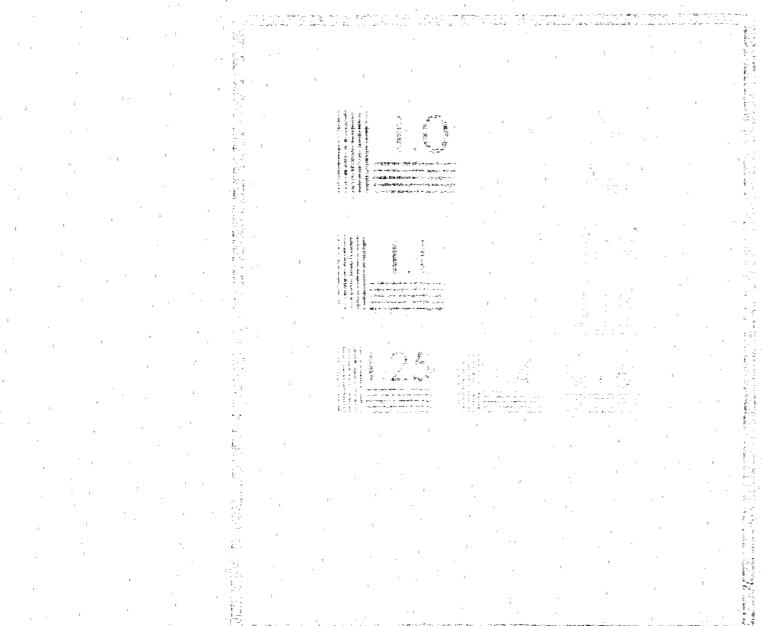


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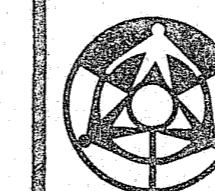
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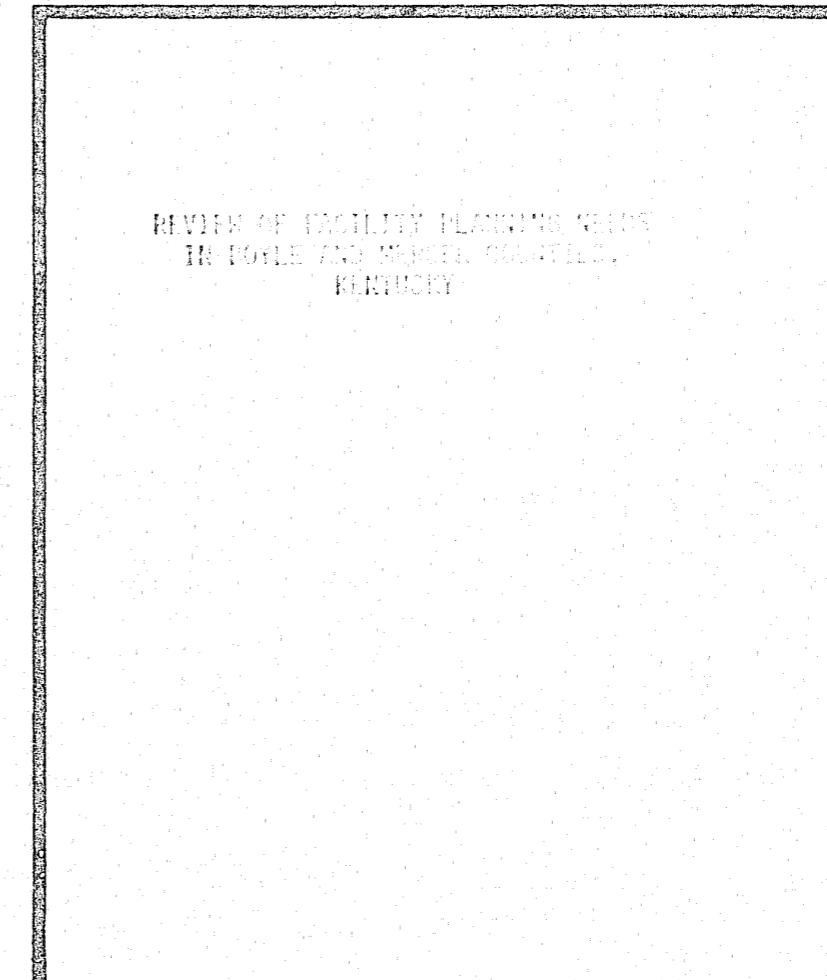
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THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

Criminal Courts Technical Assistance Project
Institute for Advanced Studies in Justice
The American University Law School
Washington, D.C.



