Form No. 10-300 REV. (9/77) UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE RECEIVED NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES JAN 3 CY. INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM DATE ENTERED SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS NAME HISTORIC The Great Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge The Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge 2 LOCATION spand STREET & NUMBER The Hudson River NOT FOR PUBLICATION CITY, TOWN CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT Poughkeepsie/Highland VICINITY OF 25th CODE CODE 027/111 Dutchess/Illster 036 New York 3 CLASSIFICATION **OWNERSHIP** CATEGORY STATUS **PRESENT USE** __DISTRICT _PUBLIC _OCCUPIED _AGRICULTURE __MUSEUM _BUILDING(S) XPRIVATE XUNOCCUPIED _COMMERCIAL _PARK XSTRUCTURE _WORK IN PROGRESS _вотн _EDUCATIONAL __PRIVATE RESIDENCE _SITE **PUBLIC ACQUISITION ACCESSIBLE** __RELIGIOUS __ENTERTAINMENT OBJECT XYES: RESTRICTED IN PROCESS __GOVERNMENT _SCIENTIFIC XTRANSPORTATION BEING CONSIDERED __YES: UNRESTRICTED _INDUSTRIAL X OTHER a bandnd _NO _MILITARY OWNER OF PROPERTY NAME Consolidated Rail Corporation STREET & NUMBER Penn Center Plaza CITY, TOWN STATE Philadelphia Pennsylvania LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION COURTHOUSE. REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Dutchess County Office Building (Records Room) STREET & NUMBER 22 Market Street CITY, TOWN STATE Poughkeepsie New York REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS TITLE Historic Resources of the Hudson __FEDERAL XSTATE __COUNTY __LOCAL January 1969 **DEPOSITORY FOR** SURVEY RECORDS Hudson River Valley Commission CITY, TOWN STATE Albany New York



CONDITION

__EXCELLENT __DETERIORATED __GOOD __RUINS __UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

_UNALTERED

CHECK ONE

XORIGINAL SITE
__MOVED DATE_____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge crosses the Hudson River at a point approximately equidistant from New York Cityand Albany.

The over-all length of the Poughkeepsie bridge, including approaches, is 6,767 feet, divided as follows into three major parts: the Poughkeepsie approach, four deck-girder and 21 Warren deck-truss spans, 2,640 feet; river crossing, seven deck-truss spans, 3,094 feet; Ulster County approach, nine Warren deck-truss spans and one deck-girder, 1,033 feet. minimum clear height, between mean high water and the bottom of the deepest truss, is 130 feet, while the total height from foundation to base of rail is 342 feet. The seven trusses of the river crossing are arranged symmetrically about a central pair of cantilevers and a suspended span, the three together having a length of 546 feet. From end to center span on each side there are, in order, an anchor span 201 feet long, a pair of cantilevers and a floating span together 548 feet long, and a connecting simple span 525 feet long and 88 feet deep. (Condit, American Building Art, p. 313).

The Ulster County approach, on the west, is characterized by woodland, while the Poughkeepsie approach, on the east, is urban residential.

The bridge is riveted steel. The first and sixth piers, on the west and east shores, respectively, are concrete. However, the four river piers consist of a timber crib and grillage (115 feet x 100 feet) filled with concrete and broken stone, surmounted by rock-faced granite blocks (40 feet x 80 feet). The 180-foot trestles, with lattice bracing, rest on the river piers; their counterparts over land diminish in size until the track meets ground. Originally double-tracked, the bridge was subsequently gauntleted (1917-1918), and later, a single track was laid (1959) for increased stability against eccentric loading. The road bed is comprised of steel rails laid over wooden cross ties which are attached to the bridge superstructure of spans and viaducts. On either side is wooden plank decking, laid longitudinally. Two simple iron railings delimit the bridge.

The bridge has been unused since May 8, 1974, when a fire caused substantial damage to a portion of the deck.

PERIOD AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW __PREHISTORIC __ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC __COMMUNITY PLANNING _LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE __RELIGION __1400-1499 __ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC __CONSERVATION __LAW __SCIENCE __1500-1599 __AGRICULTURE __ECONOMICS __LITERATURE __SCULPTURE __1600-1699 _ARCHITECTURE _EDUCATION __MILITARY _SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN __1700-1799 __ART XENGINEERING _THEATER __MUSIC X_1800-1899 __COMMERCE _EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT XTRANSPORTATION __PHILOSOPHY. _1900-__COMMUNICATIONS _INDUSTRY __POLITICS/GOVERNMENT __OTHER (SPECIFY) __INVENTION

SPECIFIC DATES 1876-1888

BUILDER/ARCHITECT John F. O'Rourke, chief eng.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The building of the Great Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge encountered both political and physical obstacles. However, two respected and powerful Poughkeepsians were able to persuade individuals to subscribe, bridge companies to take the contracts and the State Legislature to renew the charter, during the twelve years that it took to see the bridge to completion. As a result, the Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge was "one of the great bridges of the [nineteenth] century" (Condit, p. 157), a significant transportation achievement and a symbol of progress to Poughkeepsians.

The 1860's was a progressive era in Poughkeepsie. The river front was crowded with a variety of industries, real estate was booming, the country's first sand filtration water system was being designed, New York Central was improving the successful east shore railroad, and final-the Poughkeepsie and Eastern Railroad became a reality. Soon after the latter was complete, the possibility of a bridge spanning the Hudson River was suggested.

As early as 1868, John I. Platt, editor of the <u>Poughkeepsie Eagle</u>, published an article promoting the bridge, bringing the idea to public attention. The importance of such a bridge was two-fold: to introduce a crossing over the Hudson between New York City and Albany, and by doing so, to lure the nation's vast coal supply from the Pennsylvania mines through Poughkeepsie to the industries of New England. By 1871, Poughkeepsie's charismatic mayor, Harvey G. Eastman, founder and president of Eastman Business School, had joined the crusade and, together with Platt and P. P. Dickinson, engineer, he drafted a charter for the bridge company, which became law on May 11, 1871. Among the incorporators were many notable Poughkeepsians, including Platt, Eastman and Matthew Vassar, founder of Vassar College.

