story of the creation and empowerment of the BRA to address the city's economic woes; and a series of architectural choices made by key historical actors that gave this project its distinctive appearance. Boston's Government Center embodied in bricks and mortar (and concrete) a historically significant conjecture of economy, politics, and design."<sup>23</sup>

The JFK Federal Building and Boston's Government Center, of which it is a part, sit over the historic area known as Scollay Square in the West End neighborhood. Scollay Square was once the city's vibrant entertainment center, containing theaters, restaurants, hotels. The decline of Scollay Square began with the demolition of the original Scollay Buildings in 1871 to

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<sup>20</sup> Boston Public Buildings Service and U.S. General Services Administration, "Prospectus for Proposed Construction under Public Buildings Act of 1959," September 11, 1959, on file at National Archives and Records Administration, Record Group 121, Waltham, Massachusetts.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Kubo 108.

<sup>23</sup> "Building Government Center: The Boston Redevelopment Authority, 1960-67" 50

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accommodate a horse-drawn trolley line. The 1872 Great Boston Fire and subsequent rebuilding shifted the business center of the city south, and new construction in the Back Bay also drew the city's elite away from downtown.

Despite efforts to save the area, including its selection as the first location in Boston to get electrically illuminated streets, Scollay Square continued its steady decline. Theaters and restaurants were replaced with penny arcades, variety shows, and tattoo parlors to accommodate servicemen on leave and became the city's red light district.

In 1917, City officials proposed Scollay Square as the site of a new civic center, advantageous because of its location, declining building stock, non-residential character, proximity to government and business functions, and accessibility to public transit. While that project never proceeded and the area continued its decline for decades, these same qualities made the site appealing for a new government center which was discussed in the wake of the Housing Act of 1949, which enabled cities to effectively tackle slum clearance in urban areas that met several substandard structural and safety conditions.

In the 1950s, Boston's population was rapidly decreasing, and the city constructed few new buildings, reflective of a prolonged period of economic decline, dwindling population, and the highest property taxes in the nation. According to Cohen, "Between 1950 and 1960, Boston lost 8 percent of its jobs and 13 percent of its population, with the middle class in particular exiting the city."<sup>24</sup> At the same time, there was a movement to centralize Boston's multiple offices of various city, state, and federal government agencies into one downtown location. City officials and planners envisioned a government center that would unite the city's business, government, financial, and historic residential districts and simplify the downtown street system.

In 1955, Boston's mayor appointed a committee to prepare the necessary material to be submitted to start the process of urban renewal. The resulting document, "Workable Program for Urban Renewal," proposed the redevelopment of Scollay Square, as well as Pemberton Square, Dock Square, the North End, and the Waterfront, with a government building complex stretching from the Old State House to Faneuil Hall. New buildings to house federal, state, and city agencies were sorely needed, and the U.S. Senate Committee on Public Works had approved \$28,000,000 for the construction of a new federal building in Boston. The Boston City Planning Board, estimated that the building should provide approximately one million square feet of floor space.<sup>25</sup> A second report, "Government Center Study – A Preliminary Report," published in August 1956, further expanded the idea and rallied support for the redevelopment around the blighted Scollay Square.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Lizabeth Cohen, "Building Government Center: The Boston Redevelopment Authority, 196--1967," in *Heroic: Concrete Architecture and the New Boston*, The Monacelli Press, LLC, 2015, 51.

<sup>25</sup> Boston City Planning Board, *Government Center Study: A Preliminary Report*, August 1956, on file at Frances Loeb Library, Harvard University Graduate School of Design, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

<sup>26</sup> Boston City Planning Board, *Government Center Study: A Preliminary Report*, August 1956, on file at Harvard University's Frances Loeb Library, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

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In 1959, the planning firm of Adams, Howard, and Greeley, composed of Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) professors, proposed a plan for the government center in which several new public and private buildings, including a central City Hall, would be constructed around a plaza.<sup>27</sup> In addition, the plan proposed linkages between the main plaza containing City Hall and other smaller plazas to create a pedestrian network between Government Center, Quincy Marketplace, and Faneuil Hall.<sup>28</sup>

Mayor John F. Collins was elected in the fall of 1959 and formalized the public private connections and urban renewal projects started by his predecessor, Mayor John Hynes. Central to these efforts was the hiring of Edward J. Logue as the administrator of the newly established Boston Redevelopment Authority. “Collins granted the BRA authority over planning and redevelopment, responsibilities that previously had been divided with the Boston City Planning Board. Although the ‘New Boston’ had already become a slogan during the Hynes administration, under Collins its full significance became apparent as Boston moved from seventeenth to fourth in per capita [urban] renewal grants [nationwide].”<sup>29</sup>

BRA was established to manage Boston’s urban renewal projects, enabled by the Housing Act of 1954. No project was more central to the New Boston initiative than the proposed Government Center. The Government Center urban renewal project was located in Boston’s West End. First developed in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries as a residential enclave for the wealthy, by the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, the neighborhood housed a diverse working-class population and a variety of small businesses and was viewed as blighted by planners and officials. Intended by Boston officials to be the “linchpin of their strategy of using government resources and authority to jumpstart economic revival in the city,” writes Cohen, Government Center was also “a huge project to reinvent the West End, at a scale of leveling and rebuilding that would haunt urban renewal efforts in Boston, as it would in cities across the country, for decades to follow.”<sup>30</sup>

Boston’s Government Center urban renewal project transformed 60 acres in the West End, including Scollay Square, where the JFK Federal Building was to be sited. The project demolished 301 parcels with buildings in the project area, displacing 777 businesses. Although occupied primarily by businesses, prior to the acquisition, the project area was occupied by 264 families and 176 individuals, all of whom had been displaced by July 1963. Forty-eight acres of apartments occupied by poor and working class first- and second-generation immigrants were demolished to accommodate proposed new high high-rises aimed at middle class investment and occupancy.<sup>31</sup>

Upon taking office, Collins, along with Logue, initiated further studies for Government Center. In January 1961, BRA contracted I.M. Pei & Associates, Inc. of New York City to restudy the

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<sup>27</sup> Adams, Howard, and Greeley, Planning Consultants 1959 “General Plan, Government Center, Boston, 1959.” Boston Public Library, Boston, Massachusetts, 1959; Crane 1995.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 44-48.

<sup>29</sup> Cohen 53.

<sup>30</sup> Cohen 52.

<sup>31</sup> Boston Redevelopment Authority “A History of Boston’s Government Center.” Research Report. BRA Files. Boston Archives, Boston, Massachusetts, 1970.

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1959 plan and create a comprehensive redevelopment plan, including urban design framework, building controls, and design criteria. When Pei submitted final site plans to the BRA at the end of June 1961, demolition of nearly all buildings in the project area had begun.<sup>32</sup>

I.M. Pei & Associates' plan built upon the previous studies, retaining a large plaza and new City Hall as the focal point of the plan. The firm also worked closely with Boston historian Walter Whitehill to select buildings that should be retained near the site due to their historical significance, such as the Sears Crescent and Faneuil Hall, and to integrate and respect some significant historic features of the site.<sup>33</sup>

In addition, the plan proposed to replace a network of 22 previously existing streets constructed during the seventeenth through nineteenth centuries with six superblocks bounded by three major and three minor arteries, and to widen Cambridge and New Congress Streets to provide primary vehicular connections between Government Center, the North End commercial district, Boston Common, the central business district, and the financial district.<sup>34</sup> Pei's plan also proposed pedestrian connections between the new government center buildings, historic sites, such as Faneuil Hall, Quincy Marketplace, and the Old State House, and Boston's existing retail and financial centers.<sup>35</sup>

Pei's plan identified the 200,000-square-foot site just south of New Sudbury Street as the site of the proposed federal building. The plan also increased the size of the parcel by approximately 60,000 square feet from the BRA's earlier proposed plan dated October 1960, though the general location of the site did not change.<sup>36</sup>

The BRA hosted a meeting to form the Government Center Coordinating Committee on January 26, 1961. The primary goal of the committee was "the coordination of the activities of several Federal, State, and City agencies involved in the Government Center Project to expedite the project and to solve common problems as they arise." Members of the committee included Donald M. Graham, Government Center Project Director for the BRA; Robert Morgan, Chairman of the City Government Center Commission; Thomas J. Doherty, Executive Secretary of the State Government Center Commission; and Richard A. Beatty, Junior Planner with the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA). The GSA chose not to participate as formal members

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<sup>32</sup> Spreiregen, 50; Robert W. Jones, letter to Regional Commissioner, U.S. General Services Administration, January 27, 1961, on file at National Archives and Records Administration, Record Group 121, Waltham, Massachusetts; David A. Crane, "The Federal Building in the Making of Boston's Government Center: A Struggle for Sovereignty in Local Design Review," in *Federal Buildings in Context: The Role of Design Review*, ed. by J. Carter Brown, (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1995), 25.

<sup>33</sup> Boston Society of Architects, *Boston Architecture*, 56-57.

<sup>34</sup> Crane, 26.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

<sup>36</sup> Edward J. Logue, Development Administrator, Boston Redevelopment Authority, letter to Karl Wallace, Commissioner of Public Buildings, U.S. General Services Administration, May 22, 1961, on file at National Archives and Records Administration, Record Group 121, Waltham, Massachusetts; U.S. General Services Administration, memorandum of record of meeting regarding proposed size increase to JFK Federal Building site, May 19, 1961, on file at National Archives and Records Administration, Record Group 121, Waltham, Massachusetts.

