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SCOPING MEETING FOR 202-220 SOUTH STATE STREET
U.S. GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Report of public comments given at the Public
Hearing for the U.S. General Services Administration
held at Metcalfe Federal Building, 77 West Jackson
Boulevard, Chicago, Illinois on the 2nd day of
October, A.D., 2023, commencing at the hour of
3:00 p.m.

PANEL PRESENT:

- MR. JOSEPH MULLIGAN,
GSA Project Manager
- MS. REGINA NALLY,
GSA Great Lakes Regional Historic Preservation Officer
- MR. MICHAEL GONCZAR,
GSA Great Lakes Regional NEPA Program Manager
- MR. CHARLIE WEBB,
Jacobs Project Manager

1 MS. MYKYTIUK: Hello, I did just want to point
2 out some of our housekeeping.

3 I believe you probably all heard that this
4 meeting is being recorded, in addition to that, having a
5 recording for our people who are in the hybrid meeting
6 on Zoom. We do have a court reporter taking a
7 transcript of the meeting, just to let you know.

8 The meeting presentation should start in just a
9 few moments at 3:10. We did want to let you know that
10 the comment form and a link to the notice of
11 availability will be provided in the chat. Participants
12 will and should be muted during the meeting, and that,
13 of course, goes for the people online.

14 If you've requested to participate in the formal
15 comment period, you will be asked to unmute and provide
16 your comment when your name is called, and, again, for
17 people in the room, we will call you in the order that
18 you have signed up to comment. Comments left in the
19 zoom meeting chat, and this is very important, are not
20 part of the formal public record.

21 You should use one of the other mechanisms to
22 submit a comment, and we will be providing that
23 information in the presentation, and if you look back on
24 your Eventbrite registration confirmation, that

1 information is also there in those emails.

2 Just a reminder, that you may submit comments by
3 email or regular mail until October 31st, 2023. Thanks
4 for participating.

5 MR. WEBB: Good afternoon, and thank you for
6 coming. We'll begin with introductions and then we'll
7 go through an agenda. Then we will start a short
8 presentation before we get to public comments. So,
9 Joseph Mulligan, GSA's project manager is here; Regina
10 Nally, the regional historic preservation officer; and
11 Michael Gonczar, the regional NEPA program manager are
12 here.

13 My name is Charlie Webb. I'm with Jacobs. I'm
14 the project manager for the consulting team that GSA has
15 brought on to assist them with complying with the
16 National Environmental Policy Act and the National
17 Historic Preservation Act.

18 So the purpose of the meeting tonight is to
19 receive public and agency comments on the draft
20 environmental impact statement that the general services
21 administration has prepared in accordance with the
22 National Environmental Policy Act.

23 Our agenda for the meeting, Joe and Regina and I
24 will go through the first four parts of the agenda, then

1 we'll have remarks from Commissioner Dizon and Chief
2 Judge Pallmeyer and then we will get to public comments,
3 which is the main part of this afternoon's agenda.

4 A couple of items for those of you who are from
5 the media are here tonight, Tanya Schusler, the GSA's
6 public information person couldn't make it. Her contact
7 information is out at the sign in table if you did not
8 already get that.

9 One other thing, all of the public comments
10 received tonight will be responded to, but not tonight.
11 GSA wants to reserve the bulk of the time, as much time
12 as possible, to receive public input, all of the
13 comments will be responded to, but GSA will not be
14 responding to comments at this afternoon's meeting.

15 Joe.

16 MR. MULLIGAN: So good afternoon.

17 Many of you joined us almost a year ago for our
18 public scoping meeting in November. So this information
19 is a review. Why we're all here today is for the
20 proposed action of the future of the properties located
21 at 202, 214, and 220 South State Street.

22 The purpose of our proposed action is to address
23 security concerns from the adjacent courthouse, the
24 Dirksen U.S. Courthouse, to respond to a federal

1 appropriation of the 2022 consolidated appropriations
2 act, which provides funding authorities to general
3 services administration to demolish the said properties
4 and, three, managing our federal assets, recognizing
5 that GSA does not have a federal use for the properties.
6 In accordance to that process, we have two statutory
7 requirements to fulfill, one is NEPA, the National
8 Environmental Policy Act, and two is the National
9 Historice Preservation Act. Both are being run
10 concurrently.

11 We initiated both of those in our scoping
12 meeting last November. The purpose of tonight, or
13 today, is to get public input on our draft environmental
14 impact statement. With that, we're also opening that to
15 anything under section 106 NHPA, to get general public
16 input on that as well. Your recommendations and
17 comments will be taken and responded to in what's called
18 a summary document, which is provided after the comment
19 period ends on October 31st.

20 An overview at the bottom of the slide that
21 you're looking at, it shows when we initiated our
22 process, last November, so it's almost a year later and
23 you can see we're midway through in preparing the
24 drafted environmental impact statement, and now in our

1 public comment review period. Again, that concludes on
2 October 31st.

3 From there, we would prepare a final
4 environmental impact statement. Before we do that,
5 we're looking to align several other deliverables, like
6 the 106, programmatic agreement, and other pieces of
7 analysis that would complement our effort to -- for our
8 decision-maker to make an informed decision on the
9 future of the properties.

10 That final EIS is also open in the public
11 comment period. There's no hearing, but you will be
12 allowed to provide input to GSA when we issue that
13 document as well. And we anticipate in doing that in
14 early 2024, and currently are projecting a record
15 decision in spring of 2024.

16 So Regina Nally is our regional historic
17 preservation officer and she'll speak regarding the
18 status of that undertaking.

19 MS. NALLY: Thanks, Joe.

20 We just wanted to provide you a quick overview
21 of the four steps, the section 106 process. The first
22 step is to initiate consultation, which we started with
23 the opening of our public scoping meeting back in
24 November of '23, as Joe said earlier. We did that and

1 simultaneously started with NEPA, and we -- we sought
2 consulting parties to participate.

3 Step number two, which were in the final steps
4 of close out for step number two in identifying historic
5 properties. In early '23 we convened the consulting
6 parties and we, since then, had seven meetings with
7 those consulting parties. Our reports from those
8 meetings are currently out for review by the State
9 Historic Preservation Office, the advisory council, and
10 the consulting parties.

11 We have initiated assessing effects for the
12 historic properties. I think we started those
13 conversations around about May with the consulting
14 parties to identify affects to historic properties which
15 include the subject properties, historic districts, and
16 other historic properties in the vicinity. We are
17 documenting those effects as we speak.

18 Our next step would be step number four, which
19 would be to resolve adverse effects. The purpose of
20 this step is to eventually create a programmatic
21 agreement that guides GSA in the direction on how to
22 avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects to historic
23 properties. The agreement would be at a minimum among
24 GSA, the State Historic Preservation Office, the

1 Advisory Council Historic Preservation and any other
2 organizations that have responsibility to execute
3 anything.

4 Currently, we anticipate concluding the
5 agreement document in early 2024, with the intent of
6 moving towards our record of decision in spring of 2024,
7 as Joe had mentioned.

8 That's an overview of that.

9 MR. WEBB: Thank you.

10 So we have an overview of the impacts as
11 documented in the draft and environmental impact
12 statement. There's two copies of this document in the
13 back of the room. It is, of course, online, so you can
14 take a look at it there. There is a paper copy just
15 down the street at the Harold Washington Library
16 reference section, too, if you're not able to get to it
17 online.

18 So a couple of the things, the draft
19 environmental impact statement does not say which
20 alternative is better. It does not indicate a preferred
21 alternative on behalf of GSA. The final environmental
22 statement that Joe mentioned that will identify GSA's
23 preferred alternative, but the draft EIS does not.

24 I'm going to pause for a second because we lost

1 Wi-Fi momentarily.

2 Okay. And we're back.

3 For of those of you who lost the connection
4 online, we paused the meeting so you didn't miss
5 anything.

6 So the draft EIS evaluates a whole range of
7 resources, and you can see the list in the blue banner
8 on the right side of this slide. And for each of those
9 resources, the draft EIS identifies four things, it
10 identifies the intensity of the impact, whether it's
11 significant or moderate or minor or there is no impact
12 to that resource.

