

Section 106 Consulting Parties Meeting #6

May 20, 2016, 9:00 am to 11:00 am

Coppin State University, Talon Center, Room 210



Meeting Minutes

Attendees:

Maryland Historical Trust (MHT)	Beth Cole, Tim Tamburrino
Baltimore City Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation (CHAP)	Lauren Schiszik
Baltimore City Department of Planning (BCDP)	Reni Lawal
Baltimore Heritage (BH)	Johns Hopkins
Baltimore National Heritage Area (BNHA)	Jason Vaughan
Preservation Maryland (PM)	Margaret De Arcangelis
Amtrak	Johnette Davies, Amrita Hill, Steve Jurow (HNTB), William Prosser
Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)	Michelle Fishburne, 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, Jason Shellenhamer, Christeen Taniguchi

Meeting Agenda:

The agenda items touched on the following topics: National Environmental Policy Act milestones; the Preferred Alternative (Alternative 3B Revised); Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) invitation and notice not to participate in consultation at this time; additional Section 106 consultation; potential intermediate ventilation plant locations; north portal, intermediate, and south portal ventilation plant design concepts; and potential Programmatic Agreement (PA) mitigation stipulations.

Discussion:

The session opened with general introductions and a review of meeting handouts. Mr. Almquist (RK&K) led the discussion.

National Environmental Policy Act Milestones

Mr. Almquist noted the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) was completed in December 2016. Public open houses took place on April 6 and 16, 2016, specifically to respond to community comments, such as those related to noise, air quality, vibration, freight traffic, displacements, historic properties, and ventilation plant locations, as well as to present the alternative refinements and initiate discussions on mitigation. Upcoming community meetings involve conversations on mitigation for the Preferred Alternative, including a meeting with Residents Against the Tunnel (RATT), a community organization opposed to the undertaking.

Section 106 Consulting Parties Meeting #6

May 20, 2016, 9:00 am to 11:00 am

Coppin State University, Talon Center, Room 210



Alternative 3B Revised Carried Forward

Mr. Almquist reported that Alternatives 3A Revised and 3C Revised had been eliminated from further consideration, leaving Alternative 3B Revised as the Preferred Alternative to carry forward. Alternative 3B Revised meets the overall project purpose and need, including modifications to Curve 381 and high-platform accessibility improvements to the West Baltimore MARC Station. The intent with Alternative 3B Revised was to “thread the needle” and avoid impacts to as many National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) historic district-contributing rowhouses and individually eligible buildings as possible. It preserves the NRHP-eligible Ward Baking Company Building and Fire Department Engine Company No. 36, and minimizes impacts to the Atlas Safe Deposit and Storage Company Warehouse Complex by avoiding the main warehouse building while removing only the rear warehouse building on the property. Twenty-nine Midtown Edmondson Historic District contributing elements would be demolished for Alternative 3B Revised. Alternative 3B Revised creates a new adverse effect on Edmondson Avenue Historic District because the Alternative requires the demolition of two rowhouses. This increases the number of buildings demolished in the Greater Rosemont Historic District for this alternative from three to five buildings.

Ventilation Plants

Mr. Almquist and Mr. Prosser (Amtrak) reviewed the status of each proposed ventilation plant location. This includes separate ventilation plants at the north and south portal entrances and one intermediate ventilation plant. Based on the air flow dynamics inside the tunnel, Linden Avenue marks the approximate division line between the north and south zones of the tunnel and therefore the optimum location for the intermediate ventilation plant. Specifics for each plant include the following:

1. North Ventilation Plant

This facility would be located almost directly on top of the proposed tunnel bores, which allows it to be smaller in scale and massing than the other ventilation plants.

2. Potential Intermediate Ventilation Plant Locations

Based on previous comments from the consulting parties and public, the project team has narrowed the potential locations to two sites: 850 West North Avenue (Madison Park North Apartments) and 900-940 West North Avenue (Commercial Buildings/Madison Park Medical Center).

Both locations require a large underground plenum to connect the ventilation shaft with the main tunnel. The further away the shaft is located from the tunnel tracks, the larger the size of the plenum. For both locations, the plenum would be mined with controlled blasts (not drilled with a boring machine) and measure approximately 55 feet wide and 35 feet high.

The distance between the tracks and the ventilation plant locations would also require the fans to run for a few hours each day, depending on operating conditions. The fan motors would be located below ground, helping to mitigate noise levels. The fans would move air through tall stacks emerging from the center of the building. In the case of fire, fans can force the heat and smoke in one direction so the emergency egress can have a tenable environment. The size of the stacks is a function of the volume of air moving through the building, and distance between the stacks and the tracks. The stacks are therefore larger and taller at the intermediate ventilation plant locations.

