

NORTH WHITE PLAINS RAILROAD STATION
Fisher Street
west of North Broadway
White Plains
Westchester County
New York

HABS No. NY-6294

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

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NORTH WHITE PLAINS RAILROAD STATION HABS No. NY-6294

Location: Fisher Street, west of North Broadway
White Plains, Westchester County, New York

USGS White Plains Quadrangle, Universal Transverse
Mercator Coordinates 18.603140.4545480

Present Owner: Penn Central Corporation
1 East 4th Street
Cincinnati Ohio 45202

Present Occupant: Metro-North Commuter Railroad Company
347 Madison Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10017
[Metro-North has a lease on the station lasting until the
year 2032.]

Use: Railroad Station (platforms and waiting room with ticket
office)

Significance: The North White Plains Station is historically significant
as the northernmost station on the electrified portion of
the former New York Central and Hudson River Railroad's
Harlem Branch. The electrification of the Harlem Line
south of North White Plains took place in 1910. Prior to
the electrification of the line as far north as Brewster
North, North White Plains was the terminus of electric
equipment. Passengers changed trains at this station if
they wished to continue north. Large train yards are
located to the north of the station. It is here that the
electric equipment was turned around so that they could
journey back to Grand Central Terminal in New York. The
present North White Plains station is a modern
installation of no historic architectural significance.

PART 1: HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Date of erection: 1971 and 1983
2. Architect: Vollmer Associates
3. Original and subsequent owners: The station was erected by the Metro-North Commuter Railroad which leases the Harlem Line from the Penn Central Corporation. This sixty year lease was signed in 1972.
4. Original plans and construction: The North White Plains Station consists of a waiting room and ticket office set on an overpass that crosses the tracks and platforms of the station. This structure is connected to the platforms by stairs. An overpass was constructed at North White Plains in 1971 at the same time that the raised platforms were built. In 1983 the overpass was expanded to the north adding the ticket office, claims office, and police room. Copies of the original drawings for the station are extant and are available through Metro-North.
5. Alterations and additions: None known since 1983.

B. Historical Context:

Prior to the arrival of the railroads, Westchester County was a series of small independent communities separated by farmland and rural estates. The opening of rail lines connecting the towns and villages of Westchester with New York City was to irrevocably change the character of this county. On April 25, 1831, the New York and Harlem Railroad was incorporated with a planned run between New York City and the town of Harlem in northern Manhattan. Service to White Plains was soon inaugurated. It was the advent of reliable train service between Westchester and New York City that brought about the suburban development of the county. The original railroads were modest single-track lines with small wooden stations. As demand for service increased the rail lines were widened, tracks added, and imposing new stations erected. Most of the stations now in use in Westchester date from the last years of the nineteenth century or the first decades of the twentieth century; all of Westchester's Harlem Line stations south of White Plains date from the early twentieth century. The stations at White Plains and North White Plains are the only modern stations on this southern portion of the Harlem Line in Westchester.

The original rail lines were powered by steam engines. In 1902, a train collision in a smoke-filled tunnel under Park Avenue, just north of Grand Central Terminal, killed seventeen people. The outcry caused by this accident led the New York State Legislature to pass a law requiring that passenger trains using Grand Central be electrified by 1908. This law brought about the construction of the present Grand Central Terminal.

which was built to receive electric trains. The railroad was electrified in Manhattan by 1908 and in 1910 electric lines were extended as far north as North White Plains. Three large rail yards located just north of this station serviced the trains. One yard had a large turntable on which the electric engines were turned around so that they could journey back to Manhattan.

The immediate vicinity of the North White Plains station has always been largely commercial. No station and waiting room facilities were located here until the present facility was erected on a former overpass in 1983. Prior to that the ticket office was located in a trailer and there were side platforms.

PART II: ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. Architectural character: The North White Plains Railroad Station is of no interest from the point of view of historic architecture.
2. Condition of the fabric: Excellent.