13 It assesses the geographical context of that
14 impact, is it just a footprint of these three buildings
15 that would be affected or is it the Loop or is it Cook
16 County? It gives a -- the quality of the impact, is it
17 a negative impact or is it a beneficial impact?

18 And lastly, it discusses the duration of the
19 impact, is it a short-term impact that would be only be
20 experienced during adaptive reuse or during demolition
21 or is a long-term impact that would be experienced after
22 either of those two alternatives is implemented?

23 So on this slide it lists, under alternative A
24 in the left column, those resources that would have a

1 significant or moderate the impact, so for the
2 demolition alternative, there would be a significant
3 impact to cultural resources and to land use, a moderate
4 impact to the Loop Retail Historic District and the
5 Chicago Federal Center, and I should back up a second,
6 of course a significant cultural resources impact would
7 be to 202, 214, and 220 South State Street.

8 For the purpose of this undertaking, the
9 building at 214 South State Street is being treated as
10 eligible for the National Register as a contributing
11 element to the Loop Retail District.

12 And, lastly, under the demolition alternative
13 being moderate noise impact, short-term during
14 implementation of that alternative, you can see
15 alternative B, and the no action alternative, we list
16 those -- there are no significant impacts identified in
17 the draft environment impact statement under the
18 adaptive reuse alternative, but there would be moderate
19 short-term to the surrounding community, in terms of
20 noise during renovations and the no action alternative
21 could have a moderate long-term impact to these cultural
22 resources as these buildings would remain in their
23 current condition and need of repair.

24 Joe?

1 MR. MULLIGAN: So for next steps, as I stated
2 earlier, we are now in the public review of the draft
3 EIS. This forum is one of those opportunities for the
4 public to provide comment. We'll go through other means
5 on how you can provide comment as well, and, again, we
6 stated previously, but just to show the timeline for the
7 NEPA effort, the final EIS in early 2024, with a record
8 decision in spring 2024.

9 So ways you can provide public comment -- we
10 look forward to receiving comment today from everyone in
11 attendance. However, you can reserve comments and still
12 provide them through this month, October 31st being the
13 deadline. We have, via email, our statestreet@gsa.gov,
14 as well as you can send them in mail to my attention.

15 Again, all comments are considered, documented
16 in our summary report, and then considered in the final
17 environmental impact statement. So there is value,
18 there is a way for the public to engage in this effort,
19 and then for us to properly respond.

20 With that, I'd like to introduce two speakers
21 today who will give brief remarks. The first being our
22 regional commissioner, Angel Dizon, so I'd like to
23 introduce him.

24 MR. DIZON: Thanks, Joe.

1 Good afternoon everybody, can I do a quick poll
2 to find out how many of you all were here in November?
3 Okay. I can tell. This is twice as many people as we
4 had in November. And so for those of you that came
5 back, thank you so much for coming back and for all the
6 new folks, welcome to this opportunity to provide your
7 comments.

8 I'm going to keep my remarks pretty short. Not
9 because I don't care, but Joe's really the smart one
10 here. I do want to tell you up front, that there has
11 been no decision made about the disposition of these
12 buildings and I know that that's a concern out there, so
13 I just want to make sure I put that out there right away
14 that we are going through this process to determine what
15 might be the best solution to all of this.

16 And I'll tell you that, us working collectively
17 is much better than anyone of us working in isolation,
18 so we're smarter as a collective, which is the good
19 thing, and based on some of the public comments that I
20 have read about GSA, no one thinks we're all that bright
21 to begin with, so having your input is really helpful.

22 And what I think I'll just close with is that, I
23 think what Joe's already stated, is that I think there's
24 going to be plenty of opportunities for folks to provide

1 their input, and my hope is that the way that we work as
2 a collective, that we can find ways to satisfy the real
3 security issues that the courts have and provide
4 opportunities to preserve the buildings. So I think
5 that's what our collective goal is and I think that
6 opportunity does exist.

7 So, anyways, that's enough from me, but I'll
8 turn it over to Chief Judge Pallmeyer.

9 JUDGE PALLMEYER: Thank you, Angel.

10 And thank you to Joe Mulligan and all of those
11 of you within GSA that have been leading this process.

12 I want to thank the consulting parties for their
13 collaboration and their commitment to exploring truly
14 viable reuse alternatives first, and also, of course,
15 the public, for your own expressed interest in the
16 outcome of this process and these properties. I am
17 Rebecca Pallmeyer, I'm the chief judge of the court, the
18 United States District Court for the Northern District
19 of Illinois.

20 As you may know already, I serve also as chair
21 of the Dirksen Courthouse Building Safety and Security
22 Committee. My role and priority in that role -- in that
23 responsibility is to ensure the safety and security of
24 the federal courthouse and to protect thousands of

1 people who visit the courthouse every day, more than 70
2 judges, 1500 public servants, hundreds of jurors,
3 hundreds of citizenship candidates and their families,
4 including small children, groups of schoolchildren on
5 field trips from their civic responsibilities, and
6 thousands of members of the public who need to access
7 services at our court or other federal offices in the
8 building.

9 Just as a reminder, the security threats to the
10 Dirksen Courthouse are not just matters of theory or
11 speculation, in 2004 Gale Nettles was indicted and
12 ultimately convicted for plotting to destroy our
13 courthouse with a truck bomb of ammonium nitrate.
14 Partly in response to this episode in 2005, congress
15 authorized the purchase of the properties that are
16 surrounding the courthouse for the specific purpose of
17 creating a security buffer zone for our building.

18 The exception was that we would ultimately use
19 those properties for federal purposes. But as years
20 have passed, the need for federal office space has
21 declined and, indeed, public and private office space is
22 vacant throughout the Chicago downtown area.

23 There's currently no need for federal office
24 space and the federal courts are under, what they call a

1 no net new mandate, which prohibits the expansion of the
2 Court's footprint. In short, our need for space has
3 diminished, but our need for security has not.

4 Disrupted activity and threats to the Court's security
5 and safety continue.

6 In recent years, the United States Marshals
7 Service, the FBI, the ATF, the Federal Protective
8 Service, the Administrative Office of the United States
9 Courts, and private sector security experts have
10 conducted an analysis of our courthouses security
11 vulnerabilities.

12 As a result of those lessons learned from that
13 analysis and the review, we developed a list of 15
14 criteria for the adaptive reuse of the state's three
15 properties. Those criteria points outline what law
16 enforcement professionals have concluded is required to
17 protect the Dirksen Courthouse and its functions, and
18 the adaptive reuse would have to meet those criteria.
19 Our motivation is not demolition for the sake of lake
20 views or convenience.

21 Our concern really is for the safety of the
22 employees, visitors, and community. We are hopeful that
23 this section 106 process and the ideas that result from
24 collaboration here will result in a resolution that does

1 protect the security and safety of the courthouse public
2 and reclaims the dignity of the courthouse surroundings
3 for the benefit and the enjoyment of the public.

4 Thank you.

5 MR. WEBB: So we can now begin public comments.
6 Let me grab my list of -- my list of those signed up to
7 speak. We'll go through them in order as people signed
8 up, it will be a mix of people who are here in the room
9 tonight and people who are online. For those -- I
10 will -- I will give you notice of the next two or three
11 people scheduled to talk so you can be ready. For those
12 of you online, Carla will unmute you when we are ready
13 to receive your testimony.

14 Just to reiterate, what we have the sign-ups in
15 the back of the room, so in addition to the court
16 reporter we have here recording everything in this room,
17 if you'd like to give verbal comments tonight but you'd
18 prefer not to come up to the microphone, we have a
19 second court reporter who's across the hall, if you go
20 out the door, over your back left shoulder and kind of
21 do a 180, there's a stenographer, Sharon, in there who
22 will record your testimony. You can go in there at any
23 time, you do not need to sign up. That testimony there
24 counts just as much as the testimony given in the room

1 tonight or online or in a comment form tonight or in an
2 email to Joe any time before October 31st. So with
3 that, Carla, are we ready to begin?