From the onset, political and economic difficulties hampered the construction of the bridge. During the first year, an amendment to the charter was necessary to change the design from a suspension to a cantilever bridge. This was accomplished in the face of great controversy; boatmen feared that the bridge piers would cause serious accidents. In

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRA	APHICAL REFER	ENCES		
Condit, Carl W. Ame	erican Building A	rt: The	Nineteenth C	entury. New Yor
Oxford Universi	ty Press, 1960.			· New 101
O'Rourke, John F. " iety of Enginee New York.	'On Poughkeepsie ers, 1888, Adrian	Bridge." ace Memor	A Study for ial Library,	the American So Poughkeepsie,
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11 FORM PREPARED	BY Townley McE1	hiney Sha	rp, Consulta	ant
NAME/TITLE Historic Ar	chitecture & Dec	orative A	rts Consulta	ants, Hurley, N.
Edited by: Raymond ORGANIZATION	Smith, Hist. Pr	og. Analy	DATE	
Div. for Historic	Preservation, Pa	rks and R		
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12 STATE HISTORIC	PRESERVATION	OFFICER	R CERTIFICA	TION
THE EVALU	ATED SIGNIFICANCE OF TH		WITHIN THE STATE	IS:
NATIONAL	STATE_	<u>X</u>	LOCAL_	
As the designated State Historic Pro- hereby nominate this property for in- criteria and procedures set forth by	inclusion in the National Reg the National Park Service.			
	toric Preservati	on Field	Services	12/20/20
FOR NPS USE ONLY			buleau	12/2/1/1
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS I	PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN	THE NATIONA	L REGISTER	
1 Marla	26ferra	3	DATE	2.23.79
ATTEST:	REGISTER		DATE	2.23.79 Seb. 23,1979
CHIEF OF REGISTRATION	-		DATE	166, 23, 1974

Form No. 10-300a (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED JAN 3	1979
DATE ENTERED	FEB 2 3 1979

The Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge Hudson River Dutchess/Ulster New York
CONTINUATION SHEET ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

the course of events, Harvey Eastman was elected to the State Assembly to insure passage of the amendment. Next, the incorporators sought funds to inaugurate the project. At this same time, the Pennsylvania Railroad was investigating an expeditious route to New England, and upon John Platt's persuasion, agreed to subscribe to the bridge stock. J. Edgar Thompson, president of the railroad, and A. J. Dennis, chairman of the investigation committee, bought \$1,100,00 worth of stock, which was well over half of the total project cost. In September, 1873, a board of directors, forming the Poughkeepsie Bridge Company, was elected, including Thompson, Dennis, Platt, Eastman and Andrew Carnegie, the steel magnate of Pittsburgh. Soon after, a gala celebration was held. Not only the prominent members of the board, but also the mayors of Boston and Hartford and the governor of Connecticut were in attendance. However, under the strain of the financial Panic of 1873 and the death of J. Edgar Thompson, a major share holder, the scheme collapsed.

After Thompson's death and the subsequent withdrawal of the Pennsylvania Railroad, Eastman and Platt sought backing for the bridge in New England. In 1875, a committee from the Boston Chamber of Commerce visited Poughkeepsie, studied the proposition and agreed to the plans. Bridge companies showed interest in the project once again, and the American Bridge Company of Chicago was contracted to raise money and undertake the construction. Finally, building began on November 14, 1876. During the ensuing two years, work on the river piers was commenced, but the enterprise was again abandoned as the result of construction and financial difficulties, which caused the demise of the American Bridge Company.

Although Harvey Eastman died in 1878, the Poughkeepsie boosters never lost sight of their plans. They succeeded in extending the completion deadline from 1879, to 1883, and later to 1888. In 1886, the Manhattan Bridge Building Company was organized to finance the construction. Among the prominent backers was Henry Clay Frick, the coal tycoon and associate of Andrew Carnegie. The Union Bridge Company, which had completed the cantilever bridge at Niagara, was subcontracted to build the Poughkeepsie structure. Dawson, Symmes and Usher were the foundation engineers, while John F. O'Rourke, P. P. Dickinson and Arthur B. Paine were the structural engineers.

Form No. 10-300a (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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DATE ENTER		FEB 23 1979

The Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge Hudson River Dutchess/Ulster New York

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

Work did not begin until October of 1886, necessitating another extension for the completion deadline.

Against this the most determined opposition sprang up on the part of boatmen, rival cities and the Storm King Bridge promoters. All the newspapers of Albany and Troy and most of those in New York joined this movement, and the New York Chamber of Commerce, the Board of Trade and Transportation, the Produce Exchange and other bodies, sent representatives to Albany to lobby in favor of a bill...to repeal the act of 1872 and compel the removal of the piers already partly built. (Platt, <u>History of Poughkeepsie</u>, p. 228)

Once again, the bridge promoters met the challenge. This time, John I. Platt was a member of the Assembly and successfully defeated the opposition's arguments. Another bill providing an extension was signed by the governor in the summer of 1888, just two months before the last pin was driven into the bridge. Although the structure was finished on August 29, 1888, the approaches were not completed until later that year, and the first train did not cross until December 29th.

Just as the boosters of the Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge had overcome great political and economic odds to see the enterprise to completion, the engineers found innovative solutions to the physical obstacles. They "faced every kind of difficulty in the extreme: a deep, wide tidal river, great depth of bearing rock, height of the palisades which fixed the level of the deck, and sheer length of the whole structure." (Condit, p. 158) The depth of bedrock and high tides of the Hudson River required the construction of 155-foot piers, which had to be sunk to a depth of 125 feet below the water. This necessitated partial construction above water, an elaborate floating procedure and further construction under the water. By the same token, the height of the river's bluffs resulted in a trestle approximately 180 feet high. Furthermore, the bridge's "total length of over a mile was a record for a steel structure, as was the 548-foot length of its channel span." (Condit, p. 158)

The Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge not only signifies political, economic and engineering achievement in the face of adversity, but also the

Form No. 10-300a (Hev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

ISTORIC PLACES DATE ENTERED FEB 2 3 1979

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

The Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge Hudson River Dutchess/Ulster New York

CONTINUATION SHEET

New Jersey.

