

**APPLICATION FOR HISTORIC SITE DESIGNATION
OF PRINCETON BRANCH RAILROAD STATION COMPLEX**

By Anne Waldron Neumann, PhD & Kip Cherry, PP, AICP

Introduction

This application seeks historic designation under the Princeton Borough Code for the Princeton Branch Railroad Station complex (informally known as the “Dinky” station or the “PJ&B-Princeton Junction & Back” station). The complex is located on University Place on approximately .22 acres of land within Lots 4 and 39 on Block 45.01. The Princeton Branch station has been listed on the New Jersey Register of Historic Places since March 17, 1984 and on the National Register of Historic Places since September 29, 1984. As shown in the attached New Jersey Transit Railroad Station Survey (Survey #1-6, Heritage Studies, 1981, Exhibit A), the site consists of a passenger station building, a freight building, a canopy, and a high-raised platform with related infrastructure. The Trustees of Princeton University, Princeton, NJ 08544, own the property, having purchased it from New Jersey Transit Corporation on October 30, 1984. (Exhibits G, H) New Jersey Transit Corporation also has an ownership interest, having retained an easement for public transportation purposes over the property it sold to the University, including the station buildings and platform. (Exhibit H)

To support and document this application, we rely upon our personal knowledge of the site, professional backgrounds, consultation with Margaret Westfield, and upon the following sources:

- Exhibit A: (1) Summary Sheet of Nomination Information in New Jersey HPO Files, with (2) Survey #1-6, New Jersey Transit Railroad Station Survey of Princeton Station, and Survey Site Plan With Marked Boundary (1978) Also included (3) Field notes for Survey, with Photographs, taken from documentation for 1975 Nomination for Princeton Historic District.
- Exhibit B: The National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form for Operating Passenger Railroad Stations in New Jersey. Survey #1-6 supporting nomination is included with Exhibit A.
- Exhibit C: Location map and site layout prepared by Russell M. Smith, PE, PP, Hopewell Valley Engineering, PE, PP.
- Exhibit D: Images of Dinky Station Complex Historic Site, including photos by Kip Cherry.
- Exhibit E: (1) Letter from Margaret Westfield to Borough HPRC; (2) April 2012 Westfield Testimony to NJ Historic Sites Council; (3) Westfield CV.
- Exhibit F: Article by John R. Wilmot titled “The Princeton Branch: From Camden & Amboy to NJ Transit,” *Trains Magazine*, June 1984.
- Exhibit G: Agreement of Sale (1984) between NJT and Princeton University, with 1996 Addendum.
- Exhibit H: Deeds from NJT to Trustees of Princeton University

- Exhibit I: (1) “ICC sets hearings on proposed ‘dinky’ shutdown,” *Daily Princetonian*, Feb. 27, 1978; (2) “University Buys Dinky property,” *Princeton Weekly Bulletin*, Nov. 12, 1984; (3) “University proposes renovations to Dinky tracks, station grounds,” *Daily Princetonian*, Feb. 18, 1988.
- Exhibit J: (1) Letter dated May 11, 2012 from Assistant Commissioner for Natural and Historic Resources, NJDEP, Rich Boornazian, with attached Historic Sites Council Resolution; (2) Notice of docketing of appeal.
- Exhibit K: (1) October 2006 Survey of Dinky Users for Princeton University; (2) NJ Transit 2012 Princeton Station (“Dinky”) Profile

Historical Overview of Princeton Branch

The Princeton Branch or the Princeton Line opened in May 1865 to link Princeton to the Pennsylvania Railroad line between Philadelphia and New York. The current station, built in 1918, is not the first to serve the town. The terminus has been moved several times to accommodate Princeton University’s expansion. The Princeton Line has been informally known as the Princeton Junction & Back or “PJ&B” and, more recently, as the “Dinky.”¹ It is now 2.7 miles long, the shortest regularly scheduled railway line in America. Nevertheless, it now links Princetonians to the world, via a new stop at Newark International Airport and continuous rail service to Kennedy.

