

Appendix D

NJ TRANSIT Pennsauken Junction Transit Center and Park & Ride
RiverLINE and Atlantic City Line
Pennsauken Township, Camden County, New Jersey

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION,
ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES**

APPENDIX D

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES FOR PENNSAUKEN ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

The purpose of this document is to supplement the analysis in the Environmental Assessment (EA).

Wetlands/Open Waters

Vegetation, soils, and hydrology were examined for evidence of wetland characteristics according to methodology outlined in the Federal Manual for Identifying and Delineating Jurisdictional Wetlands (Federal Interagency Committee on Wetland Delineation, 1989). Existing wetland maps and other published information were reviewed to determine the presence of mapped wetlands on and in the vicinity of the project site. New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Freshwater Wetlands Mapping identifies Palustrine, scrub-shrub/forested freshwater wetlands on the adjacent property to the south-southwest and modified/disturbed wetlands to the west (i.e., west and south of the railroads).

The field investigation identified and delineated a forested wetland complex located approximately 55-feet southwest of the footprint of the proposed improvements (i.e., southeast of the RiverLINE and southwest of the Atlantic City Line). The offsite wetland is anticipated to be classified as intermediate resource value wetlands and subject to standard 50-foot transition areas; however, the NJDEP will make the final determination regarding the resource value classification of the onsite wetlands. No additional wetlands or State open waters were identified on the site or on adjacent properties. No impacts to freshwater wetlands, wetland transition areas or State open waters will result from the proposed project; therefore, no permits will be required.

Soils/Geology

The northern one-third of the project site is located within the Freehold-Downer-Urban Land complex (FrpB) and Freehold-Downer, clayey substratum Urban land complex (FrpkB). The remaining two-thirds of the project site is located within Psammets soil unit. Soils in the project site reflect the existing dense development within the project vicinity. Urban land soils are typically associated with areas of low ecological significance/habitat value. No prime soils or high quality soils will be impacted as a result of the project. The mapped soil units include the following:

Freehold-Downer-Urban land complex, 0-5% slopes (FrpB and FrpkB)

Freehold-Downer-Urban land complex is mapped within the northern portion of the study area and constitute approximately one-half of the study area, primarily within the forested areas of the site. The Freehold-Downer-Urban land complex consists of deep, well-drained soils on uplands with moderate to moderately rapid permeability. The Downer soil series consists of very deep, well drained soils on uplands. Similarly, the Freehold soil series consist of deep, well-drained

soils on uplands. Urban Land is characterized by areas that have been cut or filled as a result of development and covered with an impervious surface, such as buildings or pavement. The original soil profile is often indistinguishable. Freehold-Downer-Urban land complex is not listed as a hydric soil.

Psamments, 0-3% slopes (PssA)

The Psamments soil unit consists of excessively drained to well-drained sandy fill land that has been smoothed. The depth of the fill ranges from 24-inches to 48-inches, but is typically about 36-inches in depth. Psamments contain hydric inclusions of Atsion, Berryland and Mullica soils.

Vegetation and Wildlife

Dominant vegetation identified within the forested areas includes black cherry (*Prunus serotina*, FACU), tree-of-heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*), and catalpa (*Catalpa bignonioides*, UPL) in the canopy; sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*, FACU-) and staghorn sumac (*Rhus typhina*) in the shrub layer; Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*, FAC-), Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*, FACU), blackberry species (*Rubus sp.*, NIS) and raspberry species (*Rubus sp.*) in the woody vine layer; and pokeweed (*Phytolacca americana*, FACU+), Queen Ann's lace, poison ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*, FAC) and goldenrod species (*Solidago sp.*). The maintained lawn area and adjacent forest edge contains white clover (*Trifolium repens*, FACU-), dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*, FACU-), common milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*, FACU-), ragweed (*Ambrosia artemisiifolia*, FACU), English plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*, UPL), Queen Ann's lace (*Daucus carota*), wild strawberry (*Fragaria virginiana*, FACU), and various grass species.

Endangered and Threatened Species

The New Jersey Natural Heritage Program (NHP) of the Office of Natural Lands Management was consulted for the project. The NHP maintains a database of documented sightings of threatened and endangered species. Their data also includes information from the Landscape Project. The Landscape Project developed landscape maps that identify critical rare species habitats based on land use classifications, documented rare species locations and habitat models linked to each of the rare, threatened or endangered species.

As stated in a letter dated August 27, 2008, the NHP has records of great blue heron (*Ardea Herodias*, Special Concern) and peregrine falcon (*Flaco peregrines*, State Endangered) on the project site. The NHP also has records of four species within one-mile of the subject site, including the bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*, State Endangered), black-crowned night-heron [*Nycticorax nycticorax*, State Threatened (breeding)/Special Concern (migratory)], shortnose sturgeon (*Acipenser brevirostrum*, Federally and State Endangered), and tidewater mucket (*Leptodea ochracea*, State Threatened). Additionally, the NHP has records of a freshwater tidal marsh complex and sixteen (16) occurrences of rare vascular plant species that may be present in the Camden USGS quadrangle.

