

Section 106 Consulting Parties Meeting #2

August 5, 2015, 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm

Coppin State University, Talon Center, Room 214



Meeting Minutes

Purpose of Meeting:

To continue discussions on historic properties identified within the Baltimore and Potomac (B&P) Tunnel Project Section 106 area of potential effects (APE) and preliminary discussions on project impacts to historic properties. Talks included newly-identified properties for National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) evaluation, and discussions of the northern portal and mid-tunnel vent plant areas. The meeting began 1:30 pm and ended at 4:10 pm.

Attendees:

• Maryland Historical Trust	Beth Cole, Tim Tamburrino
• Baltimore City Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation	Lauren Schiszik
• Baltimore City Department of Planning	Kyle Leggs
• Baltimore Heritage	Eli Pousson
• Baltimore National Heritage Area	Jason Vaughan
• Mount Royal Improvement Association	Steve Howard
• Preservation Maryland	Margaret De Arcangelis
• Amtrak	Steve Jurow
• Federal Railroad Administration	Michelle Fishburne, Laura Shick
• Maryland Transit Administration	Jean Wolfers-Lawrence
• RK&K	Eric Almquist, Christeen Taniguchi, Ryan Snyder, Elizabeth Fagan
• Dovetail Cultural Resource Group	Mike Carmody

The following summarizes major topics discussed during the meeting:

Introduction

- Meeting attendees were welcomed and asked to introduce themselves.
- An overview of the meeting's agenda was discussed.
- The draft minutes from the first consulting parties meeting were distributed for any comments or edits. ***(Update: The minutes were also emailed to all consulting parties and agencies, and were determined finalized August 20, 2015.)***
- A brief overview of the project and study area was provided.

Section 106 Consulting Parties Meeting #2

August 5, 2015, 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm

Coppin State University, Talon Center, Room 214



Section 106 and National Environmental Policy Act Timeline

- A printout of the project timeline was provided to attendees.
- The timeline is driven by the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), to be completed by December 2015. Michelle Fishburne of the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) noted the need to get comments on the project and from the consulting parties regarding the alternatives during the next several months because the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) schedule is finite due to funding, with pressure to complete the Record of Decision by March 2017.
- The Section 106 historic architectural and archeological reports were submitted on July 31, 2015 to consulting parties, including the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT), for review and comment. FRA is looking for MHT concurrence on the report as part of the process moving forward.
- In addition to the historic properties identified in the report, there are an additional 12 properties for NRHP evaluation. These NRHP evaluations will be completed by the end of August 2015, with response from MHT by late September 2015. **[Update 1: During a post-meeting discussion with Tim Tamburrino of MHT, he agreed to an abbreviated review timeframe starting in mid-September 2015, still concluding in late September 2015.] [Update 2: A Mount Royal Reservoir building located on the Baltimore Department of Transportation (DOT) maintenance yard within the APE was identified, per a comment from Lauren Schiszik of the Baltimore City Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation. This property is being individually evaluated.]**
- The effects report would be completed in November 2015, with the results to be included in the DEIS in December 2015. Ms. Fishburne noted they are pushing for preliminary results from the effects report prior to the DEIS. The consulting parties meetings are very important to the effects assessment, with the results having a strong input in the DEIS. **[Update: The effects report will be completed in October 2015.]**
- There will most likely be an adverse effect to historic properties, leading to mitigation. Either a Memorandum of Agreement or Programmatic Agreement is anticipated, with consulting parties continuing to play a role in the process.
- *Beth Cole of MHT asked, will the DEIS have a Preferred Alternative?* Ms. Fishburne noted the goal is to have a Preferred Alternative by mid-October 2015.
- *Laura Shick of FRA asked, will there be a Programmatic Agreement if Section 106 is not completed?* Yes, that would be the case.