B. Description of the Exterior

1. Overall dimensions: The North White Plains Railroad Station is a one-story structure set on a bridge crossing the tracks and platforms. The structure is rectangular. It is 44'4" long by 38'4" wide.
2. Foundation: Concrete.
3. Walls: Steel with tinted glass.
4. Structural system: Steel frame.
5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: There are four stairs, each with a metal and glass door.
 - b. Windows: The walls of the structure are tinted glass set within metal frames.
6. Roof: Flat; clerestory above flat roof facing north.
7. Platforms: The station has two raised platforms with aluminum lamps, several small aluminum canopies, and small waiting rooms.
8. Stairs: There are four stairs leading up to the waiting room. Two stairs face south and lead directly from the platforms to the waiting room (stair # 1 and 3 on plan). On the east side of the station is a north facing stair that leads from the street (stair # 2). On the west side of the station is a south facing stair with a short north facing

flight at the base (stair #4). This stair leads to the large parking lot located to the west of the platforms. All four stairs are of steel with steel risers and concrete treads. The stairs appear to date largely from 1971.

9. Underpass: Near the south end of the platforms are stairs leading to an underpass with metal barrel siding. This underpass leads to the street to the east and the parking lot to the west.

C. Description of Interior

1. Floor plan: The waiting room stretches along the south side of the rectangular structure. Located on the north side of the overpass are the claims agent's offices, toilet, ticket office, and police room. A newsstand is located at the west side of the station.

2. Flooring: Concrete.

3. Wall and ceiling finishes: The walls are tinted glass and the building has a hung ceiling.

4. Doors and doorways: The station has steel and glass doors.

5. Furnishings: There is a row of attached seats along the south side of the waiting room.

D. Site

1. General setting and description: The North White Plains Station is sited in an east/west direction across the tracks. The station is located in a commercial and industrial area at the north end of the city of White Plains. To the north of the station are the large Metro-North train yards. Immediately to the northwest of the station is a two-story frame structure with aluminum siding and a tall wooden stair. This now houses the Metro-North Signal Department. To the east of the station are office buildings and a large car rental establishment. To the west is a very large parking lot.

PART III: SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Original Architectural Drawings

Original drawings for the station are preserved by Metro-North and are housed at Grand Central Terminal.

B. Bibliography

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Larson, Neil. "Westchester County Railroad Station Thematic Nomination, National Register of Historic Places Inventory--Nomination Form," unpublished draft report, n.d.