The first station of the Princeton Line was a wooden building built in 1865 when the branch opened. The second one, made of masonry, was constructed in 1873. A third, also made of masonry, was constructed in the 1890’s and located on Railroad Avenue (subsequently named University Place) near Princeton University’s Blair Arch. The fourth and current station was constructed in 1917-18 in its current location to the south of Blair Arch on University Place. This current station has been described as “ideally situated” because “it has a high-level platform at the same level as the waiting room and the street.” (Wilmot, Exhibit F)

Ownership of the Princeton Line has changed over the years as transportation modes and policy have evolved. For much of the twentieth century, the Princeton Line and its branch station were owned and operated by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company. In 1968, the Pennsylvania Railroad merged with the New York Central Railroad to form Penn Central. In the 1970’s, Penn Central faced bankruptcy. During a proposed reorganization involving the transfer of the system to Conrail, there was fear that the Dinky service would be discontinued. In response, Princetonians, under the leadership of the late Barbara Sigmund, then Mayor of Princeton Borough, formed a “Save the Dinky” Committee that lobbied to save the service. (Exhibit I (1)). These efforts were successful, and the Princeton line was included in the new Conrail system. Penn Central transferred its properties, including the Princeton Branch property, to Conrail on April 1, 1976. Several years later, New Jersey Transit was formed and took over Conrail’s rail passenger service, subsequently acquiring the property from Conrail. New Jersey Transit sold the property to the Trustees of Princeton University in 1984, while retaining operating rights and an easement for public transportation purposes. (Exhibits G & H).

¹ In this application, we use the “Dinky” or the “Princeton Branch” to refer to the station.

In the 1970's, the Princeton Branch station was surveyed as part of a statewide survey of all 112 of New Jersey's operating passenger railroad stations built before World War II. (Exhibits A & B). These surveys were done in preparation for a thematic nomination for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.² The stations were rated according to a weighted evaluation form, then ranked in descending order. (Exhibit B, §7) The thematic nomination noted that "although the comparison of the stations was intended to be objective, it is impossible to eradicate subjective evaluation in determinations of such factors as architectural quality." (Exhibit B) The Princeton Branch station was ranked thirtieth on the list of 112, and it placed in the top three stations in a second tier grouping recommended for listing even though the stations in this tier were not viewed at that time as having outstanding architectural quality. (Exhibit B) The Princeton Branch station was subsequently listed on the New Jersey Register of Historic Places on March 17, 1984 and on the National Register of Historic Places on September 29, 1984. (Exhibit A).³ The Survey supporting the nomination, found in Exhibit A(2) will be referred to in the discussion that follows as Survey #1-6 or the 1981 Survey.

The station was listed on the national register under "Thematic Nomination of Operating Passenger Railroad Stations in New Jersey" as a fully functioning train station. Even though it is short, the line ranks 44th out of 150 New Jersey train stations in terms of ridership. (Exhibit K(2)) The Dinky line links Princetonians to cities along the Northeast Corridor and to the world by way of a new stop at Newark International airport. Its continued use, along with its status as a site listed on the state and national registers, has contributed to the survival of the 1918 station complex in nearly its original state.⁴

Historic Site Description

The Princeton Railroad Station, as noted above, has been listed on the New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places since 1984. The 1981 Survey identifies the protected site by reference to a site plan that includes a passenger station building, freight building, raised

² The Princeton Branch survey, dated 1981, is now included in documentation for the 1975 nomination of the Princeton Historic District for listing on the National Historic Register as well as in the NJHPO files.

³ The agreement of sale between New Jersey Transit and the Trustees of Princeton University was executed on October 30, 1984, one month after the property was listed on the national register. (Exhibit H)

⁴ In connection with a request by Princeton University to relocate the terminus southward, New Jersey Transit, because of its ownership interest, sought project authorization in February 2012 from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Historic Preservation Office to remove track and prematurely abandon a portion of its easement. On May 11, 2012, New Jersey Transit obtained authorization from the NJDEP, subject to conditions in a New Jersey Historic Sites Council resolution. (Boornazian Letter, Exhibit J-1). The NJDEP ruling has been challenged in an appeal now pending in the NJ Superior Court filed by Save the Dinky, Inc., and Anne Neumann. (Docketing Notice, *In re Princeton Track Removal Project*, A005145-11T1, Exhibit J-2).

platform, canopy, and taxi area (Exhibit A, p 21). The two buildings, canopy, and platform remain substantially unchanged since 1984. However, the tracks have been shortened by approximately 150 feet since then and the bumper and catenary have been relocated. Changes have also been made to the configuration of the parking. The current configuration, as well as the demarcation of the boundaries of the listed historic site, is shown in the Hopewell Valley Engineering site plan attached as Exhibit C.

