

Section 106 Consulting Parties Meeting #5

March 23, 2016, 1:00 pm to 3:30 pm

Coppin State University, Talon Center, Room 210



Meeting Minutes

Attendees:

Maryland Historical Trust (MHT)	Beth Cole, Eva Falls, Tim Tamburrino
Baltimore City Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation (CHAP)	Lauren Schiszik
Baltimore Heritage (BH)	Johns Hopkins
Baltimore National Heritage Area (BNHA)	Jason Vaughan
Preservation Maryland (PM)	Margaret De Arcangelis
Amtrak	Jeffrey Abrams (Parsons), Johnette Davies, Steve Jurow (HNTB), Dale Moeller (Parsons Brinkerhoff [PB]), William Prosser
Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)	Matthew Mielke (Booz Allen Hamilton), Laura Shick
Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)	Jaqueline Thorne
Maryland Transit Administration (MTA)	Jean Wolfers-Lawrence
RK&K	Eric Almquist, Philip Hayden, James Kodlick, Ryan Snyder, Christeen Taniguchi

Meeting Agenda:

The agenda items included project status and updates, a review of revised project build alternatives and intermediate ventilation plant locations, an overview of public comments from the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and public hearings, a review and update on effects to historic properties, and a discussion of possible minimization and mitigation measures to include in a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) or Programmatic Agreement (PA) to conclude the Section 106 process.

Discussion:

The session opened with a general introduction and review of meeting handouts (listed at bottom). Mr. Almquist (RK&K) led the discussion, beginning with the Section 106 and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) timeline. Future Section 106 milestones include preparation of a draft agreement document (MOA or PA) in May 2016, additional consulting parties meetings in May-August 2016, and execution of a signed agreement document (MOA or PA) in August 2016. The DEIS was completed in December 2015. Future NEPA milestones include two open houses in April 2016, community meetings in Summer 2016, issuance of a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) in October 2016, and publication of a Record of Decision (ROD) in March 2017.

A. Alternatives 3A Revised, 3B Revised, and 3C Revised (General)

Mr. Almquist reviewed refinements made to the three remaining build alternatives, intended to minimize overall effects to historic properties and impacts to other resources, while continuing to meet the project Purpose and Need. Alternatives 3B Revised and 3C Revised each continue to include the additional benefit of faster travel times, and superior locations and accessibility for the West Baltimore MARC Station at Curve 381.

Section 106 Consulting Parties Meeting #5

March 23, 2016, 1:00 pm to 3:30 pm

Coppin State University, Talon Center, Room 210



Ultimately, Alternative 3C Revised was eliminated from further consideration because it resulted in greater financial and environmental impacts. The project team recognized the historic value of the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)-eligible Ward Baking Company and Baltimore Fire Department Engine Company No. 36 properties, which would be avoided by Alternative 3B Revised, but demolished by Alternative 3C Revised. Additional modifications were made to Alternative 3A Revised and 3B Revised to further reduce environmental impacts.

B. Alternative 3A Revised

Alternative 3A Revised includes narrower track spacing near the south portal and slightly reduced overall limits of disturbance. It makes no change to Curve 381 and the vicinity of the West Baltimore MARC Station. Alternative 3A Revised remains under consideration because it has the least impacts of the Build Alternatives.

C. Alternative 3B Revised

Alternative 3B Revised also features narrower track spacing near the south portal and reduced overall limits of disturbance, and now avoids numerous historic district-contributing rowhouses and the main building on the NRHP-eligible Atlas Safe Deposit and Storage Company Warehouse Complex property. Alternative 3B Revised also modifies Curve 381 at the West Baltimore MARC Station to the minimum radius allowable for the construction of high-level boarding platforms. In order to maintain connectivity between North Bentalou Street and an adjoining alleyway, Alternative 3B Revised will now remove two rowhouses on the corner of Laretta Avenue. Both are contributing elements to the Edmondson Avenue Historic District and Greater Rosemont Historic District.

