



State of New Jersey

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DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

NATURAL & HISTORIC RESOURCES

HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

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September 1, 2015

Zack Asadpour, Supervisor
Office of Environmental Solutions, Northern Region Team 1
New Jersey Department of Transportation
1035 Parkway Avenue
P.O. Box 600
Trenton, New Jersey 08625

Dear Mr. Asadpour:

As Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer for New Jersey, in accordance with 36 CFR Part 800: Protection of Historic Properties, as published in the Federal Register on December 12, 2000 (65 FR 77725-77739) and amended on July 6, 2004 (69 FR 40553-40555), I am providing consultation comments on the following proposed undertaking:

**Bergen County, Township of Teaneck
Route 4 Bridge over Palisade Avenue (Structure No. 0206-169)
Cultural Resources Investigation
New Jersey Department of Transportation # 020654**

Summary (**NEW SHPO Opinion**): One newly identified historic resource, the Teaneck Route 4 Open Space Corridor Historic District (Teaneck Route 4 Greenbelt), is eligible for the New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places. The proposed undertaking will have an adverse effect upon the historic district. Additional consultation is needed in order to develop measures to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate these adverse effects.

This letter was prepared in response to your letter of February 25, 2015 and a copy of the following report:

Leynes, Jennifer B. and Sharon D. White et al.
January 2015 *Cultural Resources Investigation, Replacement of Route 4 Bridge over Palisade Avenue, CSX Railroad and Windsor Road (Structure No. 0206-169), Township of Teaneck, Bergen County, New Jersey.* Prepared for

Parsons Brinckerhoff and the New Jersey Department of Transportation.
Prepared by the Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc., Cranbury, New Jersey.

This documentation was submitted to the Historic Preservation Office (HPO) for review and comment pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

800.4 Identification of Historic Properties

Architecture

The submitted report documents the intensive-level architectural survey of sixteen (16) resources more than fifty (50) years of age within the Area of Potential Effects (APE). None of these resources were previously listed on or determined eligible for the New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places.

The consultant recommended two of the surveyed resources, the Teaneck Route 4 Greenbelt and the New York, Western Shore & Buffalo Railroad Historic District, eligible for the New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places. The Teaneck Route 4 Greenbelt was also recommended eligible in the 2007 Bergen County Historic Sites Survey.

It is my opinion as Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer that the Teaneck Route 4 Open Space Corridor Historic District (Teaneck Route 4 Greenbelt) is eligible for listing on the New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places. The district is eligible under Criterion A in the areas of Community Planning and Development. As a historic district, the resource is also eligible under Criterion C as it represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction. The district is significant at the local level.

The Teaneck Route 4 Open Space Corridor Historic District (Teaneck Route 4 Greenbelt) is significant as an early example of municipal planning by a suburban community in New Jersey with the intention of protecting the quality of life in its residential neighborhoods. The district was created by Teaneck Township between 1933 and 1962 to implement the goals of its 1933 municipal master plan, which included the protection of the community's residential character against intrusive commercial development along the newly constructed highway. The historically significant public effort to acquire land along the highway resulted in the creation of a vegetative buffer and a parkway-like effect through Teaneck that is unique along the entire length of the highway.

Construction of the section of Route 4 through Teaneck began in 1931. The highway was intended to provide an efficient high speed approach to the newly constructed George Washington Bridge over the Hudson River from the interior of Bergen County. Approximately 2.5 miles of Route 4's 10 mile length is located within Teaneck Township. The construction of the highway occurred at the same time the Township was witnessing an enormous population explosion as large estates were subdivided for residential developments. From 1920 to 1930 Teaneck's population quadrupled from 4,192 to 16,513.

In an effort to preserve the residential character of their municipality, Teaneck's leaders created a zoning board in 1928 and a planning board in 1931, one of the first to be created under state enabling legislation passed in 1930. Most importantly, Teaneck passed a municipal master plan in 1933. Right-of-way acquisition and construction of Route 4 had resulted in the creation of many narrow lots with highway frontage that were unsuitable for residential use. The 1933 master plan recommended acquisition of these lots for preservation as open space. The Township immediately acquired and developed two narrow strips of land south side of the highway from Wilson Avenue to Lincoln Place as planting strips. The 1933 master plan would serve as the impetus for what would become the Teaneck Route 4 Open Space Corridor Historic District.

