NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION

NOTICE: JA131-03-15-02

National Environmental Policy Act; Proposed construction of a radio communications facility Building 347

AGENCY: National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)

ACTION: Notice of finding of no significant impact

SUMMARY: NASA announces the availability of the environmental assessment (EA) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) that address the environmental impacts expected to result from the construction of a centralized radio communications building and radio tower at Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center (JSC) in Houston, Texas. The facility would consist of the following: a 167-square meter (1,800-square foot) building constructed from concrete block material; a 61-meter (200-foot) tall radio tower supported by three guy wires anchored 49 meters (160 feet) from the tower; a paved parking lot and driveway; and an emergency back-up diesel generator with a 1,892-liter (500-gallon) aboveground fuel tank. The tower would be equipped with FAA safety lighting. The EA was prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321, et seq.), the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations for implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA (40CFR 1500-1508), and the NASA policy and procedures (14 CFR part 1216 subpart 1216.3) for implementing NEPA.

This FONSI summarizes the results of the evaluation for proposed construction and operation activities. The discussion focuses on activities that have the potential to change both the natural and human environments.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Written requests for copies of the EA and FONSI, or requests for information, should be directed to Mr. Kirk Hummel, Environmental Services Office, NASA, Johnson Space Center, Mailcode JA131, 2101 NASA Road 1, Houston, Texas 77058; FAX: (281) 483-3048.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION: NASA has reviewed the EA prepared for the construction of the radio communications facility and has determined that it represents an accurate and adequate analysis of the scope and level of associated environmental impacts. The EA is hereby incorporated by reference in this final FONSI.

Five alternatives have been considered: the proposed action, three alternative locations, and the no-action alternative. The alternative locations would not provide optimum radio frequency coverage for Johnson Space Center, the Sonny Carter Training Facility, and Ellington Field. The no-action alternative does not allow for the consolidation and upgrade of communications systems as required by the Federal Communications Commission.

The potential physical, biological, socioeconomic, cultural, and health and safety impacts of the construction and operation of the Building 347 facility have been assessed and evaluated. No significant impacts, related to any of these issues, were identified. As a result of this assessment and evaluation, a Finding of No Significant Impact is proposed.

Physical and biological resources considered included climate and earth movements, water, air, and noise resources, hazardous materials, transportation, floodplains, wetlands, wildlife, vegetation, aesthetics, aviation, communication, and health and safety. The Building 347 facility would have no substantial impact on any of these resources.

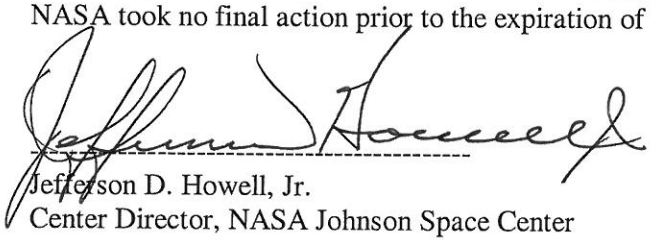
Socioeconomic evaluation included effects on land use, demographics, economic activity, and cultural resources. The Building 347 facility would have no substantial impact on any of these resources.

The health and safety issues considered included potential hazards of radio frequency electromagnetic fields. Building 347 and tower 347A would pose no hazard.

Cumulative Impacts: The EA reviewed cumulative impacts that could result from the incremental impact of the proposed activities when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions. No other actions have been identified within or adjacent to the proposed site for the Building 347 facility that would contribute to cumulative impacts.

Mitigation: Standard construction practices would be implemented to reduce erosion potential during ground disturbing activities and compliance with National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit requirements would ensure appropriate storm water runoff control.

On the basis of the EA, NASA has determined that the physical, biological, socioeconomic, and cultural impacts associated with the construction of the Building 347 facility would not individually or cumulatively have a significant impact on the quality of the human environment. Therefore, NASA has determined that an Environmental Impact Statement need not be prepared. NASA took no final action prior to the expiration of the 30-day comment period.



Jefferson D. Howell, Jr.
Center Director, NASA Johnson Space Center

CORRIGAN CONSULTING, INC.

1909 Capri Lane
P.O. Box 99, Seabrook, Texas 77586-0099
(281) 474-7455 • Fax (281) 474-4501

January 18, 2002

Mr. Ken Kumor
National Aeronautics and Space Administration
NEPA Officer
Environmental Management Division/Mailcode JE
Washington, DC 20546-0001

Re: Coordination Request for Environmental Assessment
Project Name: NASA – Building 347 and Tower 347A Construction
Project Location: NASA Johnson Space Center, Houston, Texas

Dear Mr. Kumor:

Corrigan Consulting, Inc. is in the process of preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the above-referenced project. This EA is being prepared on behalf of NASA Johnson Space Center. As required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), we are submitting the location and description of the proposed project for your review and comment.