Discussions of Alternatives 3A Revised and 3B Revised focused on the following:

- 1) *Relationships Between Railroad Structures and Neighborhoods*. Under both Alternatives 3A Revised and 3B Revised, the four railroad tracks between West Franklin Street and the south portal will descend below their existing grade into a depressed cut before passing beneath a cut-and-cover structure and associated ventilation plant into four mined bores. The cut will be protected in part by retaining walls. Occupants of adjoining buildings would look out overtop the cut or at specified vegetative screens, walls, or sound barriers. The final design for the retaining walls, cut-and-cover structure, ventilation plant, and any other required structures or buffers would be developed in consultation with the consulting parties as part of a comprehensive mitigation package. Existing connectivity between streets and alleyways would be retained through newly created links.

Ms. Schizik (CHAP), concerned about the potential for undesirably tall sound barriers, asked what structures would be constructed between the south portal and the Midtown Edmondson Historic District for Alternative 3B Revised. Mr. Almquist noted the alignment would be below-grade at this point, becoming gradually at-grade as it continues south. Ms. Schizik also asked if federally funded buildings and structures, including possible future buildings over the cut-and-cover section, would be exempt from city height restrictions per federal ownership. Presumably the ownership of any buildings would be vested in Amtrak, which is not a federal agency, and the final use of the airspace over the cut-and-cover structure could be taken into account as part of future mitigation.

Section 106 Consulting Parties Meeting #5

March 23, 2016, 1:00 pm to 3:30 pm

Coppin State University, Talon Center, Room 210



- 2) *Modifications to West Franklin and West Mulberry Streets in the Vicinity of the MARC Station.* Alternative 3B Revised includes lowering of existing track elevations, new bridge structures at both West Franklin and West Mulberry Streets, and corresponding reductions in roadway surface elevations to allow for the unobstructed flow of street traffic beneath the new tracks. There would be high clearance on the new tracks, allowing for double-stacked railcars, so as not to preclude future freight use. This requires cutting back and lowering the western approaches of both West Franklin and West Mulberry Streets, together with related cutting and lowering of Wheeler Avenue at its intersection with West Franklin Street. A retaining wall and modifications to the front yards of approximately 13 rowhouses fronting West Franklin Street may be required.
- 3) *Curve 381 and High-level Boarding Platforms.* Because Alternative 3B Revised requires the relocation of tracks west of the existing MARC Station, a new station structure will be required meeting accessibility requirements under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), including accommodation for unobstructed boarding between the station platform and train coaches. Alternative 3B Revised makes desired improvements to the MARC Station possible, and are consistent with concurrent MTA plans to expand platforms from 150 feet to 800 feet in length near the existing parking facilities and make the entire facility ADA compliant. Alternative 3A Revised does not improve Curve 381 and is too sharp for a high level platform.

D. Alternate Intermediate Ventilation Plant Locations

Mr. Almquist noted, in addition to previous comments from the consulting parties, the project team received substantial community opposition to the proposed location of the intermediate ventilation plant at the Whitelock Street community garden site within the Reservoir Hill Historic District, an NRHP-listed historic property. In response, the project team examined nine alternate sites, including those suggested by Heather Martin of the Baltimore City Department of Planning: six located inside the Reservoir Hill Historic District and three located outside the district boundary.

In addition to retaining the Whitelock Street community garden site, the team narrowed the alternate options to 920 West North Avenue (Madison Park Medical Center) and 850 West North Avenue (Madison Park North Apartments, vacant). Physical requirements dictated the selections: a) tunnel capacity and train headway inside the bores and b) emergency ventilation and egress. The two West North Avenue sites are located in the Reservoir Hill Historic District but include modern (1970s), non-contributing buildings. The abandoned housing development at 850 West North Avenue is slated for demolition and redevelopment as part of another project. Mr. Almquist noted a ventilation plant could blend more easily into a commercial context such as West North Avenue. Mr. Almquist and Mr. Moeller (PB) noted the horizontal bores required to connect either of the West North Avenue intermediate ventilation plant sites to the main train tunnels would require traditional drilling and blasting, a careful and slow process involving controlled explosives, adding between \$70 and \$90 million to the project costs because of distance. The blasting would be restricted to two times per day, each with a short period of ground movement perceptible by humans. It is expected however, that buildings would not be damaged.