Recap of Previous Section 106 Consulting Parties Meeting (July 16, 2015)

- As discussed at the last meeting, there are five build alternatives for the B&P Tunnel Project: No Build, and Alternatives 2, 3A, 3B, 3C, 11A, and 11B. A brief overview of the alternatives was provided:
 - *No Build:* Not a reasonable alternative because the tunnel is nearing the end of its useful life.
 - *Alternative 2:* This would reconstruct the tunnel in place. Not a reasonable alternative because Northeast Corridor service would have to be shut down.

Section 106 Consulting Parties Meeting #2

August 5, 2015, 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm

Coppin State University, Talon Center, Room 214



- *Alternative 3A*: Has less impacts from new right-of-way and does not improve the existing curve south of the tunnel at the West MARC Station. In addition, if Alternative 3A was built, this existing curve approaching the tunnel from the south would be memorialized and continue to limit the options for high level platforms at the West MARC Station. Alternative 3A does not meet the Purpose and Need of the project as well as other alternatives.
- *Alternative 3B*: Has more impacts as compared to Alternative 3A, improves the existing curve, may impact the American Ice House Company property, and could provide some mitigation options to the community.
- *Alternative 3C*: Similar to Alternative 3B, except the curve south of the tunnel is improved to the west.
- *Alternative 11A*: It is not reasonable to advance this alternative because of the significant impact it would have on historic properties and the community.
- *Alternative 11B*: Impacts the American Ice Company building. An update and clarification that the cut-and-cover area previously anticipated at the American Ice Company location would instead remain an open area. This would reduce the area originally thought could be available for potential mitigation.

Properties Under Evaluation for Individual Eligibility to NRHP

- Christeen Taniguchi of RK&K discussed the 12 new properties which are being evaluated for individual eligibility for the NRHP (***Update: The American Stores Co. Warehouse at 2120 W. Lafayette Avenue listed below had already been found to not be eligible by MHT. The Mount Royal Reservoir was added to the list of properties to evaluate. Therefore, the number of evaluated properties remains at twelve.***). Two of these properties are located within the indirect APE for Alternative 3C (the railroad alignment and high school), and ten are individual properties located within the direct APE. The attendees received a map of these properties, as well as a table noting which build alternatives would directly impact each property. These properties are identified and listed in the July 2015 historic architectural report:
 - *Western Maryland Railroad – Gwynn’s Falls Branch* (Baltimore City alignment)
 - *Carver Vocational-Technical High School* (2201 Presstman Street)
 - *2119 Edmondson Avenue* (circa 1930 former filling station that may be associated with 2135 Edmondson Avenue)
 - *2124 Edmondson Avenue* (circa 1920s former filling station)
 - *2126 Edmondson Avenue* (1925 former Atlas Storage Company with three buildings)
 - *2135 Edmondson Avenue* (1947 former auto sales & service that may be associated with 2119 Edmondson Avenue)
 - *2140 Edmondson Avenue* (circa 1930 former Ward Baking Company and associated auto repair building)

