

Historic Preservation Commission Meeting REGULAR

Tuesday, May 13, 2025 at 7:00 PM

REMOTE ACCESS ONLY

To Join Via Zoom Meeting Go To:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89610019456>

Alternatively you can Call In by Dialing: 1-929-205-6099

For both remote options, the Meeting ID is: 896 1001 9456

Members: Eric Gilbertson (Chair), Robert McCullough (Vice Chair), Paul Carnahan, Craig Durham, Bryan Jones and Linden Chozinska

1. Call to Order
2. Public Comments [~5 minutes]
3. Approval of the Agenda [~5 minutes]
4. Comments from the Chair [~5 minutes]
5. 87 State Street - Federal Building Section 106 Review
6. Review and Approve Minutes: *04/08/2025* [~5 minutes]
7. Other Business
8. Adjournment

Meetings are open to the public. For questions about accessibility or to request accommodations please call (802) 223-9506.



May 7, 2025

Ms. Laura Trieschmann
State Historic Preservation Officer
Vermont Division for Historic Preservation
National Life North Building
One National Life Drive – 6th Floor
Montpelier, VT 05620-1201

Re: Disposition of the Montpelier Federal Building
87 State Street, Montpelier, Vermont

Dear Ms. Trieschmann:

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) is disposing of the Montpelier Federal Building located at 87 State Street, Montpelier (the Property). The Property is a contributing building in the Montpelier Historic District, which was originally listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in 1978 and enlarged in 1989 and 2018.

The NRHP nomination describes the Property, completed in 1964 in this way:

This three-story, contemporary style office building has white stone-clad upper stories with vertical panels alternating with recessed vertical panels. The narrow windows are set within the recessed panels. The first floor is clad in flat panels of green marble and slightly recessed under the upper floors which give the upper floors a sense of floating in space or of a sculpture on a pedestal. This building is a good example of contemporary office building design.

The NRHP nomination puts more emphasis on the federal building that was demolished to allow for the construction of the Property. The 1964 building replaced an elaborate 1891 Richardsonian Romanesque style post office whose demolition “spurred the local historic preservation movement in Montpelier to create the National Register Historic District as well as develop a local preservation ordinance.” On its website describing the Montpelier Federal Building, GSA similarly provides more information about the original post office, then it does for the Property:

The previous post office building on this site was a magnificent granite Romanesque structure with arched entrances, turrets, and an impressive courtroom on the second floor. The construction of the building came in under budget and opened to a delighted public in 1891. The Vermont Watchman commented in 1893 that, “[it] is not only the most

beautiful Federal Building in the State but is, with the single exception of the State Capitol, the finest public building in Vermont”. Its perceived grandeur eventually waned, however, and the once notable structure was demolished in 1963 to make way for a more modern facility. An earlier post office building, Montpelier’s first, is still standing behind city hall, having been moved from its original location on the corner of State and Elm Street in 1870.

In July, 2023, the Property was flooded when the Winooski River crested at 21.29 feet, inundating downtown Montpelier. The Property was devastated, with approximately 11’ of water filling the basement and rising to 42” on the first floor. The electrical and mechanical systems, located in the basement, were destroyed. As soon as possible, GSA dewatered, disinfected, and dehumidified the building and restored certain systems to maintain heat and air circulation. However, key areas of concern remain, including persistent high-water levels in the building’s sump and elevator pits. This condition, coupled with an ever-present flood risk due to the proximity of the Winooski River and the North Branch, caused GSA to conduct a critical analysis of future housing options and led us to the decision to dispose of the Property.

GSA’s undertaking is conveyance of the Property out of federal ownership, and in order to comply with Section 106 and avoid an adverse effect, GSA proposes to convey the “property ... with adequate and legally enforceable restrictions or conditions to ensure long-term preservation of the property’s historic significance.” See 36 CFR 800.5(a)(2)(vii). To do this, GSA will put a Notice of Restriction in the deed stating that “the exterior of the Property would be subject to design review by the Montpelier Historic District pursuant to Montpelier Regulations - PART 2. ZONING DISTRICTS & STANDARDS - Chapter 220. Overlay Zoning Districts, Section 2201.” This will put the grantee, and all subsequent owners, on notice that the Federal Building is subject to the design review authority of the local historic commission. It is GSA’s belief that providing local control over this Property is the most appropriate approach due to the Property’s vulnerability to damage from flooding.