4 MS. MYKYTIUK: Yes.

5 MR. WEBB: A couple of logistical things we'll
6 take care of. So while Carla is doing that, let me give
7 the names of the first three people who will speak.
8 Jacob Klippenstein will speak first, followed by
9 Christopher Cody, followed by Anne Morse.

10 So Jacob is in person. If Jacob is here, you're
11 free to begin your remarks. I don't see Jacob here. So
12 we're going to go to Christopher Cody, who I believe is
13 online; is that right, Carla?

14 MS. MYKYTIUK: Yes.

15 MR. WEBB: Okay, Christopher, who's online,
16 we're ready for your testimony and then Anne Morse will
17 follow Christopher.

18 MR. CODY: Hi. This is Christopher Cody. I'd
19 like to concede my time to the next speaker. Thank you.

20 MR. WEBB: Okay. Thank you, Christopher. So,
21 Anne, we'll go to you, and then Kendra Parzen will
22 follow Anne.

23 MS. MORSE: Hello, everyone. Thank you so much
24 for giving us this opportunity.

1 As a 35-year-resident of Chicago, I've seen a
2 lot of changes on State Street, up and down State
3 Street, there's been a lot of very interesting ideas
4 proposed, some of them executed.

5 Unfortunately, the vacancy rate and the decline
6 of State Street has a tendency to depress creative reuse
7 and adaptive reuse of that space. Voids on the
8 streetscape are a contributing factor to that decline.
9 So demolition has a very feel effect on the culture of
10 Chicago of the way we live in the city.

11 One of the things I'm inclined to point out is
12 that there are some things that didn't get mentioned in
13 the impact statement and one of those is that when you
14 take down those buildings, you're putting them in
15 landfill, you're not just leaving a hole in the mouth of
16 State Street, but also distributing that waste material
17 elsewhere.

18 And in the event that at some point something is
19 built, we're using extractive purposes to create the
20 materials, to build new buildings, which, unfortunately,
21 in our experience, have a tendency to then turn into
22 landfill themselves in a much shorter period of time
23 than 19th century buildings, which were essentially
24 built to last.

1 So I'm hoping all of that kind of thing will be
2 taken into consideration, that people will have an
3 opportunity to build on the creative or adaptive reuse
4 that have been suggested and to come up with a
5 meaningful change.

6 Another situation that I haven't heard discussed
7 is whether or not, it seems as though it's being
8 presented as an all or nothing situation where all three
9 properties will have to be demolished. Perhaps one of
10 them can be saved. Perhaps one of them can anchor that
11 streetscape, which is a very important corner in
12 Chicago.

13 Thank you very much for your time. I appreciate
14 that.

15 MR. WEBB: Thank you.

16 So go to Kendra, and then Kandelyn Hahn after
17 Kendra. I think Kendra is here. Go ahead, Kendra.
18 Thank you.

19 MS. PARZEN: Thank you.

20 Good afternoon. My name is Kendra Parzen. I'm
21 the advocacy manager for Landmarks Illinois. We are the
22 statewide nonprofit organization advocating for historic
23 Preservation.

24 In both 2022 and 2023, we included these

1 buildings on our annual list of the most endangered
2 historic places in Illinois, and we appreciate this
3 opportunity to comment on the draft EIS.

4 So I have to say, I think we were pleasantly
5 surprised by the draft's findings regarding the Impacts
6 of alternative A demolition; and alternative B, adaptive
7 reuse. We strongly agree with the characterization that
8 demolishing these buildings would have impacts that are
9 negative, significant, and long-term, and we also agree
10 that adaptive reuse would have impacts that are
11 beneficial and long-term.

12 So, if these findings, frankly, pose the
13 question, how can the demolition of these buildings
14 remain on the table when adaptive reuse is clearly the
15 superior alternative from an environmental perspective?

16 Nevertheless, since demolition is still very
17 much on the table, we also feel compelled to comment on
18 the mitigation proposed in this draft report, which is
19 to landscape the cleared lots as green space, although
20 there are certainly examples of flat green spaces and
21 plazas in the greater Loop area. With the exception of
22 Pritzker Park, these examples are not located along
23 State Street, one of our city's densest corridors.

24 Open space with landscaping is not consistent

1 with the visual character of State Street nor with land
2 use plans for this area of the city. The aesthetic and
3 visual effects of this change would not be minor to
4 moderate but severe, and would be extremely poor
5 compensation for the loss of these significant historic
6 buildings.

7 Thank you for considering our comments. I
8 anticipate submitting additional comments in writing, so
9 I yield the remainder of my time.

10 Thank you.

11 MR. WEBB: Thank you, Kandalyn.

12 MS. MYKYTIUK: Kendra. Kandalyn has not spoken
13 yet.

14 MR. WEBB: Sorry. I didn't have my reading
15 glasses on. I can't read.

16 Okay. So Kandalyn is on -- signed up to speak
17 online, but we do not see her on the list of online
18 participants Carla tells me.

19 So, Kandalyn, if you're online and we're not
20 seeing you, now is your time to speak. But we can look
21 back to her if she does come online.

22 So the next person to speak will Brian Hodapp,
23 followed by Shawn Ursini. So Brian is online, I
24 believe. So, Brian, if you can hear me, go ahead.

1 We're ready for your testimony.

2 Oh, he just dropped off. Okay. So until Brian
3 comes back on, Sean, who is in person. Sean, go ahead.

4 MR. URSINI: Thank you. Shawn Ursini.

5 I work with the Council on Tall Buildings and
6 Urban Habitat, but my statement will be of my own
7 opinion.

8 And I'm just going to start with a statement I
9 found on the GSA's website, the GSA's goal are to help
10 its customers reach their sustainability goals, reduce
11 environmental impact to the federal government, and to
12 make the -- make the working environment more
13 sustainable and environmentally friendly.

14 So I just want to pose the question, how does
15 demolition further these goals, because it actually runs
16 counter to them? Even if, hypothetically, these
17 buildings were entirely recycled with their demolition
18 debris under scenario A, which that's not even possible,
19 but even if, hypothetically, it was, it completely
20 ignores the embodied carbon that exists within these
21 buildings today and I felt that that was lacking in the
22 draft EIS because it's not really fully considering the
23 environmental impact holistically if these buildings
24 were to be removed.

1 And while I'm encouraged by the draft EIS making
2 a mention of potentially retaining these buildings, it
3 does appear that decision has already made it toward
4 demolition, in no small part because the appropriation
5 language for the congressional funding with regard to
6 these buildings does specify demolition.

7 So even if we had a favorable outcome for
8 retaining these buildings ultimately out of this process
9 the legislation would need to be amended, and there
10 would be an additional hurdle to be making that happen.
11 I hope that does not impact the final decision that's
12 yet to be made.

13 And the EIS does mention the obvious impact to
14 Cultural resources by demolition of these existing
15 buildings. However, it doesn't consider the broader
16 impact that it's going to have on State Street overall,
17 which has an extraordinarily distressed commercial
18 retail market right now. And if you destroy part of the
19 streetscape, that streetscape is going to look more like
20 a mouth with broken teeth, rather than a holistic whole
21 that's contributing to Chicago's historic resources of
22 this being a birthplace of the skyscraper.

23 And some of the preservation experts have
24 mentioned that if we were going to try to apply for

1 UNESCO World Heritage, this sort of erodes our standing
2 in even doing so. It's extremely important that we
3 retain some of these historic buildings because they
4 were some of the earliest skyscrapers.

5 And, you know, where does the security perimeter
6 end, like 209 South State Street is up for sale right
7 now as a potential redevelopment opportunity? Are we
8 going to say that no one can invest across the street,
9 too, because of security concerns?

