

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Concourse Yard Substation
other name/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 3119 Jerome Avenue [] not for publication
city or town Bronx [] vicinity
state New York code NY county Bronx code 005 zip code 10468

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination [] request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements as set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant [] nationally [] statewide locally. ([] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)
[Signature] SA PO 9/19/05
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property [] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. ([] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
[] entered in the National Register
[] see continuation sheet
[] determined eligible for the National Register
[] see continuation sheet
[] determined not eligible for the National Register
[] removed from the National Register
[] other (explain) _____
Signature of the Keeper _____
Date of Action _____

Concourse Yard Substation

Bronx County, New York

Name of Property

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (check as many boxes as apply)	Category of Property (check only one box)	Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count)		
		Contributing	Noncontributing	
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building (s)			Buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district			Sites
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site			Structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> structure	1	0	Objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object			TOTAL
		1	0	

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

Historic Resources of the New York
City Subway System

Number of contributing resources

previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Transportation/rail-related

Government/public works

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Transportation/rail-related

Government/public works

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Modern Movement/

Art Deco

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation Concrete

Walls Brick, concrete

Roof Steel, concrete

Other Decorative finishes: limestone, brick

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

See continuation sheet

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Concourse Yard
Substation

Name of Property

Bronx County, NY

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7. Narrative Description

The Concourse Yard Substation is located at 3119 Jerome Avenue near West 205th Street in the Kingsbridge neighborhood of the Bronx. The substation was built in 1933 as part of the IND System's Concourse Yard. It is arranged in a north-south direction in the northeast corner of the yard. The building measures approximately 50 feet in width by 100 feet in length.

General Characteristics and Construction Methods

The construction of IND Substations in the early 1930s marked the end of the manually operated substation. All but five of the 75-plus substations built for the IND system used mercury arc rectifiers in place of the manually operated rotary converters (Payne, 48). These rectifiers functioned by placing a mercury electrode in contact with mercury vapor — a process that resulted in the current being conducted in only one direction. The most conspicuous change seen in the design of the IND substations was the lack of windows and as a result an almost complete lack of natural light. The majority of the IND substations built after 1932 were smaller underground vaults that used a single mercury arc rectifier. This smaller type of station allowed the power to be more evenly spaced along the line.

The above-ground IND substations were constructed in a simple Art Deco style. Brick facades feature ornamental limestone and aluminum doors embossed with geometric and sunburst patterns (Payne, 49). One consistent element found throughout the IND stations is the ornamental limestone door surround carved with zig zag designs and topped by a tall, inscribed lintel that reads, "CITY of NEW YORK" and lists the substation name.

The Concourse Yard is one of four IND yards, but it is the only one constructed in a depressed cut. Most of the property is occupied by 36 storage tracks which serve the BMT/IND lines, as well as the IRT line. IRT trains enter the yard from elevated tracks at the south end of the property and ramp down to the yard along the west side. These IRT trains are serviced and washed in the yard.

Exterior Description

The Concourse Yard Substation is a single-story, double-height masonry building constructed in the Art Deco style on an infill lot (Photo 1). The main (eastern) façade which faces 207th Street is topped by a low brick parapet that is capped by a band of

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limestone coping (Photo 2). Below this band is a frieze that is comprised of diamond-shaped limestone pieces and a chevron pattern in brick.

This symmetrically arranged facade is centered on a monumental portal with double doors. The entire elevation is clad with various brown-toned bricks set in a diamond pattern emphasized by recessed mortar joints. The doors are clad in aluminum and are embossed with Art Deco-style geometric motifs. The door surround is a wide band of limestone that continues from the ground to the parapet and is decorated with Art Deco-style carvings and the familiar nameplate lettering, "City of New York Concourse Yard Substation." Four narrow windows with metal grilles in Art Deco style complete the symmetrical eastern facade (Photo 3). The expansive variously-colored brick facade is decorated with four columns of brick bands and a subtle, vertical diamond pattern accented by recessed mortar joints. There is a smaller door on the north wall, where rests the original cast stone sign for the adjacent entrance gate that has been torn down... The entire elevation is set on a massive, four-foot tall stone plinth that has been faced with cement. The side and rear facades have no fenestration and only the rear facade shares the same brick cladding seen on the facade (Photo 4).