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of the committee, but designated Robert W. Jones, Regional Director of the PBS, as liaison representative.<sup>37</sup>

A newspaper article dated August 29, 1962 announced that the Senate Appropriations Committee recommended an increase in funds for Boston's new federal building, from \$26,544,100 approved by the House of Representatives to \$28,893,000. The proposed increase included \$1,997,000 in general construction costs and \$351,000 for fallout protection.<sup>38</sup> Another article reported that, on September 1, 1962, the full Senate approved the amount proposed by the Appropriations Committee as part of an \$11 billion bill that included funds for the construction of new federal buildings throughout New England by a number of federal agencies.<sup>39</sup>

The City of Boston unveiled the final plan for the Government Center Urban Renewal Project on April 2, 1963 to approximately 400 business, civic, and public officials, prior to its final review by the BRA, Boston City Council, and Federal Urban Renewal Administration. The presentation included the display of a large architectural model showing the entire 52-acre site and all proposed alterations. Mayor Collins praised the collaboration of the various public agencies who participated in the project, stating that "Here, today, we are witnessing an unprecedented partnership for progress."

An article in the *Boston Globe* reported that approximately \$157 million in construction would occur at the site and that site preparation, MBTA track construction, street relocation, and utility work were underway. Speakers announced that construction would begin within months for the proposed \$20 million City Hall, the \$26 million State Office Building, the \$34 million state service center complex, the \$28 million JFK Federal Building, the \$7 million, 2,000-car garage, and One Center Plaza. It was announced that the project would include five new roads, Cambridge, Congress, Staniford, New Charden, and New Sudbury streets, and that landscaping, trees, and benches would beautify the new roads.<sup>40</sup>

Edward J. Logue expedited the plan's implementation by establishing an early land acquisition and funding agreement with HUD and allowing several projects, including the new City Hall and the federal building, to move through the design approval, site disposition, and construction

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<sup>37</sup> Government Center Coordinating Committee, "Minutes of the Government Center Coordinating Committee," January 26, 1961, on file at National Archives and Records Administration, Record Group 121, Waltham, Massachusetts; Robert W. Jones, letter to Regional Commissioner, U.S. General Services Administration, January 27, 1961, on file at National Archives and Records Administration, Record Group 121, Waltham, Massachusetts; Karl E. Wallace, memorandum to Regional Commissioner, U.S. General Services Administration and Regional Direct, Public Buildings Service, February 14, 1961, on file at National Archives and Records Administration, Record Group 121, Waltham, Massachusetts.

<sup>38</sup> Herald Washington Bureau, "Federal Building Funds Here May Go Up," in *The Boston Herald* (Boston, Massachusetts), 29 August 1962, on file at National Archives and Records Administration, Record Group 121, Waltham, Massachusetts.

<sup>39</sup> Author unknown, "Senate Votes \$28.8 Million for Hub Federal Building," in *The Boston Globe* (Boston, Massachusetts), 1 September 1962, on file at National Archives and Records Administration, Record Group 121, Waltham, Massachusetts.

<sup>40</sup> Anthony J. Yudis, "The Center's Plans Unveiled," in *The Boston Globe* (Boston, Massachusetts), 3 April 1963, on file at National Archives and Records Administration, Record Group 121, Waltham, Massachusetts.

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initiation processes.<sup>41</sup> BRA was able to operate through an early land acquisition loan granted by the federal government on September 21, 1961, the first such loan in the country. The loan enabled an accelerated schedule for acquisition, relocation, and demolition of the target properties. The JFK Federal Building was among the beneficiaries of this fast-track approach.

### **The Architects of the JFK Federal Building**

The design of the JFK Federal Building was a joint venture between two Boston-based architectural firms, The Architects Collaborative, Inc. (TAC) and Samuel Glaser Associates. Samuel Glaser and Clifford H. Towne of Samuel Glaser Associates and Walter Gropius, Norman Fletcher, and Roland Kluver of TAC led the design team for the JFK Federal Building.<sup>42</sup> Gropius and Fletcher acted as TAC's partners in charge, and Kluver as TAC's senior associate.<sup>43</sup> Clifford Towne acted as the Project Coordinator, or architects' liaison to GSA.<sup>44</sup>

GSA commissioned TAC concurrently with BRA's commissioning of IM Pei and Associates. Norman Fletcher recollected in a 1995 article that, "no formal applications were made for the job, other than the submission of a 'Form 251,' which gave a generic description of the firm for the files of the General Services Administration (GSA) [...] I seem to remember that Henry Shepley of the well-known Boston firm of Shepley, Bulfinch, and Abbott [and GSA advisory committee member], recognizing Gropius as an internationally famous architect, had a role on the architectural advisory committee for GSA in recommending him for the job. At the same time, there was pressure for TAC to join with Samuel Glaser Associates, a firm with considerable experience in building and preparation of contract drawings, to bolster our capabilities."<sup>45</sup>

### *Walter Gropius and TAC*

Walter Gropius (1883-1969) was one of the preeminent architects of his time and a leader in the Modernist Movement. He was born in Berlin, Germany, to his namesake and architect father and mother Manon Auguste Pauline Scharnweber. He studied at the technical universities in Munich and Berlin, after which he joined the office of Peter Behrens, who is credited with being a key figure in introducing Industrial Classicism. Gropius established a firm with Adolph Meyer a few years later, and then served in World War I between 1914 and 1918. In 1918, he became director of the Weimar School of Art, which reorganized the following year as the Bauhaus. Gropius and Meyer designed the world-renowned Bauhaus design school complex that was constructed in Dessau, Germany between 1919 and 1925. Gropius fled Germany in 1934 and

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<sup>41</sup> Crane, 25.

<sup>42</sup> William B. Foxhall, "Office Buildings," in *Architectural Record*, June 1967:184.

<sup>43</sup> Von Herausgegeben, *The Architects Collaborative: 1945-1965*, introduction by Sam T. Hurst (New York: Architectural Book Publishing Co., Inc., 1966), 210.

<sup>44</sup> Paul F. Healy, U.S. General Services Administration, letter to Acting Regional Director, GSA Public Buildings Service, June 27, 1961, on file at National Archives and Records Administration, Record Group 121, Waltham, Massachusetts.

<sup>45</sup> Norman C. Fletcher, "The John F. Kennedy Federal Office Building in Boston," in *Federal Buildings in Context: The Role of Design Review*, ed. by J. Carter Brown (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, Washington, 1995), 39.

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lived in Britain until 1937, when he moved to the United State where he became the Chair of the Department of Architecture at the Harvard Graduate School of Design until 1952.<sup>46</sup>

Gropius and a group of his former Harvard students founded The Architects Collaborative (TAC) in 1945 to realize an ideal of collective design. The original partners in the Cambridge-based collaborative included Norman C. Fletcher, Jean B. Fletcher, John C. Harkness, Sarah P. Harkness, Robert S. McMillen, Louis A. McMillen, and Benjamin C. Thompson. The group started off in rented space in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and gradually expanded to six separate offices in that city, then finally consolidated in 1964 to a newly built office in Harvard Square. The firm also established branch offices in other cities, including Rome and Baghdad, as they expanded in the 1960s.<sup>47</sup>

TAC and Gropius championed the ideal of collaboration as a way to elevate the quality of the end product, as well as the philosophy that architecture does not exist in vacuum, but must work within its surroundings and for the people that will inhabit it. In 1945, Gropius summarized his emphasis on collaboration when he said:

The whole postwar reconstruction problem – so vast and complex – hangs upon our ability to cooperate. The architect as a coordinator by vocation should lead the way – first in his own office – to develop a new ‘technique of collaboration’ in teams. The essence of such technique will be to emphasize individual freedom of initiative instead of authoritative direction by a boss. Synchronizing all individual efforts by a continuous give and take of its members a team can raise its integrated work to higher potentials often the sum of the work of just as many individuals.<sup>48</sup>

TAC did not specialize in any particular scale or typology. Their projects encompassed the spectrum of design, from individual pieces of furniture to college campuses. There was also an extraordinary range to the types of projects undertaken by TAC, as observed by the Curries:

To review and contemplate the great range, variety, and sheer numbers of projects undertaken by TAC in its 35 years of practice, is virtually mind-boggling. While some large firms specialize in schools, hospitals, or housing, TAC designs everything from China teacups and plastic bubble skylights to university campuses and entire cities. It seems that nothing is too small or large for them to undertake. The broad spectrum of the man-made environment, ‘Total Architecture,’ is their oyster. As usual, Gropius said it best, ‘The architect’s field of action is nothing less than our whole physical environment; his aim: to help to

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<sup>46</sup> [http://www.greatbuildings.com/architects/Walter\\_Gropius.html](http://www.greatbuildings.com/architects/Walter_Gropius.html);  
<http://www.greatbuildings.com/buildings/Bauhaus.html>; <http://www.encyclopedia.com/html/G/Gropius.asp>  
(accessed 17 May 2008).

<sup>47</sup> Von Herausgegeben, *The Architects Collaborative, 1945-1965*, (New York: Architectural Book Publishing Company, Inc., 1966), 12.

<sup>48</sup> John C. Harkness, “Thirty-five Years of TAC,” part of an issue of *Process: Architecture* titled “TAC: The Heritage of Walter Gropius,” Volume 19, (Tokyo: Process Architecture Publishing Company, October 1980), 11.