Specific discussions of the alternate intermediate ventilation plant sites focused on the following:

- 1) *Whitelock Street (community garden).* This site offers the optimum location for Amtrak at the lowest cost and shortest distance for drilling/blasting. The property is also devoid of historic buildings and furthest from the John Eager Howard Elementary School. Ms. Schizik reiterated the

Section 106 Consulting Parties Meeting #5

March 23, 2016, 1:00 pm to 3:30 pm

Coppin State University, Talon Center, Room 210



City of Baltimore and the Reservoir Hill community are opposed to the taking of the community garden at the Whitelock Street site and favor relocating the intermediate ventilation plant to another location.

- 2) *920 West North Avenue (medical center)*. Ms. Taniguchi (RK&K) noted this site is located on the periphery of the Reservoir Hill neighborhood and historic district, and is devoid of historic buildings. It is located adjacent to contributing rowhouses and across the street from the Bolton Hill Historic District, an NRHP-listed historic property. Mr. Almquist indicated drilling and blasting for the connecting tunnels would likely take place beneath existing homes.

Ms. De Arcangelis (PM) commented all three sites were detrimental; the West North Avenue options could take away from possible future commercial revitalization along the avenue. She indicated the importance of ensuring whatever is constructed fits into the scale and look of the neighborhood. In addition to the loss of possible commercial revitalization along West North Avenue, Mr. Hopkins (BH) noted the medical center site terminates the view from the Eutaw Place median, a contributing element to the Bolton Hill Historic District; he also discussed long-standing community efforts to use Eutaw Place to bring back the historic connectivity between the Bolton Hill and Reservoir Hill neighborhoods. Ms. Schiszik expressed a preference for this site because of its distance from the John Eager Howard Elementary School and asked if the ventilation plant's technical requirements would allow construction of separate commercial space fronting West North Avenue, so as to avoid large blank walls. Mr. Prosser (Amtrak) said the building required at least some street access (but not necessarily from West North Avenue) for construction and maintenance purposes, and could not be landlocked. Any loss of ground surface area would most likely translate into a taller building.

- 3) *850 West North Avenue (vacant housing complex)*. This site is located on the periphery of the Reservoir Hill neighborhood and historic district, and is devoid of historic buildings. The large lot size offers the greatest design flexibility, with streets separating it from adjacent historic buildings and the John Eager Howard Elementary School. Drilling and blasting for the connecting tunnel would occur mainly under the Linden Avenue right-of-way.

Ms. De Arcangelis, Mr. Hopkins, and Ms. Schiszik all expressed support for current city plans to demolish and redevelop the vacant housing development on the site, and the potential negative impacts the ventilation plant might have on city/developer negotiations and commercial redevelopment. Mr. Almquist mentioned the possible benefits derived from working with both the consulting parties and the developer to integrate the ventilation plant into the larger design. Ms. Schiszik expressed additional concern over the ventilation plant's proximity to the John Eager Howard Elementary School. Mr. Hopkins asked why the potential ventilation plant boundary for 850 West North Avenue does not include the entirety of the property. Mr. Almquist and Mr. Prosser explained the entirety of the parcel was originally considered, but that this western section is the closest to the project alignments. Costs of the ventilation plant would be higher, the further east it is located. Mr. Hopkins asked about consultation with the neighboring Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA), which holds key interests in the area. Mr. Almquist said MICA has been invited to participate in the public meetings and the project team hopes to receive feedback about the West. North Avenue sites at the next planned community meeting. Mr. Vaughan (BNHA) inquired about the cost differences between the 920 and 850 West North Avenue sites.

Section 106 Consulting Parties Meeting #5

March 23, 2016, 1:00 pm to 3:30 pm

Coppin State University, Talon Center, Room 210



Mr. Almquist noted the 920 West North Avenue Site would cost less but represents a much smaller site with less flexibility.

- 4) *Other Possible Ventilation Plant Sites and General Ventilation Plant Discussions.* Ms. Schiszik asked why the Car Wash Center (northeast corner of West North Avenue and McCulloh Street) had been eliminated from consideration. Mr. Almquist noted this location would not be close enough to the ventilation shaft location required. In addition, this and other locations considered during the DEIS were eliminated in part due to the extensive cost of the additional drilling and blasting because of their distances from the potential alignments.

