

MARKET STREET ELEVATED RAILWAY, 63RD STREET STATION
Intersection of Market and 63rd Streets
Philadelphia
Philadelphia County
Pennaylvania

HAER No. PA-507-C

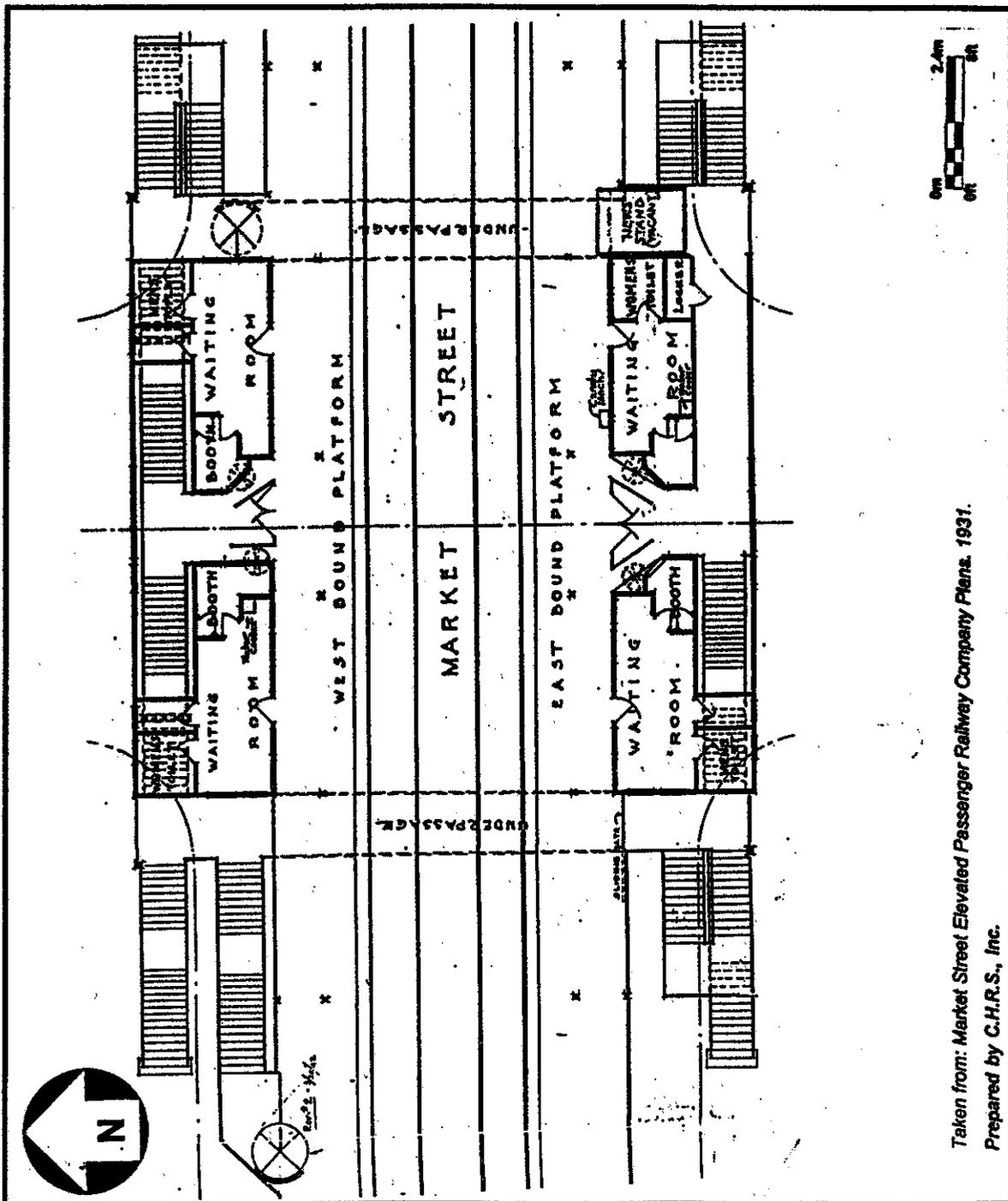
HAER
PA
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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
National Park Service
Philadelphia Support Office
U.S. Custom Houae
200 Cheatnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106

MARKET STREET ELEVATED RAILWAY, 63RD STREET STATION
 HAER NO. PA-507-C
 (PAGE 9)



Taken from: Market Street Elevated Passenger Railway Company Plans. 1931.
 Prepared by C.H.R.S., Inc.