10 I mean, I understand the concerns that the
11 federal government has on these properties, but there
12 are other new courthouses and renovated courthouses in
13 urban centers, like, Des Moines, Greenville, Nashville,
14 Toledo, Savannah, Harrisburg, Mobile, Alabama that the
15 GSA has just invested in.

16 But if we consider that Chicago's unique
17 environment because of the level of density we have,
18 maybe we should consider that a federal courthouse in a
19 major city center is not a compatible use, and maybe
20 consider relocating elsewhere in the city.

21 Thank you.

22 MR. WEBB: Okay. We're going to go back to
23 Brian.

24 Brian, we're ready for you.

1 MR. HODAPP: Can everyone hear me?

2 MR. WEBB: Yes. Go ahead, Brian.

3 MR. HODAPP: Okay. Yes -- you know, support for
4 the adaptive reuse --

5 MR. WEBB: Brian, you are cutting in and out.

6 MR. HODAPP: -- old century and consumers --

7 MR. WEBB: Brian, you are cutting in and out.

8 We're not able to pick up your comments, so I'm going to
9 suggest that we put Brian on mute again. We'll go back
10 to him, but let's continue down our list, Carla.

11 So the next person to speak --

12 Does that sound all right?

13 MS. MYKYTIUK: Yeah. It may be a problem with
14 the Wi-Fi in the room.

15 MR. WEBB: Okay. Well, let's go onto the next
16 speaker.

17 So the next person on our list is Anna Mizzi,
18 followed by Richard Prinz. Anna is online.

19 Anna, we're ready for your testimony.

20 MS. MIZZI: Hi, my name is Anna Mizzi, and I am
21 a fourth generation Chicago --

22 (Technical difficulties.)

23 -- as such, I love this city, and I hope that
24 the GSA uses this unique opportunity it currently has --

1 to -- they have beautiful buildings with --

2 (Technical difficulties.)

3 -- the use of materials and skills -- as a
4 federal employee, purchase --

5 (Technical dificulties.)

6 -- holder and -- I know the response -- the
7 government has to make fiscally sound use --

8 (Technical difficulties.)

9 -- and purchasing. By choosing to repurpose,
10 this could be seen as --

11 MS. MYKYTIUK: Anna, we are not hearing you
12 after you said "repurpose."

13 MS. MIZZI: -- the landfill waste produced can
14 dump the raw material -- lastly, there are interested
15 groups .

16 (Technical difficulties.)

17 -- the security was hired for the Dirksen
18 Building, which was the -- of the original purchase.
19 For the future use of the site, it is evident that the
20 presence of these buildings do not pose a risk on their
21 own as they have been standing for the last nearly two
22 decades. I am a resident of Printer's Row just a few
23 blocks away and has been my neighbor --

24 MS. MYKYTIUK: Anna, you are faded out again.

1 MR. WEBB: So a couple things for those of us
2 in the room: We identified the problem, and it's us.
3 It's the Wi-Fi here. It's not on behalf of the
4 speakers. So we're going attempt to get that squared
5 away.

6 We'll go back to Brian. We'll go back to Anna.
7 The next five or six speakers are all people who are
8 signed up to give testimony in person. So we'll do
9 that. But, also, Carla was getting a transcript on her
10 screen of Anna's entire statement. So it's going on the
11 record. But we're going to have to get our Wi-Fi in the
12 room squared away.

13 Anna and Brian, especially, after all of the
14 speakers who are online, email your comments, if you
15 would, to Joe Mulligan at the address that Joe gave a
16 moment ago and we'll have it on the screen before the
17 meeting ends. But let's go now to the people who are in
18 the room while we get the Wi-Fi situation squared away.
19 So we'll go to Richard next and then Mary Lu Seidel will
20 follow Richard.

21 So is Richard here? Richard was signed up to
22 give testimony in person. Not seeing Richard, so let's
23 go to Mary Lu. Is Mary Lu here?

24 MS SEIDEL: Yeah.

1 MR. WEBB: Okay. Thank you, Mary Lu, go ahead.
2 And then after Mary Lu is Victoria.

3 MS. SEIDEL: Thank you very much. My name is
4 Mary Lu Seidel. I'm the director of community
5 engagement at Preservation Chicago.

6 We've been involved in every community meeting,
7 consulting party meeting to date. We're encouraged by
8 this process of late, but we agree with -- I want to
9 concur with all of the comments Kendra Parzen from
10 Landmarks Illinois made a little while ago about the
11 process and our concerns about the future.

12 The impact statement also indicates that there's
13 no impact really of not doing anything, and we would
14 disagree very clearly that there is significant impact
15 of not doing anything on any of these buildings because
16 for the last 12 years that's what's happened to them.
17 It hasn't had a good positive impact.

18 So we think that really needs to be clearly
19 spelled out in the EIS that no action will be a
20 detrimental -- a significant detrimental impact. But I
21 just wanted to reiterate those points about the process,
22 making sure that we really need to lighten up on those
23 15 criteria, I think to the other gentleman's point
24 about if there are so many concerns being so close to

1 many high-rise buildings for the federal courthouse,
2 that maybe they should consider a different place for
3 that as well.

4 But we care about the concerns and the safety
5 for the judges. We care about all of the people who
6 work and visit those buildings, but we also think that
7 you can preserve -- you can address all of those issues
8 without destroying part of our city's history. Thank
9 you.

10 MR. WEBB: Thank you, Mary Lu.

11 So we'll go to Victoria and then Ward after
12 Victoria.

13 So the Wi-Fi is down. Should we go ahead with
14 the in-person comments?

15 Okay. So we'll continue with the -- is Victoria
16 here?

17 Okay, Victoria Kahle -- okay, you're signed up
18 to speak but you don't want to speak; is that right?

19 MS. KAHLE: I did not sign up.

20 MR. WEBB: Okay. You did not sign up to speak.
21 Okay. Very good.

22 So then, Ward, we'll go to you, and then after
23 Ward we'll go to Rolf.

24 Go ahead, Ward.

1 MR. MILLER: Thank you. For the record, Ward
2 Miller, executive director of Preservation Chicago.

3 We at Preservation Chicago want to continue to
4 encourage the General Services Administration, the
5 justices and the related parties to preserve, restore,
6 and reuse the Century and Consumers buildings located at
7 202 and 220 South State in the heart of the Chicago
8 Loop.

9 Century and Consumers Building were part of
10 Chicago's most endangered for the last two years and
11 actually once about a decade ago, and we were assured
12 during that time that they were in good hands and safe.
13 We at Preservation Chicago, along with the city of
14 Chicago and many in the architecture and preservation
15 world, are of the opinion that the 16-story Century
16 Building of 1915 by architects Holabird and Roche, along
17 with the 21-story Consumers Building by Jenney, Mundie &
18 Jensen, should also become designated Chicago landmarks.

19 As you know, these structures have been taken
20 into the City's landmarks process to be considered for
21 designation and thereby join other Chicago buildings on
22 the world stage where we would welcome them. The
23 proposed demolition will create a severe adverse effect,
24 not a moderate impact to The Loop and The Loop and

1 Retail National Register Historic District, the State
2 Street street wall, and will cause much undo and severe
3 harm to Chicago's architectural legacy.

4 It will also cause a hole in the city center,
5 much like Block 37 harmed this historic built
6 environment, and profoundly and adversely impacted this
7 incredible unique collection of terra cotta buildings
8 and skyscrapers on State Street and throughout The Loop
9 in downtown Chicago.

10 These two structures are essentially the
11 Reliance Building in waiting, referring to the building
12 at State and Washington, just three blocks to the north.
13 We saw an amazing transition there.

14 We also want to acknowledge the draft
15 environmental impact statement prepared for the
16 buildings at 202, 214, and 220 South State appear to be
17 flawed at best and contradictory. The document also
18 notes, among other items, that the GSA should reduce
19 their real estate footprint in accordance with their
20 statutory mission and in addition to a series of
21 presidential memorandums and implementation policies.