The proposed project involves the construction of a new radio communications building, Building 347, and new radio tower, Tower 347A, inside NASA Johnson Space Center. Site vicinity and site location maps are attached (Figures 1 and 2) and a detailed description of the proposed project is included as Attachment A.

Please provide any comments as soon as possible using the enclosed envelope. If there are no comments, please sign below and fax to (281) 474-4501. If there are any questions, please contact Mr. Kurt Duross or myself at (281) 474-7455. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Heather A. Bolte

Ms. Heather A. Bolte
Project Biologist

HAB/kad
Attachments

NO COMMENTS:
Signed By: Kenneth M. Kumor Date: FEB. 13, 2002

Printed Name: KENNETH M. KUMOR Title: NASA NEPA COORDINATOR

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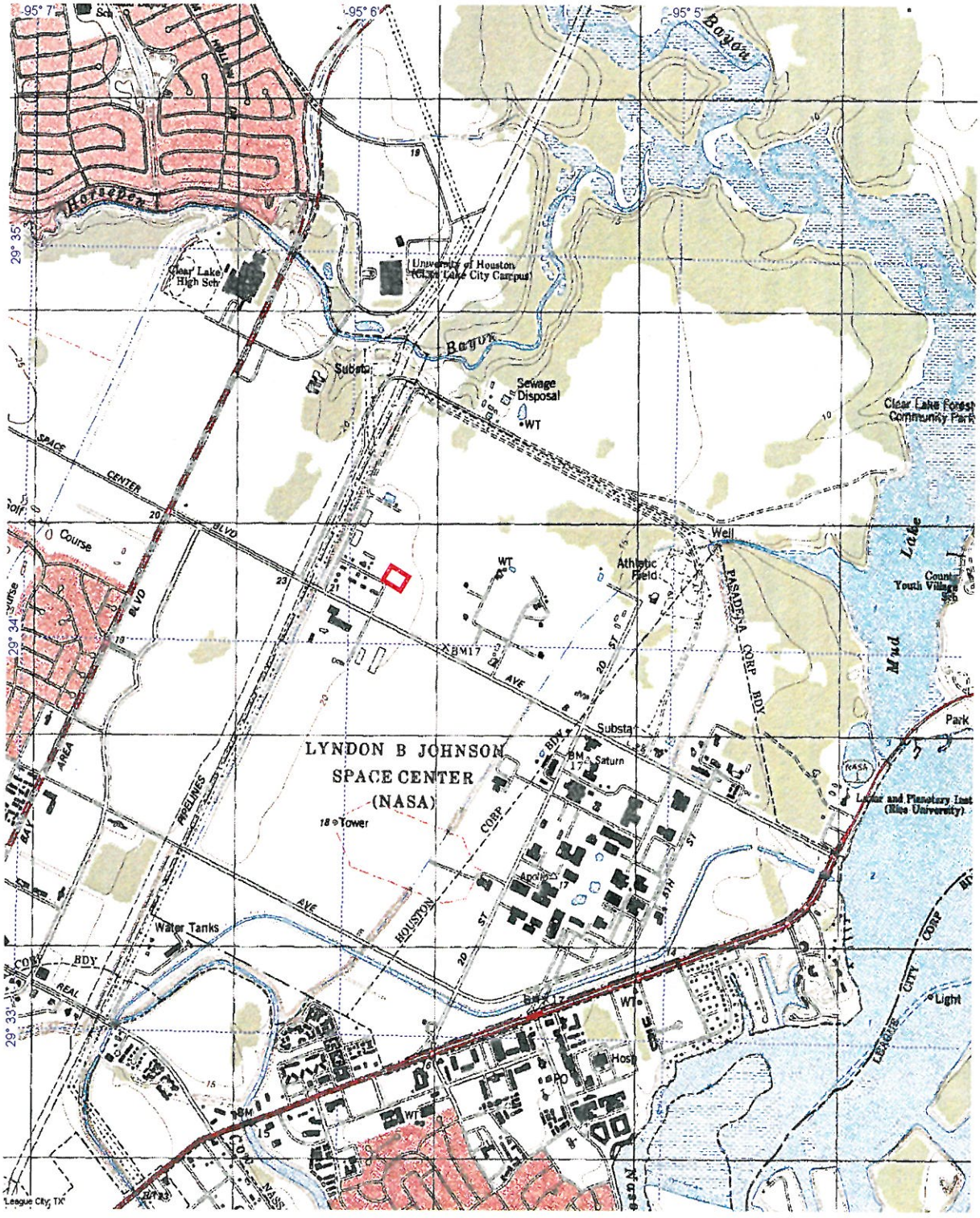
Attachment A

Project Description

Project Name: NASA – Building 347 and Tower 347A Construction
Project Location: NASA Johnson Space Center, Houston, Texas

The purpose of the proposed project is to allow the consolidation of a large number of radio communications systems into one central transmitter system. This proposed facility would simplify and improve the reliability of the present system. The proposed Building B347 would be, a 1,200 square foot, one-story structure with an attached 200-foot tall radio tower. The tower would be capable of surviving as a functional system in winds up to 130 miles/hour with associated potential flooding. The finish floor elevation of the proposed building would be 25 feet above mean sea level, a minimum to meet the potential worst case flooding anticipated. A paved parking area and driveway would also be attached to the proposed building. For emergency purposes, a back-up diesel powered generator and associated Aboveground Storage Tank (AST) would be installed adjacent to the proposed building. A six-foot security fence would surround the entire facility. The proposed facility is outlined in red on Figures 1 and 2.