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create a significant entity, to bring inert materials to life by investing them with spiritual meaning.<sup>49</sup>

TAC became a corporation in 1963 in order to improve business efficiency, share company ownership more widely and easily, proactively solicit new jobs, and better serve clients. There was a conscious effort during the incorporation to meet these objectives “without impeding the chief objective of the firm – which is to produce well-designed and socially responsible architecture for the use of people.”<sup>50</sup> Gropius was actively involved in the firm until his death in 1969. TAC grew from its original eight partners to 65 members by 1965 and 250 during its peak in the 1980s. By the mid-1990s, the firm was facing financial crisis, eventually declaring bankruptcy and closing its doors in 1995.

Notable TAC projects from the mid-1950s to mid-1960s include the Hansa Apartment Block, West Berlin, Germany, circa 1955-1957; University of Baghdad, Baghdad, Iraq, 1957-60; Pan American World Airways Building, New York City, New York, 1958-63; Wayland High School, Wayland, Massachusetts, circa 1958-1959; Parkside Elementary School, Columbus, Indiana, 1960; JFK Federal Building, Boston, Massachusetts, 1961-66; Rosenthal Porcelain Factory, Selb, Germany, circa 1963-1965; and the TAC Office Building, Cambridge, Massachusetts, circa 1962-1966.

Additional projects undertaken by TAC in Boston around the time that the JFK Federal Building was being designed and constructed include the Coolidge Pavilion, Peter Bent Brigham Hospital, 1961-62; Children’s Hospital Medical Center, 1961-65; Tufts New England Medical Center Master Plan and remodeling, 1965-67; Boston University School of Dentistry, 1966; MBTA Station Modernization, 1966; and the Harvard Medical School Sex Laboratory, 1966.

*Samuel Glaser Associates*

Samuel Glaser (1902-1983) was born in Latvia, but immigrated to America at a very young age. He graduated from MIT in 1925, worked with Clarence Stein, known for his public housing developments, and then ventured out on his own.<sup>51</sup> He found a niche designing affordable residential architecture during the early years of his practice, publishing *Designs for 60 Small Homes from \$2,000 to \$10,000: Showing How to Buy, Build, and Finance a Small Home* in 1939, in an effort “to prove that the family with a modest income can afford a small house that is architecturally planned, professionally designed, practical as well as beautiful in every last detail.”<sup>52</sup>

Although his schooling concentrated on classical styles, Glaser found himself increasingly drawn to modernism and was hired to design a four-bedroom house for Robert and Eleanor Leventhal in the Oak Hill section of Newton, Massachusetts. Gropius’ International style heavily influenced his design. His practice continued to grow as he built apartment complexes in several

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<sup>49</sup> Currie, 40.

<sup>50</sup> Currie, 41.

<sup>51</sup> Goodwin.

<sup>52</sup> Samuel Glaser, *Designs For 60 Small Homes From \$2,000 to \$10,000: Showing How To Buy, Build, and Finance a Small Home*, New York: Coward-McCann Inc., 1939.

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Boston suburbs, the Jewish Home in Brighton, the Midtown Motor Inn in Boston, Framingham High School, several contemporary synagogues including one for Congregation B'nai Israel in Woonsocket, Rhode Island, and hangars and a control tower at Logan Airport. His Star Market in Newtonville, a concrete block stretching across the Massachusetts Turnpike was one of the first structures in the country to utilize air rights.

Antonio P. deCastro and Vitolds V. Vitols partnered with Glaser in 1968 to form Glaser/deCastro/Vitols. Glaser retired in 1975 after nearly 50 years in practice, and deCastro became the firm's sole proprietor in 1979. Glaser resided in the towns of Brookline and Newton Center, Massachusetts for most of his life.<sup>53</sup> Unfortunately, none of Glaser's records or drawings survive and his, often behind-the-scenes, contributions to architecture are frequently undervalued. Glaser is typically not mentioned in scholarly articles about the JFK Federal Building and his name was misspelled in the official record.<sup>54</sup>

### **JFK Federal Building Design and Construction**

The JFK Federal Building would be Gropius' first tall building in the United States, and TAC revised its design numerous times. The original scheme proposed a monolithic eight-level mass over most of the site. However, in response to the Pei plan and to GSA guidelines, TAC revised the design, separating functions into a four-level podium and 26-level tower. GSA preferred to separate regional and local governmental functions within the building, which was accomplished by placing local offices within the low-rise section and regional offices within the high-rise section at the suggestion of the architects. The revised design located the tower at the opposite end of its current location, at the corner of New Sudbury and Congress streets.

The juxtaposition of an attenuated tower atop a wider podium and set into a landscaped plaza was a common modernist form, as well as massing scheme among many GSA buildings in the post-War period. The Byron G. Rogers Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse in Denver, for example, effectively replicates this tripartite scheme. The building is set on a four-story base, which functions as a podium for the soaring office tower. This podium is characterized by alternating vertical bays of recessed windows and cast stone panels, giving the appearance of a four-story colonnade that encompasses the building. The Federal Building (1969) complex at 11000 Wilshire Boulevard in Los Angeles County also consists of several connected volumes arranged atop a unifying podium and extended landscape.<sup>55</sup>

According to Kubo, TAC's design preceded, "the rigorous design review process developed by the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) under Edward J. Logue, which governed development of the area after 1962 [...] While Logue later criticized the GSA's unique status as 'a sovereign power' within the BRA's planning efforts, he professed to have been impressed with its selection of TAC to design the new federal building."<sup>56</sup> Similarly, according to the

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<sup>53</sup> Obituary for Samuel Glaser *The New York Times* (New York, New York), 13 August 1983.

<sup>54</sup> Goodwin.

<sup>55</sup> U.S. Courthouse and Federal Office Building (Byron G. Rogers Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse), NRIS #16000723, listed 10/17/2016; Federal Building (Federal Building, 11000 Wilshire Boulevard,), NRIS #SG100005446, listed 8/17/2020.

<sup>56</sup> Kubo 107 - 109.

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authors of *Heroic*, “The Public Buildings Service respected [BRA’s high design standards established by Edward M. Logue] by choosing Walter Gropius and Norman C. Fletcher of The Architects Collaborative (TAC) to control design.”<sup>57</sup>

The BRA had developed a design review process by the time GSA contracted the architects of the JFK Federal Building. However, GSA reportedly “adopted a posture of immunity from local redevelopment controls.”<sup>58</sup> Because the relationship between Glaser/TAC and GSA was closed-door, there are few known details about the development of the design and the decision-making process. However, GSA afforded BRA the courtesy of an informal design review of Glaser and TAC’s plans in June 1962, at which point Pei’s master plan was completed, the plans for the federal building were in the design development phase, and GSA had approved schematic drawings.

The simultaneous but separate preliminary design for the JFK Federal Building and Pei’s redevelopment plan resulted in the building’s diversion from certain details of I.M. Pei and Associates’ plan. David A. Crane, formerly of the BRA, noted, “In both the JFK Building design and the winning City Hall entry the attitudes toward pedestrian flows and grade levels parted substantially from the Pei concepts. TAC’s design placed the JFK Building on a flat podium tied to the Tremont-Cambridge entry level for the tower; cross-circulation between this building and the others is impeded by steps between the podium and general plaza level.”

Norman Fletcher’s perception of the design review process was positive. He said, “In the case of the JFK Building, comments from the GSA review team and Harry Cobb relative to the size of the floor plan of the tower, the treatment of the precast facades, and the placement of the tower would seem to lead to improvements in the concept and design of the project.”<sup>59</sup>

Planners expressed particular concern that the federal building would compete with City Hall for dominance of the plaza. Henry N. Cobb of I. M. Pei and Associates met with Gropius and convinced him to flip the design, relocating the tower to the west end of the building (Amisson and Frederick 2016; Crane 1995). According to Norman Fletcher, “In the early sketches we had placed the tower at the lower end of the site, which would have positioned it closer to the site for the City Hall, perhaps threatening its dominance. Cobb wanted to protect City Hall as the crown jewel of the composition. After giving the subject a great deal of thought, he came to Boston with the express purpose of trying to persuade TAC (specifically Gropius) to move the tower to the other end of the site, facing the plaza [...] In the end we did move the tower to the other end of the site, thus making it the focus at one end for the City Hall Plaza.”<sup>60</sup>

In addition to aesthetic and planning concerns, revisions were also a response to economic and functional constraints. Crane noted, “It became clear that GSA had imposed significant programmatic and budget constraints.”<sup>61</sup> Economic and functional efficiency was in fact a

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<sup>57</sup> *Heroic*, preface.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 30-31.

<sup>59</sup> Fletcher, 43.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 30-31.