Ms. De Arcangelis asked if 900-908 and 910 West North Avenue (commercial buildings) had been considered; she expressed strong support for considering this as a potential location for the intermediate ventilation shaft. Mr. Almquist noted the project team had taken a look at this location but it was discounted due to the required demolition of the commercial building at 900-908 West North Avenue, a contributing element to the Reservoir Hill Historic District. Ms. Taniguchi noted the commercial building and adjacent 910 West North Avenue (lobby of the former Linden Theater), were both constructed in the late 1930s. The theater is not a contributing element because the rest of the building, including the auditorium, has been demolished; in addition the façade has been heavily altered, including the removal of the marquee, and filling in of doors and windows.

Mr. Hopkins expressed his wish to keep the commercial building site under consideration, stating the building was heavily altered, lacked much of its historic integrity, and was a low priority for protection by the wider preservation community. He also pointed to the Red Line Project, which had the potential for creative ventilation plant design, but the project was terminated before that could happen. Mr. Hopkins also indicated the importance of retaining the rowhouse feel with the design. Mr. Almquist indicated context-sensitive design would be a commitment in the Section 106 agreement document (MOA or PA).

When asked by Mr. Almquist, the consulting parties agreed it was worth re-examining the commercial building site as a possible intermediate ventilation plant location. Ms. Cole (MHT) asked if Amtrak would own both the ventilation plant site and structure; Amtrak would own at least the structure and access to it. Ms. Cole remarked, regardless of the location, all site options represented an adverse effect to one and perhaps two historic districts (Reservoir Hill Historic District and Bolton Hill Historic District); other environmental factors and community input—not just historic preservation considerations—would guide the final site selection.

E. Additional Public Comments from the Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Hearings

The DEIS public comment period ended on February 26, 2016. In addition to concerns expressed over locating the intermediate ventilation plant at the Whitelock Street community garden site, public comments focused on the following themes:

- Perceived potential for operational noise, vibration, air quality, property value impacts in Reservoir Hill
- Visual, noise, air quality impacts in Reservoir Hill
- Questions on need for four tracks

Section 106 Consulting Parties Meeting #5

March 23, 2016, 1:00 pm to 3:30 pm

Coppin State University, Talon Center, Room 210



- General concern that low-income and minority areas are targeted
- Concerns about damage to historic houses/foundations due to vibration from construction and rail operations, questions about compensation for damage
- Perception the project will increase freight through the city and new tunnel, safety concerns for derailments or explosions
- Support for better passenger rail service and new connections in Baltimore

Concerning historic properties, Mr. Almquist noted the project is largely underground and not expected to cause vibrations to historic properties. Vibrations will be more noticeable near the south portal and the Flannigan asphalt plant property as the tracks approach the surface. The NEC FUTURE study (a rail investment plan for the Northeast Corridor) addresses questions of four-track capacity. Freight traffic is market-driven; currently, only two freight trains per day use the existing Baltimore and Potomac (B&P) Tunnel. The environmental review process does not consider impacts to property values.

F. Effects on Historic Properties

The following summarizes changes in effects to historic properties since the Section 106 effects assessment was originally made in October 2015. Acreages do not include the site of the intermediate ventilation plant:

Criterion	Alternative 3A (DEIS)	Alternative 3A Revised	Alternative 3B (DEIS)	Alternative 3B Revised
Likely Adverse Effects for Historic Properties *	6 (8 contributing elements impacted, including 2 demolitions)	6 (7 contributing elements impacted, including 1 demolition)	8 (83 contributing historic elements impacted, including 51 demolitions)	9 (62 contributing historic elements impacted, including 30 demolitions)
Area of Surface Disturbance within Historic District	14.2 Acres – Baltimore & Potomac Railroad and Midtown Edmondson Historic Districts	14.2 Acres – Greater Rosemont, Baltimore & Potomac Railroad, and Midtown Edmondson Historic Districts	25.3 Acres – Edmondson Avenue, Baltimore & Potomac Railroad, Greater Rosemont, and Midtown Edmondson Historic Districts	19.8 Acres – Baltimore & Potomac Railroad, Edmondson Avenue, Greater Rosemont, Midtown Edmondson Historic Districts