Interior Description

The main portion of the interior is a large, street-level, windowless volume (Photo 5). The ceiling is a flat concrete slab, the walls are painted brick and the floor is also a concrete slab. The original Cleveland overhead crane still runs the entire length of this space on massive steel girders. Solid state rectifiers have been installed to replace the rotary converters that once dominated this space. A fresh air intake plenum in the penthouse connects to a wide metal duct which runs along the back wall of the main space to the basement, where the air was circulated out of the station through the spinning action of the rotary converters. Some original equipment remains in this space including DC-circuit breaker panels (Photo 6), massive mercury rectifiers (Photo 7) as well as signal transformers (Photo 8). The doors throughout the station are the original five-panel and constructed of wood (Photo 9). The full basement also contains some of the original equipment and is accessed via a spiral metal staircase.

Concourse Yard Substation

Bronx County, New York

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Transportation
- Architecture
- Engineering
- Community Planning and Development

Period of Significance

1933

Significant Dates

1933

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Ridgeway, Robert (Engineer)

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Repository name: NYC Transit Archives
- NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission

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Substation

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8. Narrative Statement of Significance

As part of the Multiple Property Submission of the Historic Resources of the New York City Subway System, the Concourse Yard Substation is significant under Criterion A in the areas of transportation and community planning and development. The substation also meets Criterion C in the areas of engineering and architectural design. The Concourse Yard Substation was constructed in 1933 as part of Concourse Yard. The Concourse Yard Substation retains a relatively high degree of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association making it significant at the local level.

Substations play a vital role as part of the New York Subway system. A substation is an electrical plant built to convert high voltage alternating current (AC) to low voltage (about 600 volts) direct current (DC) used to provide traction power for the trains. Power was generated at a central station and sent to the substation via belowground feeder cables. These cables entered the substation basement in an area known as high tension alley to a pitch-filled copper pot known as a pothead. From the pothead, the line split into three smaller feeders and traveled to a set of oil circuit breakers (Payne, 19). The oil filled circuit breakers were powered by solenoids that were mounted on top of each oil tank. The current was then fed into stacked copper bars called high tension bus, which fed the electricity to a second set of oil circuit breakers. The current was then sent through transformers which stepped the voltage down to about 400 volts. The power was then sent to the rotary converters which took the AC power and changed it to DC. Copper buses took the DC current to a smaller circuit breaker and then to a manually operated switchboard lined with rows of knife switches and meters. Finally, from the switchboard DC feeders ran to the third rails to power the trains (Payne, 20).

The technology has changed over the years. By the time the IND was built, mercury arc rectifiers (MRCs) became the state-of-the-art technology and most of the original IND substations are of this type. The building of the city-owned IND system brought significant changes in the supply technology; rather than generating its own 11,000 volt 25 cycle, the city opted to purchase 13,200 volt 60 cycle AC from Con Edison (who coincidentally had purchased the original IRT powerhouse on West 59th Street in Manhattan).

The IND substations are usually housed in masonry structures designed in a distinctively Art Deco tradition prevalent at the time, much like the Telephone Company buildings of the same era. Like other IND substations, this one is notable for its highly articulated Art

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Deco facade of brick and limestone, which masks its true function of converting power for the subway system. Art deco motifs are found throughout the facade design, including: basketweave brick patterns, pressed geometric patterns on the metal-clad doors, and stylized lettering bearing the name of the substation carved in the limestone frames over the main portal.

Although much of the original equipment has been removed and replaced with modern equipment, the Concourse Yard Substation is architecturally and historically significant in the areas of architecture transportation, and engineering.

