FINAL DESIGN:
The final design differed from the earlier schemes in refinement. Basic organization remained the same, with the public and staff areas on the first level, and the confinement areas above.

Extensive changes were made to the kitchen and staff areas on the first level to provide a better flow of goods and food in the kitchen, and better circulation in the staff areas, particularly the lounge.

Upper levels remained the same, with the exception of the maximum security areas to be located on the fourth level, to avoid unnecessary interaction with other prisoners and staff.

STRUCTURAL SYSTEM:
Throughout the design I was working with a grid which was compatible with a two-way concrete joist or waffle system. The final design utilized a 20'-0" x 20'-0" bay module. All cells were of reinforced concrete unit masonry construction.

MECHANICAL SYSTEM:
There were two alternatives chosen for the HVAC system:

1. First floor and interior day spaces: central station boiler for a single duct, all air, variable volume system. Remote condensing unit to be located on the roof;

   Cells: Each level contains two "branches" of cells. Each "branch" is zoned independent of the others, using an electric heating/cooling fan coil unit and a remote condensing coil.

2. First floor and interior day spaces remain the same, but the cell levels would utilize the steam from a boiler as the transfer medium.

The choice between these two alternatives would be based on the cost and availability of the energy source.
SECURITY CENTER
MIA MI COUNTY
PERU, INDIANA

THESIS 1975-76
CHARLES R. PARRISH
LEVEL 1 PARKING & SALLY PORT STUDIES

EARLY ELEVATION

LEVEL ONE DESIGN DEVELOPMENT
LEVEL ONE PLAN,
KITCHEN DEVELOPMENT,
COURTYARD STUDY

FINAL ELEVATION
STUDIES

PRISONER SIGHT LINES:
CONTROL STUDIES
Memo: Miami County Security Center

Date: 1 September, 1975

Conversation with John Rusie, Sheriff, Miami County

NOTES:

- Discussed the thesis proposal with the sheriff
- He appears enthusiastic about the project
- He indicates that in reality the city of Peru wants to combine the county government offices with the new sheriff's department headquarters
- Set date of future meeting as week of 8 September, 1975
Memo: Miami County Security Center

Date: 8 September, 1975

Conversation with Jack M. Deal, Soil Scientist, Soil Conservation Service

NOTES:

- The purpose of this visit was to gather soil and climatological data for my site in Peru

- As a bonus—Mr. Deal works with juvenile offenders in the Miami County jail

- Discussion of the problems of Justice and Corrections

- Pointed out the problems of dealing with an elected official (sheriff) who may be replaced every two years

- Stressed the inclusion of an exterior space for the exercise of the prisoners as a basic human necessity

- Discussed the role of the jail in society

- Received a copy of soil and climatological data for my specific area—no problems are foreseen
Memo: Miami County Security Center

Date: 8 September, 1975

Conversation with William A. Wilcockson, Architect, architect for the Marshall County Jail located in Plymouth, Indiana

NOTES:

- Sheriff John Rusie suggested I look at this facility as a model
- 49 Prisoner capacity + drunk tank
- Houses male, female, juvenile, adult prisoners
- Separation is fixed, but areas may be changed to accommodate more or less of one group or another
- These facilities omitted a contraband room and a detectives work room—these should be mandatory in the Peru Facility
- Discussed the plan of the Marshall County facility
- Received a set of drawings and specs for the Marshall County facility to be used for square footage purposes
Memo: Miami County Security Center

Date: 11 September, 1975

Conversation with John Rusie, Sheriff, Miami County

NOTES:

- Present jail facility has capacity of 26-27 prisoners
- New facility should have a capacity of 45-50 prisoners
- Presently have only two females in the sheriff's department:
  1- clerical
  1- Salaried matron (usually the sheriff's wife)
- Presently four deputies--- all act as detectives
  Def: Deputies-on the road
  Detectives- investigation
- Presently five vehicles- all are 4-door passenger cars
- The sally port should be completely out of sight of the prisoners
  for the security of personnel bringing in prisoners
- The property room ( for the storage of stolen items ) should be
  easily accessible from the sally port area
September 19, 1975

Mr. Charles R. Parrish  
3532 North Tillotson Avenue  
#318  
Muncie, Indiana 47304

Dear Mr. Parrish:

Thank you for your letter of September 14 regarding your thesis at Ball State University.

I'm enclosing a copy of our Detention Equipment Design Manual for your use. I believe you will find in this manual the type of information you have requested.

In reply to your question regarding the MultiPod unit, it is suitable for use in any type of detention housing area. It is in very satisfactory use in maximum security cellblocks as well as in minimum security living areas.

We hope the enclosed will be helpful, and we wish you success on your thesis.