22 So that would imply that perhaps the Century and
23 Consumers Building could be offered for sale as an
24 option and still be in compliance with other

1 requirements pertaining to safety issues at the Chicago
2 Federal Center and the Dirksen Federal Courthouse. This
3 could also include possible state and municipal offices
4 as well.

5 A charrette was held last Thursday at the
6 Wizeski [phonetic] Building, became obvious that there
7 are other nearby federal properties outside the
8 boundaries of the Central Loop that could be sold at a
9 premium for private redevelopment.

10 This includes the 13-story Railroad Retirement
11 Board Building, also known as the Lipinski Building at
12 844 North Rush Street in the Gold Coast Community and
13 located about a mile from the federal center. This
14 structure is more than 90 percent leased to other
15 entities, including a Bentley Rolls-Royce and
16 Lamborghini showroom and only three floors of that
17 massive building are used for the Railroad Retirement
18 Board.

19 We also have a building in the West Loop built
20 in 1975 at 600 West Madison. The potential sale of
21 those premium properties on the Gold Coast and The West
22 Loop and the consolidation of offices into those
23 structures or into the Century and Consumers Building
24 could also very much support the renovation and

1 restoration of the Century and Consumers Buildings.

2 Therefore, many of our federal services could be
3 consolidated into the federal center complex. This is a
4 tremendous idea which can serve the needs of the GSA,
5 its agencies for years to come, while also satisfying
6 safety requirements and preserving the promise 17 years
7 ago to preserve these structures in these two prominent
8 Loop sites.

9 We have additional comments that we'd like to
10 submit in the written form that go outside the three
11 minute testimony conversation.

12 I also want to ask if we continue to have
13 terrible problems with half the people that are trying
14 to speak online, if their comments are in the written
15 form that those could be read by the speaker, just to
16 share with all of us in the audience, a more public
17 transparent process is what we're all looking for, and
18 we look forward to a positive impact here. We all want
19 to see these buildings preserved.

20 Thank you.

21 MR. WEBB: Thank you, Ward.

22 Yeah. If we can get written comments from those
23 who are online who have not yet been able to give their
24 testimony, we'll read those, but --

1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And they are saying they
2 are able to hear each other online as well, so it's more
3 of a problem with the room, but Brian H. would like
4 another opportunity to speak.

5 MR. WEBB: All right. Do you think we're ready
6 for another --

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah. I think so.

8 MR. WEBB: All right. We're just going to pause
9 for a minute to see if the Wi-Fi is working and then
10 we'll go back to Brian.

11 MR. HODAPP: Hi, Brian Hodapp. I'm a resident
12 of the city of Chicago for 15 years. I have a strong
13 interest in the architecture of Chicago, which I believe
14 makes it a very unique city, so that's why myself, along
15 with similar to majority of people in the public that
16 I've come across who are broadly in defense of
17 supporting and maintaining the Century and Consumers
18 Buildings, we believe that their historic character
19 contributes to The National Register of Historic Places
20 in The Loop Retail Historic District.

21 MR. WEBB: Brian, we lost you again, so we're
22 going to go back to the people in the room. And, yeah,
23 if we can, get written comments from those who are
24 online, we will read them here in the room.

1 Interestingly, Carla tells me that everybody online can
2 hear one another, it's just that we can't hear them. At
3 least that's what were we told. Okay. So let's go back
4 to those in the room.

5 So, Rolf, go ahead. And then Anna signed up to
6 present in person, but Anna was also signed up online,
7 and she started her comments online.

8 So, anyway, Rolf, go ahead.

9 Or excuse me. Could you pause for a second?
10 I'm just trying to get the Wi-Fi back before we turn the
11 floor over to you.

12 (Technical difficulties.)

13 MR. ACHILLES: -- other buildings including 131
14 South Dearborn and the Monadnock Building at 53 West
15 Jackson, so how can proximity to these buildings be
16 considered safe while others are not? Urban renewal is
17 widely agreed to have been a mistake with devastating
18 consequences that reinforced segregation, increased
19 dependency on the automobile, and wiped out entire
20 neighborhoods off the map. Let's not repeat these
21 mistakes.

22 If the Dirksen Courthouse is at risk, then I
23 hope that the GSA should have the expertise and
24 resources to mitigate that risk not by devastating the

1 neighborhood of The Loop but by reassessing the safety
2 of the courthouse and seeking a safe, private,
3 redevelopment plan for the Centuries and Consumers
4 Buildings.

5 This approach is completely feasible and it
6 would even be cost effective for the GSA. Spending 52
7 million just to destroy the buildings is not a good use
8 of federal resources. Those are my comments.

9 Thank you.

10 MR. WEBB: Thank you, Brian. Brian, if you're
11 able to submit your comments in either a document in the
12 chat or to email them to Carla, we'll read them because
13 we in the room could not hear them start to finish. We
14 will get them in the record one way or another.

15 Okay. Are we ready for Rolf?

16 So after Rolf, when we're back up and running,
17 then we'll go to John Borgman and then to Brian
18 Whitlock, who are both speaking in person tonight.

19 Okay. Rolf, go ahead whenever you're ready, and
20 then we'll go to John and then Brian.

21 MR. ACHILLES: Hi, Rolf Achilles, and thank you
22 for the opportunity to talk to you, even though the
23 floor hasn't turned over yet, it's still very stable in
24 here.

1 My comments are about the three buildings in
2 discussion because there's an aspect of those buildings
3 that we haven't really talked about at all, not just
4 preserving or destroying them, but the reason those
5 buildings are significant today is not just because
6 they're skyscrapers, but its they're terra-cotta.
7 They're in the middle range of Chicago's great
8 terra-cotta boom.

9 Chicago invents architectural terra-cotta in a
10 new way in the course of the 19th century and we have
11 numerous examples; and, first, in fact, we have the
12 first signed piece of the terra-cotta in the United
13 States. It's by Isaac Scott. It's at 1401 North
14 Dearborn Street, but these buildings are terra-cotta, a
15 whitish terra-cotta, which was innovative in an age of
16 soot and grime.

17 They're white terra-cotta, the Reliance Building
18 was just before them and The Wrigley Building is just
19 after them. They're the kids in between -- this block
20 is the two in between where all around the buildings
21 were constantly soot covered, but these two weren't in
22 1910 to '20s, and that makes them significant, not just
23 as skyscrapers that didn't get dirty and could be sort
24 of self-washed. And it makes them significant because

1 they're of a terra-cotta age that's right in between the
2 early terra-cotta and then the later terra-cotta.

3 So they're superb examples for terra-cotta, and
4 if you tear them down you do have a big hole and you
5 lose that aspect which for a world heritage is quite
6 significant because you can argue about the history of
7 terra-cotta in Chicago. You don't have to go to Tulsa
8 or some other city to see what Chicago has done and
9 possibly takes away. Those are my comments.

10 Thank you very much.

11 MR. WEBB: Thank you, Rolf. And thank you for
12 your patience while we waited.

13 Okay. So we'll go to John Borgman. Is John
14 here? Very good.

15 MR. BORGMAN: Hi, my name is John.

16 I speak as a resident of Chicago for over two
17 decades and as a board member for The Institute of
18 Classical Architecture and Art.

19 I'd simply like to say somebody mentioned here
20 about the UNESCO, there is an active proposal for, I
21 believe, nine sites for early American skyscrapers in
22 Chicago. I believe that the Century and Consumers
23 Buildings are direct descendants of those buildings that
24 are in those sites being considered by UNESCO.

1 So essentially the story of Chicago's
2 architecture will be discontinuous with the loss of the
3 Century and Consumers Buildings, so the link between
4 Sullivan, Jenny, Root, Atwood, Roche, and Holabird onto
5 Mies Vander, Bertrand Goldberg, Curtis Graham, Fossler
6 Kauhn, Stanley Tigerman and currently John Ronan, Carol
7 Rusbarman, Jean Davis [all names phonetic] and others,
8 that's story will be cut with the loss of these
9 buildings and I believe it's not a moderate benefit to
10 Chicago to save them.

