

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

CRESTWOOD RAILROAD STATION

HABS No. NY-6290

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- Location: Fisher Avenue at Columbus Avenue and Crestwood Plaza
Tuckahoe, Westchester County, New York
- USGS Mt. Vernon Quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator
Coordinates: 18. 599240.4534660
- Present Owner: Penn Central Corporation
1 East 4th Street
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202
- Present Occupant: Metro-North Commuter Railroad Company
347 Madison Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10017
[Metro-North has a lease on the station lasting
until the year 2032.]
- Use: Railroad Station (platforms and waiting room with ticket
office)
- Significance The Crestwood Station of the former New York Central and
Hudson River Railroad's Harlem Branch is significant as
one of the surviving stations erected during the period in
the first decades of the 20th century when southern
Westchester County was developing into a populous suburb
of New York City. It was the presence of the railroad
lines from New York City's Grand Central Terminal, with
stops in such communities as Crestwood, that brought
development to the area. The Crestwood Station is a
simple example of a Harlem Line station and it retains
many features dating from a major redesign of 1928.

PART 1: HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of Erection: The station was erected between 1901 (the 1901 Bromley Atlas of Westchester County shows a station on the east side of the railroad tracks; the present station is on the west side) and 1911 (extant drawings indicating alterations to the present station's canopies are dated 1911).

2. Architect: Unknown

3. Original and subsequent owners: The station was erected by the New York Central and Hudson River Railroad. In 1968, the New York Central merged with the Pennsylvania Railroad to create the Penn Central Corporation. In 1972, the Penn Central's suburban rail lines, including the Harlem Line, with its station at Crestwood, were leased to the Metro-North Commuter Railroad for a period of sixty years.

4. Contractor: Unknown.

5. Original plans and construction: Since original plans and photographs have not been located, the original condition is not known. The drawing for a 1911 canopy alteration shows a hipped roof building with a slate roof. The fenestration pattern was different than that presently visible. A partial plan shows that the entire north end of the station was originally a baggage room (this is now the location of the ticket office).

6. Alterations and additions:

1911: The original station canopy connected to the north side of the station was removed and a new canopy constructed over the stairs that lead to a tunnel, referred to as a subway, running under the tracks.

1928: At this time the station was extensively altered by the New York Central Railroad's Engineering Department. The exterior of the building was resurfaced with stucco and a brick base. The original chimney on the north side of the building was removed and a new chimney erected to the south. Most of the present interior plan dates from this time. Some original features, such as the wood wainscot, were reused. The design engineer for the alteration was E.A. Dougherty of the New York Central Railroad's staff. The contractor for this work was the M.F.Kelly Building Corp.

At an unknown date the baggage room was eliminated and the wall separating the baggage room and the ticket office was removed, thus enlarging the ticket office.

At an unknown date the slate roof was replaced by an asphalt shingle

roof.

The length of the station platforms has been extended several times. In 1971 raised platforms were constructed. A raised platform extends over the early platform canopy posts on the northbound platform. At the time the raised platforms were constructed, use of the southbound platform was discontinued and a new platform was built in the track bed between the two older platforms. A bridge was erected over the platforms connecting the original platforms and the new platform.

B. Historical Context

Prior to the arrival of the railroads, Westchester County was a series of small independent communities separated by farmland and rural estates. The opening of rail lines connecting the towns and villages of Westchester with New York City was to irrevocably change the character of this county. On April 25, 1831, the New York and Harlem River Railroad was incorporated with a planned run between New York City and the town of Harlem in northern Manhattan. Service to White Plains was soon inaugurated. It was the advent of reliable train service between Westchester and New York City that brought about the suburban development of the county. The original railroads were modest single-track lines with small wooden stations. As demand for service increased, the rail lines were widened, tracks added, and imposing new stations erected. Most of the stations now in use in Westchester date from the last years of the nineteenth century or the first decades of the twentieth century; all of Westchester's Harlem Line stations south of White Plains date from the early twentieth century.