Sincerely,

William E. Parker  
Vice President

Enc.
Skyscraping power in a jail without bars

By Nory Miller

The 27-story federal detention center, newly opened at Von-Buren and Clark, represents everything that jails, as a rule, do not represent. It is a place of dignity and individuality for each prisoner. It is an individual design as well, by architects Harry Weese & Associates, fresh and full of juice.

Most jails look like walls from the outside, like cages from within—rectangular pyramids for the living, human zoos.

That’s what the U.S. Bureau of Prisons wanted to replace. Its plan involves three demonstration detention jails in Chicago, New York City, and San Diego and other projects which it hopes will in turn influence state and local prison authorities.

The first thesis the bureau wanted to replace were the long, tiered corridors of steel bars and the marching of prisoners to and from dining halls surrounded by guards. Further, it wanted to protect prisoners from each other.

THE SOLUTION is like a very secure college dorm with private rooms, lounges, carpeting and some degree of freedom.

Each prisoner has his own room — no bars — but each is located on the periphery of the building, with a narrow, but nonetheless transparent window to the outside. Two stories of rooms, with an open two-level multipurpose room in the center, make up a unit. An exercise room, visitors’ reception, kitchenette and guard station are all standard equipment.

The prisoners live in these units. They sleep, eat, work, receive company. No unit has more than 44 prisoners — a number prison officials say can be controlled without regimentation. The subdivision into small units also permits officials to segregate the first-time offenders from the old hand, the ax murderer from the gun dodger.

During the day, prisoners are free to roam anywhere within their unit. They are also free to lock themselves in their own quarters — important not only for privacy but for refuge from attacks by fellow inmates. The only time the prisoners leave their units is for outdoor exercise — on the roof.

The rooms themselves are decorated in butcher block and bright fabric, equipped with beds, dressers, desk and chair, a window — 7½ feet high but only 3½ inches wide. It was to be 3½ inches, they see, but someone broke out of one of those.

SECURITY is more real than visible. There are no phony bars of guards wherever possible, but there is a guard in each unit, aided by a control panel that has command of all doors, elevators, telephones and, if necessary, means of entering knockouts. The building is super-reinforced, the furniture built-in. Bronze-plated glass on the windows protects people in offices across the street from possible antics of exhibitionist prisoners.

All of this is set in the most audacious and successful architectural design in Chicago since McCormick Place II.

In one sense, it is logical and practical. The building is triangular because that shape was found to work best when you needed lots of outside wall for private rooms and not much inside for the lounges.

The structure is concrete because that material has built-in security and it’s cheap. The windows are narrow vertical slits because narrow is safe and vertical was the only way to wash the wall with light and provide a view at the same time.

IN ANOTHER sense, however, the design is symbolic. For the only thing that the building resembles even more than an IBM punch-card is a medieval fortress. The crossbows and rolling ball behind every opening.

Architect Weese has done something very straight here and, at the same time, artistically daring (many modernists would say reckless). He has embraced the traditional notion that a building should resemble what it is — and what is it? A prison, if not a wall with impenetrable openings?

He has then transmitted that notion in 20th Century designs — back to the books on Le Corbusier and Marcel Breuer for precedents. The designs work and simultaneously recall an appropriate historical symbol, the castle, built also in reference to security.

All of this practicality and metaphor is brought together in a stunningly tall structure. Weese has managed an inextricable balance not only of the solid corner piers against the improvised pattern between, but of the open-mouthed gasps of an entry, the chiseled high-band (disguising the louvers of the mechanical floor), the brief ribbons of glass on the west facade (visitors’ rooms) and the wire mesh-covered band of the exercise yard at top.

The concrete is raw; the evidence of reinforcing rods and post-tension cables plain.

It is a tough building, tough and funny and fit to bust with purpose and nerve. Chin out, eyes twinkling, it has the inveterate air of authority reserved most particularly for that never-changing go architecture — the compete thought.

TO BE FAIR, however, there is something critical missing. While the tower is graced rather nicely at ground level by a tree-lined plaza (for those who don’t mind the company), it is also slammed against an eight-story cheapie garage whose relationship to the tower may be obscure but whose relationship to Congress St. is clear — a mean barricade.

The garage is part of the project, housing kitchen and laundry for the jail, as well as parking for the Federal Center across the street. But it isn’t melded effortlessly into the setting.

A number of urbanists have objected from the beginning for a different reason. Indeed, several downtown banks and civic organizations brought suit, charging that a downtown jail would discourage development of the projected South Loop New Town. A new garage would subvert the city’s ordinance banning such construction in the Loop. They lost because the courts interpreted environmental impact — upon which the case was hung — as physical qualities, not social.

The urban question, however, is larger than a court decision. Is it a bad idea to have a jail where lots of people will see it? The Bureau of Prisons maintains that a central location is vital for family visits — important for rehabilitation and for access to good personnel. None — even the objectors — seems worried about escapees. But our turn-of-the-century sensibilities about the City Beautiful recoil at such an idea.