11 Thank you.

12 MR. WEBB: Thank you, John.

13 Is Brian Whitlock here? Brian, go ahead. Thank
14 you.

15 MR. WHITLOCK: Thank you.

16 Brian Whitlock, I'm a 69-year resident of the
17 city of Chicago.

18 I live at Jackson and Michigan, and I'm the
19 president of the Metropolitan Tower Condominium
20 Association, which is a building that is of historical
21 significance also. We're celebrating our 100th year
22 next year.

23 It's important, I think, to preserve the
24 character of the city and so adaptive reuse I think

1 would be my first preference in terms of the property.
2 But I think the environmental impact statement does
3 ignore the fact that demolition, if it was to go
4 forward, would at least free up the space and allow it
5 to be developed otherwise.

6 I submitted comments with my registration. I'll
7 echo some of those comments that -- They are that -- and
8 I would like to remind the GSA that the zoning for this
9 area is educational at this end of State Street and so
10 as educational space, we're surrounded by a number of
11 universities and also high schools that lack theatrical
12 space and performance art space. The north end of State
13 Street is the theater district and that center part of
14 State Street is retail.

15 I think if the space was readapted or it was
16 replaced in demolition, I think to have some sort of a
17 fine art center would be a wonderful addition to this
18 space, so certainly on the lower levels and lower floors
19 to have that be theater, theatrical-type and performance
20 arts space, have educational and classrooms on the
21 middle floors, and then perhaps lean on the comments
22 that were by the Dreyfus [phonetic] people having the
23 upper floors perhaps be repurposed and to some other
24 governmental space and relocate governmental employees

1 out of the spaces that, perhaps, could be sold and have
2 those people move back into the downtown central
3 corridor I think would be important.

4 So I think reuse of the space would be the best
5 alternative. Doing nothing as -- has been detrimental
6 to State Street. Doing something I think is imperative,
7 whether that's demolition and replacement, whether it is
8 adaptive reuse.

9 I think something needs to be done. We just
10 can't keep going along. State Street is dying, and I
11 think doing something, particularly something that might
12 bring back and be adaptive in connection with the
13 theatrical and educational would certainly help
14 resurrect some of the retail space in the center of
15 State Street as well.

16 Thank you.

17 MR. WEBB: Thank you, Brian.

18 So that's the extent of the speakers who have
19 signed up to speak in person. So now there's a couple
20 of people who were not online when we called their name.
21 Let's go to them and then we'll go back to the people
22 who were -- who -- those of us in the room could not
23 hear their testimony. But one of the person signed up
24 to speak online who has not spoken yet, that's Joseph

1 Antunovich. Carla tells me the Wi-Fi is as good as it's
2 ever been.

3 So, Joseph, if you're still online, we're ready
4 for your testimony.

5 MR. ANTUNOVICH: Good afternoon.

6 My name is Joe Antunovich. I'm the CEO and
7 founder of Antunovich Associates, an architectural firm
8 here in Chicago. I've lived in Chicago and worked in
9 Chicago for the last 50 years as an architect. I'll
10 make a few comments here and then we will also submit a
11 written document expanding my comments.

12 Our firm has worked as restoration architects on
13 buildings in Chicago and mainly on State Street. We
14 renovated the former Goldblatt Building, the historic
15 Goldblatt Building, for DePaul University, a little
16 south of the subject property. And also north of the
17 subject property we restored the beautiful Reliance
18 Building from a decrepit falling down office building
19 into one of the gems of American architecture, bringing
20 it back from office to a hotel.

21 As mentioned earlier, both those buildings are
22 beautiful terra-cotta enclosed buildings, much like the
23 buildings that we were discussing at 202 and 220 State
24 Street. Our experience with this site goes even

1 further.

2 In 2017, we were part of a development team that
3 looked at the feasibility of adaptive reuse for these
4 important buildings, these beautiful terra-cotta
5 buildings that form the nucleus of development along
6 State Street. Right now they sit as a missing tooth in
7 the development all the way along our great street.

8 Our studies in 2017 and presented to both the
9 city of Chicago and the GSA address all of the safety
10 concerns that were raised by the GSA and our mixed use
11 development created almost 500 new residential
12 apartments in the three buildings that are being
13 discussed today, in addition to 25,000 additional square
14 feet of retail on the ground floor.

15 To renovate and to bring back these buildings
16 with activities such as these is exactly what our city
17 is craving and what The Loop needs to bring people back
18 into the heart of our city. Please, please, do not
19 demolish these buildings. These are our jewels. We are
20 the caretakers of these beautiful, beautiful buildings
21 and other examples along State Street show how the
22 renovation of these buildings can assist and continue
23 the rebuilding of this great, great, great street.

24 So I encourage you, I encourage you, please, to

1 pursue the viable adaptive reuse option alternative B
2 and do not, do not demolish the gorgeous, gorgeous
3 buildings that great architects in the past have passed
4 on down to us for our care and loveable, loveable
5 nourishment.

6 Thank you very much.

7 MR. WEBB: Okay. Thank you, Joe.

8 Let's move back through the people online. Is
9 Kandalyn online, Carla?

10 Okay. It looks like Kandalyn is not online.

11 So there's two people who gave online comments
12 that we could not hear the whole thing. That was Anna
13 Mizzi and Brian. So I'm going to suggest we go to Anna.
14 We were having Wi-Fi problems, Anna, when you started
15 your testimony. So if you wouldn't mind, if you're
16 still online, could you give your comments again,
17 please?

18 MS. MIZZI: Sure.

19 Hello, my name is Anna Mizzi, and I am a fourth
20 generation Chicagoan.

21 As such, I love this city and hope that the GSA
22 uses their unique opportunity it currently has to choose
23 to restore and repurpose these buildings rather than to
24 demolish. They are beautiful buildings with intricate

1 design that speaks to the historic majesty of Chicago.
2 Buildings like these are no longer constructed and
3 cannot be made as the materials and scope are a thing of
4 the past.

5 As a federal employee, a former purchase card
6 holder, and a current core [phonetic], I know the
7 responsibility the government has to make fiscally sound
8 use of taxpayer dollars. The federal government is also
9 encouraged to make environmentally conscious decisions
10 for purchasing.

11 By choosing to repurpose, this could be seen as
12 a feather in the GSA's cap to adhere to both. Aside
13 from the 56 million dollar demolition and any costs to
14 rebuild, assuming about 10 million dollars a floor,
15 there is also the environmental cost of any chemical,
16 particles in the air during demolition, the landfill
17 waste that is produced, and then the raw materials to be
18 used as well as.

19 Lastly, there are interested groups desiring to
20 repurpose the space that would meet NEPA security
21 required for the Dirksen Building which was the impetus
22 of the original purchase. As for the future use of this
23 site, it is evident that the presence of the buildings
24 do not pose a risk on their own.

1 I am a resident of Printer's Row, which is just
2 about four blocks south, and this is my neighborhood.
3 The Loop does not need more vacant lots and empty
4 storefronts, office use downtown is declining and there
5 are grants currently in place to bring businesses back
6 to the LaSalle Corridor, so there's little need for the
7 typical reasons for new construction. I am in favor
8 of -- for these buildings to remain and be repurposed as
9 an archive or such.

10 Thank you.

11 MR. WEBB: Thank you, Anna.

12 So the only other person who signed up to speak
13 online that we have not heard from is Brian.

14 MS. BLASIUS: Excuse me. I signed up to speak
15 in person. My name is Elizabeth Blasius.

16 MR. WEBB: Okay. I'll tell you what, let me
17 ask -- one moment. We got our Wi-Fi working. Let's
18 have Brian. Brian started to give his comments twice
19 and we couldn't hear. So, Brian, if you are still --
20 Brian, if you are still online, please give your
21 comments and then we'll go to while next.

