

Resolution 16-3

Title	Investigation of the Total Collapse of World Trade Center Building 7
Sponsors	Daniel Barnum, FAIA and Fifty Members of the Institute
Intent	To adopt a Position Statement in support of a new investigation into the total collapse of World Trade Center Building 7 on September 11, 2001.
Text of Resolution	<p>WHEREAS, according to the AIA Public Policies and Position Statements, architects are professionally obligated to use their knowledge, skill, and experience to engage in civic life; and</p> <p>WHEREAS, World Trade Center Building 7 (WTC 7), a 47-story, steel-framed high-rise building, suffered a total collapse at 5:20 PM on the afternoon of September 11, 2001; and</p> <p>WHEREAS, the cause of the collapse of WTC 7 has become the subject of vigorous public debate, such that establishing the true cause of the collapse of WTC 7 is of great civic importance; and</p> <p>WHEREAS, prior to and since September 11, 2001, no steel-framed high-rise building has ever suffered a total collapse, except buildings demolished through the procedure known as controlled demolition; and</p> <p>WHEREAS, the collapse of WTC 7 exemplified many of the signature features of controlled demolition, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sudden onset: The roofline of WTC 7 went from being stationary to being in free fall in approximately one half-second.• Rapidity: The roofline of WTC 7 fell to the ground in less than seven seconds.• Free fall: For 2.25 seconds, or a third of its descent, WTC 7 fell at the rate of gravity over a distance of eight stories, meaning that the lower structure of the building provided no resistance whatsoever.• Symmetry: WTC 7 fell directly downward through what had been the path of greatest resistance, with the debris deposited mostly inside the building's footprint.• Explosions and window breakage: Video shows vertical sequences of explosions and window breakage running up the north face of WTC 7 as it began to collapse.

- Dismemberment: The steel frame of WTC 7 was almost entirely dismembered.
- Totality: The entire structure of WTC 7 collapsed to the ground, leaving no sections of the building standing; and

WHEREAS, first responders and bystanders reported explosions and other phenomena suggestive of controlled demolition immediately prior to and during the collapse of WTC 7, as exemplified in the following account by a first-year NYU medical student identified as “Darryl” on 1010 Wins Radio: “[W]e heard this sound that sounded like a clap of thunder. Turned around. We were shocked to see that the building was, uh.... Well, it looked like there was a shockwave ripping through the building and the windows all busted out. It was horrifying. And then about a second later the bottom floor caved out and the building followed after that”; and

WHEREAS, a CNN video captured both the sound of an explosion coming from WTC 7 and the following statements prior to the onset of the collapse:

Unidentified voice: “You hear that?”

Voice of emergency worker #1: “Keep your eye on that building. It’ll be coming down soon.”

Voice of emergency worker #2: “Building is about to blow up, move it back.... We are walking back, there’s a building about to blow up. Flame and debris coming down”; and

WHEREAS, numerous experts in controlled demolition and structural engineering have attested that the collapse of WTC 7 could have only been caused by controlled demolition, as exemplified in the following statement made by Dutch demolition expert Danny Jowenko after viewing video of the collapse: “This is controlled demolition.... It’s been imploded. It’s a hired job, done by a team of experts”; and

WHEREAS, in spite of the fact that WTC 7 had only few, small, and scattered fires and modest structural damage, the NYC Office of Emergency Management and the New York Fire Department predicted the collapse of WTC 7 with extraordinary confidence and precision, deciding to establish a safety zone around WTC 7 early in the afternoon and waiting several hours in anticipation of the building’s collapse; and

WHEREAS, local authorities were so certain of WTC 7’s eventual collapse that anticipation of the collapse was widely reported in the media, as exemplified by MSNBC’s Ashleigh Banfield, who reported, “I’ve heard several reports from several different officers now that that is the building that is gonna go down next. In fact, one officer told me they’re just waiting for that to come down at this point” — and by the BBC, who erroneously began reporting the collapse 23 minutes before it actually occurred; and

WHEREAS, in spite of the fact that local authorities predicted the collapse of WTC 7 with extraordinary confidence and precision, investigators for the Building Performance Study, conducted by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), were “stunned” by the collapse of WTC 7 and concluded in May 2002: “The specifics of the fires in WTC 7 and how they caused the building to collapse remain unknown at this time. Although the total diesel fuel on the premises contained massive potential energy, the best hypothesis has only a low probability of occurrence”; and

WHEREAS, three and a half years after the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) began its investigation into the World Trade Center disaster, NIST’s lead investigator, Dr. Shyam Sunder, stated that NIST had some “preliminary hypotheses,” but conceded, “[T]ruthfully, I don’t really know. We’ve had trouble getting a handle on building No. 7”; and

WHEREAS, NIST finally concluded in its 2008 report that the collapse of WTC 7 was caused by “normal office fires,” thus abandoning earlier hypotheses that diesel fuel fires or structural damage caused the collapse; and

WHEREAS, according to NIST, the fires that it alleges triggered the total collapse of WTC 7 burned at temperatures “hundreds of degrees below those typically considered in design practice for establishing structural fire resistance ratings”; and

WHEREAS, NIST neglected to examine steel from WTC 7 with a “Swiss cheese appearance” that had been attacked by molten iron — as documented in Appendix C of the FEMA/ASCE Building Performance Study — and instead falsely alleged that no identifiable steel was recovered from WTC 7; and

WHEREAS, in its draft report for public comment, NIST falsely denied that WTC 7 entered free fall, and then acknowledged the occurrence of free fall in its final report, but falsely alleged that the occurrence of free fall was consistent with its computer model, which, in fact, does not show a period of free fall, nor does it come close to replicating the observed collapse; and

WHEREAS, NIST’s computer model omitted critical structural features of WTC 7, which, in the opinion of independent engineers, had they been included, the computer model would have shown that NIST’s alleged collapse initiation mechanism had zero probability of occurring; and

WHEREAS, NIST has refused to release key portions of its modeling data to engineers studying the collapse of WTC 7, claiming that to do so “might jeopardize public safety”; and

WHEREAS, thousands of members of the architecture and engineering professions, including the 97 sponsors of this resolution, believe there is sufficient evidence contradicting NIST's explanation of the collapse of WTC 7 to warrant a new investigation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the AIA Board of Directors shall commence the process to adopt a Position Statement, to be published in the AIA Directory of Public Policies and Position Statements, stating both:

- The AIA's belief that incidents involving the catastrophic failure of buildings and other structures must be investigated using the highest standards of science-based investigation and analysis; and
- The AIA's support for a new investigation into the total collapse of WTC 7.