The Crestwood Station is located at the northern edge of the village of Tuckahoe in the town of Eastchester. Tuckahoe was one of the first communities to develop along the Harlem Line. The village grew as a direct result of the presence of rich beds of Tuckahoe marble. Tuckahoe marble was the building material for some of the most prestigious structures in the New York area prior to the Civil War. Among the notable structures built of Tuckahoe marble are the New York County Courthouse ("Tweed Courthouse"), Colonnade Row, and the A.T. Stewart Store, all in New York City. According to the 1901 Bromley Atlas of Westchester County, quarry companies were located on the east side of the railroad tracks, immediately to the north of the Crestwood Station (referred to on this map as the Yonkers Heights Station). The Crestwood area did not develop into a residential area until the 1920s. The 1901 atlas shows the Yonkers Heights subdivision to the west of the station (the city of Yonkers begins to the west of the Bronx River, just a few yards from the station), but very few houses had been built yet. A 1914 atlas shows a few frame houses in Yonkers Park and a few in a subdivision called Hollywood, located to the east of the station. In the late 1910s and 1920s, the area near the station was extensively developed with new single-family detached homes. The increase in the neighborhood's population and the corresponding increase in the number of people using

the Crestwood Station may have prompted the New York Central Railroad to undertake its extensive 1928 alterations to the station.

The Crestwood Station is sited in a quiet location with a park and Crestwood Lake to the southeast and woods to the northeast. Immediately to the east is the Bronx River and an exit from the Bronx River Parkway. A picturesque stone bridge crosses the river and parkway, connecting the station to Yonkers Park. To the west of the station is a small commercial area with a number of buildings dating from the 1920s. Beyond this is a residential area.

PART II: ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. Architectural character: The Crestwood Station consists of a station building, canopies, platforms, and a subway extending beneath the tracks. The station is a good example of an early twentieth-century Westchester railroad station. The station is well sited in a suburban location and has undergone few changes since it was extensively redesigned in 1928.
2. Condition of the fabric: The building was given a general visual inspection and appears to be in good condition.

B. Description of the exterior

1. Overall dimensions: The Crestwood Station is a one-story rectangular structure with a shallow projecting bay at its northeast corner. The building is 42'4" long and 16'4" wide.
2. Foundations: concrete.
3. Walls: The building is faced with stucco applied over a wooden frame. It has a high brick watertable.
4. Structural system: The building is a wood frame structure with a wood frame roof.
5. Chimneys: There is a single chimney rising above the roof near the southwest corner of the building. The chimney is clad with stucco.
6. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The building is entered through doors set in the center of the east and west elevations. The east entrance has its original wooden door with sixteen panes of glass and original thumb latch handles. The wooden western entrance door is not original. A doorway in the center of the south elevation leads to the basement stairs. This wooden door is original, but it has been partially covered with a wood panel. A doorway on the west side of the north elevation originally led into the baggage room. This entrance has been closed up (the brick on the base of the exterior

does not quite match that applied in 1928).

b. Windows: The west facade is symmetrically massed with pairs of windows to either side of the entrance. According to the 1928 elevation drawings, these windows originally had 6x6 wood sash. They now have 6x1 wood sash. To either end of this elevation is a small rectangular window, originally with 4x4 sash. The window to the south has its original wood sash with obscured glass; the window to the north has been replaced by an air conditioner. On the east facade are pairs of windows flanking the door. As on the west facade, these originally had 6x6 sash; all four windows have had some sash alterations (from the south, these four windows have 1x6, 6x1, 6x2, and 6x3 wood sash). A small rectangular window to the south has original 4x4 wood sash with obscured glass. At the north end of this elevation is a three-sided bay. The central window has an original 6x6 window, while the side windows have original 4x4 wooden sash. The north elevation has a single window with altered sash, while the south elevation has a pair of original 4x4 windows with obscure glass.

7. Roof: The station has a hip roof clad with asphalt shingles. The shingles on the northeast corner of the roof and on the adjoining canopy are considerably newer than those on the rest of the roof, resulting from repair of damage caused by a fire in 1986.