Section 106 Consulting Parties Meeting #2

August 5, 2015, 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm

Coppin State University, Talon Center, Room 214



- 2235 Edmondson Avenue (circa 1910 former B&P Railroad station)
- 2249 Edmondson Avenue (circa early 1910s Fire Department Engine Co. No. 36)
- 2120 W. Lafayette Avenue (American Stores Co. Warehouse, south section built 1927, central built 1932-48, north section built 1951)
- 2078 Mosher Street (LBR Warehouse built sometime after 1914 with circa early 1950s addition)
- W. Mulberry Street Bridge of the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad (circa 1920s)
- *Mr. Tamburrino asked to clarify, we are not just confirming these properties are contributing elements to historic districts, but we are determining their individual significance. Yes, we understand that under Section 106, a property has equal value, whether it is individually eligible or a district contributing element. We are conducting these evaluations for the purposes of Section 4(f).*
- *Ms. Cole asked for a discussion of Section 106 versus Section 4(f). Ms. Fishburne explained Section 4(f) only applies to USDOT projects. Section 4(f) regulations require FRA to evaluate avoidance alternatives if Section 4(f) properties are impacted. Section 4(f) resources include historic properties, parks, and wildlife refuges. If the Section 4(f) Evaluation identifies a feasible and prudent alternative that completely avoids Section 4(f) properties, FRA must select this alternative. If there are no feasible and prudent avoidance alternatives that avoid all Section 4(f) properties, then FRA must analyze alternatives to determine which has the least overall harm. One of the factors considered during the least overall harm analysis is the relative significance of the Section 4(f) property, so the additional information on these properties will assist with the analysis. FRA must also find that all possible planning to minimize harm to the Section 4(f) property has occurred. All proposed alternatives would have Section 4(f) impacts, and we must look at what alternative has the least overall harm and meets the goals of the project best. The opinion of the consulting parties and input during mitigation opportunities discussions will be assist with the Section 4(f) process. Eric Almquist of RK&K noted severity of remaining harm to each Section 4(f) property is another consideration. The severity of the harm may be different for a property in poor condition, which impacts its integrity level, versus one where the integrity is high. Section 4(f) is not a black-and-white process.*
- *Ms. Shick asked, what if the Section 4(f) property is a rare surviving example? Ms. Fishburne noted if a historic property is very rare and there is no mitigation opportunity (i.e. the American Ice Company), this must be considered in the least harm analysis and that input from the consulting parties would assist in identifying the rarity of the property and its importance.*

South Portals (Continued Discussions)

- Alternative 3A: This alternative would impact two industrial buildings on either side of the tunnel – the American Stores Company Warehouse at 2120 W. Lafayette Avenue and the LBR Warehouse at 2078 Mosher Street. Ms. Fishburne noted with industrial buildings, perhaps you could take a bay off of the building instead of demolishing it entirely.
 - *Ms. Cole asked, at what point will you be dropping Alternative 3A entirely? Mr. Almquist stated, as of now, Alternative 3A cannot be dropped. This alternative does not meet the Purpose and*

Section 106 Consulting Parties Meeting #2

August 5, 2015, 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm

Coppin State University, Talon Center, Room 214



- Need as well as the others and does not meet long term goals, but until we understand the impacts in full, we cannot drop Alternative 3A.
- *Ms. Cole mentioned Johns Hopkins of Baltimore Heritage's comments at the last meeting about the 30 second travel time difference between the different alternatives and asked to clarify why this is important.* Ms. Fishburne noted FRA is under a U.S. Congressional mandate to reduce train travel time.
 - *Ms. Fishburne asked about the importance of the two warehouses that would be impacted by Alternative 3A?* Eli Pousson of Baltimore Heritage stated the highly visible American Stores Warehouse building is particularly significant as an important retailer and is representative of a type of building the company built in other cities such as Philadelphia and New York City.
 - Alternative 3B: This alternative would clip the American Ice Company, and impact some of the district contributing warehouses on either side of the tracks. The impacted area also include the firehouse, B&P Railroad Station and commercial buildings along Edmondson Avenue (both sides of the tracks), and residential rowhouses. This alternative would address the curve of the West Baltimore MARC Station by shifting the alignment to the east. We may be able to minimize clipping the American Ice Company building. Steve Jurow from Amtrak noted there is some room for adjustments.
 - Alternative 3C: This alternative would impact the firehouse, B&P Railroad Station, a commercial building, and Ward Baking Company, located along Edmondson Avenue (west of the tracks). The impacted area for this alternative is mostly industrial buildings, with a number of rowhouses. Alternative 3C also flattens the curve, shifting to the west of the current alignment.
 - The attendees were asked to compare Alternatives 3B and 3C:
 - *Mr. Tamburrino asked, if there is a way to avoid the American Ice Company, fire station, and the American Stores Company Warehouse.* Ms. Fishburne and Mr. Jurow responded this would be tight. Should the east side be adjusted, for example, this can instead affect the west side. Highway design is more flexible as compared to railroad design.
 - *Mr. Pousson noted both alternatives have difficult aspects. The Alternative 3B direct impact area has a new playground that had only recently been a vacant lot, located at the southwest corner of W. Lafayette Avenue and N. Payson Street. Also, it is important going forward to determine which buildings in the impacted areas are vacant.* Ms. Fishburne responded by indicating FRA is currently undergoing studies about which buildings are occupied versus not occupied.
 - *Ms. Fishburne asked, how would the loss of buildings change the overall historic district(s) and its/their character?* Mr. Pousson noted the Midtown Edmondson Historic District, for example, would be greatly impacted by the loss of properties because a main factor of the district's significance is its history as a rowhouse, residential neighborhood. There are commercial buildings along Edmondson Avenue that play a role in this significance. The industrial history is also an important component, and Mr. Pousson noted many former employees of these industrial businesses still live in the area. This working firehouse is a distinctive visual presence