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE

aggressive, persistent spirit of Poughkeepsie's nineteenth—century entrepreneurs, and illustrates "a farsighted appraisal of its potential importance." (Condit, p. 158) The building of the bridge was an attempt to
tie the nation's resources to regional centers of industry, as evidenced
by the involvement of powerful nineteenth-century political leaders and
businessmen from New York, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Connecticut and

Form No. 10-300a (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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DATE ENTERED		FEB	23	1979

The Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge Hudson River Dutchess/Ulster New York

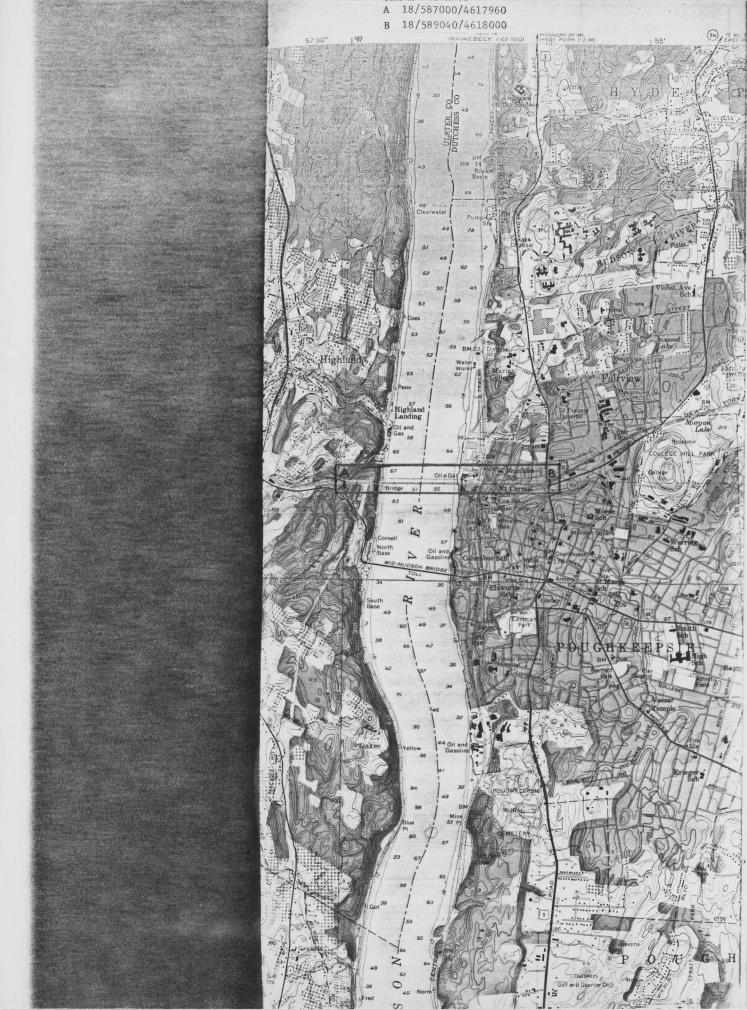
CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9

PAGE 2

Platt, Edmund. The Eagle's History of Poughkeepsie from the Earliest Settlements, 1683 to 1905. Poughkeepsie: Platt and Platt, 1905.

Research File: New York State Division for Historic Preservation, Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau, Albany, New York.



United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

		Name of Property	
		County and State	
mber	Page	Name of multiple property listing (if applicable	
	CAPIOLECNE		
Dut	ghkeepsie Railroad Bridge chess County, NEW YORK 001577		
Pou Jus	NYSHPO requested the level of sig ghkeepsie Railroad Bridge to be ra tification for the change has been ormation is attached.	ised to National.	
	ional Park Service Certification	=======================================	
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Property the Great Paughkoepine Rail	roll Bridge
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National Register Write-up Federal Register Entry Send-back Re-submit	Entered <u>FEB 2 3 1979</u>

United States Department of the Interior - Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

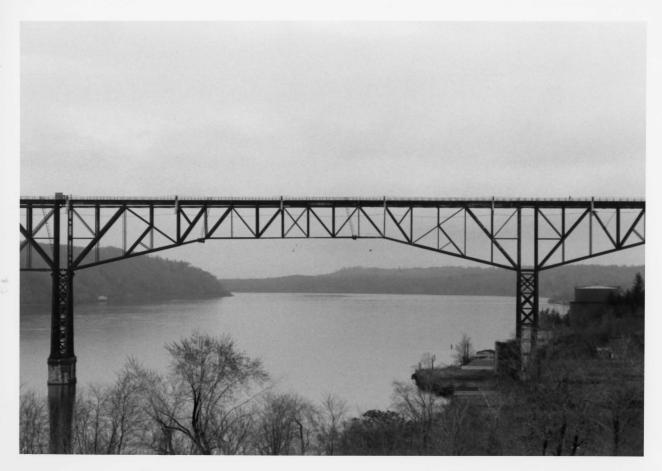
REQUESTED ACTION: ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION
PROPERTY Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge NAME:
MULTIPLE NAME:
STATE & COUNTY: NEW YORK, Dutchess
DATE RECEIVED: 05/19/08 DATE OF PENDING LIST: DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 7/3/08 DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:
REFERENCE NUMBER: 79001577
NOMINATOR: FEDERAL
REASONS FOR REVIEW:
APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL:
COMMENT WAIVER:N
ACCEPTRETURNREJECTDATE
ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:
RECOM./CRITERIA
RECOM./CRITERIA DISCIPLINE
REVIEWERDISCIPLINE

Service.