The description of the historic site in Survey #1-6 continues to be substantially accurate. It is quoted below, but with italicized text used to indicate features that are no longer present or that have been modified.

“The Princeton complex is located on a relatively open site at the S edge of the Princeton University campus. It consists of a 1½-story station, tracks, platform and canopy aligned generally N-S and a 1½-story stone freight house, located ca.150’ S of the station. *There is a small parking lot (l) SW of the Freight House,*⁵ while additional parking is located along University Place. Bordering the tracks on the E is a high hedge, which visually separates station and campus. Both station and shelter are in the Collegiate Gothic style.

The inbound canopy at Princeton is 17 bays long, the S six of which are attached to the E façade of the Freight house. At its N end the canopy is attached to the E façade entry to the station. A very shallow gabled roof with a wood frame supported on a single row of wood columns with wood brackets and concrete bases. Tie beams have shaped ends. *An incandescent lighting fixture with circular metal shade hangs from the framing in each bay. Hanging E of the Freight House door is a board sign (red, gold type and border).* Materials appear original.

The station at Princeton, located W of the tracks, consists of a 1 ½-story rectangular block, 5 bays long and 3 wide, with a gabled roof, its ridge paralleling the tracks. Walls are coursed ashlar⁶ with limestone trim; roofing is slate. The E and W facades are essentially identical, each containing central paired doors surmounted by paired 12 pane windows in a transverse gable end and flanked on either side by (from the center) a triple grouping and a double grouping of windows. Windows are 9 pane transom over 12 pane horizontal casement, while doors are 9/2 panel. The façade contains three windows and the N, a door with a transom and two windows.

*Although some openings are boarded,*⁷ materials appear original.

The spaces of the Princeton station are on one level. The central half of the block comprises the Waiting Room, *while the S quarter comprises the Ticket Office,*⁸ and the N quarter, a short hall with the Ladies’ Room to the W and Men’s Room to the E. The

⁵ The configuration of parking areas has changed since 1984.

⁶ A clearer description is “coursed random multi-colored stone.”

⁷ The buildings were subsequently restored and are in overall good condition with no boarded windows.

Men's Room is accessible only from an exterior door in the N façade, and the basement, from an exterior stairway adjoining (sic) the E façade. The Waiting Room has a terrazzo floor, paneled wainscot and plastered walls and ceiling. The ceiling is barrel vaulted with a groin vault in the center on axis with the doors. Other rooms have similar finishes although wainscots are beaded matched board in the Ticket Office and marble panels in the Rest Rooms. Trim consists of molded board. All materials, with the exception of lighting fixtures....appear original.

The freight house at Princeton, located W of the tracks and ca. 150' S of the station, consists fo (sic) a 1 1/2 story rectangular block, 6 bays long and 3 wide, with a gabled room, its ridge paralleling the tracks. Adjoining the N end is a 1 1/2 story transverse block, three bays wide and one deep. It too has a gabled room. Walls are coursed ashlar⁹ and the roof, slate. Trim is concrete and gable ends have heavy concrete coping. The E facade contains a central door (originally double leaf, but now single leaf, with a clapboard surround). N of center are two paired windows, a freight door, and a single window. The W façade contains two central paired windows flanked on either side by (from the center) a double leaf freight door and a single window, and on the N only, a small 1/1. The transverse block projects beyond the W façade line and contains one window on the S and two on the W. The S façade contains three windows, while the N contains two, and a central door sheltered by a bracketed hood. There are also windows in the gable ends, all of which are boarded over. A wood frame platform adjoins the main block on the W and S. An octagonal stone chimney rises from the E side of the roof.¹⁰ All materials appear original.”