Section 106 Consulting Parties Meeting #2

August 5, 2015, 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm

Coppin State University, Talon Center, Room 214



- in the historic district, and many other firehouses like this one elsewhere in the city are no longer being used as fire stations.
- *Ms. Cole mentioned, because this list of 12 additional properties is new, they have not had much time to review or become familiar with the buildings.*
 - *Ms. Schiszik asked about a buffer between the tracks and the community, such as trees or concrete walls? The project will not use additional space for a buffer; anything to be done (e.g. trees) will take place within the confines of the direct impact areas.*
 - **Alternative 11B:** It was previously stated Alternative 11B would have a section of cut-and-cover going underneath the American Ice Company building. This section will actually be an open cut from American Ice Company building south until Calverton Road, which is significantly different.
 - *Kyle Leggs of the Baltimore City Department of Planning asked, what are the costs of each alternative? 11B is approximately 4.2 billion, 3B and 3C are approximately 4 billion, and 3A is approximately 3.7 billion.*
 - *Steve Howard of the Mount Royal Improvement Association asked, is it impossible/difficult to move the portal further south, as to avoid the American Ice Company building? If you made the portal further south, it would impact the grade. Currently, the train tracks go over Franklin and Mulberry Streets; Alternative 11B would have the trains to go underneath these streets instead. The trains are chasing the grade heading south, and the issues with the grade would impact the tunnel, as the tunnel would have to be significantly below grade.*
 - *Mr. Leggs asked, are the alternatives designed for freight use as well? Mr. Almquist answered, yes, capacity for freight trains is included in the design and would accommodate double stacked cars.*
 - *Ms. Fishburne asked if the American Ice Company building could potentially be moved. Is its significance architectural or tied to its location? Ms. Cole, Mr. Tamburrino, and Mr. Howard mentioned the building was nominated because of its historic and architectural significance. Its location is important since its success as an ice company was facilitated by its proximity to the railroad tracks.*
 - *Ms. Fishburne noted this is a multi-billion dollar project with opportunities for mitigation related to its impacts.*
 - *Mr. Pousson stated, for confirmation, that Alternatives 3B and 3C impact a larger number of buildings, whereas Alternative 11B mainly impacts the American Ice Company. He indicated he could not give concrete feedback yet without talking to the Baltimore Heritage board, as well as their public.*
 - *Ms. Fishburne noted Alternatives 3B, 3C, and 11B provide an opportunity to make West Baltimore MARC Station ADA accessible with high level platforms.*
 - *Mr. Pousson was concerned about moving the West Baltimore MARC Station south of its current location. Ms. Fishburne and Jean Wolfers-Lawrence of the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) indicated MTA has a West Baltimore MARC Station project that has looked at this option.*

