

**Norfolk Southern Railway Company
Pittsburgh Vertical Clearance Projects/W. North Avenue
CP Meeting 3, May 2, 2023
Design Advisory Team Meeting, June 14, 2023
Responses to Comments**

Comment #	Document/Page #/ Section/Paragraph	Commenter	Comments	Responses
1	06/13/2023 PA SHPO Response Letter/ Page 1/ International Harvester Building/ Paragraph 1	Emma Diehl/ Barbara Frederick	Regarding Option 6, while a fence will be introduced within the streetscape, the new design will not result in raising of the limestone water table and sills to accommodate the increased vertical alignment of the sidewalk, thereby avoiding an adverse effect. Please provide more detailed information on the revised design of the sidewalk, landscaping and related features adjacent to the International Harvester Building. Please indicate how the design meets the requirements of the City's Department of Mobility and Infrastructure and the Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and thereby avoids an adverse effect.	The design team has been corresponding with the property owner and DOMI to review revisions to the proposed Option 6, including the elimination of a railing and the addition of a landscape feature in the area between the raised sidewalk and the building's south (front) façade. A meeting with the design team and Q Development has been scheduled for 11:00 AM, Tuesday, August 15, at 828 W. North Avenue. Revisions to Option 6 will be made following the property owner meeting. As indicated in the consulting party meeting, Option 6 moves the elevated sidewalk away from the building's front façade so that no project activities will have a direct effect on the building. The visual impacts of the elevated sidewalk will be minimized with landscaping. The sidewalk is in compliance with ADA guidelines and has been approved by DOMI. DOMI has also waved the requirement for street trees in this location to allow for the incorporation of a landscaped area fronting the building's W. North Avenue façade.
2	06/13/2023 PA SHPO Response Letter/ Pages 1-2/Allegheny Commons Historic District/ Paragraphs 1-2	Emma Diehl/ Barbara Frederick	<p>Thank you for the additional information on efforts to avoid or minimize adverse effects to the district presented at the May 2, 2023 meeting. We remain concerned about the introduction of the new pedestrian bridge in the historic district. The bridge will be constructed in the historic location of a pedestrian bridge, reusing approach steps, and will restore pedestrian access to both sides of the park. It will also introduce a new design feature into the setting of the district. We understand a Design Advisory Team (DAT) is being formed to vet the proposed designs for the new Allegheny Commons Pedestrian Bridge and the new West North Avenue Bridge as well as any resultant park landscaping or other features to ensure compatibility within Allegheny Commons Historic District. If the DAT follows the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and focuses on the preservation of character defining features identified in the 2013 National Register nomination, the project should have a No Adverse Effect on the Allegheny Commons Historic District. This finding is conditional on conformance of the designs with the Standards. The Standards should be included in guiding principles for the DAT, as outlined below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Character defining features of the park within the project area for the new bridges will be identified and preserved during the design process. • The new designs will be compatible with the overall historic character of the district and will not alter the integrity of design, setting, materials, workmanship, and feeling of the district. • The size, scale, and materials of the new designs will be compatible with the adjacent district. 	Noted. For added clarification regarding the steps of the former pedestrian bridge, the approach located on the north side of the bridge consists of a lower section, landing, and upper section. The lower section dates to the 1960s Simons and Simons plan; the upper portion of the steps are integral to the ca. 1905 pedestrian bridge. The lower portion of the steps will be preserved in place, while the upper stairs will be removed along with the abutment of the former bridge. The upper stairs and abutment are in poor condition and cannot be reused. Similarly, the approach on the south side of the bridge consists of a lower section, landing, and upper section. The lower steps will be preserved in place while the upper stairs will be removed along with the abutment. The upper steps have a large vertical crack through the middle and the stairs have slumped inward. The upper stairs and abutment are in poor condition and cannot be reused to support the new bridge.