[N.J. Office of Cultural and Environmental Services, New Jersey Transit Rail road Station Survey, #1-6; Exhibit A].

As can be seen from the very few italicized items, the station complex remains substantially as described in Survey #1-6. Since 1981, there has been no significant alteration to the building facades. In 1988 or thereafter, approximately 150' of track were removed as part of a southward relocation of the terminus from the northern to the southern half of the station platform. (Exhibit I-3) However, this relocation left the platform and canopy in place and did not disturb the buildings. Also in the late 1980's or thereafter, the ticket office was discontinued and ticket machines are now located in the area between the station buildings. The adjacent drop-off and taxi area, as well as the nearby parking lot, were also reconfigured. Bike racks are now located on the east side of the station.

Area Context

The surrounding area has evolved since the station was built in 1918, beginning with the construction of McCarter Theater in 1929. However, just as the Princeton Station was designed

⁸ Tickets are now dispensed by outdoor ticket machines. The original grillwork at the indoor ticket windows remains.

⁹ A clearer description is “coursed random multi-colored stone.”

¹⁰ The passenger station also has an octagonal stone chimney.

to harmonize with the Princeton University campus, so, subsequently, many of the buildings that grew up around the station were designed to harmonize with both. McCarter relates to the station complex and the campus through its multi-hued stone and limestone details. Hobey Baker Rink, constructed in the early 1920's and the second oldest hockey rink in the United States, uses the same multi-hued stone. So does the former University Store building at 22 University Place, which was constructed in the late 1950's to the north of the Princeton Branch station and south of Blair Arch.

The WaWa located to the west of the station on University Place is an unprepossessing one-story structure built in the twentieth century. It has an unobtrusive stucco-like façade. Other nearby structures, including New South, are more dominant but in our opinion do not detract from the historic charm of the station complex.

Site Condition

Margaret Westfield, a certified preservation architect, visited the site on March 28, 2012 as a consultant for the citizens' group Save the Dinky, Inc. to evaluate it and prepare testimony in connection with the application for New Jersey's Transit to the New Jersey DEP referenced in footnote 4 above. In recent months, as a courtesy, she has consulted with us on this nomination, and we are basing the following statements about condition on our own observations, on our discussions with Ms. Westfield, and on statements about condition in her written testimony, attached here as Exhibit E(2).

According to the National Register nomination, the passenger station was partially renovated in 1976 as the official Princeton Bicentennial Visitor Center. Staffed by volunteers, the station was the starting point for walking and bus tours of Princeton sponsored by the Princeton Historical Society.

It appears that the concrete platform, which exhibited major deterioration in the 1983 photograph in Exhibit D was repaired later in the 1980s.

We know that the existing multi-light leaded glass window sash was installed sometime after March 2002 when the station is pictured with one-over-one sash. In historic photographs, the Station is shown with multi-light windows.

The passenger station's masonry facade may have been cleaned.

The passenger station is currently missing the canopy over its front entrance. We have recently learned that the canopy was torn off by a truck prior to 1978 and had already been removed before listing on the state and national registers. (1978 Photographs, Exhibit D) The copper flashing for the canopy remains attached to the building. The front-entrance canopy is documented in early photographs, and similar design details survive on the freight station canopies. An accurate restoration of the canopy would greatly enhance the passenger station's appearance.

Current problems include active structural movement of the passenger station's northeast corner and two non-functioning downspout boots that were designed to carry the water away from the building. It appears that an asphalt pathway that has been installed on the north side of the station is blocking its discharge pipe. The resulting water infiltration may have undermined the foundations, since the open cracks in the masonry suggest on-going settlement in this location.

A section of replacement copper cornice at the back of the building carefully replicates the cross pattern on the rest of the cornice work but has a peeling patina finish.

The above-noted problems are not severe and can be corrected. They do not impair the beauty and integrity of the station complex. Further, while there have been some alterations to the outdoor areas since 1984, the critical historic features of the Dinky station remain. The bike racks and ticketing machines have not affected the buildings, the canopy, and the high-level platform. The relocation of the terminus from the northern to the southern half of the platform, made after 1984, did not affect the historical integrity of the site. The buildings remain in the same location, with no significant alteration to their exterior features. The high-level platform remains. The platform canopy remains. The tracks and catenary remain, although their end point has been moved to the southern half of the platform. Changes made to expand the drop-off area in the late 1980s, under Barbara Sigmund's mayoralty, have, in our admittedly subjective judgment, only served to reinforce the charm and historicity of the Princeton station.

