

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

FLEETWOOD RAILROAD STATION

HABS No. NY-~~6028~~<sup>6288</sup>

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- Location: Broad Street at MacQuesten Parkway  
Mount Vernon, Westchester County, New York
- USGS Mt. Vernon Quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator  
Coordinates: 18.597640.4531080
- 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 Fleetwood 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 twentieth century when  
southern Westchester County was developing into a populous  
suburb of New York City. It was the presence of railroad  
lines from New York City's Grand Central Terminal, with  
stops at such communities as Fleetwood that brought  
development to the area. The Fleetwood station is a very  
simple example of the Harlem line's early twentieth-  
century suburban train stations.

PART 1: HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Date of erection: 1923-24. Station was designed in 1917, as noted on elevation drawing in the collection of Metro-North Commuter Railroad. Work was not started, however, until September 25, 1923 and was completed on October 25, 1924.
2. Architect: A.F. Haldeman. No information is available on architect A.F. Haldeman. It is probable that Haldeman was an architect on the staff of the New York Central Railroad. All drawings were prepared by the New York Central's Office of the Engineer of Structures. Haldeman signed the drawings in a column that included the signatures of various engineers.
3. Original and subsequent owners: The station was erected by the New York Central and Harlem 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 River Line, with its station at Fleetwood, were leased for the Metro-North Commuter Railroad for a period of sixty years.
4. Contractor: The elevation drawing notes that the contractor's name was James A. Henderson. Nothing is known about Henderson.
5. Original plans and construction: The Fleetwood Station is a modest frame structure with wood tongue and groove siding and a hip roof. Copies of original drawings of elevations, plans, sections, and details are extant. The drawings are preserved on microfiche and are available through Metro-North. The original building was probably close to that shown on the drawings (no historic photographs have been discovered). The east (front) elevation had a wooden door set slightly to the left of center. To the right of the entrance and sharing the same simple wooden enframing, were a pair of 6x6 windows. Another pair of windows was located to the far left of the elevation and a single window was set to the right. The south elevation was articulated by a pair of 6x6 windows and a door located at the west end of the facade. The north elevation had two 6x6 windows. At the rear of the building was a terrace with a wooden railing. This terrace overlooked the Bronx River. A door connected the waiting room and terrace. To the left of the door and sharing the same simple wooden enframing, were two 6x6 windows. Individual windows were located to either side. On the interior, the station consisted of a single waiting room, a ticket office, and two rest rooms.
6. Alterations and additions: The first alteration appears to have occurred shortly after the station was completed (the exact date of this alteration is not known, but the building with its addition

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appear on a 1935 Sanborn atlas). This alteration entailed the removal of the front elevation and the addition of a front waiting room. The addition is clad with tongue and groove siding, but the grooves are slightly different from those on the original building.. The groove at the top of each board on the original structure is curved, but those on the addition are angled. The addition has a flat roof that is connected to the roof of the station canopy.

A telephone booth was added to the north wall of the original waiting room, probably in the 1960s. This telephone booth projects into the original men's room.

According to the retired Fleetwood station master, a fire damaged the south and west elevations of the station in about 1972 (evidence of the fire can be seen on the charred stair canopy posts at the southwest corner of the building). When the building was restored, the terrace on the west elevation was removed and the terrace door and the pair of windows to its left were removed and their location covered with tongue and groove siding. At this time, the damaged ticket office was covered with wood paneling.

At an unknown time the floor was covered with tan linoleum tiles.

At an unknown time, many of the original six-paned sash windows were replaced with plexiglass.

At an unknown time, the original bronze ticket gate was replaced by plexiglass. A second ticket gate is extant, but is hidden by a bulletin board.

At an unknown time, the interior doors were changed or altered.

At an unknown time, an opening was cut into the east end of the south elevation. This is used as a newsstand and coffee stand and is covered with a steel door.

At an unknown time, the sinks in the two rest rooms were changed.