*Contributing elements counted once per element; includes buildings and structural elements of historic districts

The following summarizes direct and indirect effects to individual historic properties by each alternative:

Name	MIHP/NR#	NRHP Criteria	3A Revised	3B Revised
Baltimore and Ohio Belt Line Railroad	B-5287	A and C	Direct Adverse Effect	Direct Adverse Effect
Baltimore and Ohio Belt Line Bridge over Jones Falls Valley	B-5288	A and C	Direct Adverse Effect	Direct Adverse Effect
Baltimore & Potomac Railroad (Philadelphia, Baltimore & Washington Railroad)	B-5164	A and C	Direct Adverse Effect	Direct Adverse Effect
Reservoir Hill Historic District	B-1379	A and C	Direct and Indirect Adverse Effect	Direct and Indirect Adverse Effect

Section 106 Consulting Parties Meeting #5

March 23, 2016, 1:00 pm to 3:30 pm

Coppin State University, Talon Center, Room 210



Name	MIHP/NR#	NRHP Criteria	3A Revised	3B Revised
Midtown Edmondson Historic District		A and C	Direct Adverse Effect	Direct and Indirect Adverse Effect
Bridge BC 2410 (Lafayette Avenue over Amtrak)	B-4553	C	Direct Adverse Effect	Direct and Indirect Adverse Effect
Atlas Safe Deposit and Storage Company Warehouse Complex	B-5188-2	A and C		Direct Adverse Effect
Greater Rosemont Historic District	B-5112	A and C		Direct Adverse Effect
Edmondson Avenue Historic District	B-5187	A and C		Direct Adverse Effect

Ms. Taniguchi noted the number of Midtown Edmondson Historic District contributing elements demolished for Alternative 3B Revised is now lower, from 73 buildings/structures to 29. The main warehouse building (facing directly onto Edmondson Avenue) of the Atlas Safe Deposit and Storage Company Warehouse complex will no longer be demolished. Only the rear warehouse building on the property will be removed. However, Alternative 3B Revised now has an adverse effect on Edmondson Avenue Historic District because two rowhouses would be demolished. This also increases the number of buildings demolished in the Greater Rosemont Historic District for this alternative from three to five buildings.

G. Minimization and Mitigation Measures

Mr. Almquist presented a list of general minimization and mitigation measure ideas to start off consulting parties discussions.

Discussion focused on the following:

- 1) *Project Design.* Mr. Almquist remarked context-sensitive design of new elements, including the ventilation plants, would be assumed. He also noted potentially moving the intermediate ventilation plant to West North Avenue is part of the project team's effort to minimize adverse effects on historic properties. Ms. Cole noted, however, these locations are still located within the historic district and therefore it is important the design fit into the district's context. Mr. Almquist pointed to a West North Avenue street scene showing the 920 West North Avenue (medical center) intermediate ventilation plant location during the 1940s; the property consisted of a block of 3 ½-story rowhouses with tall basements, comparable in size and scale to a potential ventilation plant. Perhaps this historic block can be used as a model should the medical center location be selected. He asked if the consulting parties considered features such as sound barriers a form of mitigation. Ms. Cole remarked they could create a visual impact requiring mitigation.
- 2) *Construction Protection Plans.* Mr. Almquist discussed construction protection plans, which would accompany plans and specifications, and ensure protection of historic properties during construction.
- 3) *Documentation.* Mr. Hopkins emphasized the importance of directing funds toward stabilizing and preserving buildings, and locating tenants over focusing on documentation. Ms. Cole noted

Section 106 Consulting Parties Meeting #5

March 23, 2016, 1:00 pm to 3:30 pm

Coppin State University, Talon Center, Room 210



proper documentation of historic properties would be required for the record and mitigation measures would need to be balanced, reasonable, and achievable.