As for interior features, the passenger building has been restored and reopened, with the exception of the men's room. The exterior door of the men's room is intact although locked. We note that no detail was given about the interior of the passenger station men's room in the state and federal nomination survey, presumably because it was not considered an historically important feature of the site. We also note that the interior of the freight building was noted to be "inaccessible" on the 1981 Survey and was presumably considered irrelevant to the site's eligibility for state and national historic site status. (Exhibits A & B)

Significance

The 1981 Survey describes the significance of the station complex as follows:

The Princeton station and Freight House are good examples of the Collegiate Gothic style adapted to the functions of an early twentieth century rail terminal facility. In form and materials they are consistent with many of the buildings on the Princeton University campus nearby. Construction of the station coincided with a burst of Collegiate Gothic construction by the University following a decision by the Trustees in 1896 that future buildings would be in the English Gothic style. This transformation was led by noted "archaeological Gothic architect Ralph Adams Cram who was the University's supervising architect from 1904 to 1927. . . The complex is unusual in that it was built with high level platforms. At most suburban stations on the Pennsylvania line, platforms were rebuilt at a later date. It is also a terminal, located at the N end of a branch line which joins the mainline at Princeton Junction. . .and is served by a shuttle train (locally known as the "dinky"). Until its consolidation with the New York Central line, the Pennsylvania operated through train specials via the branch line to Princeton

University football games. A special train yard was once located E of the station near the stadium. **In virtually original condition, the complex continues to serve large numbers of commuters.** . . .

[Exhibit B, Survey, Emphasis added]

The Princeton station remains as a functioning railroad station complex in virtually original condition that continues to serve large numbers of commuters. Historic architect Margaret Westfield has given us her opinion that the essential features of the site remain unchanged from 1984 when it was found eligible for state and federal historic site status. The state and national historic register listings provide compelling evidence of the significance of the Dinky station in our state and national history. As a site that has been a recognized historic site for almost three decades and that remains in virtually original condition, we believe it presumptively qualifies for historic site designation under the applicable sections of the Borough Code.

Importantly, the Princeton station complex satisfies two of four historic site criteria, “A” and “C” described in a National Register bulletin, “How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation.” This detailed bulletin is the source of all following quotations unless otherwise specified. It is also the source for Princeton Borough's briefer land-use ordinance 17A-118.7, “Criteria for designating historic sites and district.” For example, national criteria A and C are listed in the Borough's 17A-118.7a as criteria 1 and 3.

Criterion A: Pattern of Events

First, the station meets national criterion A, “Event”: connection with a “pattern of events or a historic trend that made a significant contribution to the development of a community.” The Dinky, with its station complex, was a key generator of industrial progress and economic growth for the town of Princeton. The Princeton line supported the transport, storage and distribution of commodities that included coal, fuel oil, and lumber. And it had the unique distinction of hosting 23,000 passengers attending the Harvard-Princeton game in 1923, with 42 trains and 298 railcars descending on the station and awaiting their return. Many passengers stayed overnight in their railcars. In 1904, when the station was still located at Blair Arch, the Yale-Princeton game drew a rail crowd of over 30,000 passengers.

It is noteworthy that both the passenger and freight stations have survived to this day, together with their canopy and their original high-level platform. Most Pennsylvania Railroad suburban stations were given high-level platforms as later renovations. These platforms allow passengers to board the train at train level, eliminating the need to climb stairs to get to the train cars. Although the Dinky or “PJ&B” is also a terminus, now offering only shuttle service to the main line, it formerly offered through service to New York and Philadelphia, especially for the University's football weekends. On many of those weekends, alumni arrived in private cars and spent the night on the sidings. Not surprisingly, given its historic association with the University, the Dinky is memorialized in the University's best-known college song: “We'll clear the track as we go back./Going back to Nassau Hall.”