**REVIEW OF FACILITY PLANNING NEEDS
IN BOYLE AND MERCER COUNTIES,
KENTUCKY**

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I. INTRODUCTION

In October, 1972, the Kentucky Model Circuit Courts Project began operation with a major goal of introducing and testing the concept of court administration in Kentucky at the trial court level in five pilot judicial districts. These five districts were felt to represent a cross-section of the state's population and included circuit courts serving both rural areas and industrialize, heavily populated urban centers; and multi-judge, single-county districts as well as single-judge, multi-county districts. In addition, several unique situations were represented by these districts, such as Franklin County, where all state administrative cases are decided, and Oldham County, site of La Grange Reformatory, where a number of prison problems are handled. Within the general purpose of the project, several important objectives were sought, among which were the reduction of case processing time, provision of centralized management and resources to the five participating courts, the availability of modern equipment and the institution of methods whereby information could be collected and evaluated for the five judicial districts.

A major need of most of the circuit courts of Kentucky, and particularly those of the Project, was to develop a comprehensive methodology for facility planning for both immediate and long-range future. To develop general guidelines for architectural analysis of the state's courthouses, particularly those within the project, Judge Henry V. Pennington, Project

Director and Circuit Judge of the 50th Judicial District (Boyle and Mercer Counties) requested assistance through LEAA's Criminal Courts Technical Assistance Project at The American University. Of immediate concern to Judge Pennington was the need to evaluate facility planning currently in progress in the two counties. In Mercer County, this planning focussed upon renovations creating a model courtroom-in-the-round. The Mercer Fiscal Court in Harrodsburg had authorized an initial expenditure of \$12,500 which would revert to the fiscal court June 30, 1974 if planning was not instituted by the Circuit Court. In Boyle County, the local fiscal court had decided to construct a modern detention center adjacent to the courthouse which was slated to be remodelled and expanded with an annex at a cost of \$1 million.

In view of limited technical assistance resources available at the time of the request, coupled with the urgent need for immediate assistance, the technical assistance services focussed upon evaluating the planning currently in progress in Boyle and Mercer Counties and outlining the areas of further study that should be undertaken should the Model Courts Project have additional resources available.

On May 2 and 3, Lawrence Siegel, Operations Coordinator for Space Management Consultants, Inc., and an architect with extensive experience in judicial facility planning, met with Judge Pennington and Ms. Diane Morris, regional administrator of the Model Courts Project. During this visit, he toured the courthouses in both Boyle and Mercer Counties as well as met with all court personnel concerned, and spent considerable time with the architects

involved in planning the Boyle County facility. On May 14 through 17, Andreas Sagaty, Mr. Siegel's associate, returned to Kentucky to analyze in depth the current status of facility planning in the two counties and, particularly, to work with the architect in Boyle County in revising the working plans. The results of these efforts are described in the following sections of this report.

II. REVIEW OF CIRCUIT COURT FACILITIES IN BOYLE COUNTY

A. Background

Although the circuit courtroom is in reasonably good repair, the courthouse overall is desperately in need of renovation or replacement. A Lexington architectural firm, Donald B. Shelton Architects-Engineers & Associates, has produced schematic plans for a major renovation and apparently has also completed the design of a new jail. The courthouse plans were studied by the technical assistance consultant and discussed with personnel of the Model Courts Program, with the Sheriff, Circuit Clerk and Court Administrator, and with the principal and one member of the architectural firm.

The recommended plans and the planning procedure both show major deficiencies. Given that planning constraints and site constraints may both have contributed problems, nevertheless they did not dictate the apparent disregard of relationships between jail and courthouse or among the several departments and activities in the courthouse. Examples of these poor relationships include a long corridor jointly used for public access to the judge's suite, jurors' access to the courtroom, witness access to witness waiting room, emergency exit from the courtroom, and prisoner circulation between jail holding cells and the courtroom. This mixture of circulation patterns is seriously lacking in security and presents problems in other respects as well. Prisoner holding cells share a common entrance corridor with witness waiting rooms, creating the obvious opportunity for potentially dangerous confrontations. The prisoner's circulation corridor also serves as public access to the Grand Jury Hearing Room and to probation offices. Because no waiting space is provided for Grand Jury Witnesses,

the prisoner corridor (and also the main public lobby) will probably be used for that purpose, disregarding the need for security and privacy. No private toilet facilities are provided for grand jurors who would consequently have to share public facilities and public corridors.

Apparently neither a facility program nor a projection of future space needs was prepared by the architect so it is not possible to assess directly the adequacy of space allocation, but the few examples cited above give small reason for confidence. Other examples include unplanned spaces for Circuit Clerk and Sheriff which make it impossible to estimate whether those functions will be any better housed than at present. In the judge's suite, conference spaces are duplicated at the cost of reduced space for law clerk, library, and court administrator.

B. Analysis of Planning to Date

Working drawings were stated by the architect to be within a few days of completion and susceptible to only minor changes, although it is the consultant's estimate that the time required just to replan space use so that the Circuit Court can function adequately in these new quarters will require between 20 and 30 man-days. A structure of this high cost and importance to the community is worthy of that small amount of time to (1) carefully determine by observation and personal interview present and probable future requirements, (2) plan each space in consideration of these needs, (3) present each space use plan to the specific users for their analysis and comment, and (4) develop a comprehensive plan for the entire building that compromises conflicting needs for amounts and locations of space in a manner best suited to the total operation of the court and courthouse.