The location at 900-940 West North Avenue would combine two lots to achieve the necessary minimum space for constructability and functionality. The existing alleyway connecting to West North

Section 106 Consulting Parties Meeting #6

May 20, 2016, 9:00 am to 11:00 am

Coppin State University, Talon Center, Room 210



Avenue would be closed and a new connection made along the lot's north boundary between the existing alley and Eutaw Place.

3. South Ventilation Plant

The south ventilation plant would be constructed over the cut-and-cover section in the approximate location of present-day 2020 Mosher Street. Because the tracks would run near the surface at this location, all ventilation plant equipment must reside above-ground inside the building. This would increase its overall scale and footprint, occupying the entire surface of the cut-and-cover section. This precludes the possible use of the space for other purposes. The facility would also require fences and/or walls to secure the open-cut areas. Ms. Fishburne (FRA) noted, in addition to the displacement of rowhouses within the proposed right-of-way, the new south ventilation plant would stand directly across the street from remaining rowhouses on the opposite side of North Payson Street. FRA anticipates a lot of coordination and communication to determine the layout and the view sheds from the remaining houses.

Mr. Almquist and Ms. Fishburne described several alternate locations for the south ventilation plant in order to minimize adverse effects to rowhouses on North Payson Street. The investigation identified an existing parking lot at the corner of North Bentalou Street and Riggs Avenue on the west side of the present railroad right-of-way as a possible site. This shift to the west site would potentially alleviate impacts to contributing resources in the Midtown Edmondson Historic District on the east side, but would introduce new indirect impacts to both the Midtown Edmondson Historic District and to the Greater Rosemont Historic District. No net benefit would result from the relocation. Moreover, operational and phased building requirements mean service must continue on the existing Northeast Corridor (NEC) track during construction, while the south ventilation plant must begin operation first before the project is complete. This means the connecting plenum between the tunnels and the ventilation plant must pass either under or over the operating NEC tracks, creating substantial clearance problems and adding considerably to the overall cost. Finally, the option of building the ventilation plant at the nearby P. Flanigan & Sons plant adversely impacts a viable business, and the grade is not good. Weighed in the balance, the FRA would recommend the current Alternative 3B Revised cut-and-cover location for the south ventilation plant location.

Conceptual Designs

Mr. Almquist presented conceptual designs for the ventilation plant locations to help meeting attendees visualize specific design constraints and options. He noted building massing can include various set-backs and step-backs to reduce the scale at street-level.

1. *PA Design Review* – Ms. Cole indicated the PA would include a process for developing and consulting on designs. Ms. Fishburne agreed, FRA anticipates coordinating on designs and view sheds during the PA process. After some discussion, the parties recommended adding the conceptual designs into the FEIS but not as an addendum to the PA. Ms. Schizik stated she could not comment now on the conceptual designs and noted the massing and visual elements would have to be worked out as part of on-going consultation.

2. *Parking and Loading Areas* – In response to a question from Ms. Schizik (CHAP) concerning the existence and size of the proposed parking and loading facilities, Mr. Prosser noted the extensive mechanical equipment of the site would require both routine and capital maintenance during their

Section 106 Consulting Parties Meeting #6

May 20, 2016, 9:00 am to 11:00 am

Coppin State University, Talon Center, Room 210



lifetime. This included infrequent “change-outs” of oversized equipment. Parking would be required for the maintenance staff. Ms. Schiszik suggested the size for parking is larger than needed, and that it would not be a good to have surface parking facing West North Avenue.

3. *Security* – Ms. Cole (MHT) asked about planned security measures at each facility, including occupancy requirements and fencing. Mr. Prosser noted key security measures would be incorporated, such as security cameras and lighting. The south ventilation plant, located on top of the planned cut-and-cover section over the tracks, would require added fencing to protect the 45-foot drop into the cut and safeguard moving trains and the catenary system. Mr. Prosser noted it is hard to determine at this time how often the plants would be visited; while likely not daily, it would involve regular visits. The plants could be an access point for personnel. Also, the plenum and tunnel could be accessed from the plants.

4. *Intermediate Ventilation Plant Preferred Location* – Mr. Tamburrino (MHT) indicated the 900-940 West North Avenue site at the corner of Eutaw Place represents a gateway into both the Reservoir Hill and Bolton Hill Historic Districts, and construction of a ventilation plant might not represent the best use for the property. Mr. Hopkins (BH) reiterated his previous objections to the use of 900-940 West North Avenue, because the location is an important opportunity to link the Reservoir Hill and Bolton Hill Historic Districts (historically together known as Mount Royal) along Eutaw Place. If selection of this location becomes necessary, Mr. Hopkins recommended shifting the proposed ventilation plant as far east as possible to leave room for connectivity improvements along Eutaw Place.

