

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM**

NR Eligible: yes    
no

Property Name: Baltimore & Potomac RR, W. Mulberry Street Bridge Inventory Number: B-5164-1  
 Address: Bridge over West Mulberry Street, south of the West Baltimore Historic district: yes  no  
MARC Station  
 City: Baltimore Zip Code: 21223 County: Baltimore City  
 USGS Quadrangle(s): Baltimore West  
 Property Owner: Not Available Tax Account ID Number: N/A  
 Tax Map Parcel Number(s): N/A Tax Map Number: N/A  
 Project: Baltimore & Potomac Tunnel Project Agency: Federal Railroad Administration  
 Agency Prepared By: RK&K  
 Preparer's Name: Philip A. Hayden Date Prepared: 9/11/2015  
 Documentation is presented in: Proquest Historical Newspapers, Proquest Sanborn Maps  
 Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation: Eligibility recommended  Eligibility not recommended  
 Criteria: A B C D Considerations: A B C D E F G  
*Complete if the property is a contributing or non-contributing resource to a NR district/property:*  
 Name of the District/Property: Baltimore & Potomac RR  
 Inventory Number: B-5164 Eligible:  yes Listed: yes  
 Site visit by MHT Staff yes  no Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Property and Justification: *(Please attach map and photo)*

Opening Summary

This documentation expands upon a Determination of Eligibility (DOE) Form completed for the Baltimore & Potomac (B&P) Railroad section of the Philadelphia, Baltimore & Washington (PB&W) Railroad in Baltimore City (B-5164; MHT Eligible: 9/11/2012), which identified the West Mulberry Street Bridge as a contributing resource. The purpose of this form is to present additional background information and consider the potential individual eligibility of the West Mulberry Street Under-grade Bridge for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

Architectural Description

Completed in 1953, the skewed, reinforced concrete and steel stringer bridge carries four elevated tracks of the PB&W Railroad (former Pennsylvania Railroad [Penn Railroad] main line; Amtrak Northeast Corridor) over a partially depressed section of West Mulberry Street, located just southwest of the West Baltimore MARC Station. The sub-structure features simple concrete

<b>MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW</b>	
Eligibility recommended <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Eligibility not recommended <input type="checkbox"/>
Criteria: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D	Considerations: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> G
MHT Comments: <u>Not eligible individually; contributes to Midtown Edmondson</u> <u>CONTRIBUTES TO P. B &amp; W RR (B-5164)</u> <span style="float: right;">HD</span>	
<u>Jim Jarlman</u> Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services	<u>9/22/15</u> Date
<u>[Signature]</u> Reviewer, National Register Program	<u>9/24/15</u> Date

abutments and sloped wing-walls with widely-spaced, deep horizontal grooves incised into each face. The super-structure consists of closely set sections of pre-fabricated steel I-beam stringers forming a solid ballasted deck. Both fascia stringers are concrete encased with a pronounced sill and broad covered overhang, one deeply incised horizontal groove, and a recessed impression of the Penn Railroad's keystone corporate logo. Plain concrete buttresses at each of the bridge's four corners rise from the base of the abutments to form simple newels with rounded terminals at the ends of the structure's solid concrete balustrades. The newels are similarly incised with deep vertical grooves. The overall appearance of the bridge has the streamlined aesthetics of the Art Déco style, and it appears to remain in an excellent state of preservation, with all of its original materials and finishes still intact.

Historic Context

Beginning in the 1860s, the powerful and influential Pennsylvania Railroad (Penn Railroad), recognizing the need to compete directly with the Baltimore & Ohio (B&O) Railroad by establishing its own links to Baltimore, Washington, D.C., and points south, pursued several plans to achieve its aims. It secured control of the Northern Central (NC) Railroad between Harrisburg and Baltimore via York, Pennsylvania. It also obtained the charter for a small agricultural line called the Baltimore & Potomac (B&P) Railroad, assumed the charter of the unbuilt Union Railroad of Baltimore, and acquired track rights over the Philadelphia, Wilmington & Baltimore (PW&B) Railroad. By stitching together these links, the Penn RR was able to create a network of direct all-rail routes between its main trunk line across central Pennsylvania and the nation's principal political and economic centers in New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington, D.C., securing the railroad's position as one of the country's largest industrial concerns (Wrabel 1995).

