

# Accenting the positive at Federal Triangle

Although much of the publicity surrounding this complex has been dedicated to the lawsuits, the project has been a major boost for the limestone industry



The primary cladding for the Federal Triangle Building will be Indiana limestone, while Deer Isle granite is being used for the water table.

A legal quagmire for contractors, the Federal Triangle project, which will be the second largest federal building when it is completed in 1996 (the Pentagon is the largest), has been somewhat overlooked in terms of what it has done for the limestone industry.

In addition to a \$1.2 million contract to supply Indiana limestone — which was awarded to Indiana Limestone Company, Inc. — the project also signed a \$27,270,000 contract for the fabrication and erection of the limestone blocks for the exterior facade to a joint venture of Chas. H. Tompkins Co. of Washington, DC, in association with Miller Druck Specialty Contracting and Cathedral Stoneworks, both of New York.

"The Indiana limestone industry is currently in the throes of a sluggish con-

struction market," said T. Dean Barnes, president of Indiana Limestone, when his company was awarded the contract in April of 1992. "The Federal Triangle project will be a much needed boost, assuring job security for hundreds of people within the limestone and associated industries for the next three to four years while pumping millions of dollars into the local economy."

The company quarried 400,000 cubic feet (11,320 cu.m) of limestone blocks, according to Brian Moore of Indiana Limestone, from which 250,000 cubic feet (7,075 cu.m) of finished material will be fabricated. All of the limestone was quarried during the 1992 quarrying season, which ended in October.

Indiana Limestone, which was organized in 1926, is no stranger to the Fed-

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be done by the Pagliaro Brothers Stone Co. Inc. of Upper Marlboro, MD, while the trusses and drawings will be supplied by Harmon Contract of Minneapolis, MN. This work is being supervised by Miller Druck, while Tompkins is monitoring progress on the site.

For the water table, Deer Isle granite was chosen. This material was quarried on Crotch Island off the coast of Maine by New England Stone Industries of Esmond, RI. Fabrication of the granite, Mr. Teitelbaum said, is being completed by Granite Importers of Barre, VT.

Approximately 12,500 cubic feet (350 cu.m.) of granite will be fabricated, according to Mary Tournant of Granite Importers. Fabrication of the granite is expected to be complete by July of 1994.

In January, a visual mock-up of the main elements of the building's exterior was constructed at the 13th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue entrance to the site. This includes a section of the stone base and typical wall panel. The mock-up remains on view, pending review by various entities.

The stonework inside the building has yet to be determined, according to PADC architect Kelvin Thomson, who said a variety of American stones have been considered. Options have ranged varied from Tennessee marble for the floors to a terrazzo pattern with a granite border.

Mr. Thomson said the stone will be used at the ground floor and the concourse level, which runs from the Metro Station to 14th Street and contains most of the retail shops and the auditorium. "The main factors are price, availability and color," Mr. Thomson said, "We're looking at what kind of stone we can get for what price."

During the four-year construction phase, the project is expected to employ 3,600 to 4,000 people in numerous building trades. By comparison, a typical development project in the Washington area employs 400 to 600 people.

Additionally, a minimum of \$71.7 million (approximately 15 per cent of the construction cost) is expected to flow to minority businesses during the project.

## Project history

The Federal Triangle Development Act, which brought the project to life,

was passed by both Houses of Congress in 1987 and signed into law by former President Ronald Reagan in August of that year. When completed, the complex will be a multi-use facility accommodating 3.1 million gross square feet (288,000 sq.m), of which 1,850,000 square feet (172,000 sq.m) will be above grade.

The project, which is situated on an 11-acre (4.5 h) site south of Pennsylvania Avenue between 13th and 14th



Each Indiana limestone column will weigh 19 tons.

restaurants and retail shops.

"The most prominent element of the scheme, its pronounced geometry, is a direct response to Pennsylvania Avenue, which the building meets at right angles," explained a statement from Pei Cobb Freed. "The complex is both a destination and a public link to Constitution Avenue, the nation's museums, its monuments and the Washington Mall."

Originally, 500,000 square feet (46,450 sq.m) of occupiable space had

for the project.

A 1990 civil suit by Saratoga, challenging the PADC's selection of the Delta Partnership (now known as the Federal Triangle Corp) as the developer for the project, was dismissed in U.S. District Court in October of 1991. A motion for reconsideration was dismissed in January of 1992, along with a related suit against the GSA. At the same time, the court dismissed the Minority Business Enterprise Legal Defense and Education Fund's suit against the PADC. The latest development has been the filing of appellate briefs, and oral argument was set to begin this fall.

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eral Triangle. "The company also provided limestone for two earlier Federal Triangle Buildings, the Department of Commerce and the Internal Revenue Service, both constructed in 1929," said Terry E. Soderberg, executive project director for Federal Triangle Corp., the project developer.

Cathedral Stoneworks is supervising the fabrication work, which will be completed by Indiana Limestone. The exterior stone enclosure package requires 42,000 pieces of fabricated limestone to be hauled to the site in 750 truckloads.

Fabrication began in early September and is expected to take 13 months to complete. Mr. Moore explained that the pieces will be shipped as they are finished, with the first pieces being shipped in November.

The largest pieces of limestone, Mr. Moore said, are the building cornices, which are 10 x 7 x 3 feet (3 x 2 x 1 m) and weigh approximately 15 tons each. Meanwhile, the building columns weigh 19 tons each. Despite the massive stone quantities and sizes involved, the fabricating has gone "very smoothly" so far, Mr. Moore said.

Erection of the fabricated pieces will require 100 miles (160 km) of caulking and 4,000 trusses, according to Ed Small of Chas. H. Tompkins, which was also awarded an \$81,110,000 contract to perform the structural concrete and steel portion of the project.

The stone on the first through third floors will be handset, while floors four through eight will be set on a steel truss system. David Teitelbaum of Cathedral Stoneworks said the handset work will

Streets, will have an estimated total cost of \$784 million to \$791 million, depending on the cost of financing.

Pei Cobb Freed Partners served as the architect for the project, with Ellerbe Becket, Inc. of Washington, DC, as associate architect. When completed, the building will provide offices for a number of federal agencies, including the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. The facility will also include space for conferences, exhibits,

been designated for the International Cultural and Trade Center (ICTC). But in January of 1992, the administration decided not to sublease space to the ICTC.

After this decision, discussions were held between the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corp. (PADC), Federal Triangle Corp., the General Services Administration (GSA), Pei Cobb Freed and the Office of Management and the Budget. The parties decided that although the interior space allocated to the ICTC would be reconfigured to accommodate additional federal agencies, the monumental exterior design of the Federal Triangle Building should not be changed. Additionally, it was decided that construction should not be delayed.

## Legal battles

Although they may have been given too much publicity, the lawsuits that have developed from the project cannot be ignored. One of the ongoing legal battles involves Saratoga Development Corp., one of six unsuccessful competitors

Another suit, dismissed on June 1 of this year, was filed by the George Hyman Construction Co. in May of 1992, and charged that the PADC violated the Freedom of Information Act.

Despite the lawsuits and the midcourse changes, however, the Federal Triangle project is poised to take its place in history among the prominent stone architecture of Washington, DC — a city world renowned as a showplace for stone. ■