

Cotton Annex Auction Questions

- 1. Will there be any other considerations other than highest bid when GSA evaluates offers for the Cotton Annex building such as the Patriot Act?**

No. GSA will make a decision to award based on the high bid from the online auction

- 2. If you wish to bid, do you have to register by December 1?**

No. You would need to register and pay your registration deposit before the auction closes. GSA requests a 5-day period to process registrations.

- 3. Can you provide more information on the easement related to C Street?**

The access easement over the closed C Street right-of-way is intended to allow the purchaser to access the parcel from C Street. The Invitation for Bid (IFB) will contain a form of the easement that would be executed at closing.

- 4. What does GSA intend to do with the property on the north side of C Street across from the Cotton Annex building?**

GSA has a continuing need for the property immediately north of C Street related to the operations of its Central Heating and Refrigeration Plant, which is located immediately west of the Cotton Annex.

- 5. Has the SHPO considered connections on the South & East side for expansion?**

The Cotton Annex was specifically designed and intended for future expansion by extension from the south and east sides to occupy the entire block. The walls at those expansion locations were not designed to be permanent exterior walls. Therefore, a direct attachment of new construction to the existing building at these locations is an acceptable treatment from the historic preservation standpoint, provided that the design of the adjacent construction is appropriate under the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. Creating internal connections to the existing building at these locations is also acceptable.

6. Has there been a Historic Review for the corridors?

The evaluation of the corridors for historic character, which was prepared by GSA in consultation with the SHPO, is shown on the preservation zone diagram included with the documentation available to bidders. Advice on appropriate corridor treatments under the Secretary of the Interior's Standards is available in the accompanying Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings, and in several National Park Service publications specifically addressing the treatment of interiors and interior corridors in historic buildings. These materials are available at:

www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation/rehab/stand

www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs

www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/tech-notes

7. Would the Historic Preservation of the property impede the retention, repair, and or replacement of the windows?

The evaluation of the historic character of the building's windows is shown on the preservation zone diagram included with the documentation available to bidders. Advice on appropriate window treatments under the Secretary of the Interior's Standards is available in the accompanying Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings. Extensive guidance on specific window treatments is available in National Park Service technical publications available at:

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8. Would the acquirer of the building be able to obtain steam and chilled water from the steam heating plant across the street?

GSA does not anticipate make steam and chilled water to owners of private buildings. Potential purchasers should bid accordingly.

9. What is the impact of the WMATA easement on the NE corner of the site?

The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) easement that traverses the site is located in the far Northeast corner of the parcel. Potential bidders should contact WMATA for information on potential impacts to additional construction on the site.

10. Are there any sub-surface restrictions on what could be done at the site due to the WMATA easement?

Potential bidders should contact WMATA for information on potential impacts to additional construction on the site.

11. Are additional windows in the warehouse portion approved by the NPS and other governing agencies?

Any modifications to the existing structure would have to be done in accordance with the process for modifying the structure laid out in the historic preservation covenants attached to the Invitation for Bid (IFB). See also Question #7.

12. If new cooling towers are required atop of the building or any new addition, would GSA assure their approval by NPS and any other relevant agency having jurisdiction?

No. Any modifications to the existing structure would have to be done in accordance with the process for modifying the structure laid out in the historic preservation covenants attached to the Invitation for Bid (IFB) and local preservation law.

13. What is the impact of the WMATA Easement?

The WMATA easement is shown on the survey to make bidders aware of its existence. Potential bidders should contact WMATA for information on potential impacts to additional construction on the site.

14. The original plan contemplated an addition. If a new addition followed the original plans, would GSA and any other agency having jurisdiction guarantee its approval?

No. Any modifications to the existing structure would have to be done in accordance with the process for modifying the structure laid out in the historic preservation covenant attached to the Invitation for Bid (IFB) and local preservation law.

15. Does GSA have knowledge regarding a determination that the staircases are code-compliant.

GSA is unaware of any such determination. The property is being sold As-Is, Where-Is.