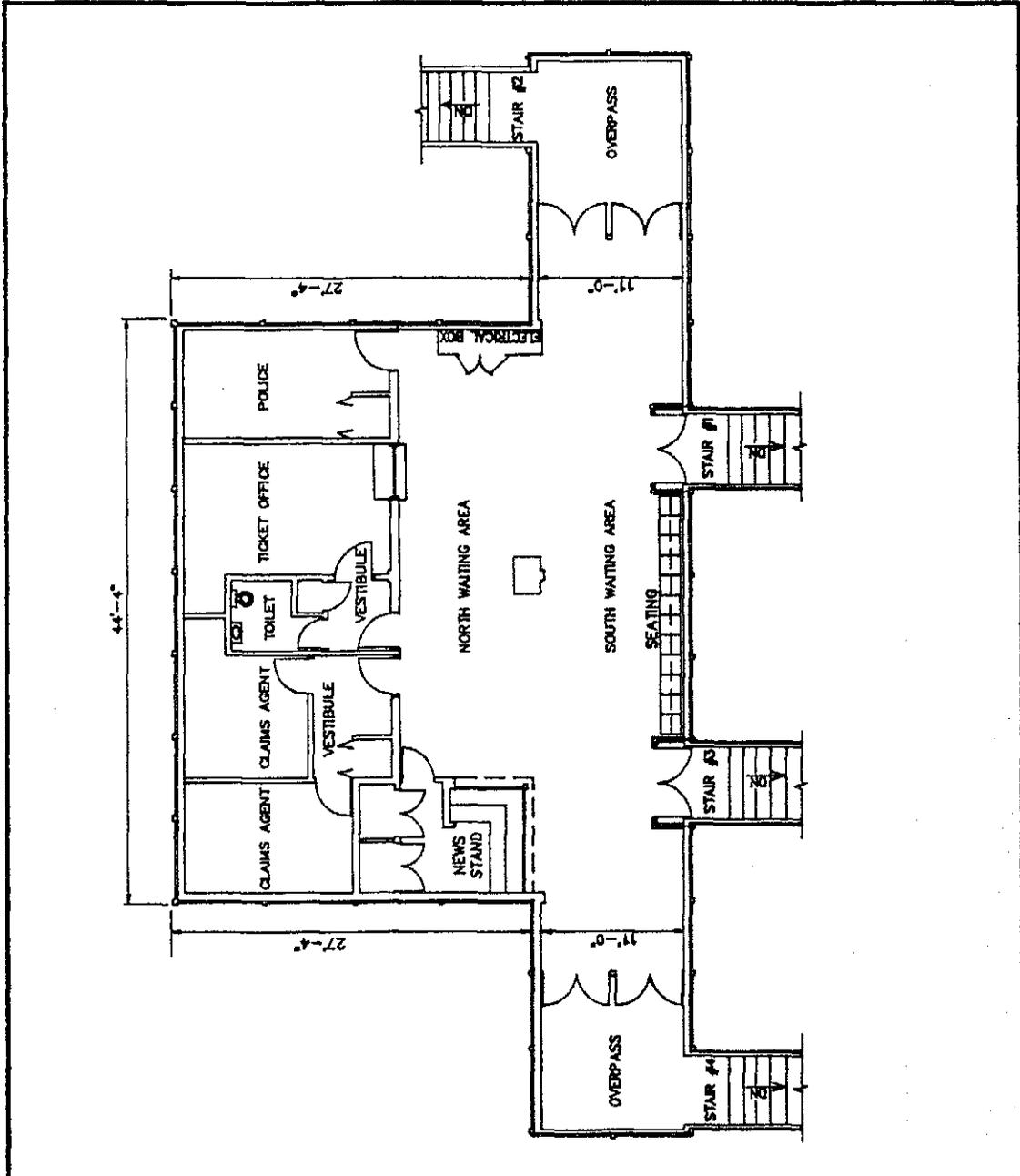
2. Secondary and published sources:

- Atlases of Westchester County, 1898-1920.
French, Alvah P., ed. History of Westchester County New York (NY: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1925).
Goeschel, Nancy. "Grand Central Terminal Interior Designation Report" (NY: New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, 1980).
Griffin, Ernest F., ed. Westchester County and Its People (NY: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1946).
Sanchis, Frank. American Architecture: Westchester County, New York Colonial to Contemporary (North River Press, 1977).