The Township's goal of protecting the community's residential character was challenged as early as June 1933, when a petition was received to rezone property fronting Route 4 for commercial use. The rezoning was not allowed and the Township continued its efforts to acquire property. By 1934, the Township already owned one third of the properties along Route 4. This included land donated by the residential developers in order to protect adjoining developments. By 1946, the Township owned a majority of the property along the highway and the 1947 municipal planning report is the earliest to document the existence of the Greenbelt, which was then called the Route 4 park strips.

By 1962, the Township had acquired all of the available land along the roadway corridor, resulting in a comprehensive, uninterrupted, non-commercialized area along the highway. While those portions of the highway located in other municipalities became more like a main street due to extensive commercial development, the Teaneck portion became distinguishable for its parkway-like feel and free-flowing traffic due to its absence of development and commercial driveways. Although it does not appear that it was ever intended to be a designed landscape similar to other parkways, over the years Teaneck has planted trees, grass, and shrubs in the open space parcels in order to create an attractive stretch of road and to give the travelling public a favorable impression of their upscale suburban community.

The period of significance for the historic district is 1933 (the adoption of the Teaneck Master Plan and the first acquisition of property along Route 4) to 1962 (when all available land along the corridor had been acquired).

The HPO respectfully disagrees with the consultant's determination that the boundary of the resource should exclude the roadway and bridges because they predate the period of significance and do not contribute to the district's importance as a unique example of municipal planning in a suburban community. Based on a review of the report, conversation with National Park Service National Register staff in Washington, DC, and internal HPO staff discussions, the roadway and bridges are included in the boundary of the district and are considered contributing resources. A contributing building, site, structure, or object is defined as one that adds to the historic architectural qualities, historic associations, or archeological values for which a property is significant because a) it was present during the period of significance, and possesses historic integrity reflecting its character at that time or is capable of yielding important information about the period, or b)

it independently meets the National Register Criteria. Route 4 and its associated bridges were present during the period of significance of the district, retain integrity from the period of significance, and add to the historical associations of the historic district as the construction of the roadway was the impetus for the municipality's desire to acquire the adjacent properties to create a vegetative buffer for its residential neighborhoods. The local roadway bridges that cross over the Teaneck Route 4 Open Space Corridor Historic District and date from the period of significance are also considered contributing resources.

The boundary of the Teaneck Route 4 Open Space Corridor Historic District (Route 4 Teaneck Greenbelt) is as proposed in the submitted report (the Teaneck, Teaneck Board of Education, and Bergen County owned parcels along Route 4 between River Road and the municipal border with Englewood) with the exception that the boundary also includes the Route 4 roadway corridor and bridges. That portion of the corridor between the Hackensack River and River Road is excluded from the boundary because there are no Township owned parcels in that area and it was previously altered extensively by the reconstruction of the River Road intersection. The boundary includes portions of the Lowell School property, Kieliszek Park, Police Athletic League property, South Gaylord Park, Windsor Park, Votee Park, and Overpeck Park as delineated on pages RGA1-28 through RGA1-31 of the submitted report.

Character defining features of the district include, but may not be limited to, the spatial relationship between the 5-6 lane Route 4 roadway corridor and bridges, the adjacent, undeveloped open space buffers and parkland, and the residential neighborhoods beyond. Plantings which primarily include hardwood trees and grass in the open space buffers, overhead vehicular and pedestrian bridges, and planted medians and islands at intersections are also character defining features within the district.

The district retains integrity of location, design, materials, setting, workmanship, feeling, and association. Trees and plantings have been lost and added over the years, but hardwood trees and grassy areas remain prevalent and the landscape's setting among the community's residential neighborhoods is intact. Modern features like bus shelters are few in number and unobtrusive. The integrity of feeling and association of the district are particularly high as the section of Route 4 in Teaneck remains distinctive from the highway corridors in adjacent municipalities.

The HPO respectfully disagrees with the consultant's eligibility determination for the surveyed portion of the New York, West Shore & Buffalo Railroad (NYWS&BRR) Historic District. Based upon a review of the submitted report, information on file at the HPO, and discussions amongst the HPO staff, we have concluded that the NYWS&BRR Historic District does not appear to meet the criteria for New Jersey and National Register eligibility. No additional consideration of this resource is required for the proposed undertaking.