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primary factor in the design and space planning of the JFK Federal Building. GSA Buildings Manager Joseph R. McElhinney estimated that the building might result in \$80,000 in annual savings for one large agency alone, due to factors such as its consolidation of services, simple office designs and finishes, efficient use of space, and in-house employee facilities. The building featured a “charge plate” (or self-serve agency charge account) supply store in the basement, eliminating the need for equipment storage space in the offices. The building also contained a community duplicating plant, a fully-staffed health center, a 60-vehicle car pool, a credit union, a 600-seat employee cafeteria that served breakfast and lunch on all federal work days, and a 70-seat conference dining room. Prior to the construction of the building, federal agencies were scattered throughout Boston in leased offices and had to furnish their own supplies, printing, and other services, all of which resulted in higher costs to the federal government and the public. A “study guide” was used to determine the space allowance for each office within the building, which ranged from approximately 60 square feet for a typical office worker to 175 to 225 square feet for an agency head.<sup>62</sup>

The building also incorporated permanent suites for congressional representatives; permanent Conference Rooms dispersed throughout the building designed for either lecture or conference room requirements; cafeteria facilities seating 2,600 persons over four seatings, including breakfast and lunch; a medical suite with doctor’s office, seven treatment rooms and nine test rooms; repair shops to service the entire Boston area vehicle fleet area under jurisdiction of GSA; off-street trucking area leading to covered shipping and receiving dock; small branch post office at ground floor level; and parking facilities for 130 cars.<sup>63</sup>

To address the functional requirements and to balance those with the overall vision for Government Center, TAC’s revised design proposed a relocated single tower with a typical floor plate of 14,000 to 15,000 square feet. However, GSA had recently initiated a policy dictating that no single floor plate in a high-rise section could be less than 19,000 to 20,000 square feet. The architects felt that accommodating all of the usable floor space in one large tower would have resulted in a bulky, aesthetically unpleasing design, so they proposed two joined, offset, rectangular towers that would result in a more slender massing, provide more daylight to interior offices, produce more varied shadows, and present a slender massing to the adjacent plaza.<sup>64</sup> According to Kubo, “Fletcher cited the Thyssen-Haus in Dusseldorf by Hentrich-Petschnigg & Partner (1957-60) as providing the inspiration for TAC to split the program into two slender twenty-four story slabs, offset and hinged around a glass circulation core, to accommodate the required square footage on each floor.”<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Judy Newton, “New Federal Building Has a Charge-Plate Store in Basement,” publication unknown, date unknown, on file at GSA Public Buildings Service New England Region, JFK Federal Building, Boston, Massachusetts; U.S. General Services Administration, JFK Federal Building dedication program, September 9, 1966, on file at GSA Public Buildings Service New England Region, JFK Federal Building, Boston, Massachusetts.

<sup>63</sup> The Architects Collaborative, Inc. and Samuel Glaser Associates, vital statistics document dated December 16, 1965, on file at GSA Public Buildings Service New England Region, JFK Federal Building, Boston, Massachusetts.

<sup>64</sup> Foxhall, 184; Von Herausgegeben, 213; Fletcher, 41.

<sup>65</sup> Kubo 108.

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Glaser and TAC's final design divided one continuous and connected, 1 million square foot structure into two primary components: a 26-story high-rise tower and a four-story podium. The low rise, a long and low four-story rectangle, measuring 147 by 446 feet, accommodates the "District" or "Contact" offices. It features two circulation cores and an interior courtyard, which measures approximately 123 by 43 feet and provides daylight to the cores and adjacent hallways.

The tower, located at the northwest corner of the plaza near the intersection of Cambridge and New Sudbury streets provides 24 usable floors to accommodate the "Regional" offices and two floors of mechanical penthouses, distinguished by vertical aluminum louvers. The most notable feature of the tower is its division into two offset portions, each measuring 60 by 185 feet, connected by a 17-foot wide elevator and service core that consists of elevator bays, stairwells, and restrooms. Below grade, the ground floor is continuous between the low- and high-rise sections, which are also linked with an enclosed, glass and concrete clad connecting corridor connecting the first and third floors.

Designed for an initial population of approximately 4,000 persons and a potential of 6,700, TAC emphasized comprehensive flexibility through modular planning. Exterior facade and fenestration, as well as interior surfaces, including the ceiling, are based on 4'-10" square grid carried throughout the structure to coordinate ceilings, lighting, heating and cooling, partitions and cellular under-floor for electric and telephone distribution system.

Adding interest to the façade, a projection with rounded corners delineates the cafeteria on the third floor of the low-rise section's south elevation. Gropius had initially proposed a similar projection on the east elevation of the tower as well, as shown in an early rendering, but it did not make it into the final design. According to Norman Fletcher, "Walter Gropius was interested in developing some projecting elements in the composition to lend interest to what otherwise would be an uninterrupted skin of standard precast modules... [Leonard Hunter, GSA's assistant commissioner for design and construction] agreed with one projecting element, which expressed the cafeteria space in the low block, but he did not approve the projection on the tower."<sup>66</sup>

Fletcher recalled that the newly cleared City Hall Plaza site "did not leave much context."<sup>67</sup> In addition, "Summarizing the John F. Kennedy Federal Building's status as the first symbol of the Government Center, Fletcher later recalled, 'the new GSA building was setting its own context--clean, fresh, and optimistically modern with its white, precast, quartz aggregate panels.'"<sup>68</sup> TAC did address the immediate context and site constraints of Government Center. In addition to the massing revisions, the towers are lifted above the plaza level by two-story pilotis with 30 square columns supporting each tower. This move permits transparency at ground level and a fluid connection between the interior entrance spaces and the exterior plaza.

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<sup>66</sup> Fletcher, 41-42.

<sup>67</sup> Fletcher, 42.

<sup>68</sup> Kubo 109.

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### **Artwork Incorporated into the Design of the JFK Federal Building**

According to Norman Fletcher, Walter Gropius asked GSA to support the integration of artwork into the design of the JFK Federal Building. Gropius received some support from GSA staff members. However, the request was not approved until after President Kennedy's assassination in 1963 and the consequent naming of the building. TAC successfully promoted the use of \$3 million saved by coming in under budget to commission public art for the site, "a reflection of Gropius's long-standing interest in the integration of art and architecture," as well as the federal government's renewed commitment to incorporating the work of living American artists into public buildings.<sup>69</sup> Gropius nominated Robert Motherwell for the creation of a mural, Herbert Ferber for the design of a metal sculpture to be placed in the courtyard, and Dimitri Hadzi for the creation of an additional sculpture for the plaza.<sup>70</sup>

#### *Thermopylae*

Walter Gropius requested that GSA commission a sculpture by Dimitri Hadzi (1921-2006) for installation at the JFK Federal Building. Gropius had earlier visited an exhibition that included Hadzi's work at MIT's Hayden Gallery in 1963. The exhibition included three heroic sculptures by Hadzi, including *Salamis*, *Marathon*, and *Thermopylae*, all named after Greek battles. GSA commissioned Hadzi to execute a modified version of *Thermopylae* for placement at the new building at a cost of \$66,000. The 2.5 ton, 16-foot tall, abstract, bronze sculpture, which stands on the plaza adjacent to the southeast elevation of the high-rise section, was inspired by President John F. Kennedy's book titled *Profiles in Courage*, as well as the President's war record. The name of the sculpture stemmed from the Battle of Thermopylae, in which Spartans and Persians fought one another in 480 B.C. The name and design of the piece were intended to "suggest the versatile and complex qualities of a vital and vigorous personality which made the late President Kennedy a modern hero." The sculpture, which reportedly took three years to make, was cast in twenty different pieces and welded together. It installed in 1966 and drew mixed reactions from the public.<sup>71</sup>

Dimitri Hadzi was born in New York City in 1921. He studied at Cooper Union and the Brooklyn Museum of Art School, as well as the Athens Polytechnion in Greece. He was a guest sculptor at the American Academy in Rome and has had works displayed at Lincoln Center, Chase Manhattan Bank, the Guggenheim and Whitney Museums, and the Museum of Modern Art in New York City, as well as Baltimore's Sun-Life Building, Yale University, Princeton University, and Massachusetts of Technology (MIT).<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Kubo 109.

<sup>70</sup> Fletcher, 42.

<sup>71</sup> Robert L. Kunzig and Albert A. Gammal, Jr., "The John Fitzgerald Kennedy Federal Building, Boston, Massachusetts," building summary, date unknown, on file at GSA Public Buildings Service New England Region, JFK Federal Building, Boston, Massachusetts; U.S. General Services Administration, "Thermopylae," copy of plaque text prepared as part of the Art in Architecture Program, date unknown, on file at GSA Public Buildings Service New England Region, JFK Federal Building, Boston, Massachusetts; "Profile of 'Courage' at JFK Building," in *The Boston Globe*, June 27, 1969, on file at GSA Public Buildings Service New England Region, JFK Federal Building, Boston, Massachusetts; Fletcher, 43.

<sup>72</sup> U.S. General Services Administration, "Thermopylae," copy of plaque text prepared as part of the Art in Architecture Program, date unknown, on file at GSA Public Buildings Service New England Region, JFK Federal Building, Boston, Massachusetts.

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*New England Elegy*

In 1966, GSA commissioned Robert Motherwell (1915-1991) to create a painting to be displayed at the JFK Federal Building. Motherwell's abstract impressionist mural titled *New England Elegy*, which cost \$25,000, "represents a bereavement of the martyred and beloved President John F. Kennedy. It evokes varying triumphant and melancholy emotions upon each individual viewer in reflecting on the heroic president's life."<sup>73</sup>

The mural, which hangs in the passageway between the high-rise and low-rise sections, consists predominantly of irregular black and white shapes and has a sky blue lower border and a horizontal yellow line through the center. Walter Gropius made the following statement regarding the selection and placement of artwork, including *New England Elegy*, within the JFK Federal Building: "I try to start any design from studying requirements of the human being who will be using the space. How can we enliven that space for workers in order to increase efficiency? Here, we have used large, strongly colored walls offering points of interest that 'give a little kick' to the passerby."<sup>74</sup>

The painting was the subject of controversy upon its completion and installation in 1966. Several newspaper articles written in August 1966 reported that workers and visitors to the JFK Federal Building disapproved of the work. The controversy stemmed from perceptions that the work represented the moment of President Kennedy's assassination. Thomas N. Maytham, assistant curator of paintings at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, stated in August 1966 that a black blotch near the top right corner of the painting "may represent the profile of the President's head, a very direct and specific depiction of the most brutal moment of the tragedy when Kennedy was struck by the bullet." Maytham believed that "The entire thing symbolizes a vehicle. It leaves the viewer to concentrate not so much on detail as on the significance of what has occurred. The reason for doing so on a massive scale is to put an exclamation point to the subject and also to make clear the fact that this is not the death of just any individual, but is a major moment in the history of the United States."<sup>75</sup> This controversy was partly responsible for temporary suspension of the federal fine arts program in 1966.