The Princeton station, situated in a location integral to the town, has provided significant support for Princeton's cultural life. The University built McCarter Theatre in 1929 diagonally

across University Place from the Princeton Station partly to serve the Triangle Club. But easy access from New York City meant that actors could arrive and return by train. Many new shows tried out in Princeton before heading to Broadway. The current station's close proximity to McCarter continues to facilitate the arts in Princeton. Less well understood is the support the station provides for educational institutions other than Princeton University. It is within walking distance of the Princeton Theological Seminary and of the Institute for Advanced Study. Its proximity to Nassau Street, the Seminary, and the University makes it convenient for visitors but also a commuter destination for many who work at those locations. Finally, the station provides a walkable mass transit link to cities on the Northeast Corridor, making Princeton a desirable location for commuters to jobs in New York and Philadelphia.

Indeed, the National Register Bulletin lists, as one example of a site that meets criterion A: "A railroad station that served as the focus of a community's transportation system and commerce." The nomination of the Princeton Branch for state historic site status notes that the station complex is "an integral part of the townscape." The Princeton Branch line is currently 44th out of 150 New Jersey stations in ridership, with over 1,000 rides each weekday, a 28% increase since 2006. (Exhibit K(2)) A 2006 University-sponsored study showed that 50% of riders starting at the Dinky Station walked or biked to the station on weekdays, and 75% on weekends. Of those starting at Princeton Junction, 65% walked or biked from the Dinky to their Princeton destination on both weekdays and weekends. (Exhibit K(1))

Criterion C: Distinctive Design/Construction

The station complex also qualifies as historic under national criterion C, "Design/Construction." It embodies "the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction." Architect Alexander C. Shand (or persons working under his direction) designed the current station in the Collegiate Gothic style that had prevailed on Princeton's campus since 1896, when University trustees decided that all future building should use the English Gothic style. The passenger station and separate freight house are thus consistent with many nearby University buildings in both form and materials

The station complex is made up of a 1 1/2 story station (North Building) and its companion, the 1 1/2 story freight house (South Building.) These are well-proportioned, with clean lines, and are good examples of Collegiate Gothic architectural design. While this style is not uncommon for railroad buildings, the Princeton station building and associated freight building have unique qualities because they are constructed entirely of random coursed multi-colored slate stone quarried locally.

The window surrounds, sills, and gable end coping are constructed of carved limestone, the roof is slate, and the base of the building is tooled granite. Both the station and freight buildings have complex octagonal stone chimneys. The station also has several other unique elements. The transom windows on the east side of the passenger station are attractive and unusual. The copper gutters are faced at the ends with a raised shield divided into two sections that appear to symbolize the location of the terminus at Princeton University. The lengths of the copper gutters are segmented by raised equalized cross details, all demonstrating the care that was taken with the station design. (Gutter Detail Images, Exhibit D) Along with the raised

platform and the length and detail of the canopy, these elements distinguish the station from other branch stations that were given comparable ratings in the 1981 survey.¹¹

When the station was constructed in 1918, the Collegiate Gothic style already prevailed on Princeton's campus and was common among Pennsylvania Railroad stations. But the Dinky station features locally quarried multi-hued stone, which has subsequently been replicated in other University buildings. The station complex stands as an architectural anchor for the historic evolution of University Place. As is noted in the 1981 survey (Exhibit A), on University Place, between Blair Arch and the existing station, some of the neo-Gothic dormitories, constructed during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, use the same materials. McCarter Theatre, constructed in 1929, relates to the station complex through its multi-hued stone and limestone details. Hobe Baker Rink, constructed in the early 1920's and the second oldest hockey rink in the United States, uses the same multi-hued stone. So does the former University Store building at 22 University Place, which was constructed in the late 1950's to the north of the Princeton Branch station and south of Blair Arch.

In short, the Dinky complex shows both “a pattern of features common to a particular class of resources” and an “individuality or variation of features that occurs within the class.” Suggesting the importance of design in railroad stations built near this period, when Princeton Junction's terminal burned in the 1950s, it was rebuilt according to the original 1928 plans.