The Concourse Yard occupies 23 acres in the Kingsbridge section of the Bronx. The site was originally dug out to serve as a reservoir for the adjacent Jerome Park, but this was never carried out. The yard, however, is sunken with respect to neighboring properties. The north end of the site is separated from the Jerome Avenue Yard by West 205th Street, which is elevated from the tracks. This sunken yard is located between Bedford Park, Lehman College and Bronx High School for Science to the west and light industrial and residential buildings of the Kingsbridge section of the Bronx to the east and south.

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Concourse Yard
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9. Bibliography

Cudahy, Brian. *A Century of Subways: Celebrating 100 Years of the New York City's Underground Railways*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2003.

Hood, Clifton. *722 Miles: The Building of the Subways and How they Transformed New York*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993.

Interborough Rapid Transit Company. *The New York Subway: Its Construction and Equipment*. 1904. Reprinted on website managed by David Pirmann (2004). Retrieved 03/14/04 from source: <http://www.nycsubway.org/irt/irtbook/>.

National Park Service, Department of the Interior Historic American Engineering Record NY-122, "Interborough Rapid Transit Subway (Original Line): The NY Rapid Transit Decision of 1900: Economy, Society, Politics" prepared by Walter B. Katz, 1979.

New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission. *IRT Subway System Underground Interior Designation Report*. New York: NYC LPC, October, 1979.

Orlando, Barbara. "Recapturing the Past: Station Architecture," *At Your Service: MTA New York City Transit Employee Newsletter*, March, 2004.

Parsons, Brinckerhoff, Quade & Douglas, Inc., Historical Perspectives, Inc. and Robert E. Olmstead, P.E. "Phase I: Reconnaissance Level Historical Survey of Transit Authority Properties," June, 1991.

Payne, Christopher. *New York's Forgotten Substations: The Power Behind the Subway*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2002.

Concourse Yard Substation

Bronx County, New York

Name of Property

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10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Less than 1 acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1 8	5 9 3 5 9 0	4 5 2 5 2 5 0	3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	
2				4			

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By (*See Continuation Sheet for authors*)

name/title Contact: Kathleen A. Howe, Historic Preservation Specialist

organization NYS Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation Date March 30, 2004

street & number Peebles Island, PO Box 189 Telephone 518-237-8643 ext. 3266

city or town Waterford state NY zip code 12188

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional Items

(Check with SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner (Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

name MTA New York City Transit Contact: Hollie Wells, Project Administrator

street & number 2 Broadway, 6th Floor, D6.125 telephone 646-252-4268

city or town New York state NY zip code 10004

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act. As amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, D.C. 20503.

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10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the Concourse Yard Substation is shown as the bold line on the accompanying site plan entitled, "Oasis Map Concourse Yard Substation." The designation for Substation includes all portions of the station structure and the property included within the boundaries of the NYCTA right-of way.

Boundary Description

The boundary for the Concourse Yard Substation encompasses the entire station building and the NYCTA right-of way associated with the structure.

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11. Form Prepared By:

Steven Bedford, Principal Architectural Historian
Stacey Vairo, Architectural Historian
Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc.
72 Cedar Street
Hartford, CT 06106
860-247-7200

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Concourse Yard
Substation

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Additional Documentation

List of Black and White Photos

Concourse Yard Substation

New York County, NY

Photographer: Stacey Vairo

Date: November 2004

Negatives on file: Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc.

72 Cedar Street

Hartford, CT 06106

1. Concourse Yard Substation. View northwest.
2. Entrance detail. View northwest.
3. Windows in eastern façade. View southwest.
4. Northern elevation. View west.
5. Substation interior. View north.
6. Circuit breaker panels. View south.
7. Mercury rectifier. View west
8. Signal transformer. View north.
9. Switch board and wooden panel door. View east.