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<sup>73</sup> U.S. General Services Administration, "New England Elegy," copy of plaque text prepared as part of the Art in Architecture Program, date unknown, on file at GSA Public Buildings Service New England Region, JFK Federal Building, Boston, Massachusetts.

<sup>74</sup> Foxhall, 184.

<sup>75</sup> "Abstract Painting of JFK Death Scene Stirs Furor," in *The Boston Globe* (Boston, Massachusetts), 12 August 1966, on file at GSA Public Buildings Service New England Region, JFK Federal Building, Boston, Massachusetts; Ed Gillooly, "Painting of JFK Shooting Stirs Up Storm of Protests," in *Record American, Boston*, August 12, 1966, on file at GSA Public Buildings Service New England Region, JFK Federal Building, Boston, Massachusetts; Ann-Mary Currier, "Reaction: Confused...Appalled," publication unknown, date unknown, on file at GSA Public Buildings Service New England Region, JFK Federal Building, Boston, Massachusetts; Michael O'Connor, "The Wrong Memorial," publication unknown, date unknown, on file at GSA Public Buildings Service New England Region, JFK Federal Building, Boston, Massachusetts; Dick Solito, "Mural Depicts JFK Death," in *Traveler*, date unknown, on file at GSA Public Buildings Service New England Region, JFK Federal Building, Boston, Massachusetts.

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Supporters of the piece argued that abstract expressionists are not concerned with representational depictions, but with emotional expression through “random” shapes and colors. These supporters praised Motherwell for his talent and innovation and praised the federal government for commissioning a work from such a notable artist.<sup>76</sup> Motherwell himself made the following comments in response to the controversy surrounding his painting: “All of this came about when someone erroneously reported that it was supposed to represent the President’s death. This is absolutely wrong...The subject matter is of an elegiac feeling, a feeling of grief for someone who has died.” In another interview, Motherwell commented, “It has nothing to do with the assassination. Does a requiem Mass describe a death? It is a representation of an emotion of grief.” Motherwell also stated, “...I had an aesthetic problem because the mural was designed for a particular building. I thought it was appropriate because the building is very monumental, enormous and powerful. I tried to make the mural equally monumental and powerful, but in contrast to the building which is somewhat impersonal and very geometric.”<sup>77</sup>

Motherwell was born in Aberdeen, Washington, and studied at the Otis Art Institute in Los Angeles, California; Stanford University; the Graduate School of Art and Sciences at Harvard University; the University of Grenoble, France; Oxford University in England; and Columbia University. His works have been exhibited in the Guggenheim and Whitney Museums, the Kootz Gallery in New York City, the San Francisco Museum of Art, the University of Minnesota, the Gallerie de France in Paris, the Yale University Art Gallery, and many other art centers in Switzerland, Spain, Germany, Holland, and Japan.<sup>78</sup>

*Full Circle: Profile in Courage*

In 1966, GSA commissioned a sculpture as part of its Art in Architecture program to be placed in the courtyard, adjacent to the low-rise section of the JFK Federal Building. Herbert Ferber, a New York-based artist, was chosen to design the sculpture. Ferber created *Full Circle: Profile of Courage* a large-scale, 12 by 14 foot, welded copper and steel sculpture. Ferber’s sculpture is composed of a central circle and several curved elements that go through the circle. The sculpture was installed in the courtyard in 1968.

Herbert Ferber, who sculpted *Full Circle: Profile in Courage*, was born in New York City as Herbert Ferber Silvers in 1906. After attending Morris High School in the Bronx, Ferber graduated from Columbia University with a Bachelor of Science degree in dentistry in 1927. From the 1930s through the 1950s, Ferber maintained two careers as a sculptor and a practicing

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<sup>76</sup> Herbert A. Kenny, “Art Furor,” publication unknown, date unknown, on file at GSA Public Buildings Service New England Region, JFK Federal Building, Boston, Massachusetts; Robert Nason, “Elegy Cause to Cheer,” publication unknown, date unknown, on file at GSA Public Buildings Service New England Region, JFK Federal Building, Boston, Massachusetts; Michael McCurdy, “Front-Paging an Artist,” publication unknown, date unknown, on file at GSA Public Buildings Service New England Region, JFK Federal Building, Boston, Massachusetts.

<sup>77</sup> George McKinnon, “Art Fuss Irks Motherwell,” publication unknown, date unknown, on file at GSA Public Buildings Service New England Region, JFK Federal Building, Boston, Massachusetts; “An Elegy, Says Artist,” publication unknown, date unknown, on file at GSA Public Buildings Service New England Region, JFK Federal Building, Boston, Massachusetts.

<sup>78</sup> U.S. General Services Administration, “New England Elegy,” copy of plaque text prepared as part of the Art in Architecture Program, date unknown, on file at GSA Public Buildings Service New England Region, JFK Federal Building, Boston, Massachusetts.

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dentist. From 1927 through 1930, he undertook an independent artistic study in sculpture at the Beaux-Arts Institute of Design. In 1930, Ferber was expelled from the National Academy of Design for sculpting “nonacademic, figurative work.” Yet that same year, Ferber received the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation scholarship and exhibited landscape and figure etchings at the National Art Club.

In 1969, a year after the installation of his welded copper and steel structure *Full Circle: Profile of Courage* for the JFK Federal Building, Ferber was awarded the Guggenheim Fellowship, a scholarship intended for men and women who have demonstrated exceptional capacity for productive scholarship and/or exceptional creative ability in the arts. Ferber's best-known sculptures are open, hollow forms in soldered and welded metal. With his *Sculpture as Environment* exhibition (1961), Ferber created an installation executed in fiberglass for a room at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York City. In the 1970s, Ferber continued his exploration of abstract form, mostly in large-scale outdoor pieces. He died in 1991 in North Egremont, Massachusetts. His works are held in countless public collections throughout the U.S., including the Albright-Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo, New York; the Cantor Arts Center at Stanford University in Palo Alto, California; The Contemporary Museum in Honolulu, Hawaii; the Dallas Museum of Art; the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C.; and the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York City.<sup>79</sup>

**JFK Federal Building Dedication**

The JFK Federal Building was the first building constructed for Government Center. According to the BRA's “proposed Demolition Staging Areas and Timetable” from 1961, demolition and grading at the site of the JFK Federal Building was to be complete by November 1, 1962.<sup>80</sup> On March 15, 1963, the title to Parcel 5, approximately 4.6 acres, in Government Center was purchased by GSA for \$1.2 million. Groundbreaking for the JFK Federal Building occurred July 8, 1963. At the end of 1963, following his assassination, the building was officially renamed after John F. Kennedy. The construction took just over three years and the building was almost fully occupied by the date of its formal dedication, September 9, 1966.

More than 5,000 people attended the dedication ceremony, including several members of the Kennedy family. Congressman Edward Boland served as master of ceremonies, and speakers included Governor John A. Volpe, Mayor John F. Collins, Honorable Lawson B. Knott, Jr., Congressman Torbert E. Macdonald, Congressman Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr., Senator Leverett Saltonstall, Senator Edward M. Kennedy, Speaker John W. McCormack, Richard Cardinal Cushing, Rabbi Joseph H. Shubow, and Right Reverend Anson Stokes, Jr. Several speakers remembered the late President Kennedy and commented on the appropriateness of dedicating the new building in his honor.

<sup>79</sup> Artnet website, “Herbert Ferber,”

[http://www.artnet.com/Artists/ArtistHomePage.aspx?artist\\_id=6118&page\\_tab=Bio\\_and\\_links](http://www.artnet.com/Artists/ArtistHomePage.aspx?artist_id=6118&page_tab=Bio_and_links) (27 February 2009).

<sup>80</sup> The American House (a hotel) was the most prominent structure on this site. However, the hotel was demolished in 1935 to accommodate a parking lot, which still occupied one third of the site when demolition for the JFK building commenced. There were approximately a dozen structures on this site.