As such, pursuant to GSA’s Section 106 obligations, GSA has determined that this undertaking will have no adverse effect on the Property. Following your review, we would appreciate your written concurrence via a counter-signature to this letter provided below, with our opinion that the disposal action will not result in any adverse effect.

Please send any comments within thirty (30) days to the GSA’s Office of Property Disposal at 10 Causeway Street, 11th Floor, Boston, MA 02222 or contact Anthony Barbati at 617.459.6776 or anthony.barbati@gsa.gov with any questions on this case.

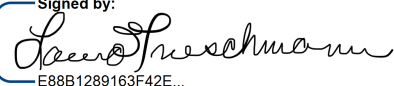
Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

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John E. Kelly, Director
 Real Property Disposition
 Public Buildings Service
 New England Region

The Vermont Division for Historic Preservation concurs that the conveyance of the Montpelier Federal Building out of federal ownership, pursuant to the terms set forth in this letter, will have no adverse effect on the Property.

Signed by:

E88B1289163F42E...

5/7/2025

Name

Date



UNITED STATES GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
NOTICE OF SURPLUS DETERMINATION FOR FEDERAL REAL PROPERTY
April 21, 2025

Former Montpelier Federal Building
87 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05602
GSA Control Number: VT-1182-AA

Notice is hereby given that the subject Property has been determined to be surplus Government property and is available for disposal pursuant to the provisions of the Property Act (116 Stat. 1062, 40 U.S.C. 543) as amended with certain related laws and applicable regulations. The Property was determined unsuitable for homeless use and published in the Federal Register <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/title-v/> on March 28, 2025. HUD Assigned Property Number: 54202510010.

The former Montpelier Federal Building is a 3-story, 70,000 sf contemporary office building on a 1.6+/- acre lot that supports a mix of office, administrative and storage uses. Surrounding properties include government and commercial uses. The building was listed in 2018 as a contributing resource to the Montpelier Historic District National Register nomination (78000246).

The Property Act authorizes public agencies (non-Federal) to submit a formal expression of interest for surplus real property within **30 days of the date of this Notice**. Disposal of this Property may be made to public agencies for the public uses stated below, and that disposal is authorized by the statutes and applicable regulations as follows:

STATUTE	TYPE OF DISPOSAL
40 U.S.C. 545(b)(8)	Negotiated sale to public bodies for public purposes.

Any public agency wishing to acquire the Property for negotiated sale, in accordance with 40 U.S.C. 545(b)(8), should submit written notice thereof, on or before **May 21, 2025** to:

U.S. General Services Administration
Real Property Disposition
Attn: Anthony Barbati, Realty Specialist
10 Causeway St., 11th Floor
Boston, MA 02222
617-459-6776
anthony.barbati@gsa.gov

U.S. General Services Administration
Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr. Federal Building
10 Causeway Street
Boston, MA 02222
www.gsa.gov

ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION



GSA New England Region

Such written notice shall:

- 1) disclose the contemplated use of the Property;
- 2) contain a citation of the applicable statute under which the public agency desires to procure the Property;
- 3) state the length of time required to develop and submit a formal application for the Property (where a payment to the Government is required under the statute, include a statement as to whether funds are available and, if not, the period required to obtain funds); and
- 4) give the reason for the time required to develop and submit a formal application.

Upon receipt of the written notice, the public agency shall be promptly informed concerning the period of time that will be allowed for submission of the formal application.

In the absence of a written notice, or in the event a public use proposal is not approved, the regulations issued pursuant to authority contained in the Property Act as amended, provide for offering the property for sale according to its highest and best use.

For information contact: U.S. General Services Administration
Real Property Disposition
Attn: Anthony Barbati, Realty Specialist
10 Causeway St., 11th Floor
Boston, MA 02222
617-565-7736
anthony.barbati@gsa.gov

U.S. General Services Administration
Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr. Federal Building
10 Causeway Street
Boston, MA 02222
www.gsa.gov



April 21, 2025

Joshua Jerome
Planning & Community Development
39 Main Street
Montpelier, VT 05602

Email Notice: jjerome@montpelier-vt.org

RE: Former Montpelier Federal Building
87 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05602
GSA Control #: VT-1182-AA
HUD #: 54202510010

Dear City Planning & Community Development:

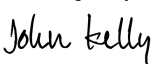
The above referenced Property has been determined surplus to the needs of the Government. The Property has been determined unsuitable for homeless use by the Department of Housing and Urban Development. As surplus property, the site is available for disposal pursuant to the provisions of the Property Act (40 U.S.C. 543 et. seq.) as amended, certain related laws and applicable regulations.

