

An Idyllic Place to Work: FOB10A



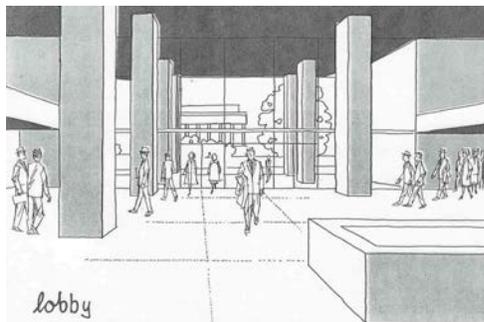
Prior to moving into the headquarters building in November 1963, the FAA gave each employee a brochure, “Introducing the New FAA Headquarters Building.” The brochure, distributed in March, touted the marvels of the brand new building, designed especially for the agency.

Most employees today might not recognize the building described in the brochure. For example, the FAA touted the “150-foot wide area centered on each floor and extending from end to end of the building as the “most spacious, well lighted, pleasant places to work in the building.

One of the benefits of the new headquarters design, according to the brochure, was that it would only take “1 minute to walk from the front to back and only 2 ½ minutes to walk the length of the building.” More importantly, “sixteen high-speed electronically controlled elevators” made movement between floors fast and easy. And, “escalators that can carry 8,000 people an hour” would operate between the first and second floors and the first floor and lower garage level.

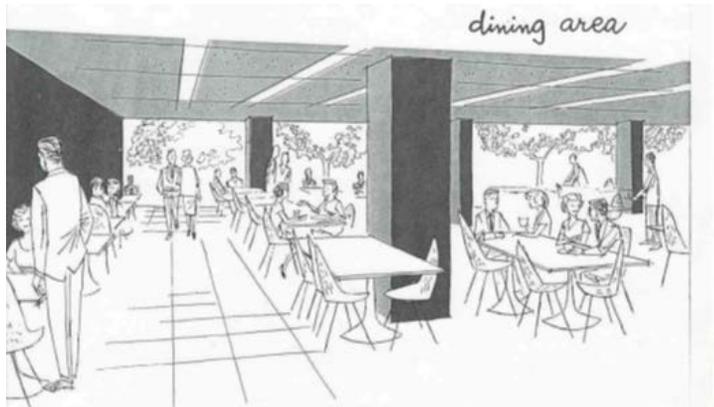
The key advantage of the building was that “there will be uniform, dependable air-conditioning to evenly control temperature, humidity, and fresh air flow. Recessed fluorescent lighting will leave no dark corners day or night.” With regard to the interior décor, the FAA proudly stated that the agency worked hard “to assure that every detail of décor will be completely modern, harmonious, colorful, and comfortable.”

In addition, “one of the fringe benefits of the building is the view a majority of FAA people will have from a thousand floor-to-ceiling windows. Many of the windows on the south side of the building look over a broad panorama stretching from the hills across the Anacostia River westward to the Tidal Basin. To the north, windows look out on a scenic arc that extends from the Capitol Building westward along the Mall to the Lincoln memorial and beyond that to Arlington across the Potomac.”



Notice the Lincoln Memorial from the windows inside the lobby.

The agency also ensured that no employee would ever go hungry. “Dining room and snack bar areas on the second floor can be reached in very few minutes from any part of the building. Furnishing will be colorful and comfortable.” The brochure explained that “FAA, GSA, and Government Services, Inc. have been planning ways and means of providing excellent food service served in an appetizing manner and in very pleasant surroundings.”



The building’s access to major transportation routes was also important to commuters. “Public and private highway transportation is fast being improved by new bridges across the Potomac and modern expressways leading into the District from all areas west of the River.” Furthermore, the “building is less than 10 minutes from Union Station, 15 minutes from Washington National Airport, 40 minutes from Dulles International Airport.”



The view from the north side of the building