The length of the station platforms has been extended several times. The most significant station alterations occurred in 1971 when raised platforms were constructed. The raised platform extends around the original platform canopy posts.

## B. Historical Context:

Prior to the arrival of the railroads, Westchester County was comprised of 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, immediately to the south, was to irrevocably change the character of this county. On April 25, 1831, the New York and Harlem Railroad was incorporated with a planned

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run between New York City and the town of Harlem in northern Manhattan. Service was soon continued to the north of Harlem and on December 1, 1844 service was inaugurated to White Plains. 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 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 neighborhood known as Fleetwood is located in Yonkers, immediately to the west of the train station. The Fleetwood area was named in 1852 when a one hundred acre plot of land was acquired for suburban development. Fleetwood does not appear to have been a successful suburban venture since few houses were actually built. An 1899 atlas shows only scattered development in the area. Only two houses were located near the present station, 670 and 674 Locust Street, Mt. Vernon, both of which are extant. One of the reasons why the Fleetwood area may not have become a successful suburban section was the fact that it was not conveniently located near a railroad station. Rail service did not begin at Fleetwood until the completion of the present station in 1924. The Fleetwood Station was opened at the time when Mt. Vernon and neighboring Yonkers were experiencing a tremendous amount of single-family and apartment house construction. The area immediately to the east of the train tracks became the site of a number of neo-Tudor style apartment buildings erected during the 1920s.

The Fleetwood Station is one of the most modest surviving railroad stations in Westchester and is the smallest on the southern section of the Harlem Line. It is also the only frame station along this section of the railroad.

## PART II: ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

### A. General Statement

1. Designed in 1917, built in 1923-24 and altered on the front facade at some time shortly thereafter, the Fleetwood Station is a modest frame structure with simple architectural detail. The building has its original tongue and groove siding and original interior finishes and built-in furnishings.
2. Condition of the fabric: The building was given a general visual inspection. It appears to be in fair to good condition.

### B. Description of Exterior

1. Overall dimensions: The one-story rectangular building measures 34.7' x 25.7'. The building is set on a sloping site and has a

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- cellar. Connected to the building is the original wooden station canopy.
2. Foundations: The foundations are concrete and they rest on a series of concrete piers.
  3. Walls: All of the walls are covered with horizontal wooden tongue and groove siding. Windows and doors are set within simple wooden enframements set flush with the siding. There is no ornamental detail on the building.
  4. Structural system: This is a traditional wood frame structure. The ten concrete piers along the foundation wall and two concrete piers set in the center of the cellar support wooden piers. These piers support the floor of the main floor.
  5. Porches: To the south of the building is a wooden porch that leads to a flight of stairs located to the rear of the building. Originally it also led to the terrace once located at the rear of the station. A shed canopy is located over the front part of the porch.
  6. Chimneys. The building has a single square brick chimney rising above the roof at the southeast corner of the original section of the building. The chimney has a concrete cap and metal flashing.
  7. Openings:
    - a. Doorways and doors: The front elevation has two doors leading into the front waiting room. The doors do not appear to be original. Each door is crowned by an original transom with six lights. The doors are set within very simple wooden enframements that are set flush with the siding. On the west side of the south elevation is a doorway that leads to the cellar stairs; the door at this entrance is not original. At the opposite end of the south elevation is a wide opening with a steel gate. This opening is not original.
    - b. Windows: The front elevation contains three windows. A window is located to either side of the entrance on the right side of this facade. These windows are set within the same enframement as the door. The third window is immediately to the right of the door on the left side of this elevation; it is also set within the same enframement as the door. These windows originally had 6x6 sash. Only the upper sash of the window on the far right is original. The north elevation has two windows set within simple enframements. Only the upper sash of the window to the left is original. The south elevation has a pair of windows set within a single enframement. These windows have original 6x6 sash and original wire window guards. At each end of the rear elevation are single windows. The window to the left has original 6x6 sash; the sash has been removed from the window to the right.