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

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MARKET STREET ELEVATED RAILWAY, 63RD STREET STATION HAER NO. PA-507-C

Location: Intersection of Market and 63rd Streets
Philadelphia
Philadelphia County
Pennsylvania
USGS Quad: Lansdowne, PA and Philadelphia, PA 1:24,000
UTM Coordinates: 18.478894.4423429

Construction Date: 1907 - 1908

Builder: Philadelphia Rapid Transit Company

Chief Engineer: William S. Twining

Present Owner: Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority
1234 Market Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19107

Present Use: Market Street Elevated Railway Station

Significance: The 63rd Street Station is an elevated station located above the intersection of Market and 63rd Streets. An intermediary station along the elevated line, it enabled residents within a few-blocks radius as well as passengers transferring from trolley lines to commute on the Elevated to Center City, Philadelphia. The station is a contributing structure within the Market Street Elevated Railway Historic District. The station is significant historically for its role in the residential development of this part of West Philadelphia, and architecturally for its design. Like many of the other stations along the Elevated, the 63rd Street Station embodies the distinctive characteristics of a particular early twentieth-century architectural style. Similar to the 56th, 52nd, and 46th Street Stations located to the east, the 63rd Street Station exhibits classical and eclectic detailing. The eastbound and westbound platform buildings are enclosed with copper paneling and pilasters. Other features include metal balustrades with quatrefoil motifs, clerestory windows, and bracketed cornices.

Project Information Statement: The Market Street Elevated Railway between Millbourne Station in Delaware County and 46th Street Station in Philadelphia will be reconstructed. The project includes replacement of the Millbourne Station and the Market Street Elevated superstructure. Plans call for the reconstruction of the stations from 63rd Street to 46th Street, but efforts will be made to retain historic features where possible. To mitigate the adverse effect, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission stipulated HAER documentation of the existing structures. This documentation was undertaken to fulfill that stipulation.

Neeta Jitendra Desai
Cultural Heritage Research Services, Inc.
403 East Walnut Street
North Wales, PA 19454

INTRODUCTION

The Market Street Elevated Railway extends west-east along Market Street between 69th Street in Upper Darby Township, Delaware County, and 46th Street in the City of Philadelphia, Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania. Constructed between 1904 and 1908, the elevated structure is situated along Market Street between 63rd and 46th Streets. West of 63rd Street, the railway crosses Cobbs Creek, a waterway that forms the boundary between Philadelphia and Delaware Counties. From this point, the railway travels at ground level through Millbourne and terminates at the 69th Street Terminal in Upper Darby Township, Delaware County. The tracks and stations form part of the Market-Frankford Line, which is owned and operated by the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transit Authority (SEPTA), 1234 Market Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 19107.

The Market Street Elevated Railway (HAER No. PA-507) is composed of the Market Street Elevated superstructure, an associated substation (HAER No. PA-507-E), and the following railway stations: 69th Street Terminal (HAER No. PA-507-A); Millbourne Station (HAER No. PA-507-B); 63rd Street Station (HAER No. PA-507-C); 60th Street Station; 56th Street Station (HAER No. PA-507-D); 52nd Street Station (HAER No. PA-507-F); and 46th Street Station (HAER No. PA-507-G). The Market Street Elevated Railway Historic District, which consists of the Market Street Elevated Railway, was determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, historical significance and Criterion C, design/construction in August 1996.

