

NORTH PHILADELPHIA STATION, MECHANICAL BUILDING
2900 North Broad Street, on the northwest corner of
Broad Street and Glenwood Avenue
Philadelphia
Philadelphia County
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-5958-B

HABS
PA
51-PHILA,
743B-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
Northeast Region
U.S. Custom House
200 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
NORTH PHILADELPHIA STATION, MECHANICAL BUILDING

HABS
PA
51-PHILA,
743B-

HABS No. PA-5958-B

Location: 2900 North Broad Street, on the northwest corner of Broad Street and Glenwood Avenue (bounded by Broad Street to the east, Indiana Avenue to the north, rail lines to the west, and Glenwood Avenue to the south) Philadelphia, Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania.

USGS Philadelphia Quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 18.487300.4427220

Significance: The Mechanical Building stands as part of the North Philadelphia Station whole. Constructed during the important 1912-1915 expansion phase, it functioned as an integrated component of the complex mechanical system that allowed through-freight, commuter rail lines, and long distance passenger trains to serve Philadelphia. As a structure dedicated to the service of station functions, the Mechanical Building is a significant component of the North Philadelphia Station complex.

Description: The Mechanical Building is a one story brick building located to the west of the Station Building and covered ramp. Designed for purely utilitarian functions, the building relates to the station complex as a whole in its use of Kittanning brick facing, and terra cotta and bluestone trim.

Set on a poured concrete foundation, the Mechanical Building is faced with Kittanning brick, the same used on the ground floor of the Station Building, and backed with standard red clay bricks. A low-pitch center gable roof is supported by a lattice girder truss system similar in construction to the Platform canopies. The cornice and coping at the parapet are terra cotta and box gutters are copper. The leaders were external but are no longer extant. Sodium halide flood lights are on corners and above the west elevation's north door. Plywood has been placed behind the lower portion of each window.

The west elevation, or primary facade, has a stacked terra cotta pediment at the line of the parapet. Five soldier-course splayed-arch window bays with bluestone slate sills, on both north and south elevations, contain thirty-five light steel industrial sash with eight light center pivot hoppers. One bay on the south elevation, the second easternmost, has been modified as a door passage - the top twenty lights remain. Another soldier course articulates a water table approximately three and one-half feet off of the ground, broken only by the sills of the windows. Door openings on the west elevation have been infilled with concrete masonry units and c.1970 metal doors and frames for access to a staff changing room.

NORTH PHILADELPHIA STATION, MECHANICAL BUILDING
HABS No. PA-5958-B
(Page 2)

elevation have been infilled with concrete masonry units and c.1970 metal doors and frames for access to a staff changing room.

History: This building was built in the 1912-1915 construction and adaptation campaign to handle mechanical functions previously contained on the ground floor (basement) of the Station Building.

The building has been adapted for various functions over time. Currently the east end houses electrical transformers for the switches and catenary lines. A small staff changing room has been constructed within the building with an entrance at the west elevation.

Sources: Richards, Frederick L. *Germantown Junction National Register Nomination*. March, 1992.
Historical Society of Pennsylvania - Philadelphia Record (v.7:1777), c.1915 Perkins Collection (vol.5c, p.65); c.1901
Library Company - Pa. RR: 1560, b,c; c.1930
Temple University Urban Archives - Box 438, Folder 18b; c.1915, 1922.
Pennsylvania State Archives - Bulletin Collection Penn Central Railroad Collection, M.G. 286

Graphic Documentation: See North Philadelphia Station, HABS No. PA-5958

Historians: Mark A. Bower and James T. Parkinson

Historic Preservation Group
Kise Franks & Straw
Summer 1994