Section 106 Consulting Parties Meeting #2

August 5, 2015, 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm

Coppin State University, Talon Center, Room 214



- *Mr. Leggs asked at what grade the alignment would be for Alternative 3B at the American Ice Company.* Mr. Almquist answered it would be about 20 feet at that point, which would be open-cut. The cut-and-cover area would be about 35 feet.
- *Mr. Leggs asked, what is taking place with the Alternative 3B alignment after the disturbance areas and along the Mary Ann Winterling Elementary School.* Mr. Almquist indicated the alignment would stay within the right-of-way at that point.
- *Mr. Pousson asked what grade Edmondson Avenue would be for Alternative 3B.* Mr. Almquist answered it would remain the same.
- *Mr. Almquist asked, what do you think could be done to minimize impact?* Ms. Cole stated avoiding the American Ice Company building would be the best option. Mr. Leggs indicated it would also be important to examine the possibilities of enhanced aesthetics, green spaces, and buffers. Ms. Fishburne stated Amtrak would own the tops of the cut-and-cover areas; it is not certain they would be willing to own and manage a park space above the tunnel, for example.
- *Mr. Howard asked why cut-and-cover would not be an option for Alternative 11B in the American Ice Company area.* Mr. Almquist and Ms. Fishburne indicated the elevation for this alternative is in a deeper cut due to the geometry of the alignment; cut-and-cover is not possible.
- *Mr. Almquist asked, what might be some opportunities for mitigation for the surrounding community in Alternatives 3B and 3C?* Mr. Leggs suggested quiet zones, tall barriers, and safety measures. Mr. Pousson mentioned the Edmondson Community Organization building on Edmondson Avenue is a community-controlled building, which would end up across the street from a large hole in the ground. Mr. Pousson also stated the real goal of the mitigation would be the reuse, rehabilitation of the American Ice Company building by a private developer. He indicated the buildings ending up near/next to the tunnel in the future may be less viable, so we need to think about that issue. This area is in economic need, and a simple plaque or sign for mitigation will not help revitalize the area, and more should be done. Revitalization of the area is an important factor in the mitigation. Ms. Schizik asked if mitigation benefits can extend to the buildings that remain.

North Portals

- The group discussed the north portal locations for all 3 and 11 alternatives, all of which are essentially in the same area. There would be a cut-and-cover after emerging on the east side of Interstate 83. The alignment would then tie into the existing grade. The Baltimore and Ohio Belt Line Railroad and Baltimore and Ohio Belt Line Bridge over Jones Falls Valley are historic properties located within the direct APE; there are also likely indirect impacts. Currently, there is a former Baltimore DOT maintenance yard in the north portal area; it was evaluated for the NRHP as part of this project and found to not be eligible.
- *Ms. Schizik asked about a potential building or ruin that may be in the trees in this area that could be related to the Mount Royal Reservoir.* The project team did not know about this building, but will look into it. ***(Update: A field visit was made on August 10, 2015; a circa 1850s to 1860s pipe vault***

Section 106 Consulting Parties Meeting #2

August 5, 2015, 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm

Coppin State University, Talon Center, Room 214



building engraved with “Mt. Royal Reservoir” on the façade was identified. This building will be evaluated for the NRHP.)

- *Mr. Pousson asked, is this area still used by DOT for maintenance use? No, it is not.*
- *Mr. Howard asked if the light rail would be impacted by the project. No, it would not.*