POUGHKEEPSIE RAILROAD BRIDGE
Location: Hudson RiverDutchess/Ulst, NY
Credit: L. Corwin Sharp, HADAC, 1978
Neg. filed: N.Y.S. Div. for Historic
Preservation, Albany, NY

Looking North 23 1979 JAN 3 1979



POUGHKEEPSIE RAILROAD BRIDGE
Location: Hudson Riv. Dutchess/Ulst, NY
Credit: L. Corwin Sharp, HADAC, 1978
Neg. filed: N.Y.S. Div. for Historic
Preservation, Albany, NY
Looking North, truss
Photo # 2

JAN 3 1979



POUGHKEEPSIE RAILROAD BRIDGE
Location: Hudson Riv. Dutchess/Ulst, NY
Credit: L. Corwin Sharp, HADAC, 1978
Neg. filed: N.Y.S. Div. for Historic
Preservation, Albany, NY
Looking Northeast
Photo # 3



POUGHKEEPSIE RAILROAD BRIDGE
Location: Hudson Riv. Dutchess/Ulst, NY
Credit: L. Corwin Sharp, HADAC, 1978
Neg. filed: N.Y.S. Div. for Historic
Preservation, Albany, NYFEB 23 1979
Looking Northeast, detail: truss
Photo # 4

JAN 3 1979



POUGHKEEPSIE RAILROAD BRIDGE

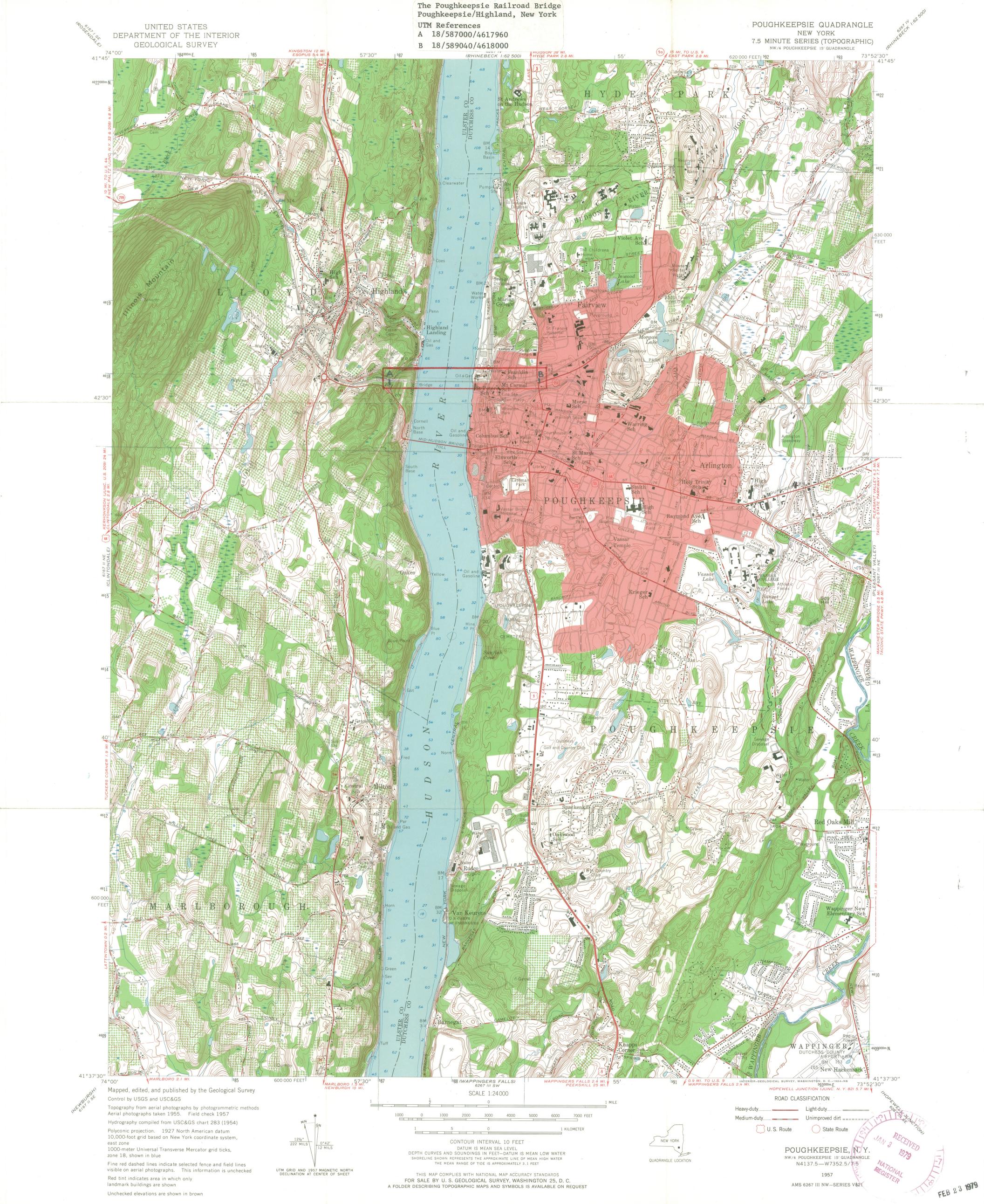
Location: Hudson Riv. Dutchess/Ulst, NY Credit: L. Corwin Sharp, HADAC, 1978
Neg. filed: N.Y.S. Div. for Historic Preservation, Albany, NY

Looking Northeast, detail: pier, trestle Photo # 5FEB 23 1979 JAN 3 1979



POUGHKEEPSIE RAILROAD BRIDGE
Location: Hudson Riv. Dutchess/Ulst, NY
Credit: L. Corwin Sharp, HADAC, 1978
Neg. filed: N.Y.S. Div. for Historic
Preservation, Albany, NY
Looking West, railroad bed
Photo # 6

JAN 3 1979



Ponolikeen ie Raulroad Bridge

TELEPHONE REPORT

OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

PROJECT:

Correspondence

To/FROM:

Plussell Smith, CONRAIL

DATE:

1 30/79

T.O. Box 23451, L'Snjunt Playa Station PHONE: Washington, D.C. 20024

STAFF MEMBER:

S. Too Tuman

DIVISION:

DR

REPORT:

Ny Railroad Bulling which They own. Wanted to know how The property was nonunated and what he effect of listing was. Also requested a copy 8) The nomination which was sent out w/ an E/fects of hitting sheet on 130/79.