The 63rd Street Station is an elevated station located above the intersection of Market and 63rd Streets. An intermediary station along the elevated line, it enabled residents within a few-blocks radius as well as passengers transferring from trolley lines to commute on the Elevated to Center City, Philadelphia. The station is a contributing structure within the Market Street Elevated Railway Historic District. The station is significant historically for its role in the residential development of this part of West Philadelphia, and architecturally for its design. Like many of the other stations along the Elevated, the 63rd Street Station embodies the distinctive characteristics of a particular early twentieth-century architectural style. Similar to the 56th, 52nd, and 46th Street Stations located to the east, the 63rd Street Station exhibits classical and eclectic detailing. The eastbound and westbound platform buildings are enclosed with copper paneling and pilasters. Other features include metal balustrades with quatrefoil motifs, clerestory windows, and bracketed cornices. Modern alterations include the construction of mezzanine levels, reconstruction of stairways, installation of modern token booths, and the application of metal over the original oak walls of the station interiors. Despite these changes, the 63rd Street Station represents a significant and distinguishable entity that has served residents of this part of West Philadelphia for nearly a century.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The 63rd Street Station in Philadelphia is the next station eastward along the Market Street line after Millbourne. At ground level, double tracks extend roughly 609.60 meters (2000 feet) between Millbourne and the 63rd Street Station. The elevated structure commences approximately 243.84 meters (800 feet) west of the intersection of 63rd and Market Streets, near a now-vacant Sears Roebuck building located on the northern side of the tracks. The station is located in a highly urbanized area flanked by rowhouses and commercial buildings.

The stations at 63rd, 56th, 52nd and 46th Streets share similar forms, massing and style. The 63rd Street Station is located at the intersection of Market and 63rd Streets. It contains east and westbound station buildings, shelters, reinforced concrete boarding platforms, and token-collection booths. The station buildings are set across from each other on a Warren deck truss network. Like the viaduct, the network is supported from below by steel pillars set upon concrete foundations. A reinforced-concrete-slab mezzanine is located beneath the station buildings and boarding platforms. This was installed at the station during the late twentieth century. Sheltered metal staircases, subdivided by landings, lead from the four corners of the 63rd and Market Streets' intersection to the platforms on the north and south sides of Market Street. The staircases and landings mimic the original arrangement but no longer contain historic features.

The east and westbound station buildings stand one-and-one-half stories tall, are rectangular in plan and measure approximately 17.37 meters (57 feet) long by 5.02 meters (16.5 feet) wide. They are capped by hipped roofs sheathed in tar and slag. Each is nine bays long and two bays wide. Historic features are present on the exterior of the westbound station. It is embellished with a Classical-style design consisting of longitudinal rectangular copper panels set upon a copper-paneled base. The panels are separated at regular intervals by fluted copper pilasters. The pilasters are capped by Classical-style copper brackets and a denticulated cornice. Sixteen rectangular clerestory windows are located beneath the cornice. The historic features on the exterior of the eastbound station have been covered with modern material but the clerestory windows are still evident.

The interiors of both station buildings are covered with modern metal siding. Unlike the other Elevated stations, where the token booths are located on the mezzanine level, the modern metal-and-glass token booth is located in the eastbound station building. Historic details are still present in some sections of the interior on both stations. Beaded vertical-board siding and rectangular panels are evident at the clerestory level.

Historic shelters shield a portion of both the east and westbound platforms. The roofs of the shelters extend out from the roofs of the station buildings. The shelters measure approximately 106.68 meters (350 feet) long and are supported by frames with light metal structural posts. The posts are placed roughly 6.09 meters (20 feet) apart and are joined to the shelter roof by metal lattice bracing. The bracing is joined to the shelter roof by metal brackets. The shelter ceiling is

constructed of wood boards strengthened by metal beams. The roofline of each shelter is accented by a simple cornice, and the roof is sheathed in asphalt.

The northern and southern edges of the platforms are protected by metal rails with round balusters. In some of the sheltered areas of the platform, modern chain link fencing extends from the rails to the shelter roof. The historic rails are accented by spandrel panels pierced by quatrefoils. Modern rails are also present along the platform edges and contain no decorative panels.

Switching stations are located on the east and westbound platforms. The eastbound switching station is modern, but the westbound switching station is historic. The historic station is a one-story, rectangular-plan building set at the far east end of the platform. The building is sheathed in vertical-board siding, and is capped by an asphalt-covered hipped roof. The sides are embellished with rectangular asbestos-wood panels, and are pierced by multi-pane windows and a modern door.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

By the summer of 1906 the Elevated's superstructure was completed, and work on the stations commenced. Stations along the Market Street Elevated were designed according to high architectural and efficiency standards. The first section of the railway was laid at ground level in Upper Darby Township, Delaware County. Prior to completion of the subway-elevated system, Philadelphia Rapid Transit (PRT) joined forces with two suburban surface and rail companies to erect a large terminal that would connect the Market Street line with electric lines and railways that tapped portions of Delaware, Montgomery and Chester Counties (Anonymous 1908).