The plan required extensive engineering in Baltimore, where the various railroads terminated. This work included construction of the B&P Railroad Tunnel and Union Railroad Tunnel to connect the routes from Washington and Philadelphia and extensive cuts and fills to carry the tracks across key county and city streets. Through service over the new system opened in 1873 (Wrabel 1995: 19, 21). In 1902, the Penn Railroad consolidated the B&P, Union, and PW&B Railroads (which it ultimately acquired) into a single corporate subsidiary named the Philadelphia, Baltimore, & Washington (PB&W) Railroad.

Until the early 1950s, the Penn Railroad's main line blocked the alignment of West Mulberry Street with a raised earthen embankment (Sanborn Map Company 1914). But the extension of the city's corporate boundaries, increasing development, and the rise in the use of the automobile, led planners to improve the state highway system, in particular the Baltimore National Pike (Route 40). This included widening and realigning sections of West Franklin Street and West Mulberry Street near the city's western outskirts into dedicated one-way approaches to and from the highway. West of the railroad crossing, West Franklin Street was widened and rebuilt to accommodate dualized east-west traffic. East of the tracks, West Franklin Street carried only westbound traffic, while West Mulberry Street was extended on a diagonal trajectory beneath the elevated railroad embankment and tied into West Franklin Street to handle all eastbound traffic (Sanborn Map Company, 1952; USGS 1953, 1956). To accomplish the crossing, the railroad excavated the existing embankment and inserted a new reinforced concrete and steel stringer bridge to carry the four-track main line over the new roadway.

The design of the bridge responded to the conditions of the site and the operational needs of the railroad. A large vertical seam in the middle of each abutment wall indicates that builders erected the sub-structure in two phases, allowing for continuous rail service on at least two tracks during construction. When completed, the builders erected wooden cribbing and filled the newly created cut in the embankment to facilitate the installation of prefabricated sections of the steel stringer super-structure. While railroad cranes lifted the existing track, each section of bridge was rolled into place (Baltimore Sun 1953). The finished concrete abutments, wingwalls, fascia stringers, buttresses, balustrades and newels, decorated simply with incised grooves reminiscent of the railroad's pinstrip livery on its locomotives and rolling stock, imparted an image of streamlined modernity to the structure. An impressed keystone, the railroad's corporate logo, located in the center of each fascia stringer, helped identify and advertise the

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MHT Comments:													
_____ Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services							_____ Date						
_____ Reviewer, National Register Program							_____ Date						

railroad to passing motorists while associating the company with modern improvements and, by extension, with swift, safe travel.

Statement of Significance/Justification

Constructed by the Penn Railroad in 1953 to accommodate a new roadway alignment beneath its busy Baltimore-to-Washington main line, the West Mulberry Street Bridge was a late and largely unremarkable example of mid-twentieth century bridge construction associated primarily with improvements to Route 40. The structure alone lacks significance to the broader history of transportation and engineering (Criterion A), and it is not associated with the lives of persons identified as important in the past (Criterion B). Possessed with a high degree of original integrity, the West Mulberry Street Bridge is nevertheless a common form, lacking distinction in type, period, or method of construction, and it does not represent the work of a master (Criterion C). Individually, the resource does not possess the requisite significance under the NRHP Criteria and is therefore recommended not eligible individually for listing in the NRHP. With respect to the NRHP-eligible Baltimore & Potomac (B&P) Railroad (B-5164), the West Mulberry Street Bridge was constructed by the operating railroad company during the eligible historic property's period of significance and retains a high degree of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. Therefore, while the West Mulberry Street Bridge is not individually eligible, it remains a contributing resource to the NRHP-eligible B&P Railroad (B-5164).

The resource has not been evaluated under Criterion D.

Bibliography

Baltimore Sun

1953 Photograph, Penn R.R. Mulberry Street Underpass by Ellis Malashuk, August 29, 1953 [PHOTO bgo-693]. Electronic document, http://www.ebay.com/usr/newspaperphotographs, accessed August 26, 2015.