Additional Comments on Significance

A few more words are in order about criterion A, in this case the “pattern of events” that focuses on a site's connection with events that made a “significant contribution to the development of a community.” The National Register Bulletin describes how to evaluate a property's significance within this kind of historic context. Federally-listed areas of significance that apply to the Dinky include community planning and development, economics, engineering, performing arts, social history, and—especially—transportation, the theme under which the Dinky was added to the National Register.

Evaluating a property within its historic context means especially determining “what physical features the property must possess in order for it to reflect the significance of the historic context.” That is, an historic property must maintain its “integrity.” The National Register lists seven aspects of integrity, many of which are interrelated. We have already discussed the physical integrity of the site. To repeat, it is in “virtually original condition.” Materials and design, two more aspects of integrity, are related to another aspect, feeling: “Feeling . . . results from the presence of physical features that, taken together, convey the property's historic character.” The Dinky station does indeed retain the design features that convey its historic appearance and function. For a “railroad station that served as the focus of a community's transportation system and commerce,” “essential physical features” include the

¹¹ For example, the Waldwick, NJ station, which tied with the Princeton station for 148 points on the 1981 national survey, (Exhibit A) has no freight building and no canopy. (Exhibit A & [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Waldwick_\(NJT_station\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Waldwick_(NJT_station)))

Dinky passenger station and freight building, the high-level platform, and the iconic canopy which links the two buildings and holds the sign that identifies the station as Princeton Station.

Two additional aspects of integrity deserve mention: location and association. Over almost a century of operation in its current location, the Princeton Branch station has accumulated a rich history of association for this community, an association that is recognized and reinforced in canonical works of literature. For example, central characters in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *This Side of Paradise* and J.D. Salinger's *Franny and Zooey* wait for their dates at the Princeton Branch station. The station's location as an integral part of the townscape has fostered these and other associations.

Significantly, the current station, built of masonry like the Blair Arch station and designed to reflect and carry forward the Collegiate Gothic style, did not make a sharp break with the past but instead carried forward the accumulated rich history of associations with travel on the Princeton Line. In 1903, the Liberty Bell traveled from Philadelphia to Boston with a diversion to Princeton where it was on brief display on a flat car. (Wilmot p. 49, Exhibit F.) On March 3, 1913, Woodrow Wilson left his home and walked to the Blair Arch station "accompanied by a band and many townspeople" to board a special train to Washington for his inauguration. (Wilmot, 49-50, Exhibit F). Moses Taylor Pyne commuted to New York by special train from 1885 to 1921. (Wilmot, 50, Exhibit F) Over the years, many other famous people have boarded the Dinky from the current station, including—to name just a very few—Paul Robeson, Albert Einstein, Kurt Godel, George Kennan, John Nash and James Stewart. (Westfield at 4, Exhibit F-2). Institute for Advanced Study physicist Freeman Dyson said, in 2002, "I have been riding the Dinky for 54 years and find it soothing and reliable. I consider it a great privilege to be living at the one place in the United States that has decent train service." (Westfield, Exhibit F-2).

Conclusion

To preserve the historic integrity of the current station complex to the extent possible within your jurisdiction, we ask you to recommend that the station site demarcated by the boundaries shown on the HVE Map at Exhibit C be designated as a protected historic site under the Princeton Borough Code.

The Princeton Branch station is an historic resource that still serves its historic function and serves it well. The station history seems a microcosm of one and a half centuries of America's growth and prosperity—sometimes shortsighted growth, sometimes smart growth. Designating the station complex as a locally protected historic site will affirm the value our community places on a resource that holds so many memories and so much meaning for so many. The station has been part of the fabric of community life for almost a century, and the Dinky line has been a vital part of Princeton history for much longer.

Current plans to relocate the terminus do not negate the fact that the current terminus is a state and federal historic site. It continues as an integral and valued part of our townscape. It is in virtually original condition, and it continues to operate and serve Princetonians well. Even if your designation is not binding against development plans already insulated from ordinance changes, designation will stand as an expression of the value Princeton places on this historic

transportation asset. Your designation will also serve to preserve the historic features that remain after any relocation that may occur.

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