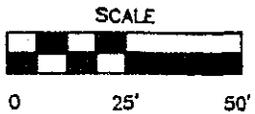
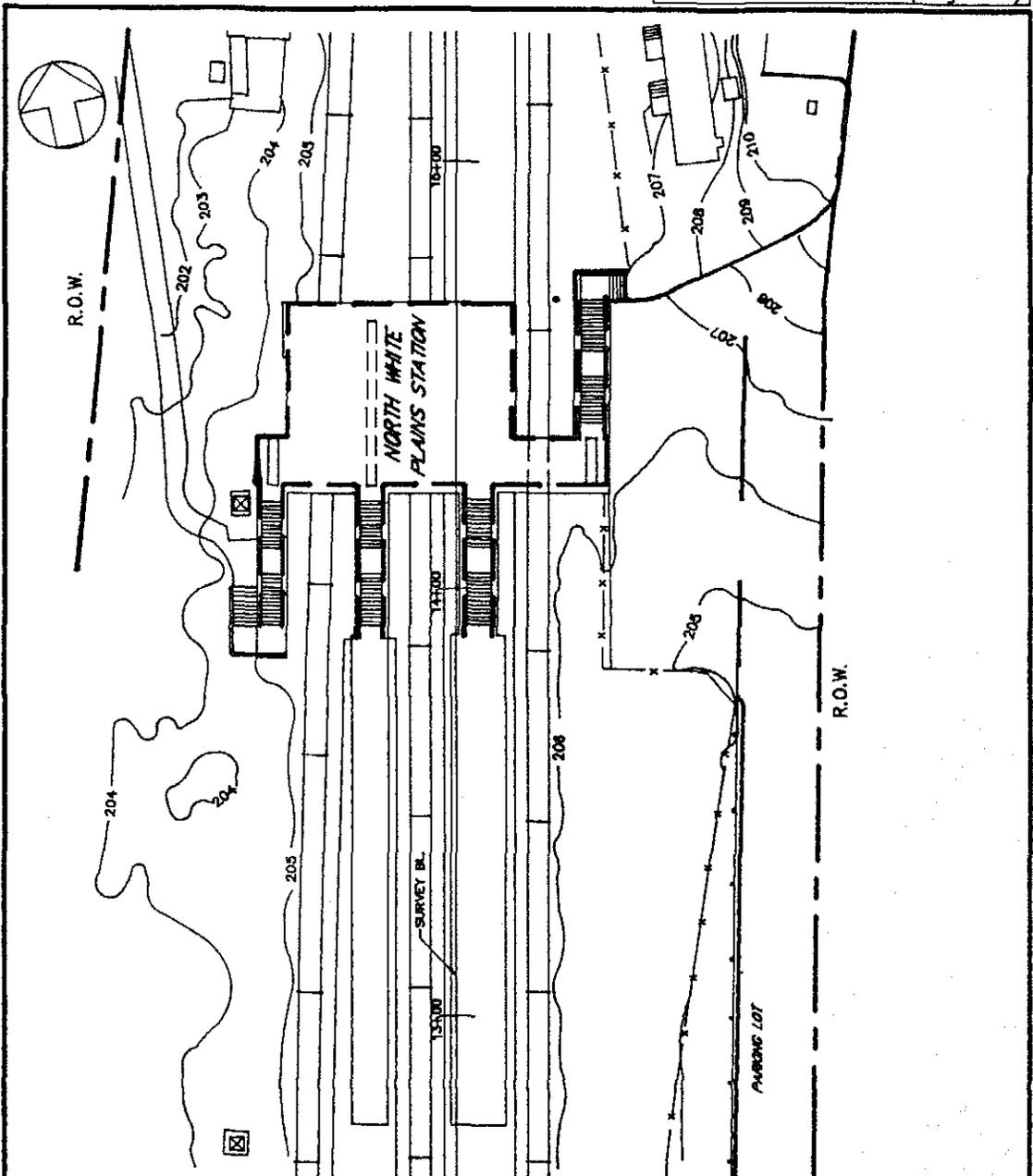
PART IV: PROJECT INFORMATION

The objective of this project, known as the Mid-Harlem Station Improvements in Westchester County, New York, is to provide modern, functional, and attractive facilities for Metro-North passengers at the North White Plains Station and seven other Harlem line stations. Changes to the North White Plains Station include modifications to the platform areas, the addition of platform canopies and passenger shelters, demolition and reconstruction of the stairways leading to the existing overpass/ticket office, rehabilitation of the existing underpass, and the incorporation of features to improve accessibility for the handicapped and elderly. The station itself will not be altered. Documentation was completed as mitigation before alterations occurred. The Federal agencies involved are the Urban Mass Transportation Administration and the National Park Service (Mid-Atlantic Regional Office) of the Department of the Interior. Records were prepared in October 1988.

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Title: Consultants
Affiliation: Consultants to Goodkind & O'Dea,
Engineers & Planners
Date: October 1988



 METRO-NORTH COMPUTER RAILROAD
MID-HARLEM STATION IMPROVEMENTS
CONTRACT NO. 7388
NORTH WHITE PLAINS STATION HOUSE
 VORCIPS CONTRACTING COMPANY, INC.
<i>Goodkind & O'Dea, Inc.</i> CONSULTING ENGINEERS



 METRO-NORTH COMMUTER RAILROAD
MID-HARLEM STATION IMPROVEMENTS CONTRACT NO. 7388
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