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Congressman Boland conveyed to the audience a message from President Lyndon B. Johnson, which read in part, "Almost 4,000 men and women will work in this new building carrying out the program of the Federal government for the benefit of the people of this area. They will work in a building designed for efficiency as well as architectural excellence. The John Fitzgerald Kennedy building moreover is part of Boston's new Government Center in which the Federal government has joined with the city and the state to provide a complex which has added to the beauty of the city and the state as well as furnishing convenient and improved public service."<sup>81</sup> The dedication program prepared for the ceremony provided general information about the new building and outlined its unique features, summarizing with a statement that "The John Fitzgerald Kennedy Building was created for maximum efficiency, flexibility, durability and economy of operation."<sup>82</sup> Gropius was also in attendance and gave a short speech stating that the new building "is part of this greater whole which sets an example for the present trend to renew our American cities and to make our environment more beautiful."<sup>83</sup>

### **Critical Reception of the JFK Federal Building**

Architectural reviews of the building were mixed. The building was described in the 1967 issue of *Architectural Record* as "a demonstration...of the skilled handling of a relatively inflexible program and stringent budget in a dignified and impressive solution."<sup>84</sup> Architectural writer Ada Louise Huxtable praised the Government Center project as a success in urban renewal and applauded the design of City Hall Plaza, but called the JFK Federal Building "...distressingly ordinary and already suffering from the American disease of instant deterioration." Huxtable continued, "Its double tower, which increases the number of daylit offices and decreases the visual bulk, is praiseworthy; the fussy, indecisive precast exterior detailing is not. The building's controversial Robert Motherwell Mural is to be criticized more for its inept and awkward placement due to inept and awkward architectural transitions than as art."<sup>85</sup> Manfredo Tafuri and Francesco Dal Co, in their 1979 book *Modern Architecture*, criticized TAC's design of the JFK Federal Building, stating, "More and more the approach of TAC tended toward a formalism whose low point as regards quality was reached in the John F. Kennedy Federal Building of 1961-66 in Boston."<sup>86</sup>

Critical reappraisal has focused on the difficult, sometimes awkward process of breaking with historic trends and embracing modernism; the distinction between cultural and political significance, on the one hand, and superficial aesthetics, on the other; as well as changes in the driving political ideals and ideology in the United States.

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<sup>81</sup> Tom and John Sullivan, "JFK Building Dedicated," article published in unknown publication, on file at GSA Public Buildings Service New England Region, JFK Federal Building, Boston, Massachusetts.

<sup>82</sup> U.S. General Services Administration, JFK Federal Building dedication program, September 9, 1966, on file at GSA Public Buildings Service New England Region, JFK Federal Building, Boston, Massachusetts.

<sup>83</sup> Walter Gropius, 1966 Dedication Speech. Walter Gropius Papers. Harvard University Library, Cambridge, Massachusetts. (Gropius 1966).

<sup>84</sup> Foxhall, 173.

<sup>85</sup> Ada Louise Huxtable, "Hub Govn't Center Urban Success of 20<sup>th</sup> Century," in *Herald Traveler and Boston Record American*, September 12, 1972, on file at GSA Public Buildings Service New England Region, JFK Federal Building, Boston, Massachusetts.

<sup>86</sup> Tafuri and Dal Co, 333.

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Some critics based their appraisals on the difficulty, especially in locations like Boston with significant and well-established historical associations, of enacting separation with the past, which is a necessary element of modernism. David Fixler, president of the New England chapter of DOCOMO, asserts, “These [buildings comprising Government Center] were significant buildings for more reasons than just the fact that they were great works of architecture by great architects. They really signaled Boston’s putting its stake in the ground as saying we’re going to be a modern city. We’re not going to be a sort of neo-colonial backwater that people come to for the Freedom Trail and for the Boston Tea Party [...] and to watch what has happened to Boston since the 1950s when these [Government Center buildings] were first planned and then ultimately built in the 1960s is to really see the growth of Boston as a cosmopolitan center.”<sup>87</sup>

The authors of *Heroic* developed this thesis further, arguing that “the forward-looking optimism of concrete architecture in the United States communicated the social ideals of John F. Kennedy’s New Frontier and Lyndon B. Johnson’s Great Society programs, emblems of the collective will to capitalize on growing national wealth to broadly repair and enrich the public realm.”<sup>88</sup> Cohen calls Government Center, “nothing less than a bold architectural and political statement of optimism about Boston’s future.”<sup>89</sup>

Other critics have focused reappraisals on the awkward positioning of the Government Center planning and design and construction in between periods during which federal and local governments tragically viewed the wholesale razing of neighborhoods a potential solution to urban blight and a later period, which continues to this day, during which confidence in the private sector supplanted trust in the government. As Cohen notes, “Critic Ada Louise Huxtable later concluded that the West End (“a definitive demonstration of how to destroy a community with a bulldozer”) and Central Artery (“a conclusive exercise in how to dismember and blight a city”) caused the city to learn “painful lessons.” The consequence was that “Boston paused for shocked reappraisal of what ‘renewal’ has wrought.” Through rigorous design review and planning processes that involved deeper community input, Huxtable wrote, the BRA under Logue developed “one of the country’s most progressive and promising urban renewal programs,” transforming Boston into a city in which “design quality ranks high.”<sup>90</sup>

It is a challenging but worthwhile endeavor to properly situate the planning, design, and construction of the structure in its proper historical context. According to the authors of *Heroic*, Government Center is “a relic of an earlier, government-driven liberal moment, rather than today’s private market-oriented neoliberal society,”<sup>91</sup> as well as “[a] collection of buildings and public spaces designed to convey the confidence and authority of government as the agent of progressive change [...]Government Center, dominating downtown and constructed mostly in

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<sup>87</sup> “Will Today's Ugly Buildings Be Tomorrow's Historic Architecture?”

WBUR Radio Boston, Dec. 19, 2013.

<https://www.wbur.org/radioboston/2013/12/19/ugly-buildings>

<sup>88</sup> *Heroic* 19.

<sup>89</sup> Cohen 49.

<sup>90</sup> Reprinted in Cohen 21.

<sup>91</sup> Cohen 60.

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concrete, aimed through monumentalism to communicate the assertiveness, economic ambition, and stylistic boldness of the public sector.”<sup>92</sup>

The concepts that drove the development of the JFK Federal Building - of civic engagement, a progressive and effective public infrastructure, regulatory controls on private actions, and professional expertise - are much more controversial today. Cohen writes, “The dislike of Government Center in the twenty-first century may also reflect a different understanding than a half-century ago of what it means to be public-oriented and democratic. Logue and Collins felt that civic-minded public employees who were experts in their fields--as planners, architects, and government officials--could be trusted to act for the common good. Today, partly as a result of Boston’s sometimes wrenching experience with urban renewal in neighborhoods like the West End, citizens demand a more participatory kind of democratic process of planning and project approval. Finally, many people who take pride in Boston’s current economic vitality attribute it to the city’s entrepreneurial spirit, forgetting that these government projects were the critical mobilizing force behind the region’s revival.”<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Cohen 55.

<sup>93</sup> Cohen 60.

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Boston Public Buildings Service and U.S. General Services Administration

John F. Kennedy Federal Building

Suffolk County, MA

Name of Property

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Boston Redevelopment Authority

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“Reaction: Confused...Appalled,” publication unknown, date unknown, on file at GSA Public Buildings Service New England Region, JFK Federal Building, Boston, Massachusetts.

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Healy, Paul F., U.S. General Services Administration

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John F. Kennedy Federal Building  
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Nason, Robert

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Solito, Dick

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John F. Kennedy Federal Building  
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Notes re: John Fitzgerald Kennedy Federal Building, Boston, Massachusetts, Project No. 19900," dated September 17, 1965, on file at GSA Public Buildings Service New England Region, JFK Federal Building, Boston, Massachusetts.

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Memorandum to Regional Commissioner, U.S. General Services Administration and Regional Direct, Public Buildings Service, February 14, 1961, on file at National Archives and Records Administration, Record Group 121, Waltham, Massachusetts.

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<https://www.wbur.org/radioboston/2013/12/19/ugly-buildings>

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Memorandum of record of meeting regarding proposed size increase to JFK Federal Building site, May 19, 1961, on file at National Archives and Records Administration, Record Group 121, Waltham, Massachusetts.

JFK Federal Building dedication program, September 9, 1966, on file at GSA Public Buildings Service New England Region, JFK Federal Building, Boston, Massachusetts.

"New England Elegy," copy of plaque text prepared as part of the Art in Architecture Program, date unknown, on file at GSA Public Buildings Service New England Region, JFK Federal Building, Boston, Massachusetts.

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U.S. General Services Administration Public Buildings Service

Real property acquisition record for JFK Federal Building, March 18, 1965 (date prepared), on file at National Archives and Records Administration, Record Group 121, Waltham, Massachusetts.

John F. Kennedy Federal Building  
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U.S. General Services Administration, Assistant Chief Project Coordinator

Memorandum to "All Offices of Design and Construction," regarding "Information of Professional Services Contract No. GS-00-B-1882," February 28, 1961, on file at National Archives and Records Administration, Record Group 121, Waltham, Massachusetts.

U.S. Senate Committee on Public Works

"Committee Resolution," 86<sup>th</sup> Congress, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session, on file at National Archives and Records Administration, Record Group 121, Waltham, Massachusetts.

#### Internet Resources

Artnet website

"Herbert Ferber,"

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deCastro Nelson Delegas Associates Website

[www.dnarchitects.com/bios/tony.html](http://www.dnarchitects.com/bios/tony.html) (accessed 17 May 2008).

ENCYCLOpedia.com Website

"Water Gropius"

<http://www.encyclopedia.com/html/G/Gropius.asp> (accessed 17 May 2008).

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"Walter Gropius"

[http://www.greatbuildings.com/architects/Walter\\_Gropius.html](http://www.greatbuildings.com/architects/Walter_Gropius.html) (accessed 17 May 2008).

"Bauhaus"

<http://www.greatbuildings.com/buildings/Bauhaus.html> (accessed 17 May 2008).