16. Has GSA taken any action regarding PCB's present in floors of the transformer vaults?

No.

17. Does GSA have any knowledge of migration of hazardous materials from the multiple tanks located at the GSA central heating plant?

There was a groundwater sampling conducted on the Central Heating and Refrigeration Plant (CHRP) site in 2014. There were no substances detected at or above EPA limits. Given the groundwater flow to the southwest as mentioned in the ASTM Phase I report, GSA believes the likelihood of any migration of contaminants from the CHRP site as low.

18. Does GSA have any knowledge of any hazardous materials migrating from the railroad tracks bordering the subject property to the south?

No. Given the groundwater flow to the southwest as mentioned in the ASTM Phase I report, GSA believes the likelihood of any migration of contaminants from the railroad tracks to the south of the site as low.

19. The property report mentions the existence of tunnels from the metro subway system possibly underneath the subject property. Does GSA have any knowledge of any tunnels underneath the subject property?

The WMATA easement is shown on the property survey. Potential bidders should contact WMATA for information on the precise location of tunnels located within that easement. GSA has no other knowledge of subway tunnels beneath the property.

20. Does GSA have knowledge of PCBs present in the hydraulic fluid for the three hydraulic elevators in the Cotton Annex building?

No. We have no record of testing of the hydraulic fluid for PCBs. However, there are documents in our files that indicate the elevators were upgraded in 1992.

21. Does GSA have any reports regarding the extent of asbestos containing materials (ACMs) for the Cotton Annex?

The ASTM Phase I report documents suspected ACM materials. There has not been additional specific testing for ACMs.

22. Does GSA have a completed report regarding LBP's for the subject property?

There is a report located at <https://realestatesales.gov/gsauctions/aucitdsc/?sl=DCNCR017001001> which reports on limited LBP sampling in the building in 2014.

23. Does GSA have testing reports available concerning the lead pipes supplying the drinking water for the Cotton Annex building?

GSA does not have any such reports. As noted in the ASTM Phase I report, based on the age of the building, it is possible that the lead pipes and/or solder were used for plumbing in the construction of the building.

24. Does GSA have any reports available concerning PCB's contained within the fluorescent light fixtures throughout the Cotton Annex building?

No additional reports are available. The possible presence of PCBs in fluorescent light fixtures is noted in the ASTM Phase I report. Our records indicate a major "re-lamping" around 1994. Although we cannot confirm, it is likely the PCB light ballasts would have been removed at that time.

25. Are there any restrictions regarding driven piles or excavation limits/methodologies?

Bidders would be advised to contact WMATA and the DC Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) regarding any such restrictions. GSA has a notice regarding chilled water lines in the Invitation for Bid.

26. The IFB notes that the northern lines are not in service. Can these be decommissioned and removed or does GSA want to keep them there for possible future use?

The lines to the north that serve the Cotton Annex itself are not in service and can be removed. The lines that are currently in service must be left in service.

27. Is there any way to find out what buildings the southern lines service for purposes of estimating the cost of relocating those lines?

These lines supply chilled water to the National Gallery of Art (East and West buildings), the National Museum of the American Indian, the National Air & Space Museum and their restaurant, the Hirshhorn Museum, the Arts & Industries Building, the National Museum of African Art, and the Freer Gallery. The points of separation for these services occur off the subject parcel.

- 28. If the southern lines are retained in place**
- a. Can structures be built above them provided written approval is obtained from GSA?**

GSA would consider this as long as access for potential repairs was feasible and granted.

- b. Can the lines run through a parking garage such that access can be provided to GSA when necessary?**

GSA would consider such an arrangement.

- 29. How will design of the access easement be handled? Could the eventual property owner design that as a forecourt to the building and/or below grade parking, or does it have to take the form of a typical street right of way with cartway and sidewalks?**

This street segment is specifically mentioned in the DC Zoning Code. GSA's intent in granting the access easement would be for continued use as a street. Any major change in the streetscape would trigger an NHPA Section 106 consultation given the Federal Government's retained ownership of the street right of way.