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8. Roof. The station has a hip roof clad with asphalt shingles. According to the original plans, the roof was clad with asbestos shingles. The roof has deep projecting eaves with simple brackets. The front extension to the station and the platform canopies have tar paper roofs.
9. Canopies. The original platform canopy extends in front of the station building. Connected to the station are three beams, supported on simple struts. These beams originally extended to the original front elevation of the station; now, the two end beams have been incorporated into the side walls of the front extension and the central beam is covered by plaster and is visible in the front waiting room. These beams connect with ten foot tall square (10"x10") wooden posts that support the canopy roof. Twelve additional free-standing T-shaped posts extend to the south and six extend to the north. The posts have been reinforced with steel plates. The canopy has a wooden ceiling consisting of tongue and groove boards with beams running along the length of the ceiling. These beams rest on the posts. The bases of the piers have been incorporated into a new raised platform. There is a similar canopy, consisting of seven posts, located on the northbound platform.
10. Stairs and bridges: The station is set below the Broad Street viaduct and is connected to the viaduct by a long flight of stairs that begins near the southwest corner of the building. The dog-legged stairway consists of a single flight facing in an east/west direction, a landing, and two flights, separated by a landing, facing in a north/south direction. The stairs are concrete and steel and have metal pipe rails. The stairs are set beneath a wooden canopy that is attached to the stairway. On the east side of the platform is a straight stair with two flights and a single landing. This stair does not have a canopy.

At the northern extension of the station platform is a steel bridge that crosses the tracks. On the southbound platform, this bridge is supported by two battered steel posts with curved brackets. On the northbound platform, the bridge is supported by a four-legged tower-like structure. Wooden stairways (steel treads have been placed on each step), facing south on the southbound platform and north on the northbound platform, lead from the platforms to the wooden walkway of the bridge. The stairs have pipe railings.

#### C. Description of interior:

1. Floor plans:
  - a. Cellar: The cellar was laid out in accordance with the original plans. A wooden stair leads from the south elevation entrance to the cellar. It consists of a large room with a boiler. In the middle of this room and extending from it in an easterly direction is the coal storage room with its terra-cotta hollow tile walls.

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- b. Main floor: The original section of this interior was laid out exactly as shown on the original drawing. It consists of a large waiting room. To the south of the waiting room is the ticket office. At the north end of the waiting room are doors leading to the men's and women's rest rooms. To the east of the original waiting room is the rectangular front waiting room that was added shortly after the station was completed.
2. Flooring. Waiting room floor is tan linoleum; cellar and rest rooms are concrete.
  3. Wall and ceiling finish: Walls have wooden wainscot consisting of 3'6" high vertical boards. Above this the walls are plaster. There is a plaster cornice located above the line of the ticket windows and doors. A second cornice is located at ceiling level. The ceiling in the original waiting room is plaster. The cornices and ceiling are hidden by a hung ceiling. In the front waiting room, the walls appear to have some sort of painted paneling. The ceiling is plaster and has a central beam that runs in an east-west direction. The walls of the ticket office are clad with wood paneling; the office has a hung ceiling. The rest rooms have plaster walls. The basement walls have a concrete base. Above this is wooden sheathing laid on a diagonal; the ceiling is also wood.
  4. Doorways and doors: The original wooden door leading into the ticket office has been covered with metal sheathing. The doors to the rest rooms have either been replaced or heavily altered.
  5. Windows: All of the windows have very simple enframements. The windows on the north and south elevations have been boarded up on the inside.
  6. Decorative features and trim: There is very little decorative detail or trim inside the station. As has been noted, there is a plaster cornice running above the ticket office and doorways in the original waiting room and there is an additional cornice at the ceiling level in this room. These are now hidden by the hung ceiling. An original bronze ticket-window grille survives behind the bulletin board to the right of the present ticket window.
  7. Hardware: The only historic hardware is located in the rest rooms. The half doors between the rest room vestibules and the main rest rooms and the half doors at the toilets are hung on self closing spring hinges (probably manufactured by the Chicago Spring Butt Company). The stall doors also have clasps with brass handles and round outer seals that note if the stall is occupied or vacant. These are not functional at present.
  8. Mechanical equipment:
    - a. Heating: Located in the cellar is an oil burner manufactured by

the United States Radiator Corporation of Detroit, Michigan. This is not the original boiler, since coal was the original heating material. The original waiting room contains two original radiators--one on the north wall and one on the south wall (these are marked on the original plan). The waiting room addition also contains two original radiators.