- 4) *Interpretive Material and Education.* Ms. Taniguchi described the idea of new virtual reality systems to interpret history using mobile devices. Mr. Hopkins felt such systems would be effective for interpreting major buildings or whole neighborhoods, but they seemed less effective for projects such as the B&P Tunnel. Mr. Tamburrino (MHT) stated interpretive materials should identify intended users and be made available to the broadest possible audience. Ms. Schizik noted we could also digitize now, and make use of the material later. She also suggested using large blank wall surfaces (sound barriers, ventilation plants) as canvases for community engagement, including digital screens, public art displays, film projections, changing historic images, lectures, etc. She pointed to the digital billboard on top of the Metro Gallery located along Charles Street in Baltimore City as an example. Whereas art pieces would involve maintenance and other costs, projections are dynamic and can be easily changed, and could be more attractive to young people.
- 5) *Community Preservation Efforts/Stabilization and Rehabilitation.* Most discussion emphasized ways to support direct preservation efforts. Mr. Hopkins expressed his preference for bricks-and-mortar preservation efforts over publications and interpretive signs. He also emphasized the importance of focusing mitigation on the areas experiencing the greatest impacts, especially the neighborhoods around the south portal and West Baltimore MARC Station. As a model, Mr. Hopkins offered the "Preservation Fund" stipulation in the PA for the Red Line Project. He noted the PA resulted in discussions of a committee to identify rehabilitation funding disbursement. He also recommended the potential to coordinate with existing programs at the state, city, and local/private levels. Possible partners include CHAP, Baltimore Housing, Druid Heights Community Development Corporation, and Coppin Heights Community Development Corporation. Mr. Almquist also suggested the United States Department of Transportation Ladders of Opportunity Transportation Empowerment Pilot program.
- 6) *Archeology.* Mr. Kodlick (RK&K) explained a Phase IA archeological study has been completed. There is a reasonably high potential for historic archeological resources, with a low potential for prehistoric. Additional Section 106 archeological efforts will take place once a preferred alternative has been selected and during construction, and therefore the agreement document (MOA or PA) will include archeological stipulations.
- 7) *General.* Mr. Hopkins noted the importance of focusing mitigation efforts on the more significant property types that could be lost, versus just the absolute number of resources. He also indicated mitigation efforts should be focused on the south portal area where there are more direct effects, as compared to historic properties such as the Reservoir Hill and Bolton Hill Historic Districts.

H. Advancing the Programmatic Agreement or Memorandum of Agreement

An agreement document (MOA or PA) would be required to resolve adverse effects to historic properties and conclude the Section 106 process. Ms. Cole noted, because archeological effects remain unknown at this time, the development of a PA seems most applicable. Ms. Shick (FRA) reiterated this point and stated FRA would be preparing a PA. Ms. Cole also urged the consulting parties to consider now whether or not they may have a role in the PA, as it moves forward.

Section 106 Consulting Parties Meeting #5

March 23, 2016, 1:00 pm to 3:30 pm

Coppin State University, Talon Center, Room 210



Next Steps:

Mr. Almquist invited all attendees to continue thinking of mitigation ideas. FRA expects to select a Preferred Alternative and hold public open houses in April 2016 before developing a draft PA in May, 2016. The next consulting parties meeting will likely take place in May 2016 to discuss the draft Section 106 PA and mitigation measures.

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

List of Meeting Handouts:

General:

- Meeting Agenda
- Section 106 and NEPA Timeline
- ACHP Template Agreement Documents
- Sample Programmatic Agreement (Red Line Project)

Tables:

- Intermediate Ventilation Plant Comparison
- Alternatives Evaluation
- Alternative 3B Section 106 Adverse Effects

Maps:

- Alternatives 3A and 3B Overview – Historic Architectural Area of Potential Effects and Historic Properties
- Alternatives 3A and 3B North Portal Vicinity – Historic Architectural Area of Potential Effects and Historic Properties
- Alternatives 3A and 3B Potential Intermediate Vent Plan Sites – Historic Architectural Area of Potential Effects and Historic Properties
- Alternatives 3A and 3B South Portal Vicinity – Historic Architectural Area of Potential Effects and Historic Properties
- Detail, Alternative 3A South Portal Vicinity – Historic Architectural Area of Potential Effects and Historic Properties
- Detail, Alternative 3B South Portal Vicinity – Historic Architectural Area of Potential Effects and Historic Properties