



Department of Economic and
Community Development

Connecticut
still revolutionary

March 14, 2014

Mr. Mark Alexander
Department of Transportation
2800 Berlin Turnpike
Newington, CT 06111

Subject: State No. 135-301
Atlantic Street Reconstruction and Replacement of Metro-North Railroad Bridge
(Bridge # 08012R)
Stamford, CT

Dear Mr. Alexander

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) is providing comments based on recent consultation with the Connecticut Department of Transportation's (DOT) and other interested parties regarding the above-referenced project. The purpose of this project is to improve the horizontal and vertical geometry for Atlantic Street at the bridge, to increase the roadway capacity by providing additional travel lanes on Atlantic Street, and to improve pedestrian circulation in the vicinity of the Transportation Center. It was also determined that the project should include provisions for an additional track for the railroad, as well as a platform to service this track.

The new bridge will consist of concrete-encased steel girders supported by concrete abutments with a center pier. The proposed increases in overall span length and cross-sectional width of the new structure will require the reconstruction of the existing railroad retaining walls along South State Street. Concrete form liners or other means will be used to recreate the aesthetic elements of the existing structures. At the request of the City, the brownstone which comprises the existing bridge abutments and portions of the retaining walls, will be salvaged and turned over to the City for reuse.

As you know, Bridge # 08012R is eligible for listing on the National Register for Historic Places. It is the opinion of this office that the demolition of Bridge # 08012R would constitute an adverse effect to the bridge itself and the adjacent National Register listed South End Historic District. In consideration of the comments provided by The Historic Neighborhood Preservation Program (HNPP), SHPO concurs that this undertaking may have indirect and cumulative effects to the South End Historic District. This office is concerned that the enlarged artery of Atlantic Street will diminish the integrity of this historic property due to the increased street width and increased traffic.

State Historic Preservation Office

One Constitution Plaza | Hartford, CT 06103 | P: 860.256.2800 | Cultureandtourism.org

An Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer An Equal Opportunity Lender



Adverse effect is defined in the federal regulations implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (36 CFR § 800.5(a)(1)) as an action that may: “alter, directly or indirectly, any of the characteristics that qualify the property for inclusion in the National Register in a manner that would diminish the integrity of the property’s location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, or association. . . adverse effects may include reasonably foreseeable effects caused by the undertaking that may occur later in time, be farther removed in distance or be cumulative.”

The SHPO believes that there is no prudent alternative to the proposed demolition and replacement of the historic bridge. We are therefore recommending that the Federal Highway Administration develop a Memorandum of Agreement to resolve the adverse effect Pursuant to 36 CFR § 800.6.

The CT SHPO recommends the following stipulations to be included in the Memorandum of Agreement:

- The Atlantic Street Railroad bridge be documented in accordance with the guidelines set forth by this office and two copies of the report shall be submitted to the State Historic Preservation Office. That documentation report should include a concise narrative history of the railroad bridges in Stamford and the historic context of the railroad through Fairfield County. A copy of the report should be made available to the public at the town library and/or the Town Hall.
- DOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) shall provide up to \$50,000.00 to the City of Stamford to be used explicitly for the study of alternative transportation corridors around the South End National Register of Historic Places district.
- DOT and the City of Stamford agree to add the Historic Neighborhood Preservation Program as a key partner in future transportation planning studies to minimize effects caused by future DOT transportation improvements in the city.

The State Historic Preservation Office appreciates the opportunity to review and comment upon this project. These comments are provided in accordance with the Connecticut Environmental Policy Act and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. For further information, please contact Todd Levine, Environmental Reviewer, at (860) 256-2759 or todd.levine@ct.gov.

Sincerely,

Daniel T. Forrest
State Historic Preservation Officer