b. Plumbing: The men's rest room has a large porcelain urinal that appears to be original.

9. Original furnishings: The original waiting room contains an original built-in bench on the west wall. An L-shaped built-in bench is located on the north and adjacent west walls of the waiting room addition. These benches are constructed of horizontal wood boards (a drawing for the bench in the main waiting room notes that it is oak; they have been painted, thus identification of the wood is not possible at present). The benches have curved seats and curved, solid wooden arms. An original counter resting on three brackets is located in front of the ticket window. The ticket office contains an original built in table with three drawers, each with metal handles, and cabinet doors.

#### D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The Fleetwood Station faces almost due west in what is now a very unprepossessing location. The building is set almost immediately below a concrete viaduct that carries Broad Street across the railroad tracks and the Bronx River. This viaduct was here when the station was built; it has recently been rebuilt. In addition, there are two concrete bridges that carry the Cross County Parkway across the Bronx River. The Bronx River and the Bronx River Parkway are located directly to the east of the station. The Fleetwood section of the city of Yonkers is located on the west side of the river. To the east of the station are the Harlem Line tracks and the northbound platform. Beyond this platform are a series of garages facing onto MacQuesten Parkway. Farther east are five and six story apartment houses, a few single family frame residences, and a taxpayer commercial block.

### PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

#### A. Original Architectural Drawings

Several original drawings of the Fleetwood Station have been preserved on microfiche (the originals are not extant). These drawings include plans, elevations, cross sections, structural details, canopy details, bench design, and ticket window grille detail. The microfiche collection is in the possession of Metro-North and is housed at Grand Central

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Terminal, New York, New York.

B. Early Views

None located.

C. Interviews

Interviews with the present and former station masters.

D. 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 the City of Mount Vernon, 1899-present.

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).

E. 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 Improvements in Westchester County, New York, is to provide modern, functional and attractive facilities for Metro-North passengers at the Fleetwood Station and seven other Harlem Line stations. Changes to the Fleetwood Station include modification of the platform areas; the addition of platform canopies and passenger shelters; the demolition of the existing and construction of a new overpass, ticket office, and concession area; the addition of platform, walkway, overpass and ticket office/waiting area lighting; 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 June 1988.