8. Sidewalk: The building rests on a raised podium with concrete sidewalk (this arrangement is referred to as a "concrete sidewalk" on the 1928 alteration plan) This sidewalk merges with the platform. The sidewalk is reached via a flight of four concrete steps. An iron pipe railing runs along the edge of the sidewalk and serves as a railing on the stairs. There is a later wooden extension at the north end of the sidewalk.

9. Platforms: The original southbound concrete platform is extant. On the northbound side, all of the original platform is now covered by a raised platform with the exception of a small area at the northernmost end.

10. Canopies: On the southbound platform, original canopies are attached to the station. On the east elevation, six L-shaped brackets with supporting struts are attached to the station and support the sloping canopy with its wooden ceiling and beams. The four northernmost brackets are original, while the two southernmost brackets were added in 1928 (their profile is slightly different). The original north canopy, attached to the north side of the station, was removed in 1911 and replaced by the present three bay long canopy. This hip-roofed canopy with wooden ceiling and beams is supported by pairs of T-shaped post and beam structures with supporting corner struts. An additional wooden member connects the center of each beam with the underside of the roof peak. At its north end, this canopy has an additional peak-roofed bay, half as wide as the main section of the canopy, supported by a single T-

shaped post and beam structure with supporting corner struts. The north canopy covers the subway that extends beneath the tracks (see B11). At the south end of the station, the canopy extends for a single bay. This canopy, with its single T-shaped post and beam structure with supporting corner struts, was added to the station in 1928. There is some evidence on the plans that this canopy originally continued for another bay, but was cut back at some point.

On the northbound platform is an eleven bay long canopy with steel posts and brackets supporting steel beams and a corrugated roof. With the exception of the two northernmost bays, the bases of these columns are covered by the raised platform. This canopy dates from the early decades of the twentieth century, but it is not known exactly when it was erected. To the south of this canopy is a modern aluminum canopy.

11. Subway: A segmental-arched reenforced concrete subway tunnel runs beneath the tracks connecting the two original platforms. On each platform is a flight of stairs, set at a right angle to the tunnel. The stairs have pipe-rail banisters and pipe-rail guards.

12. Bridge: A modern aluminum bridge with three flights of stairs (one for each platform) extends over the tracks.

C. Description of Interior

1. Floor plan:

a. Cellar: The small cellar is located at the south end of the building. It is divided into two spaces--a boiler room to the west and a coal bin to the east. A wood stair reached from entrances on the south facade and in the men's toilet leads to the boiler room.

b. Main floor: The building has a large rectangular waiting room with the ticket office to the north and women's and men's toilets to the south. Most of the present configuration of the rooms dates from 1928 (at some point after 1928 the ticket office was enlarged by the removal of a baggage room located in the northwest corner of the building).

2. Flooring: All of the floors are concrete.

3. Wall and ceiling finishes: The waiting room has a wooden wainscot dating from the original period of construction and reused in 1928. It has plaster walls, a plaster cornice, and plaster ceiling. The ticket office and toilet rooms have plaster walls and ceilings.

4. Doors and doorways: There are three doors inside the waiting room--one leading to the ticket office and one for each of the toilets. The toilet doors are original, but have had wood panels attached to their exterior faces. Original pivot transoms are extant above each door. The ticket office door is not original. All three doors are set into wooden enframements.

5. Windows: All of the exterior windows are set within wooden frames, as are the two ticket windows. The ticket windows have obscured glass (now painted) shutters located within the ticket office.

6. Hardware and plumbing fixtures: The eastern entrance door has an original thumb latch, as noted in B6. The women's toilet has an original porcelain toilet (seat altered). The men's toilet has an original porcelain urinal. Other plumbing fixtures have been altered.

7. Mechanical equipment: The basement has a boiler that is not original. There are two radiators in the center of the room, a radiator on the outer wall of each toilet room, and a radiator on the north wall of the ticket office (probably not original). The boiler and radiators were installed according to plans for low pressure steam heating prepared in 1927.