Smith, Stephanie

*General Services Administration Prospectus Thresholds for Owned and Leased Federal Facilities*, Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, October 3, 2005; available from <http://digital.library.unt.edu/govdocs/crs/permalink/meta-crs-7678:1> (accessed 17 May 2008).

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"Planning and Community Development Update, November-December 2004," available from [www.town.brookline.ma.us/Planning/PDFs/Update/UpdateNovDec2004.pdf](http://www.town.brookline.ma.us/Planning/PDFs/Update/UpdateNovDec2004.pdf) (accessed 17 May 2008).

John F. Kennedy Federal Building  
Name of Property

Suffolk County, MA  
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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository: GSA, Region 1

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 4.5

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |              |            |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

John F. Kennedy Federal Building  
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**Or**  
**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

- |             |                 |                   |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Zone: 19 | Easting: 330435 | Northing: 4691971 |
| 2. Zone:    | Easting:        | Northing:         |
| 3. Zone:    | Easting:        | Northing:         |
| 4. Zone:    | Easting :       | Northing:         |

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The JFK Federal Building property is bounded by New Sudbury Street on the north, Congress Street on the east, City Hall Plaza on the south, and Cambridge Street on the West. The boundary is shown on the accompanying City of Boston Tax parcel map.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The National Register boundary for the JFK Federal Building includes the entire portion of the 4.5-acre tax parcel (City of Boston Parcel ID 0302605000) that is historically associated with the building during its period of significance (1966-1968). This boundary follows the tax parcel lines and includes the federal office building which has occupied the lot since its erection in 1966. The boundary encompasses all of the contributing resources that comprise the property: the building, the site (including the plaza and other hardscape and planting features), and the two objects (sculptures).

John F. Kennedy Federal Building  
Name of Property

Suffolk County, MA  
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### 11. Form Prepared By\*

name/title: GSA Historic Preservation Staff (Elizabeth Hannold & Todd Satter)  
organization: US General Services Administration, Public Buildings Service  
street & number: 1800 F Street, NW  
city or town: Washington state: DC zip code: 20405  
e-mail elizabeth.hannold@gsa.gov  
telephone: 202-617-1279  
date: July 2021

\*This nomination is based on an earlier nomination prepared by A.D. Marble for GSA in 2010. Claire Hosker, GSA Historic Preservation Staff (retired) also contributed to earlier versions.

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### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

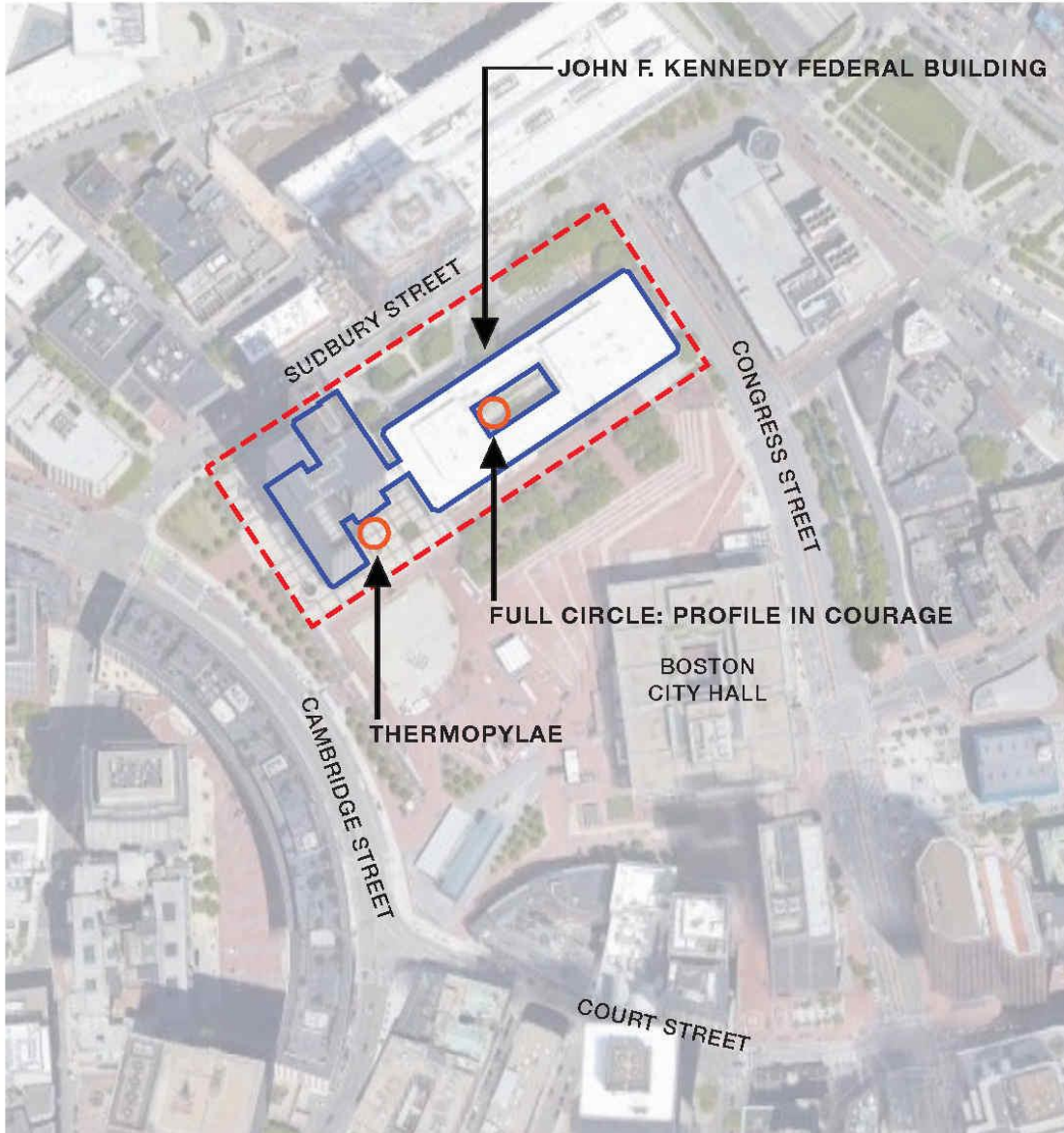
- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)






John F. Kennedy Federal Building  
Name of Property

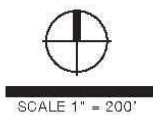
Suffolk County, MA  
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**Sketch map** with contributing and non-contributing resources



-  contributing building
-  contributing site
-  contributing objects

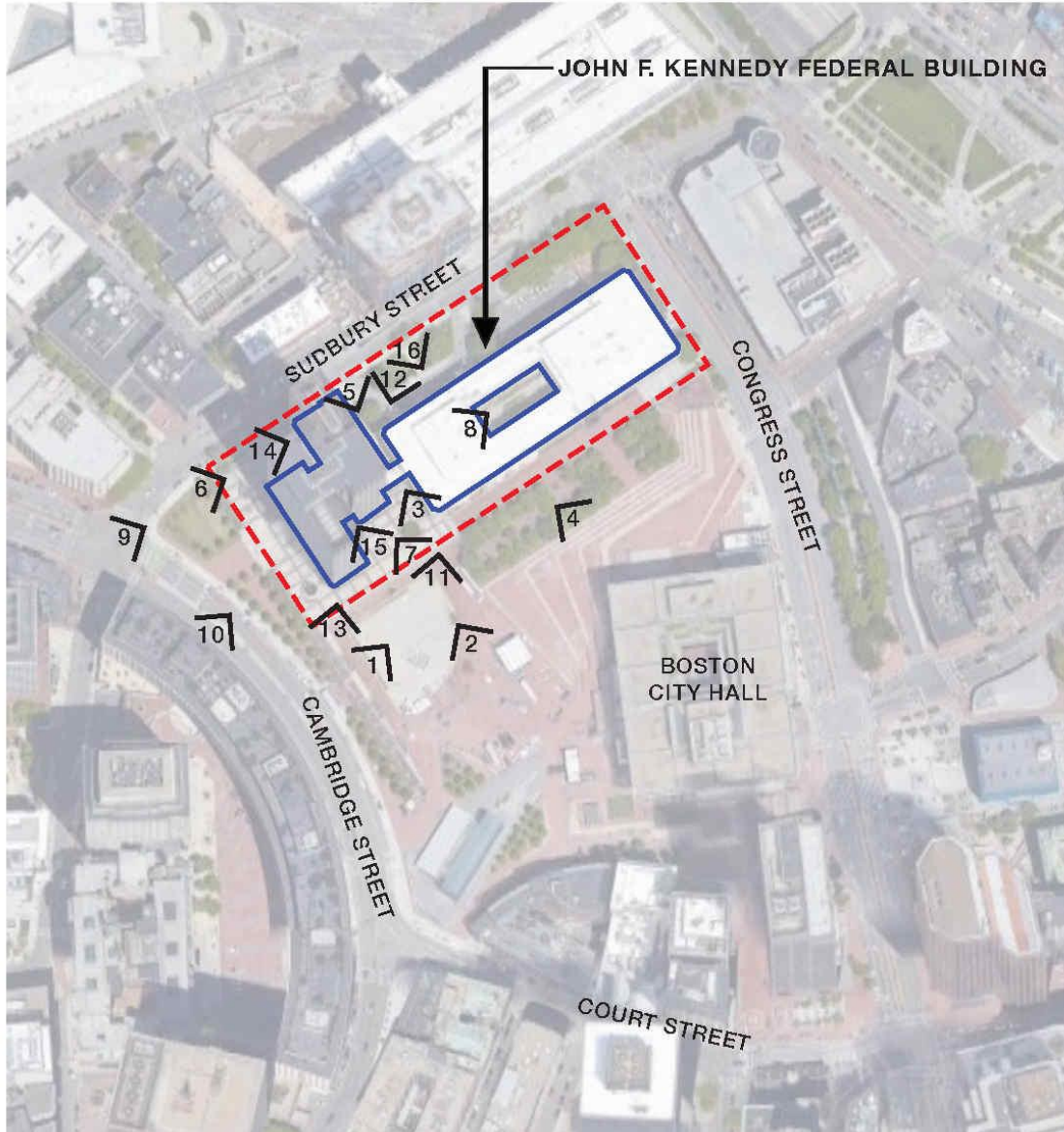
JOHN F. KENNEDY FEDERAL BUILDING  
SUFFOLK COUNTY, BOSTON, MA  
CONTRIBUTING AND NONCONTRIBUTING  
RESOURCES  
prepared July 2021