TELEPHONE REPORT

Office of Archeology and Historic Preser	VATION
PROJECT: Poughkeyone RR Bridge,	New York
TO/FROM: Day Sneith	DATE: Feb. 23, 1979
ADDRESS: NY SHPO Stay	Phone:
STAFF MEMBER: L. Beebe	DIVISION: XIZ
REPORT: Asleed for explanation of 32 a meant to be encomparated. They thought any deck surface counded. I indicased 32 seemle the size of the deck. He suggested acreage to 11.	ce shed, be a to be 3 times jested changing

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE NEW YORK

Date Entered FEB 23 1979

Name

Location

Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge

Poughkeepsie Dutchess and Ulster Counties

Also Notified

Honorable Daniel P. Moynihan

Honorable Jacob K. Javits Honorable Hamilton Fish, Jr. State Historic Preservation Officer Mr. Orin Lehman Commissioner Parks and Recreation Agency Building #1 Empire State Plaza Albany, New York 12238 Mr. William Tucker
Power Authority, State of New York
123 Main Street
White Plains, New York 10601

Dear Mr. Tucker:

In response to your telephone request of August 26, 1982, we are enclosing a copy of the nomination form used in listing the Poughkeepste Railroad Bridge, Dutchess County, New York, in the National Register of Historic Places on February 23, 1979.

The nomination contains the detailed background information which you mentioned in your inquiry.

Thank you for your interest in the historic preservation programs of the National Perk Service.

Sincerely,

Bruce MacDougal

Carol D. Shull Chief of Registration National Register of Historic Places Interagency Resource Management Division

Enclosures

bec: Mr. Orin Lehman, SHPO, New York

cc: 710
Mid-Atlantic Region
FNP:J Vosburgh:lw:272-3504:9-02-82

Sys.8(nom)#3029

BASIC FILE RETAINED IN NR

March 14, 1984

Pumpkin Lane Clinton Corners, NY 12514

Ms. Barbara Rinaldi, Senior Environmentalist New York State Department of Environmental Conservation North Clove New Paltz. NY 12561

Dear Ms. Rinaldi:

I recently read an article in the Poughkeepsie Journal about the plan to demolish the old Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge.

I feel that this bridge should be preserved as a hiztoric site for the people of Poughkeepsie. It is as much a part of our city as the Arch in St. Louis is to its residents. This bridge is visited by many people through out the area as well as the world. The Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge should be saved.

I would like to arrange a convenient time to meet with you along with my Sign Language Interpreter. Please contact me with a time and date.

Thank you for your time and cooperation on this matter. I am looking forward to meeting with you to discuss the plight of the Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge.

Sincerely,

Robert E. Miller

cc: Mayor, Thomas Aposporos
National Register of Historic Places
Julia Stokes, N.Y.S. Office of Parks & Recreation
Historic Preservation
Hudson-River Sloop Clearwater, Inc.
Conrail

Re: Pougheepsie Reilroad Bridge Citizen Participation Specialist New York State Deptartment of Environment Consecryatio 21 South Putt Corners Road New platz , New York 12561

Dear Ms. Muller

My concern is about the 96 year old Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge. This bridge was listed on the National Register of Historic Landmarks in 1979. From my eyes, I see a beautiful 6,767 foot bridge crossing the Hudson River. This is one of the longest bridges in this area.

As we think about it, should we restore this bridge converting it into a glass skywalk to give visitors to the Dutchess County area, along with our own residents a view they will not soon forget. Since it cannot be used for trains or cars again, we should really consider another alternative to demolishing it.

Thousands of vistiors to Dutchess County could leisurly walk over it bringing tourism to our county and increased revenue.

Dutchess County is an area where the Vanderbilt and Roosevelt homes are as old as this bridge. I believe our City can benefit greatly by adding another tourist attraction to our area.

I truly disapprove with the Con Rail proposal to have the bridge demolished. Being in good condition, it could be converted to something else.

I remember well that Franklin Roosevelt's home was restored for about two million dollars from a U.S. Government grant. The Statue of Liberty will cost about thirty million to prepare her for a 100th anniversary in 1986. What about the old Poughkeepsie Railroad bridge in Dutchess County? I am hoping that Central Hudson, Dutchess and Ulster counties, and New York State will share some of the financial burden to restore this landmark. We may even be able to find developers and organizations willing to donate time, money, etc. to get a project of this sort started.

My dream is that it will be successful and not fail. This bridge should exist in our history. Our city neighbors will be able to look across the river at a beautiful lighted bridge at night and feel closer to us.

We should all work together and let this beautiful br $\pm dge$ celebrate her 100th birthday!

Gordon E. Miller 295 Church Street Poughkeepsie, N.Y.

> Sincerely, Serdin & Miller

MAN S RECT

Robert Eugene Miller Pumpkin Lane Clinton Corners, N.Y. 12514

April 27, 1984

Ms Ellen R. Muller Citizen Participation Specialist N. Y. S. Dept of Enverronmental Conservation 21 South Putt Corners Road New Paltz, N.Y. 12561

outcles to

RE: Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge

Dear Ms Muller

As a resident of Poughkeepsie for the past 37years. I support the efforts of the Oldtime Railroad Club's opposition to the demolition of the Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge.

The Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge is a very strong and safe structure. I remember long freight trains pulled by both steam diesel engine carrying hundreds of tons of coal and lumber across it.

I would like to propose that you consider some alternative for the bridge's future before you proceed to demolish it.

First, The cost of providing better service through repairing and painting the bridge would beless expensive than the cost of demolishing the structure. This alternative would also provide more jobs in the area and broaden the tax base. Secondly, The bridge could be used as a monorail with rubberr wheels which will quiet sound and that would looklike the Disneyland Alweg Monorail Systtem in Anahein, California to service Poughkeepsie main mall to Highland, with possible expansion as a later date. Thirdly, the Poughkeepsie Bridge could be made into an Historic Monument and tourist attraction by building a restaurant in the center of the bridge/ And fourthly, the Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge is an asset to both the public and to industry. There is even the possibility of transporting fresh water supply lines from Ashokan reservoirs or other reservoirs across the Hudson River to join with existing lines to New York City. The Water Department of the City of Poughkeepsie could provide the auxiliary water supply if and when pollution renders the Hudson River undrinkable. Another future need could be the transporting of more electric power lines over the Bridge by Central Hudson Gas and Electric Corporation or other company.