Ms. Cole asked if FRA would identify a Preferred Alternative for the intermediate ventilation plant location or provide information on both West North Avenue sites as part of the FEIS. Mr. Almquist noted it would be ideal to have a Preferred Alternative at the intermediate ventilation plant location for the FEIS, but this would probably not be the case.

5. *Land Use Timing/Coordination* – Mr. Vaughan (BNHA) asked about the timing for land use acquisition following publication of the Record of Decision (ROD) and the mechanisms by which future prospective property owners would know about contemplated uses for property, including possible condemnation. Mr. Almquist noted right-of-way acquisition depended entirely on future funding for the project. Neither the City nor the FRA was responsible for actively notifying buyers of impending land acquisitions, but the combination of published reports and project mapping may be sufficient to appear in any “due diligence” investigation for the purchase of an affected parcel. Ms. Schiszik noted that the City should figure out a mechanism for making prospective purchasers aware of future improvement plans. Ms. Thorne (MDOT) noted, since Baltimore DOT is a project partner, they could communicate with housing and other City departments, so there should be a communication loop.

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation Consultation

Ms. Taniguchi (RK&K) reported that FRA notified ACHP of the adverse effect finding and invited the agency to participate in the Section 106 consultation process on April 6, 2016. There has been no response yet from ACHP. Ms. Shick (FRA) noted ACHP typically responds to all invitations, so she will check on the status (Follow-up: The ACHP formally declined to participate at this time, in correspondence dated June 7, 2016).

Section 106 Consulting Parties Meeting #6

May 20, 2016, 9:00 am to 11:00 am

Coppin State University, Talon Center, Room 210



Additional Section 106 Consultation

Ms. Taniguchi indicated FRA is preparing updated Section 106 information to account for Alternative 3B Revised, including the West North Avenue intermediate ventilation plant locations, and clarification of the Baltimore & Potomac Railroad historic district boundary. This will be submitted to MHT and the other consulting parties for review and comment.

The 1938 commercial building at 900-908 West North Avenue, which would be demolished for one of the proposed intermediate ventilation plant locations, is identified as a contributing element in the Reservoir Hill Historic District NRHP nomination form.

After discussion with MHT, FRA evaluated the John Eager Howard School and Recreation Center for the NRHP. The property is more than 50 years old, but not a contributing element of the Reservoir Hill Historic District. It consists of a main building and gymnasium/auditorium/cafeteria; construction started in 1962, with a dedication in early 1964. The property also has a 1966 recreation center and original playground dedicated in 1968.

Also, Ms. Davies (Amtrak) indicated the B&P Railroad historic district boundary needs to be revised, particularly around the area approaching Penn Station. We will ensure the boundary is corrected.

Ms. Lawal (BCDP) asked how the NRHP evaluation process might impact Baltimore City's planned redevelopment of the school. Ms. Taniguchi indicated we are evaluating the school as it stands right now, before construction begins in Summer 2016. Regardless of the proposed changes, it is anticipated the property is not eligible for the NRHP.

Potential Section 106 Programmatic Agreement Mitigation Stipulations

Mr. Almquist and Mr. Hayden (RK&K) introduced a set of draft stipulations (*for discussion purposes only*) for the PA to mitigate adverse effects to historic properties. The stipulations were based on previous discussions among the consulting parties. These included stipulations governing professional qualifications, architectural historic properties, and archaeological identification and evaluation. Specific mitigation measures concerning architectural historic properties included: a) Preservation Fund; b) Design Reviews (for new project buildings, structures, landscape designs, and streetscapes); c) Cultural Resources Construction Protection Plans; d) Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS)/Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) Documentation; e) Interpretive Material; and f) Electronic Information Sites. Final roles and responsibilities would be worked out among the agencies and consulting parties. Mr. Almquist asked the attendees to consider the roles they may wish to play in carrying out the PA provisions. Mr. Hayden noted the PA would include standard administrative stipulations (not included in the handout), designed to ensure regular review and consultation among the signatories, such as for document review and changes during future design and construction. The PA will also include provisions for additional Section 106 identification and evaluation tasks.

Overall Comments – Ms. Cole asked what happens after the ROD with the PA and whether or not this is a priority project. Ms. Fishburne indicated there is currently no construction funding for this project. Ms. Davies suggested including in the Whereas that the PA would not go into effect without construction funding. Ms. Cole asked the PA to be clear as to what would trigger its implementation.