Like those at grade level (Millbourne Station and 69th Street Terminal), stations erected in West Philadelphia along the Market Street Elevated superstructure were also planned with the highest efficiency standards. Local law dictated that stations be placed 0.80 kilometers (1/2 mile) apart on average. Eight stations, therefore, were built, located at the intersections of West Market Street and 63rd, 60th, 56th, 52nd, 46th, 40th, 36th and 32nd Streets (Anonymous 1908).

The elevated stations were uniformly designed in the Classical manner that was popular during the early 1900s. Station buildings, located on both the east and westbound platforms, housed waiting rooms, men's and women's toilets, token booths and locker areas. Amenities such as water coolers and candy machines were also provided. Turnstiles and sliding gates provided entry and egress to and from the platforms. The buildings themselves measured approximately 17.37 meters (57 feet) across by 5.02 meters (16.5 feet) deep, not including exit stiles and stair landings (Philadelphia Rapid Transit Company 1931).

The stations were designed as steel-frame buildings capped by hipped roofs. The exterior facades were sheathed in Classical-style copper paneling, pilasters and molding. The facades were punctuated by double-hung sash and clerestory windows. The eaves were embellished with copper lion heads placed at regular intervals around the roofline. The station interiors were sheathed in oak paneling. Each building was equipped with lights, a waiting room heated by electricity, and toilet facilities with tiled floors, wainscoting and modern plumbing. Shelters supported by bracketed structural posts extended along reinforced concrete platforms. Metal rails embellished with quatrefoil spandrel panels flanked the outer edges of both platforms. Access to each station was provided by staircases located at the four corners of each intersection. The staircases were subdivided by landings that were capped by tin-clad flat and pyramidal roofs with galvanized iron trimmings. The stair rails were also embellished with quatrefoil spandrel panels. Steel cross passages were also provided at every station. These features enabled passengers to safely move between east and westbound stations above the busy intersections (Evening Bulletin 1907; Philadelphia Rapid Transit Company 1905). Much of the decorative metal work and structural elements that adorned and supported the stations were produced by Belmont Iron Works of Philadelphia (Philadelphia Rapid Transit Company 1905).

SOURCES OF INFORMATION/BIBLIOGRAPHY

Engineering Drawings

Philadelphia Rapid Transit Company. "Market Street Elevated Passenger Railway Company Plans." 1905. On file at Frederic R. Harris, Inc., Philadelphia, PA. Soon to be on file at the City of Philadelphia Archives, Philadelphia, PA.

. "Market Street Elevated Passenger Railway Company Plans." 1931. On file at Frederic R. Harris, Inc., Philadelphia, PA. Soon to be on file at the City of Philadelphia Archives, Philadelphia, PA.

Secondary Sources

Anonymous. *Philadelphia's Rapid Transit: Being an Account of the Construction and Equipment of the Market Street Subway-Elevated and Its Place in the Great System and Service of the Philadelphia Rapid Transit Company Together with a Review of the Millard Construction Co.* Philadelphia: Arnold & Dyer, 1908.

Rachleff, Allison, and Mary Daughtrey. *Historic Resources Survey and Determination of Eligibility Report: Market Street Elevated Reconstruction Project, Borough of Millbourne and City of Philadelphia, Delaware and Philadelphia Counties, Pennsylvania.* Report prepared for the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority. Report prepared by Cultural Heritage Research Services, Inc., North Wales, PA. 1996

Newspapers

Evening Bulletin, March 7, 1907. "Features of New 'L' Opened To-day."

Additional Resources

A large collection of historic photographs is located at the Urban Archives, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA. These photos are of stations and the superstructure, construction of the line, as well as the dismantling of the Schuylkill River to 46th Street portion of the Elevated.

Cox, Harold E. *The Road from Upper Darby.* New York: Electric Railroaders' Association, Inc., 1967.

