



## The Design of WFSB, a Local CBS Affiliate

A successfully designed broadcast facility harmoniously provides for the current needs of a station, looks ahead to anticipate the need for future expansion, and seamlessly adapts to site challenges. The design of WFSB, a local CBS affiliate located in the Rocky Hill suburb of Hartford, Connecticut, is no exception to that rule.

The relationship between WFSB and Rees Associates, Inc. (REES™) began in 1985

when REES completed their trademarked FACILITY BUSINESS PLAN® for the station. Through the FACILITY BUSINESS PLAN® process, REES was able to help the station improve their functional and staff efficiency and lower utility costs. Data gathered during the planning phase indicated that, for WFSB, the news product was of highest priority and production capacity was secondary.

To accommodate this need, the team focused on providing design to increase efficiency for the station's news staff. Parking, entry, and circulation for news crews are now located at the rear of the building, making it easier for crews to move and store equipment and expediting video downloads and editing. This arrangement also allows the WFSB facility to take full advantage of the helipad already located on the site.

The building surrounds a double-height core that contains a full newsroom set and provides the focus for all interior spaces. The first floor houses news and production operations, including ten editing bays. The second floor contains administrative offices that overlook the central news set. Additionally, the facility is designed to allow for future expansion to double the station's current capacity.

Originally created for a downtown site, the building location was changed to a new site in a growing office development shortly after completion of the design phase. True to its name, the new Rocky Hill location varies up to seventy feet in elevation.



After cutting and blasting to accommodate the building's 62,000 s.f. footprint, steep retaining walls were built at the northern edge to provide a dramatic backdrop for the facility. Blasted rock was later reused in parking and paving applications on-site.

To establish the building's connection to the new site while minimizing disruption to the project schedule, landscaping and site preparation plans were adjusted. A curved exterior wall, originally intended to respond to a downtown street, now hugs the retaining wall and defines access to parking at the rear of the building. Because of the site's elevation, a 150 foot STL/TSL tower was installed.

The building's exterior is sleek and modern, incorporating stone, metal, and glass into the material palette. Rough-face masonry block provides a rusticated base from which smooth stone panels that emulate limestone rise to form the two-story façade. Glass and stone boxes pop out from the building to define interior functions such as conference rooms and stairwells, and a double-volume entry lobby on the south side conveys transparency and openness through its expansive curtainwall while simultaneously providing a security-controlled entrance to the building.



A successfully designed broadcast facility harmoniously provides for the current needs of a station, looks ahead to anticipate the need for future expansion, and seamlessly adapts to site challenges.



By night, the facility is dramatically lit to create a glowing beacon effect.

Through the use of creative and adaptive design coupled with extensive knowledge of the specialized needs of the broadcast industry, REES designed an enduring and magnificent facility that will be a landmark in the Rocky Hill community for years to come.

A successfully designed broadcast facility harmoniously provides for the current needs of a station, looks ahead to anticipate the need for future expansion, and seamlessly adapts to site challenges.