I would like all citizens of Duchess and Ulster Counties to join together to protest the demolition of the Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my views on this matter.

Sincerely,

Chet Eugene Miller

Robert Eugene Miller

cc: County Executive Ms. Patterson
Mayor Thomas Aposporos of the City of Poughkeepsie
National Register of Historic Places
Julia Stokes, New York State Office of Parks and
Recreation Historic Preservation
Hudson River Sloop Clearwater Inc.
Chairman Stanley Crane of Conrail Corp.
Robert DeFillippo of Poughkeepsie Journal staff
Robert Day of Central Hudson Gas and Electric Corp.



David A. Paterson Governor

Carol Ash

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau • Peebles Island, PO Box 189, Waterford, New York 12188-0189 518-237-8643 www.nysparks.com

May 19, 2008



Alexis Abernathy National Register Reviewer National Park Service, 8th floor 1201 Eye Street, NW Washington, D.C. 20005-2280

> Re: Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge Dutchess and Ulster Co., NY

Dear Ms. Abernathy:

Thank you for providing me with an opportunity to support the re-evaluation of the Poughkeepsie Railroad at the national level of significance in the context of American engineering history. As the attached letter from William Krattinger explains, the 1888 bridge established records for both overall length and clear span above the navigation channel. The completion of the bridge attracted national attention and became a widely recognized symbol of achievement for the relatively young engineering profession in this country. Presently, the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation is working closely with not-for-profit organizations to ensure the long-term preservation of the bridge while providing for recreational access across the mile-long structure. This priority initiative has gained widespread support throughout the region and upon completion will offer unparalleled opportunities for interpreting the design and construction of the bridge and its place in the history of engineering. I strongly recommend recognizing this bridge at the national level of significance and I am very appreciative of your assistance with this change.

Sincerely,

Ruth L. Pierpont

Deputy State Historic Preservation

Rugues Reipont

Officer

attachment



David A. Paterson Governor

> Carol Ash Commissioner

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau • Peebles Island, PO Box 189, Waterford, New York 12188-0189 518-237-8643 www.nysparks.com

25 April 2008

Mr. Stephen Densmore Dyson Foundation & Walkway over the Hudson 57 South Clover Street Poughkeepsie, New York 12601

> RE: Poughkeepsie-Highland Railroad Bridge Dutchess & Ulster Counties

Dear Mr. Densmore,

Thank you for contacting me regarding the Poughkeepsie-Highland Railroad Bridge, listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1979 in the context of American 19th century engineering and transportation. At that time the structure was determined to be significant at the state level, rising above the local and regional context but falling short of national level significance. Further consideration of this significance level by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), made following your recent inquiry, would indicate that the Poughkeepsie-Highland Railroad Bridge would appear to satisfy the requirements for national level significance within the context of engineering. I would like to take this opportunity to outline the SHPO's justification for this new determination.

Historian Carl W. Condit, in his 1960 work American Building Art: The 19th Century, referred to the Poughkeepsie-Highland Railroad Bridge as "one of the great bridges of the century." In his evaluation of the structure Condit noted the complexities of erecting a bridge in this location, requiring significant engineering solutions in order to bring the project to fruition. Borrowing from Condit's own words, "The builders of the Poughkeepsie bridge faced every kind of difficulty in the extreme" including: "a deep, wide tidal river, great depth of bearing rock, height of the palisades which fixed the level of the deck, and sheer length of the whole structure." Though plans for this crossing were first initiated in the 1860s, fueled by the desire to link the burgeoning industries of New England with the anthracite coal fields of Pennsylvania via Poughkeepsie, it was not until 1888 that the project finally was completed under the auspices of the Manhattan Bridge Building Company and structural engineers John F. O'Rourke, P.P. Dickinson and Arthur B. Paine. At the time of its completion the Poughkeepsie-Highland Railroad Bridge established records for length—exceeding one mile—and likewise for the 548-foot length of its channel span. As Condit further noted the bridge was "for its age... virtually in a class by itself." The bridge survived vigorous use with minor alterations, including being strengthened in 1906-7 and having the twin tracks combined in 1917, attesting to the quality of its design, engineering and construction. As such, it is the opinion of the SHPO that this remarkable example of 19th century American engineering satisfies the requirements for significance at the national level.

Please contact me at	your convenience if	I can be of further ass	sistance to you. I can be reached at our
waterford offices at	(518) 257-8043, exte	ension 3265, or via ema	ail at William.Krattinger@oprhp.state.ny.us.
			Sincerely,
			William Krattinger
			Historic Preservation Program Analyst
cc: Jayne McLaughli	in Taconic Parks Re	egion	
cc. Jayne McLaughn	iii, Tacoine Parks Re	Sion	

ACTION:

NATIONAL REGISTER INFORMATION SYSTEM

Id 79001577 LI 02/23/1979 NY Dutchess Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge

01 More

Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge Name

Address Spans Hudson River

Poughkeepsie
County Dutchess Vicinity Restrict City

State NEW YORK

Status LISTED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER Date 02/23/1979

Day45

Resource Type STRUCTURE Acreage 11.0

Multiple

Contributing bldg 0 Site 0 Strc 1 Obj 0 Total Noncontributing bldg 0 Site 0 Strc 0 Obj 0 Total 1 0

Park



New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau • Peebles Island, PO Box 189, Waterford, New York 12188-0189 518-237-8643 www.nysparks.com

FAX

To: Alexis Abernathy
From: Mark Peckham
Fax number: 202-371-6447 202-371-2229
Date: 5/19/08 Total pages inc. cover sheet:
Subject:
☐ Urgent ☐ For Review ☐ Please Comment ☐ Please Reply ☐ Please Recycle

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New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation David A. Paterson Governor

> Carol Ash Commissioner

Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau • Peebles Island, PO Box 189, Waterford, New York 12188-0189 518-237-8643 www.nysparks.com

May 19, 2008

Alexis Abernathy National Register Reviewer National Park Service, 8th floor 1201 Eye Street, NW Washington, D.C. 20005-2280

> Re: Poughkeepsic Railroad Bridge Dutchess and Ulster Co., NY

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New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

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Dutchess & Ulster Counties

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Sincerely,

William Krattinger Historic Preservation Program Analyst

cc: Jayne McLaughlin, Taconic Parks Region

ACTION: NATIONAL REGISTER INFORMATION SYSTEM

Id 79001577 LI 02/23/1979 NY Dutchess Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge

01 More

Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge Name

Spans Hudson River Address

City Poughkeepsie
County Dutchess Vicinity Restrict

Status LISTED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER Date 02/23/1979 Resource Type STRUCTURE Acreage Day45 11.0

Multiple

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Park

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Thomas Behrens 05/19/2008 11:52 AM EDT

To: Alexis Abernathy/Contractor/NPS@NPS

cc:

Subject: Re: Fw: Poughkeepsie RR Bridge NY, national significance

Alexis,

The pontists (yet to be coined word referring to bridge enthusiasts) in the office and I agree that this span was an audacious endeavor for its time period and a beautiful structure as well and is indeed worthy of the rarefied air of National Significance.