IT IS AN IDEA to be reconsidered. The City Beautiful is an aristocratic notion — a little bit of oblige of opera houses, formal geometries and gardens. Its excesses have led to the Volunteer urban renewal, destroying whole neighborhoods as blight: barren downtown skyscraper lobbies, free of the messy jumble of shops that used to attract people, and the occasional attempted banning of dogs.

But, presumably, the United States of the latter 20th Century has left the writhing skin of gentility under the rock where it earlier moldered noblemen’s oblige. We are supposedly tougher today — right on, upfront, telling it like it is. And like it is includes crime and it includes jails. For better or worse.

In any case, this jail happens to be the cutting edge of humanitarism, manifest in the power, subtlety and sheer temerity of its architecture.
Prisoners in the federal detention center (far right) have rooms furnished in butcher block with bed, drawers, lavatory and 5-inch-wide window. (Daily News photo near pht/Fred Stein)

SOURCE: Chicago Daily News, Saturday-Sunday, August 30-31, 1975
U.S. jail in Loop offers TV, carpets

SOURCE: Chicago Tribune.

Sunday, September 11, 1975

By Richard Phillips

IF COOK COUNTY had the type of jail that the Federal Bureau of Prisons is about to open in the South Loop, Winston Moore, county correction director, would be worried more about broken dishwashers and clean carpeting than jailbreaks.

The new federal jail is confined, but it is colorful and comfortable. It might outrage every punitive-minded taxpayer in the country, but federal officials say it is cheaper than the traditional four-walled prison with bars and tiers.

This jail is triangular. It has no bars. The guards have no guns. The inmates have private, carpeted rooms with air conditioning, butcher-block shelves, and even toilets with REAL seats.

"THIS BUILDING is completely secure, but it was built efficiently and with human dignity in mind," said William R. Nelson, warden of the sleek 28-story structure.

A postman hardly would recognize the building as a jail. From the approach at the corner of Clark and Van Buren streets, it resembles the prow of a destroyer riding thru ocean waves. Its eleven-eighth inch steel siding is sheathed with frosted vertical windows, the too narrow. The windows, except for the ones in the housing area.

THE "FEDERAL detention center," as it is called by officials who eschew such words as jail and guard, will open Monday. By December, it will be fully occupied by 400 prisoners, Nelson said.

Almost a fourth will be nonviolent criminals, such as convicted lawyers and bank employees, who will be on a work-release program or who have less than a year to serve on a longer term.

The jail will house 124 deportees, 100 prisoners awaiting trial, 44 prison caretakers, witnesses under protective custody and prisoners who are patients in the jail's three-story hospital.

EACH OF THE major categories will be segregated from the others, Nelson said. They will be housed on 14 floors, or seven split-level housing areas, each equipped with colorful prison-made furniture, televisions, a exercise room, lounge, kitchenette, and the 44 bedroom-cells that compose a housing area.

Each of the housing areas also have a permanent daytime staff of guards and counselors with offices there. Classes will be conducted in each area. Meals, which are precooked, are heated in infrared ovens in each housing area. Variation with relatives occurs in separate rooms there.

None of the guards has keys to the doors, which are electronically locked.

And opened by prisoners at a second-floor computer room. The computers, in fact, control almost everything mechanical in the building, including the elevators, which so far haven't been working well, according to some guards.

IF THE MODERN building could be called a piece of cake, then the frosting must be on the top, which prisoners reach by elevator to play volleyball, basketball, or just gaze at the Loop.

The building designed by Harry Weese & Associates, survived controversy before being built. According to several federal judges, who fought for it because they wanted more latitude in sentencing, several Loop banks that covering the land filed suit to stop its construction. The suit was dismissed.

Now, however, the only visible critics of the $10.24 million structure are a few prosecutors who ruefully observe that it hardly will be as conducive as the Cook County Jail to persuading reluctant government witnesses to testify in grand jury.

"They can be jailed for contempt if they refuse to testify under immunity," said one. "With Cook County Jail they could hardly wait to change their minds.

Now, however..."
Its triangular lines make new federal detention facility at Clark and Van Buren Streets an unusual landmark for aging South Loop.
"... Darling, I'm sorry I called you a dirty embezzler this morning. ..."
RESOURCES:


RESOURCES:

CONVERSATIONS WITH THE FOLLOWING:

* John A. Rusie, Sheriff, Miami County.

(PROFESSORS AT THE COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING)

* Anthony J. Costello
* James R. Underwood
* Robert A. Fisher
* Bruce Meyer
* Robert Koester
* Mark Kopchell
* Stanley Geda
* John Kissida