Sanborn Map Company

1914 Insurance Maps of Baltimore Maryland, Vol. 2 (Sheet 138) Sanborn Map Company, New York, New York.
1956 Insurance Maps of Baltimore Maryland, Vol. 2 (Sheet 138) Sanborn Map Company, New York, New York.

USGS

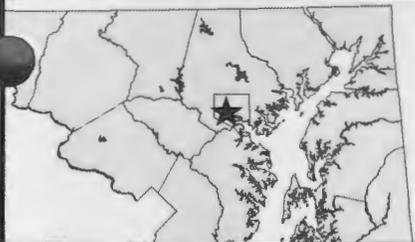
1953 7.5' Quadrangle, Baltimore West and East.
1956 7.5' Quadrangle, Baltimore West and East.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW
Eligibility recommended Eligibility not recommended
Criteria: A B C D Considerations: A B C D E F G
MHT Comments:
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services Date
Reviewer, National Register Program Date

# Baltimore & Potomac (B&P) Railroad, West Mulberry Street Bridge (B-5164-1) Baltimore, Maryland



USGS Baltimore West  
Quadrangle 7.5 minute series



0 1,750 3,500 7,000 Feet

## Location Map

Date: September 2015

# Baltimore & Potomac (B&P) Railroad, West Mulberry Street Bridge (B-5164-1)

Baltimore, Maryland



USGS Baltimore West  
Quadrangle 7.5 minute series



0 250 500 1,000 Feet

## Location Map

Date: September 2015

# Baltimore & Potomac (B&P) Railroad, West Mulberry Street Bridge (B-5164-1)

Baltimore, Maryland



0 50 100 200 Feet

## Location Map

Date: September 2015

**Photo Log**  
**MIHP# B-5164-1**

Baltimore & Potomac (B&P) Railroad, West Mulberry Street Bridge  
Bridge over West Mulberry Street, south of the West Baltimore MARC Station  
Baltimore, Maryland 21223

Photographers: Elizabeth Fagan & Philip Hayden  
Dates: August 10, 2015 & August 25, 2015

#	Digital Image File Name	Description of View
1	B-5164-1_2015-08-10_01.tif	Overview, West Mulberry Street Bridge depicting east elevation, looking west.
2	B-5164-1_2015-08-10_02.tif	Overview, West Mulberry Street Bridge depicting west elevation, looking east. Note keystone logo in center of fascia stringer.
3	B-5164-1_2015-08-25_03.tif	Detail, West Mulberry Street Bridge deck looking southwest.
4	B-5164-1_2015-08-25_04.tif	Detail, West Mulberry Street Bridge abutment depicting phased construction seam (center) and deck stringers, looking southwest.

**Prints:**

Processing – RA-4

Paper – Fujicolor Crystal Archive Professional Paper (Super Type CN)

**DVD-R Gold:**

Verbatim, UltraLife Gold, Metal Azo dyes



B-5164-1

Baltimore + Potomac (B+P) Railroad, West  
Mulberry Street Bridge

Baltimore, MD

Elizabeth Fagan

AUGUST 10, 2015

Overview, West Mulberry Street Bridge  
depicting east elevation, looking west.

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MD SHPO



B-5164-1

Baltimore + Potomac (B&P) Railroad, West  
Mulberry Street Bridge

Baltimore, MD

Elizabeth Fagan

August 10, 2015

Overview, west Mulberry Street Bridge,  
depicting west elevation, looking east,  
Note keystone logo in center of fascia  
stringer.

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MD SHPO



B-5164-1

Baltimore + Potomac (B+P) Railroad, West  
Mulberry Street Bridge

Baltimore, MD

Philip Hayden

August 25, 2015

Detail, West Mulberry Street Bridge deck  
looking southwest.

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MD SHPO



B-5164-1

Baltimore + Potomac (B+P) Railroad, west  
Mulberry Street Bridge

Baltimore, MD

Philip Hayden

August 25, 2015

Detail, west Mulberry Street Bridge  
abutment depicting phased construction  
seam (center) and deck stringers, looking  
southwest.

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MD SHPO