Has the nomination been completed?

Tom

Thomas M. Behrens Architect Historic American Engineering Record National Park Service p. 202-354-2163 f. 202-371-6473 http://www.cr.nps.gov/hdp/

"Only when the last tree has died and the last river been poisoned and the last fish been caught will we realize we cannot eat money." Alexis Abernathy



Alexis Abernathy 05/19/2008 10:23 AM

To: Thomas Behrens/WASO/NPS@NPS

CC:

Subject: Re: Fw: Poughkeepsie RR Bridge NY, national significance

If someone has a chance to look it up today let me know.

I would appreciate all the information.

Thanks it is a cool looking bridge.

Alexis

Alexis Abernathy
National Register of Historic Places
alexis_abernathy@contractor.nps.gov
Work (202)354-2236
fax (202)371-2229
Thomas Behrens



Thomas Behrens 05/19/2008 09:50 AM EDT To: Alexis Abernathy/Contractor/NPS@NPS

cc:

Subject: Re: Fw: Poughkeepsie RR Bridge NY, national significance

for your viewing pleasure:

http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/h?pp/hh:@field(NUMBER+@band(ny1265))

Poughkeepsie Bridge Falls Victim to Time

Past Wonder Has Become a Present Worry

By Robert DeFillippo and Jonathan Saltzman Special to The Washington Post

POUGHKEEPSIE, N.Y.—When the first steam locomotive crossed the Poughkeepsie Bridge in 1888, the massive steel-girdered span—the first major rail crossing of the Hudson River—was hailed as an architectural wonder. Today, its survival is a tangled political wonder.

The 6,767-foot-long giant of elaborate latticework, midway between New York City and Albany, opened Pennsylvania coal fields to the hungry industries of New England. The Northeast of the 19th century placed such importance on the structure that steel magnate Andrew Carnegie traveled to Poughkeepsie to join Matthew Vassar, founder of Vassar College, in dedicating it.

History has passed over and under the bridge. President Franklin D. Roosevelt's special trains crossed the usually freight-only bridge to reach his home at Hyde Park, within sight of the bridge on the Hudson bluffs 10 miles north.

But over the years, railroad mergers and changing freight-traffic patterns left the bridge an orphan. The Penn Central Railroad and its successor, Conrail, found it more efficient to marshal all New England-bound freight at Selkirk Yard near Albany, bypassing the bridge.

The span was closed by a major fire in 1974. Neither Penn Central nor Conrail made any effort to repair it. But the bridge refuses to die. The battle over its future only intensified after it burned.

Meanwhile, as politicians, investors and preservationists tussel over it, the bridge hangs like a huge sword of Damocles over part of the city of Poughkeepsie and navigation on the river 212 feet below, occasionally showering pieces on homes and cars.

Last November, Conrail sold the bridge—which cost \$10 million to build—for \$1 to Railway Management Associates, an anonymous limited partnership based in St. Da-

vids, Pa. But the sale did nothing to mute the long-running battle.

The mysterious sale has preservationists wondering what the new owners plan to do with the bridge, which is on the National Register of Historic Places. The deal also has local officials worrying that they may get stuck with a white elephant.

"Railroads look to avoid demolition costs by dumping these things," said Gordon K. Cameron, executive director of the New York Bridge Authority, which operates five bridges across the Hudson north of New York City. "There doesn't seem to be anything illegal, but it's a question of morality."

"Let me tell you that if this is Conrail's way of shedding liability, in my judgment they have shed nothing at all," Poughkeepsie Mayor Thomas C. Aposporos said. "If this sale turns out to have been simply a way of avoiding responsibility, and the people of the city of Poughkeepsie are again threatened by that structure, Conrail can be assured of a lawsuit—even if they're not the owner of record."

Poughkeepsie's corporation counsel, Richard Cantor, said the city had reason to fret about maintenance of the span, which he said is "a massive obligation" for Railway Management.

Conrail estimated the cost of demolition at \$1.4 million.

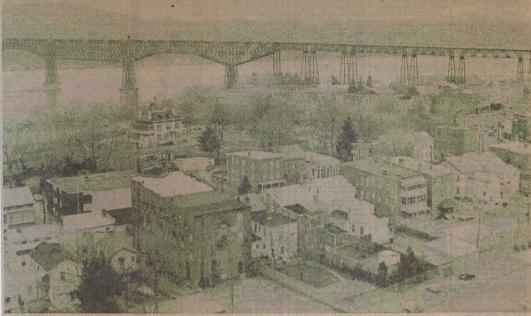
It would cost \$19.7 million to restore the bridge to handle trains again, according to a 1980 study by the Federal Railroad Administration. But trains would have no place to go because Conrail tore up the tracks on both banks of the Hudson before the sale.

Aposporos and preservationists said they are worried because the deed to the bridge does not reveal the names of the 15 principals of Railway Management. The partnership's agent, Gordon S. Miller, has refused to identify them or to say where the organization's three purported offices are located.

All Miller has told local officials is that his group plans to preserve the bridge and develop it into a tourist attraction during the next 10 years.

