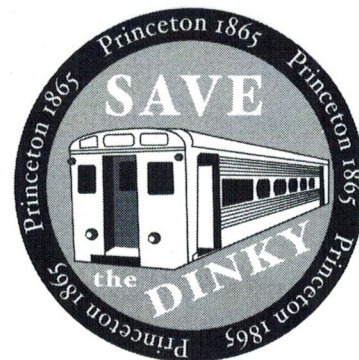


**P R E S S   A D V I S O R Y**  
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For immediate release

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**For Immediate Release:**

**SAVE THE DINKY ASKS NJ DEP TO PROTECT HISTORIC DINKY  
STATION UNTIL COURT CAN RULE ON LEGALITY OF NJ TRANSIT**

Princeton, NJ. To prevent irreversible damage to the historic Princeton Railroad Station, the citizens' group *Save the Dinky, Inc.* (SDKY) filed an emergency application with the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) on August 16, asking the agency to temporarily stay an approval it gave to NJ Transit last year to cooperate in University plans to dismantle the station. An appeal is pending, but the appeal will not be heard until sometime in the fall.

SDKY told the DEP that removal of train infrastructure and shortening of track and damage to the train right of way could begin within days because of NJ Transit's plan to stop train service on August 24 to prepare for temporary service to begin on August 26 from a platform 1200 feet to the south. According to SDKY's emergency application, the project will:

have an irreversible and catastrophic effect on the station by ending the station's transportation function, removing its character defining elements, and destroying a railroad right-of-way dating back to 1865, through abandonment and conversion to non-rail use.

SDKY filed its application with DEP Commissioner Bob Martin and with Rich Boornazian, the Assistant Commissioner for Historic and Natural Resources, who approved NJ Transit's request to abandon historic protection for the station to accommodate University development plans.

The Princeton Station was built in 1918 and was placed on the state Register of Historic Places in March 1984 as part of a listing of "Operating Passenger Railroad Stations in New Jersey." NJ Transit sold the station property to the University in October 1984, but retained an easement to preserve the use of the property for public transportation. NJ Transit told historic site regulators at the DEP last year that the sale contract obligated it to move the terminus at the University's request and that, with the proposed move to a location opposite the University's Lot 7 garage, its easement will expire in five years.

Boornazian's ruling allowed NJ Transit to terminate the easement ahead of time so that the University can build a road over the train right-of-way for employee

access to the Lot 7 garage. Early termination will also permit the University dismantle and redevelop the station without having to comply with state historic site regulations. The regulations apply to government property, including property protected by easements, not to property owned by private parties.

Anita Garoniak, President of *Save the Dinky*, said the group wants to preserve the status quo so that “there is still a station that can operate and a right-of-way to the station” when the appeals court hears the case. “If we cannot get a stay,” she said, “we will have no station left to argue about by the time the courts rule.” Garoniak said her group had to apply to the DEP before seeking a court stay.

SDKY is pursuing three other legal actions to try to save the Princeton Station as an operating in-town train station. In the fall of 2011, it filed a suit in the NJ Chancery Division seeking a ruling that the 1984 contract did not give the University a right to move the terminus. In June, the Chancery court denied a University attempt to dismiss the case, ruling that SDKY and the plaintiffs have standing on the meaning of the contract, but not to enforce the easement. On August 8, along with the NJ Association of Railroad Passengers, the group appealed a June NJ Transit Board decision authorizing its staff to transfer its public transportation easement on the Station to the University. The appeal argues that state law required NJ Transit to hold a hearing before abandoning the station and easement.

SDKY has also filed a comment to support a federal Surface Transportation Board (STB) Petition filed in June by NJ-ARP and the National Association of Railroad Passengers asking for a ruling that NJ Transit and the University need federal approval before abandoning the station. Charles H. Montange, a Seattle attorney who handles rail preservation issues, represents SDKY in the federal case.

NJ Transit and the DEP are both represented by attorneys in the Attorney General’s office who answer to the Governor. Governor Christie is an ex officio member of the Board of Directors of Princeton University and has been a strong advocate of the University’s arts campus expansion plan, including the plan to move the train terminus. SDKY’s DEP application states:

Given the nature of the issues and the importance of the historic resource – an operating passenger railroad station that currently serves over 1,000 passengers daily – a stay is not only appropriate but in the public interest. A stay will preserve the subject matter of the appeal and preserve confidence in the neutrality of the administrative processes that have been established under law to protect New Jersey’s historic and environmental resources.”

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