Source: U. S. G. S. Survey, League City Quad, 1995

Scale: 1 inch = 4000 feet

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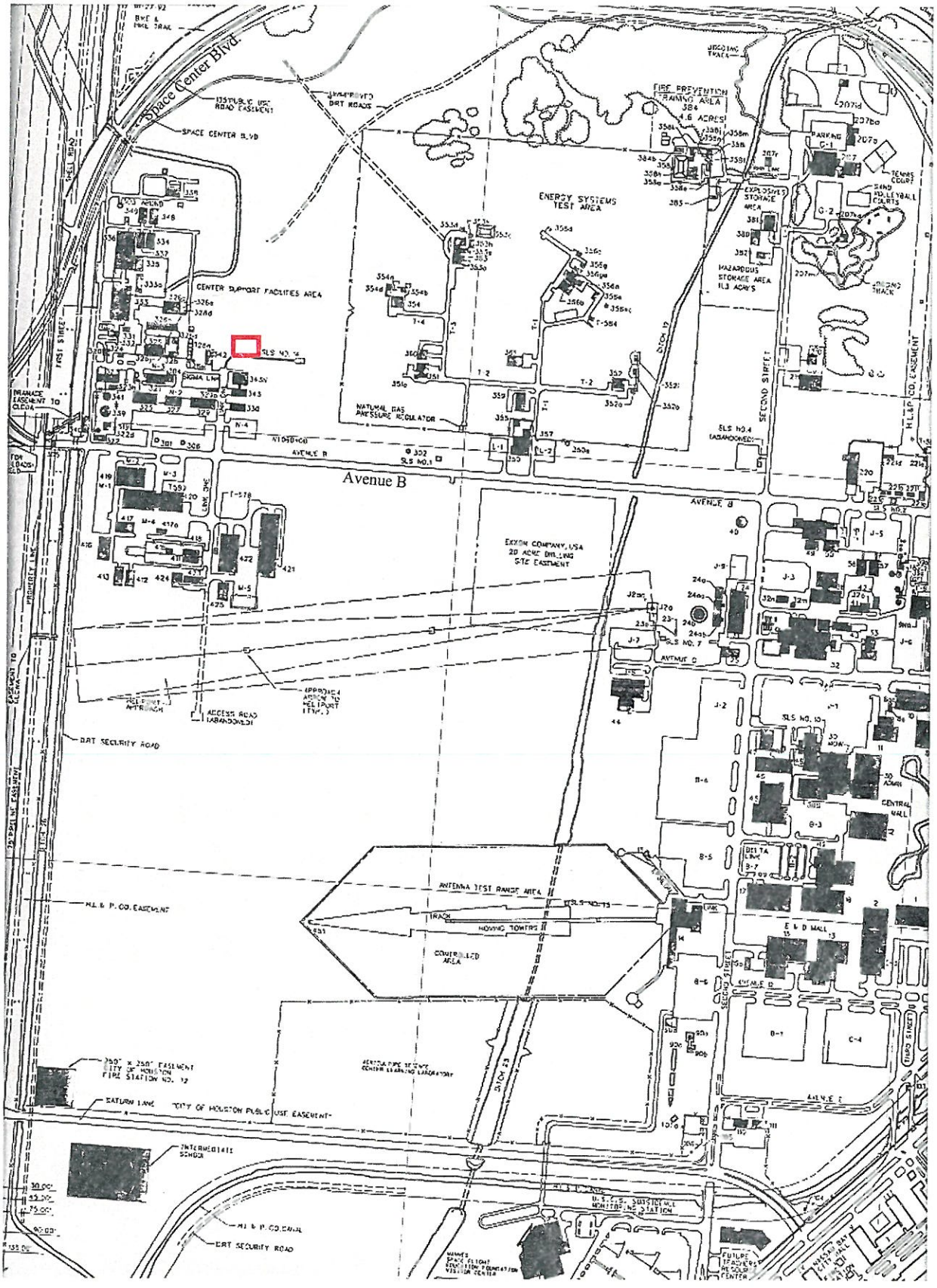
Site Vicinity Map	**NASA B347 and Tower Houston, TX**
January 2002	
Figure 1	



Source: Master Site Plan, JSC 09-18-01
Scale: 1 inch = 1000 feet

Site Location	**NASA** **B347 and Tower** **Houston, Texas**
January 2002	
Figure 2	