Section 106 Consulting Parties Meeting #6

May 20, 2016, 9:00 am to 11:00 am

Coppin State University, Talon Center, Room 210



Specific discussions on these and other potential stipulations focused on the following:

- 1. Preservation Fund* – Based on previous comments among the consulting parties, Mr. Almquist emphasized the Preservation Fund was to constitute the bulk of the mitigation effort, and therefore is the first mitigation measure in the PA. He commented the PA will frame the procedure for developing and implementing the Preservation Fund. Many options exist for operating and managing the fund, and the specific mechanisms would be worked out at the time funding becomes available. A likely scenario would place the FRA in an overall supporting role as the funds grantor, with Amtrak acting to coordinate the effort. Mr. Hopkins emphasized the difficulty in implementing such a program and stressed the need to identify specific parties with responsibilities for leading, overseeing, and carrying out the Fund’s intended purpose. He also recommended inclusion of a specific timeline or trigger to account for future uncertainty in funding and implementation. Ms. Cole indicated the Federal Transit Administration has administered grants in the past. Ms. Davies mentioned a grant program for the Positive Train Control improvements program. She also noted, however, that Amtrak probably would not want to administer such a program itself, but rather would delegate the task to an identified organization or institution whose mission is consistent with the stipulation goals. The consulting parties indicated support for the Preservation Fund.
- 2. Design Reviews* – Mr. Hayden noted reviews would encourage context-sensitive designs to minimize effects to historic properties. Design features include the ventilation plants, retaining walls, sound barriers, bridges, and catenary lines. Mr. Vaughan noted the need for context-sensitive design treatments for the Bolton Hill Historic District. Ms. Taniguchi indicated, while it is anticipated the intermediate ventilation plant would have no adverse effect on the Bolton Hill Historic District and therefore mitigation through design considerations would not be required, an effort would be made to ensure designs are compatible with all historic properties within the area of potential effects.
- 3. Cultural Resources Construction Protection Plans* – Mr. Hayden noted these plans would accompany project plan sheets and specifications once construction begins. Mr. Hopkins recommended provisions for an emergency contact system for neighbors to alert contractors of problems. The system should function 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- 4. HABS/HAER Documentation* – Mr. Hayden remarked the HABS/HAER documentation effort was designed to provide basic data for the historical record with the task consolidated into five thematic documentation efforts designed to capture key historical elements while avoiding costly and redundant recordings of numerous identical historical resources and contributing elements.
- 5. Interpretive Material* – Mr. Hopkins reiterated his concern that too many resources would go toward the development of interpretive exhibits and publications instead of bricks-and-mortar preservation of buildings.
- 6. Electronic Informational Sites* – Mr. Hayden noted all mitigation material and information produced would be available on electronic informational sites to reach the widest possible audience. Ms. Schizik suggested this stipulation direct the signatories toward partnering with Baltimore’s many established organizations, which already maintain active social media operations and robust web presences with creative and engaging content. The other attendees agreed that the PA should encourage the use of existing systems rather than creation of a new one.

Section 106 Consulting Parties Meeting #6

May 20, 2016, 9:00 am to 11:00 am

Coppin State University, Talon Center, Room 210



7. *Archaeology* – Mr. Shellenhamer (RK&K) presented an overview of the stipulations for managing future archaeological investigations and mitigation measures, namely Phases I to III, as needed.

8. *Oral Histories* – Ms. Schiszik recommended the inclusion of an oral history component focused on the most heavily affected areas around the south portal as a means of capturing neighborhood perspectives and memories. She recommended modeling it after, or partnering with, organizations already engaged in oral history programs, such as WYPR’s audio series “Out of the Blocks.”

9. *Recycling/Salvage* – Ms. Schiszik suggested a program to salvage select historic materials from buildings slated for demolition and make them available for local preservation/restoration projects. Priority should go toward projects funded through the Preservation Fund stipulation, a better option than using the material for vent plant elevations. By consensus, the consulting parties agreed that the affected historic properties do not possess individual architectural elements worthy of special salvage and preservation, and would instead warrant recycle and reuse.

Next Steps:

Mr. Almqvist thanked the attendees for their interest and participation over the preceding months. This may be the last consulting parties meeting, unless another is needed to further discuss the PA. He invited all attendees to continue thinking of mitigation ideas/refinements and share them with the project team. He also reminded all participants to carefully consider the role(s) their organization might play in the future to implement the PA. The project team expects to circulate a draft PA in early June 2016, secure a signed PA in August 2016, issue the Final EIS (FEIS) in October 2016, and obtain a ROD in March 2017.

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

List of Meeting Handouts:

General:

- Meeting Agenda
- Potential Section 106 Programmatic Agreement Stipulations (*for discussion purposes only*)

Maps:

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