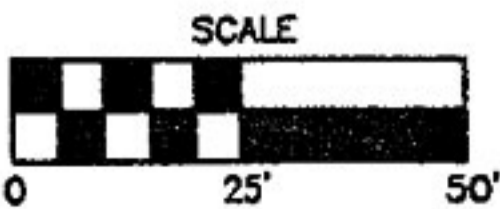
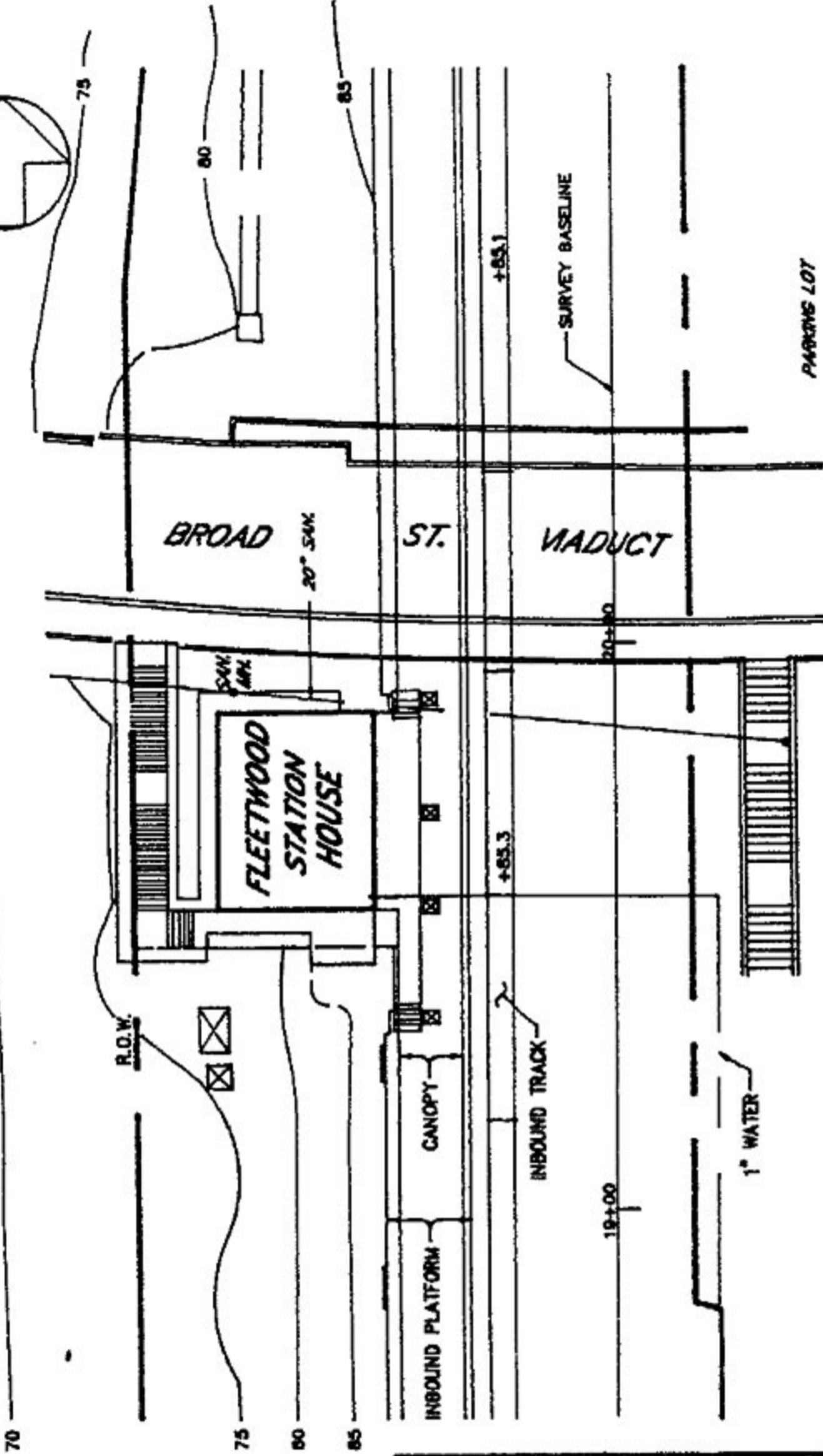
Prepared by: Andrew S. Dolkart and Missy Dierickx