John F. Kennedy Federal Building  
Name of Property

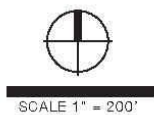
Suffolk County, MA  
County and State

**Sketch map** with key for exterior photograph views



-  building
-  boundary
-  photograph view

JOHN F. KENNEDY FEDERAL BUILDING  
SUFFOLK COUNTY, BOSTON, MA  
SKETCH MAP AND PHOTO KEY  
prepared July 2021



John F. Kennedy Federal Building  
Name of Property  
**City of Boston Tax Parcel Map**

Suffolk County, MA  
County and State



Parcels FY2018  
Parcel ID: 03026\*5000  
Address: 15 55 NEW SUBURBY ST,  
02114  
Owner: UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Boston Tax Parcel Viewer (accessed 7/20218)



John F. Kennedy Federal Building  
Name of Property

Suffolk County, MA  
County and State

**Supplemental Google Map with Latitude and Longitude**



**John F. Kennedy Federal Building**  
**15 New Sudbury Street, Boston, MA**  
**Latitude: 42.361676 Longitude: -71.060074**

John F. Kennedy Federal Building  
Name of Property

Suffolk County, MA  
County and State

### Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

NOTE: All photographs accurately portray the current appearance of the building.

Name of Property:	John F. Kennedy Federal Building
City or Vicinity:	Boston
County:	Suffolk County
State:	MA
Name of Photographer:	Carol Highsmith
Date of Photographs:	September 6, 2018
Location of Original Digital Files:	U.S. General Services Administration, Washington, DC

### Photo Log

Photo # 1 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F Kennedy Federal Building\_0001)  
Overview of building and plaza, view to northeast

Photo # 2 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F Kennedy Federal Building\_0002)  
High-rise section, connector, and southwest end of low-rise section, view to northwest

Photo # 3 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F Kennedy Federal Building\_0003)  
Southeast elevation of connector, view to northwest

Photo # 4 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F Kennedy Federal Building\_0004)  
Plaza in front of south elevation of low-rise section, view to southwest

Photo # 5 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F Kennedy Federal Building\_0005)  
Northwest elevation of connector and stairs, view to southeast

Photo # 6 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F Kennedy Federal Building\_0006)  
Conical mechanical feature on plaza at northwest corner of site, view to northeast

Photo # 7 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F Kennedy Federal Building\_0007)  
Dmitri Hadzi's sculpture titled *Thermopylae*, view to northwest

Photo # 8 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F Kennedy Federal Building\_0008)

John F. Kennedy Federal Building  
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Courtyard in low-rise section with Herbert Ferber's sculpture titled *Full Circle: Profile in Courage*, view to northeast

Photo # 9 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F Kennedy Federal Building\_0009)  
High-rise towers, from corner of Cambridge and New Sudbury streets, view to northeast

Photo # 10 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F Kennedy Federal Building\_0010)  
High-rise towers from across Cambridge Street, view to northeast

Photo # 11 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F Kennedy Federal Building\_0011)  
South elevation of low-rise section from southwest corner showing second story projection at cafeteria, view to northeast

Photo # 12 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F Kennedy Federal Building\_0012)  
Detail of northwest corner of low-rise section and stairs, view to southeast

Photo # 13 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F Kennedy Federal Building\_0013)  
Detail of southwest corner of high-rise tower, view to northeast

Photo # 14 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F Kennedy Federal Building\_0014)  
Plaza adjacent to high-rise section showing pilotis and main lobby elevation, view to northeast

Photo # 15 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F Kennedy Federal Building\_0015)  
Glazed connection between the two towers of the hi-rise section, view to northwest

Photo # 16 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F Kennedy Federal Building\_0016)  
New Sudbury Street entrance to low-rise section, view to southeast

Photo # 17 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F Kennedy Federal Building\_0017)  
Elevator bay in first floor lobby of high-rise section, view to northwest

Photo # 18 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F Kennedy Federal Building\_0018)  
Inscription "Let the word go forth . . ." on wall of central elevator bay in first floor lobby of high-rise section, view to northwest

Photo # 19 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F Kennedy Federal Building\_0019)  
Glass enclosed corridor between low-rise and high-rise sections and painting, *New England Elergy*, Robert Motherwell, view to northeast

Photo # 20 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F Kennedy Federal Building\_0020)  
Painting, *New England Elergy*, by Robert Motherwell, view to northeast

Photo # 21 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F Kennedy Federal Building\_0021)  
Escalators in low-rise section, first floor, view to northeast

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Photo #22 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F Kennedy Federal Building\_0022)  
Corridor along interior courtyard, low-rise section, first floor, view to southwest

Photo # 23 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F Kennedy Federal Building\_0023)  
Low-rise lobby with open stairway and plaza entry beyond, first floor, view to view to southeast

Photo #24 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F Kennedy Federal Building\_0024)  
Low-rise lobby open stairway and interior courtyard beyond, view to southwest

Photo #25 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F Kennedy Federal Building\_0025)  
Low-rise ground floor escalator and elevator lobby, view to southwest

Photo #26 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F Kennedy Federal Building\_0026)  
High-rise elevator lobby, 15th Floor, view to northwest

Photo # 27 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F Kennedy Federal Building\_0027)  
Original Tile, Located in a 1st Floor Utility Closet

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

- Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
- Tier 2 – 120 hours
- Tier 3 – 230 hours
- Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.



Photo # 2 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F Kennedy Federal Building\_0002)





Photo # 4 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F. Kennedy Federal Building\_0004)



Photo # 5 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F Kennedy Federal Building\_0005)



Photo # 6 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F. Kennedy Federal Building\_0006)





Photo # 8 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F Kennedy Federal Building\_0008)





Photo # 10 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F Kennedy Federal Building\_0010)









Photo # 14 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F Kennedy Federal Building\_0014)



Photo # 15 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F Kennedy Federal Building\_0015)



# John F. Kennedy Federal Building



Photo # 17 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F Kennedy Federal Building\_0017)



Photo # 18 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F Kennedy Federal Building\_0018)

LET THE WORD GO FORTH FROM THIS TIME AND PLACE,  
TO FRIEND AND FOE Alike THAT THE TORCH HAS BEEN  
PASSED TO A NEW GENERATION OF AMERICANS - BORN  
IN THIS CENTURY, TEMPERED BY WAR, DISCIPLINED BY  
A HARD AND BITTER PEACE, PROUD OF OUR ANCIENT  
HERITAGE - AND UNWILLING TO WITNESS OR PERMIT  
THE SLOW UNDOING OF THOSE HUMAN RIGHTS TO  
WHICH THIS NATION HAS ALWAYS BEEN COMMITTED,  
AND TO WHICH WE ARE COMMITTED TODAY AT HOME  
AND AROUND THE WORLD.

LET EVERY NATION KNOW, WHETHER IT WISHES US  
WELL OR ILL, THAT WE SHALL PAY ANY PRICE, BEAR  
ANY BURDEN, MEET ANY HARDSHIP, SUPPORT ANY  
FRIEND, OPPOSE ANY FOE, IN ORDER TO ASSURE THE  
SURVIVAL AND THE SUCCESS OF LIBERTY. THIS MUCH  
WE PLEDGE - AND MORE.

JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY  
35th PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES  
INAUGURAL ADDRESS  
JANUARY 20, 1961



John F. Kennedy Federal Building

Address	Phone	Hours
100 State Street, Boston, MA 02109	(617) 725-1000	9:00 AM - 5:00 PM, Monday - Friday
100 State Street, Boston, MA 02109	(617) 725-1000	9:00 AM - 5:00 PM, Monday - Friday
100 State Street, Boston, MA 02109	(617) 725-1000	9:00 AM - 5:00 PM, Monday - Friday



3-1



Photo # 20 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F Kennedy Federal Building\_0020)





First Floor - Low Rise Building  
Citizenship and Immigration Services E-100  
Immigration Information E-160  
Immigration Interviews

**First Floor - Low Rise Building**

- ↑ Hanscom Federal Credit Union ATM**
- ↑ High Rise Offices and Elevators**





Photo #24 (MA - Suffolk County - John F Kennedy Federal Building - 0024)





Photo #26 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F Kennedy Federal Building\_0026)



Photo # 27 (MA\_Suffolk County\_John F Kennedy Federal Building\_0027)