8. Furnishings: The waiting room has four benches--two on the east wall and two on the west wall. These benches date from the 1928 alteration; drawings for their design are extant. Each has four legs connected by a horizontal bar that is pegged to the outer legs. The ticket office windows are protected by metal grilles that replace the original bronze grilles. There is a wooden shelf running beneath the windows. The ticket office has a built-in desk set into the bay at the east side of the room and a built-in ticket selling counter with cabinets and drawers on the south side of the room. On the north wall of the room are a cabinet set three feet above the floor, a metal telephone and telegraph cabinet located to the left of the built-in desk, and two shelves supported by wooden brackets. The south wall of the waiting room has a built-in bulletin board located between the doors to the toilets. This bulletin board has a wooden enframing, but has lost its glass door.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The Crestwood Station faces west towards a small parking lot and the residential community of Yonkers Heights located on the opposite side of the Bronx River and Bronx River Parkway. To the southeast, between the railroad tracks and the river, is a park with lawns and a lake. To the east of the northbound platform is Crestwood's small commercial district comprised primarily of one- and two-story buildings in the Colonial Revival, Mission, and Tudor Revival styles.

PART III: SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Original Architectural Drawings

Many drawings of the Crestwood Station have been preserved on microfiche (the originals are not extant). Unfortunately no drawings dated prior to a 1911 alteration have been located. The most significant drawings are those for the major alteration that the station underwent in 1928. The extant drawings include elevations, sections, plans, etc. The microfiche

collection is in the possession of Metro-North and is housed at Grand Central Terminal, New York, New York.

B. Early Views

None located.

C. Bibliography

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Larson, Neil. "Westchester County Railroad Station Thematic Nomination, National Register of Historic Places Inventory--Nomination Form," unpublished draft report, n.d.

2. Secondary and published sources:

Atlases of Westchester County, 1898-1920.

French, Alvah P., ed. History of Westchester County New York (NY: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1925).

Griffin, Ernest F., ed. Westchester County and Its People (NY: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1946).

New York Central and Harlem River Railroad. Annual Reports, 1900-1925.

Sanchis, Frank. American Architecture: Westchester County, New York Colonial to Contemporary (North River Press, 1977).

D. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated

We have been unable to locate any archival material from the New York Central Railroad. If such material exists there may be further information about this station.