The enclosed notice describes the Property and provides instructions to be followed by public bodies wishing to apply. A copy of this notice is being sent to the Governor of the State of Vermont and the City of Montpelier Mayor. Responses to this notice should be made in accordance with the instructions contained therein.

The Property will be subject to standard Federal property disposal regulations according to 41 CFR 102-75.350.

If any of your constituents are interested in pursuing this Property, they are invited to contact Anthony M. Barbati at 617-459-6776 or email anthony.barbati@gsa.gov. I hope the above information is helpful. Please feel free to contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

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John E. Kelly, Director
Real Property Disposition (1PZ)
Public Buildings Service

Enclosure(s)

Historic Preservation Commission Regular Meeting Minutes

Subject to review and approval

Tuesday, April 8, 2025, at 7:00 PM
via Zoom Video Conference

Commission Members Present: Eric Gilbertson (Chair), Robert McCullough (Vice Chair), Paul Carnahan, and Linden Chozinska

Members Absent: Craig Durham and Bryan Jones

Others Present: Meredith Crandall (staff)

Call to Order: 7:02 PM

Public Comments: None.

Approval of the Agenda: Paul moved to approve the agenda. Bob seconded. The agenda was approved 4-0.

Comments from the Chair: Eric noted that there are two projects before the Commission, and that he spoke with Ben Doyle about both earlier in the day.

AGENDA ITEMS

1. 5 Home Farm Way/Jacob Davis House - Demo of Historic Structure Permit Application for April 21 Development Review Board Hearing
 - a. Eric suggests that the Commission should say it supports the deconstruction, versus demolition, of the structure.
 - b. Eric spoke with Jamie Duggan, and he's expected to send an email about what from the building could be re-used, including Jamie's opinion on timbers.
 - c. Bob noted that the brick nogging may be worth saving, and that maybe timbers from the building could be used to create a new info booth like the Greek revival style booth that used to be on State Street.
 - d. Paul noted that he'll be away Friday through Monday.
 - e. Paul made a motion that HPC members send comments to Eric for him to incorporate into a letter to the Development Review Board regarding disposition of the historic materials on the property. The letter to also suggest that the Board inquire about secure storage space for said materials.
 - f. Bob seconded the motion.
 - g. Eric amended the motion to add that the letter state that HPC supports the deconstruction of the Jacob Davis House. Bob seconded.
 - h. The amended motion was approved 4-0.

- i. Meredith summarized a Deconstruction versus Demolition webinar that she attended recently. HPC supports adding language supporting deconstruction to Montpelier's zoning regulations.
2. Federal Post Office Building – 87 State Street
- a. Eric summarized his conversation with Ben Doyle about the building. Is suggesting that the Resiliency Commission, HPC, and others coordinate on a packet of information about the building to assist potential developers.
 - b. Staff offered to provide zoning and river hazard overview.
 - c. Eric suggested that Caitlin Corkins from the State may be a good source for Tax Credit information.
 - d. Eric noted that Devin is willing to write up his speech from April 1st regarding the historic context of the building, and Eric would love if Bob Stevens could provide a basic overview of flood proofing suggestions.
 - e. Eric asked if the City would be submitting a letter of interest to GSA, even if just to get more information. Staff advised that this is beyond her role.
 - f. Eric and Bob emphasized that the sale of a building includes inherent uncertainty, and with the current Federal chaos that uncertainty is heightened.
3. Review and Approve Meeting Minutes
- 1. 3/11 Minutes draft wasn't in packet. Moved to next meeting.
 - 2. Eric wants a link to the zoom recording added to the April 1st meeting, and more detailed copy of Devin's speech. Staff to revise.
4. Other Business:
- a. Next Regular Meeting: Tuesday, May 13th 7:00 PM
5. Adjournment: Paul moved to adjourn. Bob seconded. Meeting adjourned unanimously at 8:00 PM