22 MR. HODAPP: Okay. Can you hear me now?

23 MR. WEBB: Yes. We can, Brian. Thank you.

24 MR. HODAPP: Great.

1 Hello, everyone. I am a long-time resident of
2 the city of Chicago, and I'm passionate about protecting
3 the architectural legacy of our city. I am speaking
4 simply as a city resident without any agenda other than
5 the desire to ensure the Century and Consumer Buildings
6 are preserved for future generations and I -- my hope is
7 that repurposing the buildings as possible instead of
8 destruction as and demolition as the solution.

9 I, along with the public, would like to come out
10 broadly in defense of these buildings and their historic
11 character which contribute to The National Register of
12 Historic Places and there are a range of reasons not to
13 demolish these buildings. Post-war urban renewal gutted
14 viable commercial corridors and destroyed neighborhoods
15 and, today, South State Street already has dozens of
16 retail vacancies because of pandemic era closures.

17 And demolition of the Century and Consumers
18 Buildings would be bad for business. It would create an
19 additional void on Chicago's most iconic thoroughfares.
20 The demolition is also highly bad for the -- very bad
21 for the planet. Post-war urban renewal consigned entire
22 neighborhoods to the trash heap. It wasted resources
23 and energy.

24 So sending millions more pounds of the Century

1 and Consumers Buildings, terra-cotta, brick, glass and
2 metal into a landfill would be very anti-environmental
3 friendly. It's been contended that the Centuries and
4 Consumers Buildings have been vacant and unused for
5 years and have fallen into serious disrepair, leaving
6 demolition as the only option, but let's make no mistake
7 that this disrepair is the direct result of GSA's lack
8 of maintenance and care for the buildings and it's not a
9 reason for their demolition.

10 Meanwhile, the GSA has expertly maintained the
11 Dirksen Federal Building, replacing the exterior curtain
12 wall in 2006 and repainting the complex with black
13 paint. The GSA owns an inventory almost 500 historic
14 buildings spanning over 200 years of American
15 architectural history. Each of these buildings demands
16 that GSA consider design, security in planning
17 surrounding the buildings in concert with the area
18 surrounding them.

19 It's been argued that the Century and Consumer
20 Buildings are too close to the Dirksen and that no plan
21 put forth for private redevelopment has addressed the
22 security risk, yet the Dirksen is within the dense urban
23 core of downtown Chicago adjacent to numerous buildings
24 including 131 South Dearborn and the Monadnock Building

1 at 53 West Jackson.

2 How can proximity to these buildings be
3 considered safe while The Century and -- proximity to
4 The Century and Consumer Buildings is not?

5 Urban renewal is widely agreed to have been a
6 mistake with devastating consequence that reinforce
7 segregation, increased dependency on the automobile and
8 wiped entire neighborhoods off the map. Let's not
9 repeat this mistake today.

10 If GSA claims that The Dirksen Courthouse is at
11 risk, then the GSA should have the expertise and
12 resources to mitigate that risk by not devastating a
13 neighborhood, The Loop, but reassessing the safety of
14 the courthouse and seeking a safe, private redevelopment
15 plan for the Century and Consumers Building. This is an
16 approach that is completely feasible and cost effective
17 for the GSA and it will preserve the vibrant, dense,
18 commercial core of the city, The Dirksen Building
19 serves.

20 I hope that the GSA can work to make this not a
21 gravel pit in the heart of The Loop, the future legacy
22 of the site of the Century and Consumer Building.

23 Thank you.

24 MR. WEBB: Thank you, Brian. I thank you for

1 your patience while we worked through the Wi-Fi issues.

2 Okay. So we have --

3 UNKNOWN: Tara --

4 MR. WEBB: Well, we'll have this young lady
5 speak. I told her she could go next. So go ahead. And
6 then Tara signed up to speak online. We'll go to Tara
7 next.

8 MS. BLASIUS: Good afternoon.

9 My name is Elizabeth Blasius. I'm an
10 architectural historian and co-founder of Preservation
11 Futures.

12 Our office is in the Monadnock building, and my
13 professional background includes work on natural
14 disaster recovery and mitigation for FEMA, and the
15 sensitive retrofit of historic buildings that may be
16 sensitive to or the subject of an act of terror under
17 the Department of Homeland Security's targeted violence
18 and terrorism prevention grant program.

19 For the record, I stand in solidarity with my
20 colleagues here in Preservation. I have specific
21 comments on the other alternatives considered and
22 dismissed as they relate to the retrofitting of the
23 Dirksen Courthouse. The section is one paragraph. The
24 reason we are discussing the proposed demolition of

1 these buildings, the safety at the Dirksen Courthouse is
2 owed more than just this one paragraph in the draft EIS,
3 and the GSA needs to provide more detail on that with
4 respect to its responsibility to the public and public
5 properties.

6 I understand the undertaking is to address the
7 potential security vulnerabilities associated with 202,
8 220, and 212 South State Street to effectively manage
9 the security risks at the Dirksen Federal Courthouse.
10 And the undertaking is to address security measures at
11 the Dirksen Courthouse, the undertaking is, per the
12 logic and process of NEPA and NHPA and 106, should be
13 fully articulated and explained for the benefit of the
14 public.

15 In the draft EIS, the paragraph references an
16 earlier section, 1.3.1 that states, "the ability of the
17 federal government to retrofit the Dirksen Courthouse
18 with countermeasures to address known security needs
19 would be infeasible from both a construction and then
20 cost consideration standpoint."

21 Section 2.3.1 then states, "security, numerous
22 studies by the FBI and the United States Marshal Service
23 have demonstrated that additional countermeasures at the
24 Dirksen Courthouse are cost prohibitive and not possible

1 because of the design and the construction of the
2 Dirksen Courthouse.

3 Additionally, other suggested countermeasures,
4 such as blackout curtains, are not acceptable security
5 standards.

6 I want to speak briefly on construction and the
7 cost consideration of that earlier section. The
8 countermeasures hang on the U.S. Court Design Guide,
9 which states "exceptions can be made to the design
10 guides standards if they are approved by the respective
11 authorities and reasons for renovation can be guided by
12 a modernization of major repair and alteration project
13 planned by the GSA to address aging buildings systems or
14 to upgrade current standards and codes."

15 There are acceptable security standards
16 explicitly stated by the design guide, but we need more
17 detail on what has been done to the Dirksen to mitigate
18 security concerns. To summarize, we need to hear
19 specifically from the FBI, the U.S. Marshals Service,
20 the Dirksen Courthouse Security and Safety Committee,
21 with respect to the to, you know, of course, our own
22 security.

23 To understand how these have been analyzed, the
24 flexibility of the U.S. Courts Design Guide, and the

1 ability for Congress to allocate funding needs to be
2 fully expanded, that 53 million that was allocated to
3 demolish the buildings, that same money could go right
4 to the Dirksen per Congress. Congress. Thank you.

5 MR. WEBB: Thank you.

6 And it was Tara that was signed up to speak
7 online, Carla?

8 MS. MYKYTIUK: Yes.

9 MR. WEBB: Okay. Go ahead, Tara.

10 MS. TOREN-RUDISILL: Hi, can everybody hear me
11 okay?

12 MR. WEBB: Yeah. Thank you.

13 MS. TOREN-RUDISILL: Okay. Thank you. My name
14 is Tara Toren-Rudisill. I am currently a senior
15 associate with Klein and Hoffman. We're an architecture
16 and structural engineering firm here in Chicago. My
17 comments today are my own.

18 For the better part of the past 20 years, I've
19 had the privilege to be one of the building consultants
20 on behalf of various architects of record for both 202
21 and 220 South State Street. I'm one of a very few
22 people who have had the opportunity to observe the
23 facades close up 100 percent.

24 I would like to first commend the local GSA

1 staff for their efforts to maintain the facades with the
2 extremely limited resources and funding available to
3 them. Work, repair work, has been -- was designed in
4 accordance with preservation standards and completed by
5 qualified contractors.

6 Over 100 years of atmospheric pollution has
7 diminished the grandeur of these buildings, but the
8 facades are salvageable. If restored, these buildings
9 will rival The Wrigley Building and other Chicago
10 landmarks.