PART IV: PROJECT INFORMATION

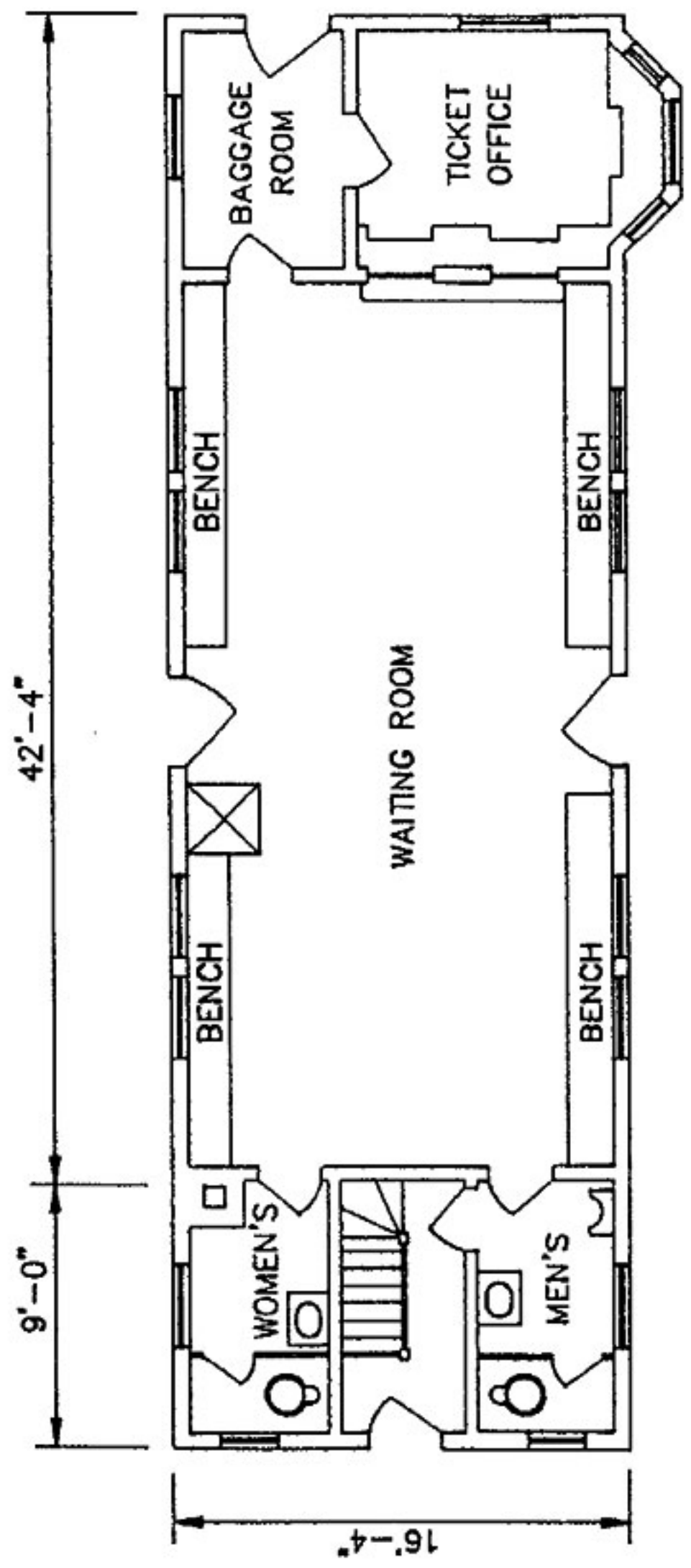
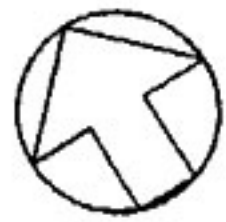
The objective of this project, known as the Mid-Harlem Station Improvement in Westchester County, New York, is to provide modern, functional, and attractive facilities for Metro-North passengers at the Crestwood Station and seven other Harlem Line stations. Changes to the Crestwood Station include modifications to the platform area, the addition of canopies and passenger shelters, the trimming back of approximately five feet from the easterly eave of the station building, the demolition and reconstruction of the existing overpass structure, the construction of a new ticket office, modification to the existing concession stand, and the incorporation of features to improve accessibility for the handicapped and elderly. Documentation was completed as mitigation before alterations occurred. The Federal agencies involved are the Urban Mass Transportation Administration and the National Park Service (Mid-Atlantic Regional Office) of the Department of the Interior. Records were prepared in August 1988.

