

How 1 World Trade Center Officially Became The Tallest Building In The U.S.

By Al Barbarino

When construction workers hoisted the final crown atop 1 World Trade Center back in May, it reached its symbolic 1,776 feet. Flags waved, onlookers cheered, and the Port Authority of New York & New Jersey proclaimed it the “tallest building in the Western Hemisphere.”

But great controversy regarding whether the tower would in fact dethrone Chicago’s Willis Tower ensued. The looming question: antennae or spire? The latter would solidify the accolade the Port Authority already touted, but the former would not. Last month, the Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat official ruled that a spire—not an antennae—sits atop the 104-story tower.

After the jump, a step-by-step guide to measuring a tall building and some key factors that played into the ruling at 1 WTC, as told to *The Commercial Observer’s* Al Barbarino by officials with the Council on Tall Buildings.