

UNITED STATES DIPLOMACY CENTER CONSTRUCTION UPDATE



The United States Diplomacy Center (USDC) will be a 40,000 square foot museum and education center

Spring 2014

On April 30, 2014, a contract was awarded to Gilbane Building Co. to build the U.S. Diplomacy Center's (USDC) glass pavilion located in the forecourt of the "old War Department" now known as the U.S. Department of State and Marshall Center. Of twelve construction companies who submitted proposals to build the USDC, Gilbane was chosen.



Over the summer, Gilbane will begin to set up their construction and staging site. The trailer and staging area will be along the Virginia Avenue side of the building and is where the work crews will meet every day to go over their work assignments. By early summer, the worksite will start to take shape with a fence erected along the sidewalk perimeter in front of the security pavilion. On the sides of the work site, two entry and egress ramps will allow DOS staffers and visitors alike to access the historic lobby, so the entrance to the 21st street side will remain open as always.



By late summer, the surface will be excavated to the depth of 20 feet to allow for the lower concourse level to be installed (where a café, bookstore and public space will be located).

One of the first tasks BBB implemented was a subsurface investigation to compile a soil study. Naturally, gravel, sand, moist clay was prominent to about 50 feet deep after which the drill auger hit bedrock. A system of 22 caissons and "geo-pier" aggregates will be drilled to the bedrock to support the superstructure.

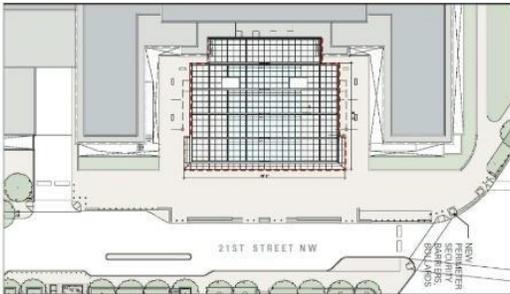


Beyer Blinder Belle's architect of record, Hany Hassan, has designed an extraordinary glass jewel box that will be pleasing to the eye by day and softly illuminated through the evening. Inspired by the rectangle and square shapes of the existing limestone façade of the old War Department, Mr. Hassan came up with a simple but proportional state-of-the-art architectural and

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engineering masterwork of design in the shape of a glass box. The glass box will not have any pitch in the roof, but will visibly have a perfectly straight roof line. The roof design incorporates a complex concealed drainage system for water and melted snow. The pavilion's mechanical systems, plumbing, and electricity tie into pre-existing systems in the State Department building so that no displeasing visuals of roof top mechanicals will be visible on the new glass roof.

Gilbane Building Co. will likely obtain the glass walls – called curtain wall or glazing in architect lingo - from Gartner Glass of Germany a company that is renowned for supplying glass for such projects. A series of tests will take place at their studio in Germany where mock up walls will be erected and tested over a two week period.



The glass walls will be exposed over a fortnight to environmental forces that resemble virtual hurricane type winds, driving rains, heat, cold and shaking to ensure the integrity of the design and structure.

Some design elements that the construction company will install are natural stone floors, sealed concrete floors and stainless steel fixtures. Within the floor footprint will be concealed trays to deliver electricity to any area in the pavilion when and where it is needed.

The original single flag pole (c. 1939) will remain at the front of the building..

Entry and exit will be through two revolving glass doors leading to the USDC lobby (approx. 1,000 sq ft). Ramps on either side will lead up to the exhibit area as well as to the

historic lobby if one is on business. The roof is actually a skylight with glass paneling running the length of the exhibit area footprint. Careful design lighting calculations were performed over many months by George Sexton & Associates to ensure the proper illumination of exhibit audio visual treatments at comfortable viewing standards. The building has met LEED certification.



The main exhibit hall is approximately 9,000 square feet, and the lower concourse level approximately 11,000 square feet. Access from one level to the next is by a glass enclosed monumental staircase as well as by an elevator system.

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