The HPO would also like to note the existence of two additional potentially eligible historic districts in the vicinity of the project. Both the West Englewood Manor (Strand and Pershing Circle) Historic District and the Forest Knolls Historic District were surveyed as part of the 2007 Bergen County Historic Sites Survey and were recommended eligible

for the New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places. The West Englewood Manor (Strand and Pershing Circle) Historic District is a large residential neighborhood (over 900 buildings) distinguished by its unique street plan and popular twentieth century suburban house styles. Eight properties from this historic district (345, 346, 352, 358, 364, 370, and 434 Billington Road and 1059 Sussex Avenue) are located within the APE for this project. The Forest Knolls Historic District is a suburban residential neighborhood characterized by Tudor Revival houses, curving streets, and consistent setbacks. One property from this historic district (1045 Garrison Avenue) is located in the APE for this project. The HPO concurs that a formal evaluation of the New Jersey and National Register eligibility of these districts was beyond the scope of this project. However, please note that future undertakings in this area may warrant further evaluation of these resources.

Archaeology

The report states that 48 shovel test pits (STP) were excavated within the Archaeology Area of Potential Effect's (APE) at 50 foot intervals. Twenty STP's identified historic and modern artifacts and three of the 20 STP's identified secondary Late-19th century historic deposits. No archaeological features were identified. Artifacts included brick, nails, bottle glass and ceramic fragments, and window fragments. No Native American artifacts or features were identified. The report states that no significant pre-Contact or historic period artifacts or features were recovered and recommends no further archaeological testing. *The HPO concurs with this assessment. In consequence, no additional archaeological survey is recommended for this undertaking.*

800.5 Assessment of Adverse Effects

It is our understanding, based upon a review of the submitted documentation, that the current project scope includes the following elements:

- Replacement of the existing Route 4 Bridge over Palisade Avenue, CSX Railroad, and Windsor Road (Structure No. 0206-169)
- Addition of acceleration lanes from Belle Avenue along Route 4 Eastbound
- Improvements to the transition geometry on Route 4 Eastbound west of Garrison Avenue through the addition of advanced warning signs
- Construction of two detention basins beneath the replacement bridge and east of the CSX Railroad
- Construction of an underground detention system south of Route 4 in South Gaylord Park
- Construction of retaining walls on all four quadrants of the new bridge
- Construction of new curbs and sidewalks where necessary
- Related underground utility work
- Rerouting the existing overhead utilities from Route 4 into the neighborhood south of the highway along existing utility corridors

As proposed, the undertaking will result in an **adverse effect** upon the Teaneck Route 4 Open Space Corridor Historic District (Teaneck Route 4 Greenbelt) due to the demolition

and replacement of the contributing Route 4 Bridge over Palisade Avenue, CSX Railroad, and Windsor Road (Structure No. 0206-169). A replacement structure that is designed in a manner that is sensitive to the character and setting of the historic district will be required to avoid further adverse effects to the district.

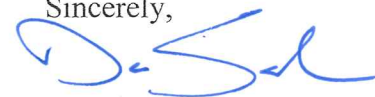
Additional project elements including right-of-way acquisition, roadway widening, installation of retaining walls, pedestrian ramps, sidewalks, curbs, etc., have the potential to affect the historic district, but the HPO believes that if these elements are minimized and/or designed to be compatible with and sensitive to the character and setting of the district, they can potentially conform to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. Similarly, the removal of trees and other vegetation within the district should be minimized and any trees and vegetation that must be removed should be replaced in-kind.

The HPO looks forward to further consultation with NJDOT, Teaneck Township, and the additional consulting parties, pursuant to 36 CFR 800.6, in order to develop measures to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate the effects of the project on historic properties.

Additional Comments

Thank you for providing the opportunity to review the submitted documentation. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please do not hesitate to contact Jonathan Kinney of my staff at (609) 984-0141 regarding historic architecture, historic districts, or historic landscapes or Vincent Maresca of my staff at (609) 633-2395 regarding archaeology. Please reference the HPO project number 10-1096 in any future calls, emails, or written correspondence to help expedite our review and response. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Daniel D. Saunders
Deputy State Historic
Preservation Officer

DDS/JK/SKL/VM/KS

Cc:

Jaime Evalina, Teaneck Township Clerk
Eugene Coleman, Teaneck Historic Preservation Commission
Elaine Gold, Bergen County Historic Preservation Trust Fund
Larry Robertson, Teaneck Township Historian