According to NJDEP Landscape Project Mapping, the project site may contain suitable forested habitat for at least one non-listed, State priority species (Rank 2 Forest Habitat). Forested

wetland and forested habitat is also identified on adjacent properties located to the south and southwest (Rank 2).

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Historic Resources Analysis

In accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, an initiation document was submitted to the SHPO for concurrence with the Area of Potential Effects (APE) and the list of Consulting Parties and Resource Organizations. SHPO provided concurrence with the APE on March 13, 2009.

An intensive level architectural survey was conducted as part of the *Cultural Resource Investigation*, which identified six resources more than 50-years of age within the Area of Potential Effect (APE)-Architecture. Two of these resources have been previously determined eligible for the National Register:

- Delaware River Railroad & Bridge Company Historic District (DRRR&BCo.HD), presently known as ACRL; SHPO Opinion: November 12, 2004; and
- Camden & Amboy Railroad Main Line Historic District (C&ARRHD), presently RiverLine; SHPO Opinion: June 26, 1975; July 12, 1991; and October 4, 1991.

The remaining four resources that are over 50-years of age in the APE-Architecture include four dwellings, located along Bannard, Derosse, and Zimmerman Avenues and the former right-of-way of DRRR&BCo northbound railroad spur, lack historical and architectural significance; therefore, these resources are recommended not eligible for the National Register.

The proposed project will have an effect on the eligible C&ARRHD and DRRR&BCo.HD; however, as stated in the *Cultural Resource Investigation* report, the project "...will have a conditional no adverse effect on both districts, provided that the design of the respective stations and elevator/stair towers meet the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*". The design and materials for the proposed RiverLine station can be extracted from existing stations that were recently constructed along the RiverLine. Alternatively, the design of the original Delair Railroad Station, completed in 1886, can be utilized in the design of the proposed station. The original Delair Railroad Station included a hipped roof with large overhangs and exposed rafters. The design of the new station serving the ACRL is more flexible since no stations were historically erected along this railroad. The nearby Cherry Hill Station, constructed circa 1990, consists of a more modern design. A more context-sensitive approach could incorporate the physical characteristics of the eligible DRRR&BCo.HD, including coursed and rusticated ashlar, which are used on the abutments for the adjacent bridge.

The respective elevator/stair towers should be designed in concert with both stations and employ similarly appropriate materials, massing and style.

In addition to context sensitive design, a publicly accessible and easily visible interpretive sign may also be incorporated at one or both of the proposed stations to illustrate the history of the individual railroads, their impact on the growth and development of Delair, and former railroad-related resources along the right-of-way.

Environmental Justice

A summary of the Census data reviewed is provided on Table 1 and 2, below:

**Table 1A
Ethnic Composition for the Project Site and Immediate Vicinity**

Census Tract	White		Black / African American		American Indian / Alaska Native		Hawaiian or Pacific Islander		Asian		Other/2 or More races		Total Pop.
	pop	%	pop	%	pop	%	pop	%	pop	%	pop	%	
6028	1654	57.8	788	27.5	57	2.0	3	0.1	54	1.9	308	10.7	2775
6027.01	27	90	3	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	30
6027.03	1478	62.7	494	20.9	8	0.3	0	0	139	5.9	240	10.1	2285

Source: U.S. Census Data, 2000

Table 1B
Ethnic Composition for the Project Site and Immediate Vicinity

Census Tract	Hispanic or Latino (of any race)		Not Hispanic or Latino		Total Population
	pop	%	pop	%	
6028	479	16.7	2385	83.3	2864
6027.01	3	10	27	90	30
6027.03	355	15	2004	85	2359

Source: U.S. Census Data, 2000

Table 2
Median Household Income and Poverty Level

Census Tract	Median Household Income	Percent of Families Below Poverty Level
6028	\$41,232	7.7
6027.01	\$70,250	0.0
6027.03	\$59,519	3.0

Source: U.S. Census Data, 1999

Hazardous and Non-Hazardous Waste

The Phase I ESA consisted of a preliminary review and evaluation of environmental database records, historical aerial photographs, topographic maps, Sanborn maps, a city-directory search, and a drive-by inspection. Sampling of soil, air, or water was *not* conducted as part of the Phase I ESA.

Roux’s Preliminary Assessment identified an area of suspected fill material within the western portion of the project site. Suspected fill material, consisting of concrete and asphalt, was observed during the field investigation. In addition, a small (two-foot square) deteriorated, rebar-reinforced concrete foundation was also identified within the south-central portion of the property. According to available historic aerial photographs, railroad tracks may have formerly transected Block 1005, Lots 2 and 3, and Block 7004, Lot 4. The tracks connected with the existing Atlantic City Railroad Line and extended offsite to the north. Historic topographic maps confirmed the presence of the former railroad line on the project site. No buildings or other structures were identified on site; however, an area of disturbance (“lighter color ground”) was visible near the area of suspected fill.