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The new design will be clearly differentiated from the original features in the district. The new structure will be designed to avoid demolition or alteration of features that contribute to the public landscape, including the steps of the former pedestrian bridge, trees, and the circulation system. The new structure will be designed to be in keeping with the requirements of the City Historic Designation. <p>The design of the new bridge through the DAT and the guiding principles is necessary to avoid an adverse effect and should be commemorated in the MOU for the project. The MOU should also provide for submission of the final design of the pedestrian bridge to the PA SHPO office. The MOU should also allow for reinitiating consultation under the State History Code should the PA SHPO find the selected design will have an adverse effect.</p>	
3	06/13/2023 PA SHPO Response Letter/ Page 2/ Minimization/ Paragraphs 1-2	Emma Diehl/ Barbara Frederick	<p>The purpose of minimization is to lessen the potential effects of a project on historic properties. Minimization measures can be commemorated in the project agreement but should not be misconstrued as mitigation. The following minimization measures have been identified for the project to date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation on the design of the West North Avenue Bridge, adjacent features (including the new bridge railing at Brighton Road), and landscaping (including the contributing low brick wall) in the Allegheny Commons Historic District. Consultation on the design of the new pedestrian bridge in the Allegheny Commons Historic District as well as adjacent features and landscaping. Formation of a Design Advisory Team to review the proposed designs for the West North Avenue Bridge and the new pedestrian bridge to ensure compatibility with the Allegheny Commons Historic District. Consultation on the design of the sidewalk, landscaping and related features adjacent to the International Harvester Building. Consultation on protection for/repairs to contributing features within the Pennsylvania Railroad: Main Line (Harrisburg and Pittsburgh) Railroad Corridor Historic District including bridge abutments, retaining walls and decorative fencing. <p>These and any additional minimization efforts outlined in past documents, discussions, and in the presentation for the May 2, 2023 meeting should be commemorated in the MOU for the project.</p>	Noted.
4	06/13/2023 PA SHPO Response Letter/ Pages 2-3/ Mitigation/ Paragraphs 1-2	Emma Diehl/ Barbara Frederick	<p>As outlined in our letter of April 13, 2023, mitigation should be identified as part of a consultative process that involves an active exchange of information between the PA SHPO and all the consulting parties to the State History Code review. As discussed at the meeting, previous commitments developed as part of the PUC mediation process should not be misconstrued as mitigation for the State History Code process or preclude consideration of other mitigation ideas. As outlined in our letter of April 13, 2023, the PA SHPO views replacement of the pedestrian bridge as part of the larger project and not as mitigation for the adverse effect. Mitigation measures discussed at the May 2, 2023 meeting include the following:</p>	The project team is reviewing the various ideas proposed by consulting parties as potential mitigation measures. As part of the mediation agreement, Norfolk Southern has pledged \$1,250,000 to the Northside Leadership Conference for enhancement projects within Allegheny Commons Park and surrounding neighborhoods. Coordination with the Northside Leadership Conference will be necessary to eliminate the possibility of a duplication of effort.

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restoration or repair of fencing throughout Allegheny Commons Historic District • Restoration of the stone building near the tennis courts • Installation of low pipe railing on the west side of the park • Additional ideas outlined in the park management plan 	
5	06/30/2023 PA SHPO Response Letter/ Page 1/ Above Ground Resources/ Paragraph 2	Emma Diehl/ Barbara Frederick	We offer the following comments in response to the first Design Advisory Technical meeting. We would like to reiterate that the design of the pedestrian bridge is not considered to be mitigation but is rather part of an effort to minimize a potential adverse effect. As outlined in our letter of June 13th, at future meetings, please mention the guiding principles based in the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and the need to ensure the proposed design is consistent with the historic materials and character of adjacent historic properties. This will ensure avoidance of an adverse effect to the Allegheny Commons Historic District, the International Harvester Building, and Allegheny Second Ward Historic District. We also request that future meetings include a more active design process, with a landscape architect, engineer, or other design professional actively seeking and providing design feedback during the meeting.	<p>Noted. Through the PUC process, NSRR has committed to reconstructing the pedestrian bridge to address a long-standing need of providing a missing pedestrian connection over the railroad corridor.</p> <p>Regarding individuals representing the design team who were present at Consulting Party Meeting #3, the presenters and participants included one historic preservation professional, four engineering (both highway and bridge) professionals, and an environmental specialist. Additionally, Michael Baker has consulted with two registered landscape architects to assist with the proposed design of the pedestrian bridge. A meeting of DAT members and consultants is scheduled for August 29, 2023.</p>