Mid-Tunnel Vent Plants

- For each alternative, there will be three vent plants at each portal, plus one in the middle. The approximate footprint of each vent plant is 100 feet by 200 feet, and up to 55 feet high. Alternatives 3A, 3B, and 3C are within the Reservoir Hill Historic District, and the Alternative 11B is within the Old West Baltimore and Bolton Hill Historic Districts. Each potential area is located within a wide, rectangular space encompassing at least a few blocks, mainly of historic district contributing buildings.
- *Ms. Schizik asked, what is the minimum height for vent plants? The majority of the residences in these districts are two- to three-story height, so ideally the vent plant structures should be the same scale. There is not a definite answer now; however, the louvers on the building need to be high enough up so that people cannot drop things into them.*
- Alternative 3A
 - *Ms. Schizik noted this area has a lot of historic integrity. Ms. Fishburne agreed, stating FRA’s goal to try and avoid historic properties in the vent plant areas, and instead use vacant areas. A lot used as a community garden could be a potential location for Alternative 3A. Mr. Almquist noted FRA is in the process of checking with the city about the garden’s ownership.*
 - *Ms. Cole asked, what level of detail on the vent locations will be in the DEIS? The goal is to have specific parcels identified in the DEIS.*
 - *Ms. Cole noted it might be good to have more information like parcels, streetscape views, design, etc. by the DEIS.*
 - *Ms. Schizik noted John Eager Howard Elementary School and the playground directly to its north might be switching places. More information will be gathered about this. **(Update: A May 6, 2015 PowerPoint presentation on the “John Eager Howard E.S. Renovation/Addition” was found online. If this is the project mentioned by Ms. Schizik, it seems to retain the playground where it is currently located, and redesign the school at its present location.)***
 - *Mr. Howard noted perhaps the vent plant can be incorporated into the school’s redesign, if the project is not already too far along.*
- Alternative 3B: The potential area is almost identical to the area for 3A.
- Alternative 3C: This area is slightly more to the north.
 - *Ms. Schizik noted the Gertrude Stein House, an important cultural resource, is located in this area, and a vent plant could impact its views and streetscape.*

Section 106 Consulting Parties Meeting #2

August 5, 2015, 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm

Coppin State University, Talon Center, Room 214



- Alternative 11B: This area includes the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation Synagogue and the former telephone exchange building.
 - *The group noted that the 1970s era three-story apartment building detracts from the historic character of the neighborhood. Ms. Schizik also mentioned the vent plant should complement the existing architecture in that area, especially since Eutaw Avenue was important as a part of the City Beautiful Movement.*
 - *Ms. Cole noted, for the site selection of the vent plants, it is very important to look at the streetscape and visibility, taking the whole district into consideration. Setbacks could be considered in the design.*
 - *Ms. Schizik asked if the first floor of the vent plants can be used for commercial use. Ms. Fishburne said probably not, since the vent plants will be full of Amtrak-owned equipment and are also used as emergency egress.*

Treatment/Disposition of the Existing B&P Tunnel

- There are a few options for the future use of the existing tunnel. These include sealing, filling, and abandoning it; adaptive reuse (e.g. a park, shopping, urban mushroom farm, or public exhibit); or maintaining the tunnel and using it as single track service (e.g. for freight). The tunnel is currently a contributing element of the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad historic district.
 - *Ms. Schizik asked, how would the tunnel be accessed? The tunnel has daylight openings.*
 - *Ms. Schizik asked, would the tunnel be decommissioned and who would own it? The tunnel would be decommissioned and continued to be owned by Amtrak.*
 - *Ms. Schizik noted, what is done with the existing tunnel could be used as mitigation for this project.*
 - *Ms. Schizik asked about other case studies, for example the High Line in New York City, as well as a similar example in Cincinnati, Ohio. Ms. Fishburne indicated public interest and a lot of public funding for High Line is what made it successful.*
 - *Mr. Pousson asked, is Amtrak committed to retaining ownership of the tunnel if it is reused? Amtrak is likely not looking to own a linear park, for example.*
 - *Mr. Howard noted two important historic properties, Marlboro Apartments and Strawbridge United Methodist Church, are located above the existing tunnel.*
 - *Jason Vaughan of Baltimore National Heritage Area asked about Amtrak and its Federal status. Would the tunnel's disposition lead to a need to meet Federal environmental requirements? Amtrak is a private corporation with a great deal of funding from the Federal government.*
 - *Ms. Cole asked about the status for archeology? The Phase IA Archeological Study states the potential for findings post-contact archeological sites is greater than pre-contact sites. Further studies would be done after the Preferred Alternative is selected. The archeology portion might go into a Programmatic Agreement.*

Section 106 Consulting Parties Meeting #2

August 5, 2015, 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm

Coppin State University, Talon Center, Room 214



Next Steps

- The 12 NRHP evaluations will be completed by mid-September 2015, with MHT review and comment by late September 2015. MHT indicated they would be able to do so within this abbreviated timeframe.