Prepared by Andrew S. Dolkart and Mary Dierickx

Title: Consultants

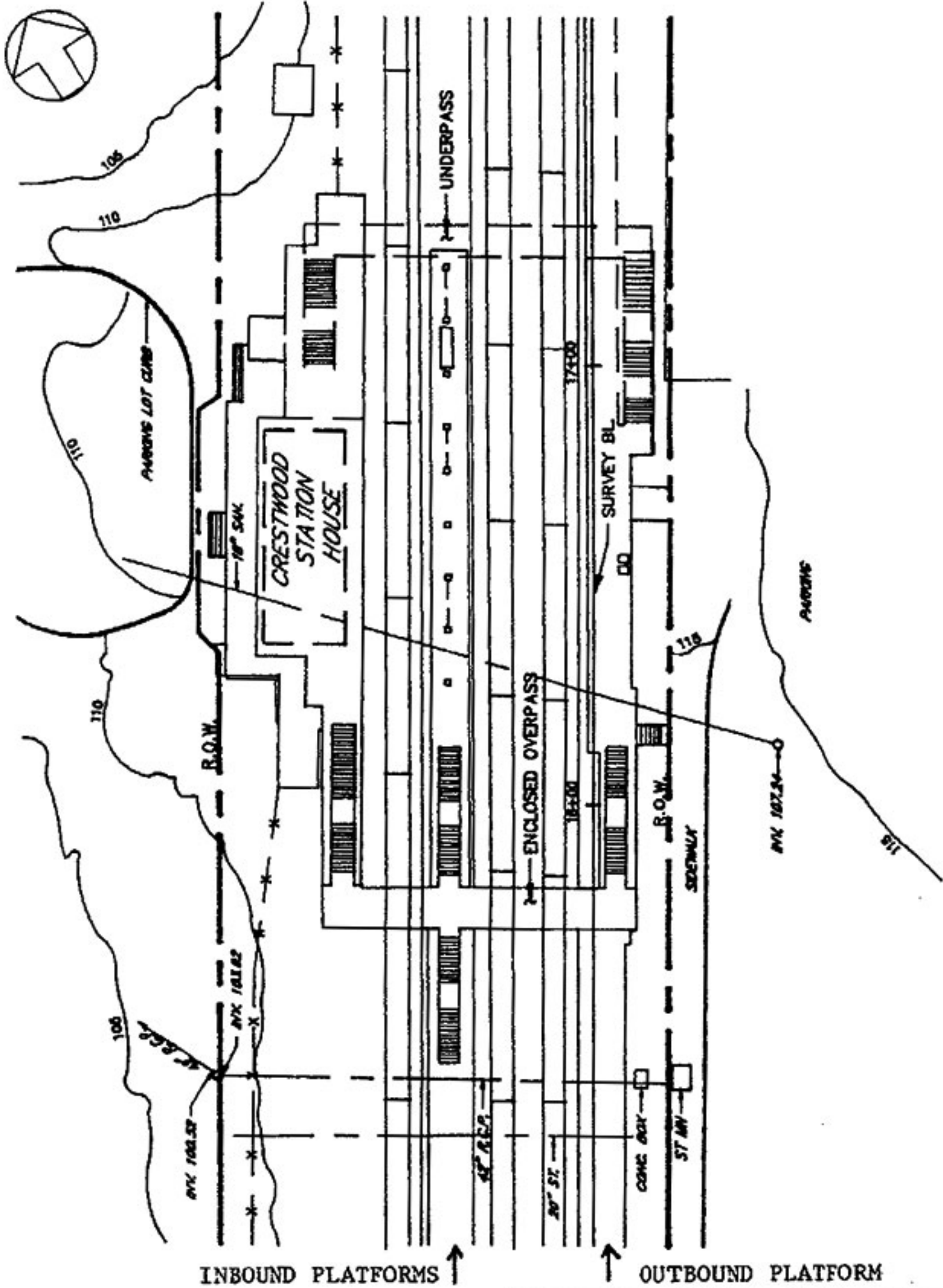
Affiliation: Consultants to Goodkind & O'Dea,
Engineers & Planners

Date: August 1988



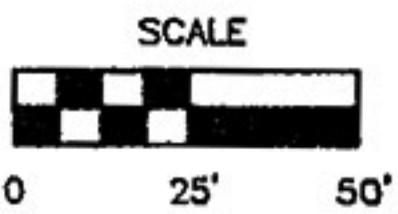
CRESTWOOD STATION HOUSE

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|  | METRO-NORTH COMMUTER RAILROAD |
| MID-HARLEM STATION IMPROVEMENTS | |
| CONTRACT NO. 7388 | |
| CRESTWOOD STATION HOUSE | |
|  | VONKERS CONTRACTING COMPANY, INC. |
| Goodkind & O'Dea, Inc CONSULTING ENGINEERS | |



INBOUND PLATFORMS ↑

↑ OUTBOUND PLATFORM



METRO-NORTH COMMUTER RAILROAD

MID-HARLEM STATION IMPROVEMENTS

CONTRACT NO. 7388

CRESTWOOD STATION HOUSE

YONKERS CONTRACTING COMPANY, INC.

Goodkind & O'Dea, Inc
CONSULTING ENGINEERS