

AMERICAN BUSINESS CENTER AT CHECKPOINT CHARLIE

Philip Johnson Haus

Berlin, Germany

PHILIP JOHNSON • ALAN RITCHIE
ARCHITECTS



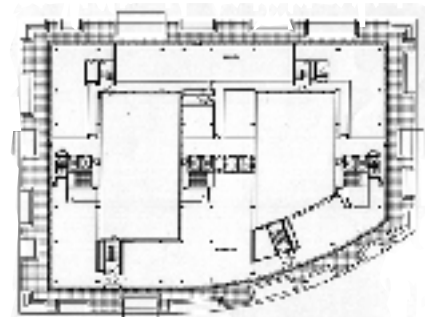
The American Business Center is a mixed-use commercial building, clad in granite with an aluminum curtain wall. Adjacent to what was once 'Checkpoint Charlie', in the former East Berlin, the design embodies a thirty meter high, seven story building and an adjacent public park. The total above ground area of over 320,000 square feet, consists of a ground floor of 45,000 square feet along with retail space and the upper floors dedicated for commercial use. Three levels of parking, storage and retail are situated underground.

The interior of the typical 35,000 square foot floor plate features two large courtyards, a response to the request for daylight to all working areas of twenty feet in depth or less. One courtyard, a three story lobby connecting an adjacent park to the main street of Friedrichstrasse, became the central organizing element of the plan. There is a cross axis which connects the three elevator cores, serving each portion of the building. The design is responsive to market desires, calling for the building to have the majority of its accessibility from Friedrichstrasse. A prestigious lobby is provided for all of the building tenants.



A first class restaurant and an adjacent lounge are designed to face a park that is part of the site. The park features a stone paving outline of the foundation of the destroyed Bethlehem Church and a ten meter metal helix sculpture supporting the bronze steeple bell of the former Church.

The facade, articulated with vertical stone elements, comes together with horizontal stone beams. Glass curtain walls sit between the vertical piers, with portions of the curtain wall slanted back to denote the entrances. The design responds successfully to the client request for a highly articulated street facade that is reminiscent of the work of the early 20th century German architects.



Client: Central European Development Corporation

Completion Date: December, 1997
Area: 38,000 m²

Associate Architects:
Pysall, Stahrenberg, & Partners