Title: Consultants

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

Date: June 1988

BRONX RIVER



**METRO-NORTH COMMUTER RAILROAD**

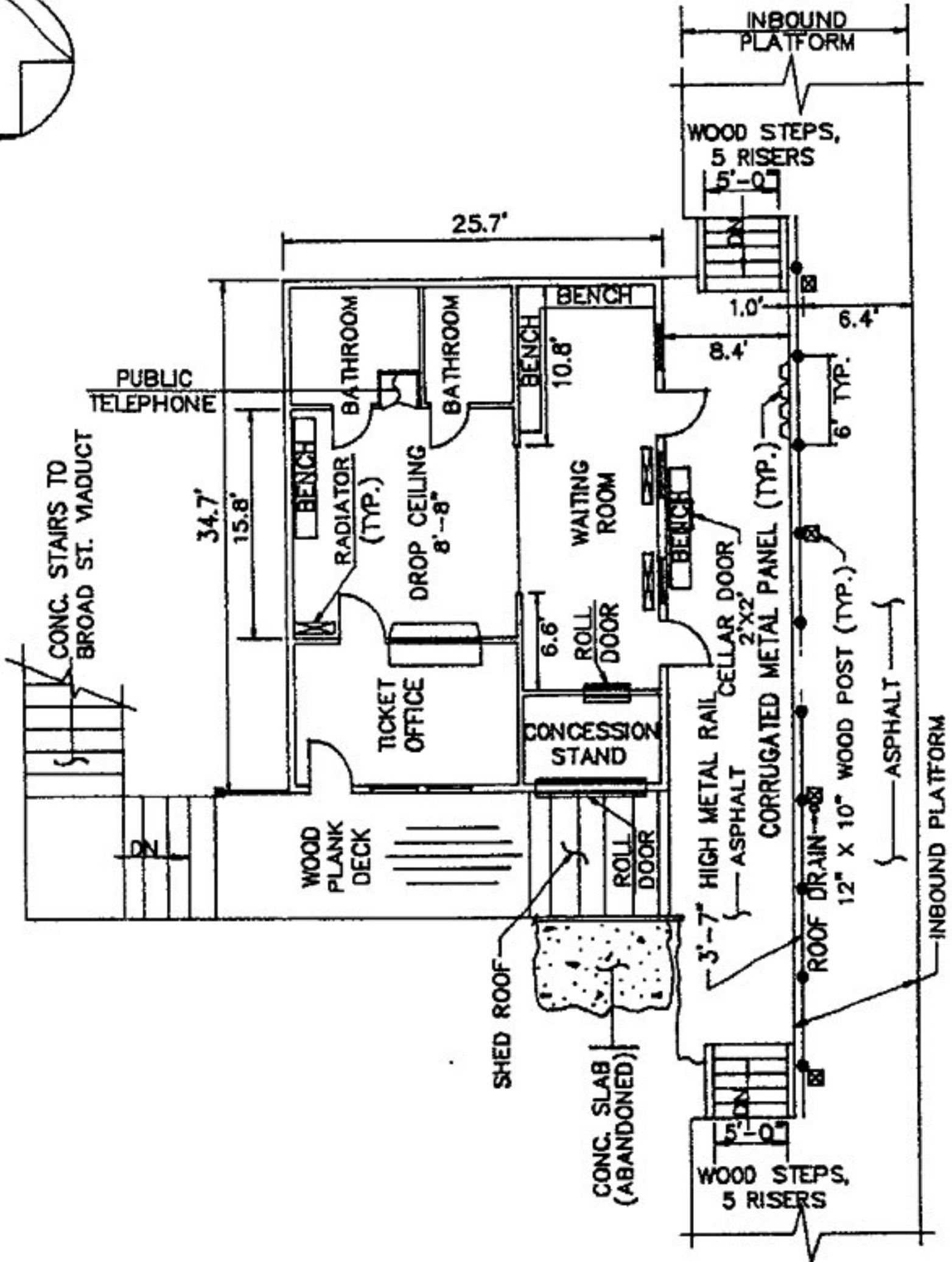
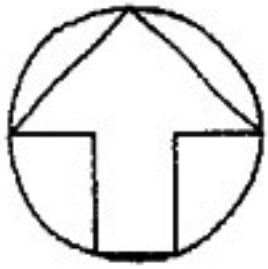
**MID-HARLEM STATION IMPROVEMENTS**

CONTRACT NO. 7388

**FLEETWOOD STATION HOUSE**

**YONKERS CONTRACTING COMPANY, INC.**

*Goodkind & O'Dea, Inc.*  
CONSULTING ENGINEERS



**METRO-NORTH COMMUTER RAILROAD**

**MID-HARLEM STATION IMPROVEMENTS**  
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