11 Regarding site security, removal of these two
12 buildings would open up numerous site lines between the
13 court and several privately owned buildings and parking
14 structures in the immediate vicinity of the building --
15 of the court.

16 Both historic buildings and the site can be
17 hardened. There are several firms that specialize in
18 both threat assessment and protective design that can
19 develop necessary solutions for historic structures,
20 including firms located here in Chicago.

21 It is my fervent hope that limited
22 understandings of all of the issues affecting this
23 specific site are -- are discussed more holistically and
24 that a limited understanding does not result in the

1 destruction of these gorgeous buildings that are part of
2 the foundation of the city of Chicago and its heritage.

3 Thank you.

4 MR. WEBB: Thank you, Tara.

5 Carla, is there anyone else online signed up to
6 speak?

7 MS. MYKYTIUK: Nobody else online.

8 MR. WEBB: The other person was Richard Prinz.
9 Okay. While Carla is checking that, is there anyone
10 else in the room here who would like to give comments?
11 I see two hands go up. This gentlemen, I saw your hand
12 first and then we'll go to the lady in the back.

13 MR. TEMPKINS: Built from 1902 to 1905 --

14 MR. WEBB: I'm sorry, sir. Could you state your
15 name first?

16 MR. TEMPKINS: Oh, I'm Ryan Tempkins [phonetic].

17 MR. WEBB: Thank you.

18 MR. TEMPKINS: I'm a 33-year resident of
19 Chicago.

20 Built from 1902 to 1905, 19 stories ornately
21 terra clad -- terra cotta-clad office building and
22 demolished. Does this story sound familiar? This is
23 not the Century nor Consumers Buildings though, it was
24 the Republic Building located at 29 South State that was

1 demolished in 1961.

2 Unlike the Century and Consumers Buildings,
3 which are being discussed for demolition due to
4 abandonment and neglect, the hands of the slumlord that
5 eminent domained them in 2005, the Republic Building was
6 torn down to make way for the new, but shorter, Federal
7 Home Federal Savings and Loan Association Building.
8 Next door to the Home Federal Building is the 1949
9 Woolworth Building, currently for sale, but is being
10 marketed as a redevelopment site for a high-rise
11 apartment building.

12 Both of these buildings would sit across from
13 the street from the future security zone should the
14 Consumers and Century Buildings both get demolished.
15 How soon until the federal government then wants to
16 procure these and tear them down since they would now
17 have unobstructed views of the same courthouse which
18 caused the Centuries and Consumers Buildings to be
19 raised in the first place?

20 Precedents are dangerous because once they're
21 set, they're impossible to reverse. If GSA destroys
22 these buildings for security, where does it end? Why
23 not the next two across State? The National Register of
24 Historic Places listed Monadnock Building. The Citadel

1 Building across Adams. The landmark Berghoff Restaurant
2 next door. How many of blocks, how many square miles of
3 vacant land does the federal government need to
4 obliterate for a veil of safety? I chose the wording
5 "veil of safety" deliberately.

6 The Century and Consumers Buildings aren't the
7 problem. They're the excuse. The GSA isn't addressing
8 the root problem, but, instead, trying to cover over the
9 actual problem, like painting over a crack on your wall
10 versus addressing the settling foundation. All
11 Demolition of the Consumers and Century Buildings would
12 do is push the problem across the street or a block
13 over.

14 54 million dollars is a lot of money. Can the
15 courtrooms, judges' chambers and other spaces can be
16 protected for better than 54 million without demolishing
17 more than 200 years of combined architectural history?
18 Yes. And the federal government already knows how to do
19 this.

20 Both The White House and The Pentagon have
21 received well publicized security makeovers decades ago
22 that included bulletproof glass. One security firm says
23 on their website, quote, "Jim Richards, CEO of Total
24 Security Solutions has experience -- experience

1 retrofitting ballistic glass in historic government
2 buildings in and around Washington D.C. He's found that
3 backing existing windows with a second ballistic layer
4 is almost the norm," end quote. The truth is cost.

5 When Joe Biden's predecessor didn't live in The
6 White House, he had the residents in a gaudy, tacky,
7 cheap high-rise at 725 5th Avenue in New York City. The
8 Secret Service are said to have replaced the glass with
9 bulletproof glass. Quote, Lee Mandel, a security expert
10 at IntraLogic Solutions provides some estimates based on
11 his past experience and expertise. "There's bulletproof
12 glass which could be 5 to \$10,000 per window for
13 physical replacement of the glass."

14 If we're to use the high-end of that range
15 \$10,000 to account for inflation since 2016 and divide
16 it into 54 million dollars, the federal government could
17 replace 5,400 in the Dirksen Federal Building with
18 bulletproof glass, in fact, Dirksen has exactly 5,304
19 panes of glass. 78 windows on the long side, 24 windows
20 on the short side, 204 windows per floors, 26 floors,
21 5,304. Not only would there be money left --

22 MR. WEBB: Excuse me.

23 MR. TOMPKINS: -- over, but replacing these
24 windows with thicker, more energy efficient technologies

1 would actually end up saving the federal government
2 money and follow their commitment to being
3 environmentally responsible. Something that Demolition
4 absolutely is not.

5 MR. WEBB: Could you wrap up your comments, sir?
6 Your three minutes is long past.

7 MR. TEMPKINS: The idea to demolish the Century
8 and Consumers Building is shortsighted, and half-baked
9 at best.

10 MR. WEBB: Thank you.

11 Young lady in the back, if you could state your
12 name and go ahead with your comments.

13 MS. KOSIAN: Hi, my name is Celine Kosian.

14 I'm just a resident. I live literally like a
15 block away from these buildings, and I'd just like to
16 say I support adaptive reuse. I think everything should
17 be done to maintain the historical character of this
18 city.

19 I think everyone who lives here knows that --
20 like, architecture, architectural tours, and the history
21 of Chicago is a big draw to tourism, but also civic
22 pride. I also think that there's a lot of demand for
23 any sort of nonprofit work or any active reuse.

24 The government has \$54 million to demolish these

1 buildings, I feel that could be used in a better way
2 that's more productive, more environmentally friendly,
3 and is better for the residents.

4 I think we should remember this is help to all
5 of Chicago. I appreciate the concerns for the federal
6 buildings, but there are also lots of people that live
7 in The Loop and visit The Loop.

8 So, thank you for your time. And I hope you
9 support adaptive reuse.

10 MR. WEBB: Thank you for your comments, Celine.

11 Anyone else in the room interested in speaking?

12 Seeing no hands, we'll go -- okay. We have no
13 indication that anyone online would like to speak.
14 We'll give one more opportunity for anyone online who
15 would like to speak.

16 And hearing no indication that anyone online
17 would like to speak --

18 MR. MULLIGAN: We'll stay on until 5, but we
19 need to dismiss the public from the hearing.

20 MR. WEBB: Okay. So we'll keep the online part
21 of the meeting open until 5, which is the end of the
22 hearing, but those of you in the room, you can be
23 released if you'd like.

24 (4:31 p.m., proceedings concluded.)

1 STATE OF ILLINOIS)
2) SS.
3 COUNTY OF COOK)

4 CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

5 Isaiah Roberts, being first duly sworn, on
6 oath says that he is a Certified Shorthand Reporter,
7 Registered Professional Reporter doing business in the
8 City of Chicago, County of Cook and the State of
9 Illinois;

10 That he reported in shorthand the proceedings
11 had at the foregoing Public Hearing;

12 And that the foregoing is a true and correct
13 transcript of his shorthand notes so taken as aforesaid
14 and contains, to the best of his ability, all the
15 proceedings had at the said Public Hearing.

16 

17 _____
18 Isaiah Roberts, CSR, RPR
19 Illinois CSR #084-004890

20 SUBSTRIBED AND SWORN TO
21 before me this 17th day of
22 November A.D., 2023.

23  

24 _____
NOTARY PUBLIC

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		35-year-resident 18:1
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