Although renovation of the circuit courtroom is contemplated, no drawings or specific proposals appear to have been made. Courtroom design is so specialized a subject that it is inconceivable to expect approval of the courthouse renovation and expansion plan without completion of that critical element. In short, the courthouse renovation plans are not in a stage of completion which would allow a rational acceptance of the design to be made. Indeed, for the stated purpose of deriving a cost estimate to enable a bond issue to be floated, plans and working drawings would not have been necessary. It would have been sufficient simply to prepare an accurate and comprehensive facility program to determine the net square feet of building area. Appropriate local construction costs per square foot of gross area would then be determined and applied to compute the estimated total construction cost. Site acquisition and preparation costs, architectural fees, and a contingency percentage would then be estimated and added to the construction cost to determine the total project cost.

C. Recommendations

Based on this initial review, several courses of action appeared open. They were:

1. (a) Prepare a comprehensive facility program and develop cost estimates from it. (b) Complete schematic plans to the satisfaction of user representatives. (c) Follow with revision and completion of working drawings. The minimum consultant effort required for part (a) and assistance in part (b) is 20-30 man-days.

2. (a) Take the calculated risk of reworking schematic plans without formal programming, basing cost estimates of planned gross square feet. (b) Follow with review and completion of working drawings. The minimum consultant effort for assistance in part (a) is about 10 man days.
3. Correct only obvious deficiencies in schematic plans. The minimum consultant effort required is 7 man days of assistance to the architect, who would then proceed with cost estimates and revision of working drawings.

In view of the limited technical assistance resources available, option three was authorized and Andreas Sagaty made a site visit May 14th-17th to prepare, in cooperation with Mr. Sherman of the architect's office, suggested revisions to the plans. Assurances were given that these revisions would be incorporated into the working drawings. A copy of the revised schematic plans was to have been forwarded to the technical assistance consultants, but, as of June 1st, had not been received. Consequently, SMC prepared a sketch and transmitted it directly to Judge Pennington on that date. Plans have not been received as of this writing.

III. REVIEW OF CIRCUIT COURT FACILITIES IN MERCER COUNTY

A. Background

The circuit courtroom in the Mercer County Courthouse in Harrodsburg is large and badly in need of renovation. Sketches had been developed for possible modifications reflecting the influence of McGeorge School of Law's experimental courtroom. An examination of the entire courthouse and discussions with several of its staff, including Michael Conover, County Attorney, revealed a number of other space problems. It was therefore concluded that a more comprehensive space study including the courtroom as one component, would produce much greater benefits to the county and to all users of the courthouse.

B. Analysis of Existing Situation

The circuit courtroom is large and high and includes a large side balcony opposite the window wall. It is adjoined by several small offices on two sides and by the judge and clerk's offices on the third side. Both total space and interior arrangements are ample and would allow for considerable freedom of design to improve the style and functionality of the circuit courtroom. A comprehensive design study should be able to yield more significant benefits than could possibly result from the simple concentration on a circular judicial area. For example, a diagonal axis, placing the bench closer to the window wall, would open the courtroom to much fuller utilization of its large available space and to a more effective layout of the judicial area.

Equally important benefits, however, would be gained by obtaining better use of the adjoining offices and balcony for jury deliberation, witness waiting, storage, prisoner holding, and attorney conference spaces. These modifications would affect users who are not part of the Circuit Court, however, and would necessitate finding them appropriate spaces. In addition, County Court, Fiscal Court, and other functions on the first and second floors of the courthouse, are far from optimally housed now, although total available space is not, at first glance, inadequate. A reorganization of space use and a renovation program to realize it appear quite feasible and could benefit Mercer County with better court and meeting facilities overall, not only in the Circuit Court.

C. Recommendations:

It would be functionally and fiscally beneficial both to the Circuit Court and to Mercer County government if a space reorganization and renovation study were established, considering the entire Mercer County Courthouse, and aiming at a comprehensive minimum cost-high benefit solution to its imbalanced space use. The study should analyze the use of space, determine significant functional and spatial relationships; estimate probable future changes in these factors, and develop schematic plans and a facility program to describe, in detail, the recommended work. Final architectural designs and construction could then follow. The duration of the study should not exceed approximately two months.

IV. SUMMARY

The foregoing discussion is designed to describe in general terms existing facility problems which bear on Circuit Court operations in Boyle and Mercer Counties, Kentucky. In view of the limited time available to the technical assistance consultants, coupled with the urgent need for their assistance, this report should serve as a guideline for planning and does not purport to be a comprehensive discussion or identification of all problems and issues to be considered. With careful planning and analysis of Circuit Court needs in both Boyle and Mercer Counties, specifically, as well as all districts participating in the project, future facility needs will not only be accommodated but the original goals of the project will also be served.

END