But he also has told a Poughkeepsie-based group of preservationists, the Committee to Save the Bridge,





Huge and historic Poughkeepsie Bridge, the first major rail crossing of the Hudson River, is at the center of a battle between politicians and preservationists.

to develop their own plans for him to consider. Among the ideas being discussed is a single, self-propelled railroad car that would shuttle com-muters from Ulster County on the west bank of the river to IBM and

other businesses in Poughkeepsie.

Ann Loedy, head of the preservationists' committee, said she is disturbed that Miller's group appar-ently had no plan before buying the bridge. "I know that if I had bought

bridge, I know that if I had bought a bridge, I would have had a plan in mind," she said.

Conrail has directed all calls about the bridge to the new owners or their attorney. Neither Miller nor Railway Management's attorney returned numerous calls to their office in Pennsylvania.

The bridge has had a string of owners. First, it was part of the Central New England Railway, then later absorbed into the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad system. In 1968, it became part of Penn Central Railroad. Conrail took over the bridge when Penn Central over the bridge when Penn Central and other bankrupt railroads were merged into one federally run sys-

tem.
"I liken the bridge to the Eiffel "I liken the orage to the Enter Tower," Loedy said, "It was built about the same time and has be-come a monument of sorts." But the May 8, 1974, fire de-

stroved about 700 feet of ties and warped some of the bridge girders above Poughkeepsie. The span was

closed.
Howard J. Leroy was driving his one-month-old. Oldsmobile along State Route 9 on April 19, 1983, when a wooden railroad tie fell from the bridge and struck the right side of his windshield.
"I felt this awful boom," said Leroy, 66. "I could have been killed very easily. If it had hit on the drivers side I would have got it right in the face."

the face,"

Such incidents prompted Poughkeepsie to sue Conrail. The city
won the suit in 1983, and Conrail.
spent \$300,000 stripping the
bridge of its ties and rails where
they hung over land in the city.

Immediately after the city won
the lawsuit, Cameron said he received a phone call from a Conrail
representative offering to sell the
bridge.

representative oriening to solve the gray was serious." Cameron said. "He asked if we wanted to buy the bridge by telephone, It was informal and so kind of crazy. It was like somebody calling you to sell you the Brooklyn Residue."

Last year, Conrail applied to the state Department of Environmental Conservation, the U.S. Coast Guard

and Poughkeepsie for permits to demolish the bridge. But Conrail abandoned the plans when it sold the bridge to Railway Management for \$1.

The sale infuriated Donald L Peysner, 40, a railroad buff and Mi-ami attorney who obtained an option to buy the span from Conrail. He had previously helped save the Catskill Mountain Branch of the Penn Central system from destruc-

Pevsner wanted to turn the Poughkeepsie bridge into a "wonder of the world" by developing it into a tourist attraction incorporating a

tourist attraction incorporating a restaurant, shops and historical exhibits. But he said Conrail sold the bridge the day his option expired. He charged that Railway Management has not adequately insured the bridge, and that "a catastrophic accident would quickly drain the insurance."

insurance."
Richard Wolf, an attorney for Save the Bridge Committee, said Railway Management's reticence about its development plans has created a worrisome "informational

gap."
"No one is accusing anyone of acting in bad faith," he said. "But when you have good-faith concerns about informational gaps, you're going to have a lot of questions."



NATIONAL REGISTER DATA 2 OTHER NAMES (4) county code: NAME as it appears on federal register: Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge 27 & 111 state Dutchesscount (also | 6)NPS REGION: (5) LOCATION street & number vicinity of city / town NY in Ulster County NE Poughkeepsie spans Hudson River (S) ADMINISTRATOR: OWNER X PRIVATE STATE MUNICIPAL COUNTY MULTIPLE FEDERAL (agency name) EXISTING SURVEYS CHARS CHARR CHALL (10) FUNDED? CYES ON (11) CONGRESS. DISTRICT 25 12 SOURCE of NOMINATION FEDERAL if state who prepared form? PRIVATE ORGANIZATION CONDITION SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-1 "SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-2 "SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-3 deteriorated Daltered Ooriginal site 17 features: Dexcellent Druins moved ONOT INTACT-O 2 NOT INTACT-O Qunaltered O NOT INTACT - O good unexposed Dreconstructed Dunknown UNKNOWN-4 W UNKNOWN-5 5 UNKNOWN - 6 Dfair unexcavated Dexcavated ≧□ NOT APPLICABLE -7 WO NOT APPLICABLE-8 NOT APPLICABLE - 9 □ No Access □ Unknown 19 ADAPTIVE USE □YES □NO 20 BACCESS YES-Restricted YES-Unrestricted SAVED? YES IS PROPERTY A HISTORIC DISTRICT? yes no CLAIMS: explain 21 AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: ☐ LANDSCAPE ARCH.- 15 ☐ POLITICS / GOVT. - 21 RECREATION -28 ☐ ENGINEERING - 11 'first' ARCHEOLOGY - prehistoric - 2 COMMERCE - 6 ☐ LAW-16 ENTERTAINMENT - 26 ☐ RELIGION - 22 SETTLEMENT-29 ARCHEOLOGY - historic - 1 ☐ LITERATURE - 17 COMMUNICATIONS - 7 ☐ EXPLORATION - 12 SCIENCE- 23 ☐ URBAN PLANNING-31 'oldest' ☐ AGRICULTURE -3 □ SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN-24 □ OTHER (SPECIFY) CONSERVATION - 8 ☐ HEALTH-27 MILITARY - 18 ☐ ARCHITECTURE-4 ☐ MUSIC - 19 ☐ ECONOMICS-9 ☐ INDUSTRY - 13 SOCIAL / CULTURAL - 30 'only' ART-5 D EDUCATION-10 ☐ INVENTION - 14 PHILOSOPHY - 20 TRANSPORTATION - 25 ETHNIC GROUP dates of initial construction: 23 functions ASSOCIATION major alterations: WHEN HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT: historic events: CURRENTLY: engineer: architect: master builder: architectural style(s): artisan: abuilder/contractor: andscape architect/garden designer: ainterior decorator: artist: NAMES give role & date PERSONAL: EVENTS: INSTITUTIONAL: MATIONAL REGISTER WRITE-UP

IF ADDITIONAL SPACE NEEDED, NUMBER & PUT ON REVERSE

reviewers initials_