CENTRAL PARK QUADRANGLE
NEW YORK-NEW JERSEY
7.5-MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)



40°52'30"
Concourse Yard
Substation
3119 Jerome Avenue
Bronx County, NY
Zone 18
Easting: 593590
Northing: 4525250
USGS Topo
Central Park Quad
1:24000

230 000 FEET
(NY LONG ISLAND)

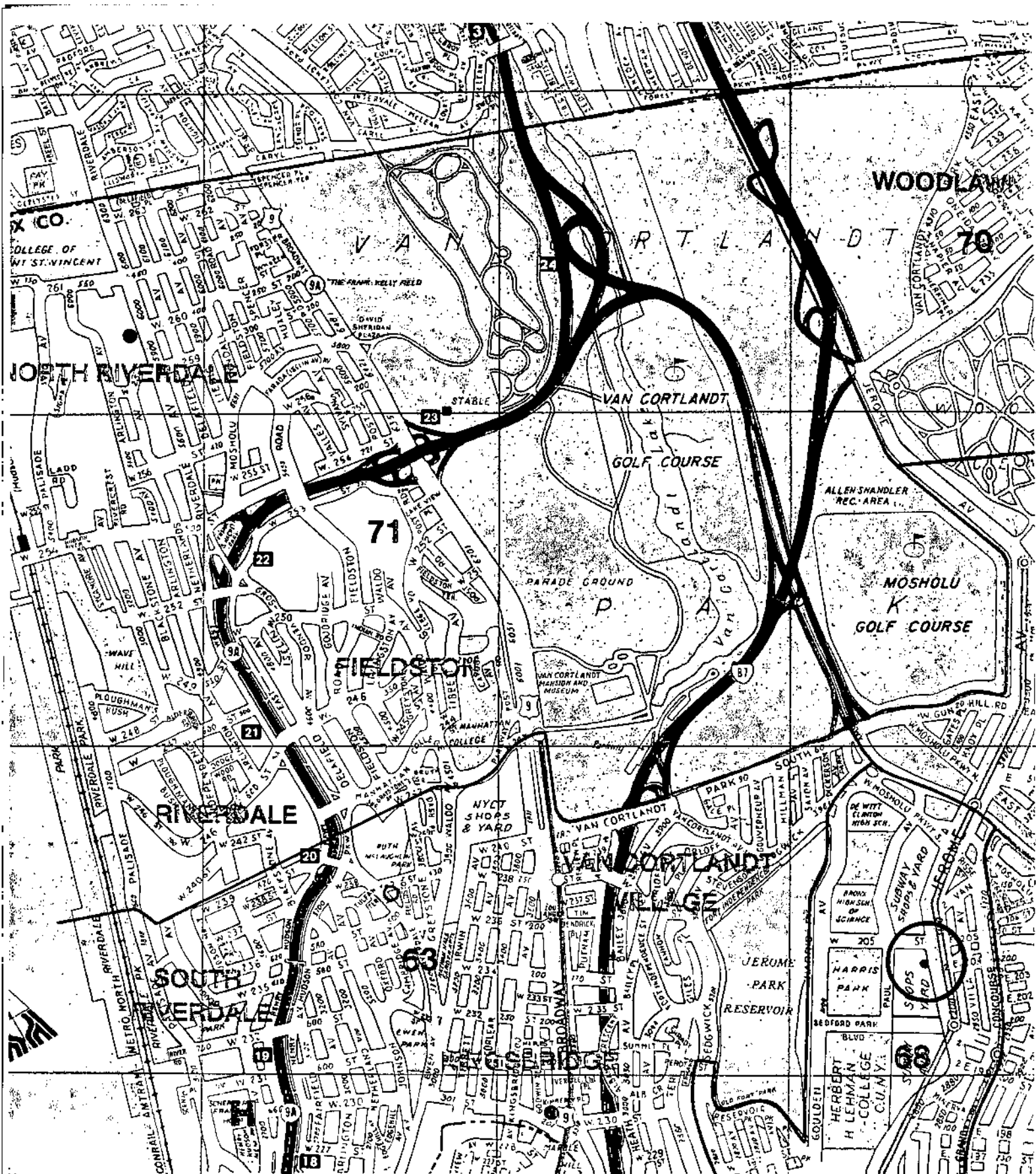
°23

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95

50'

°20

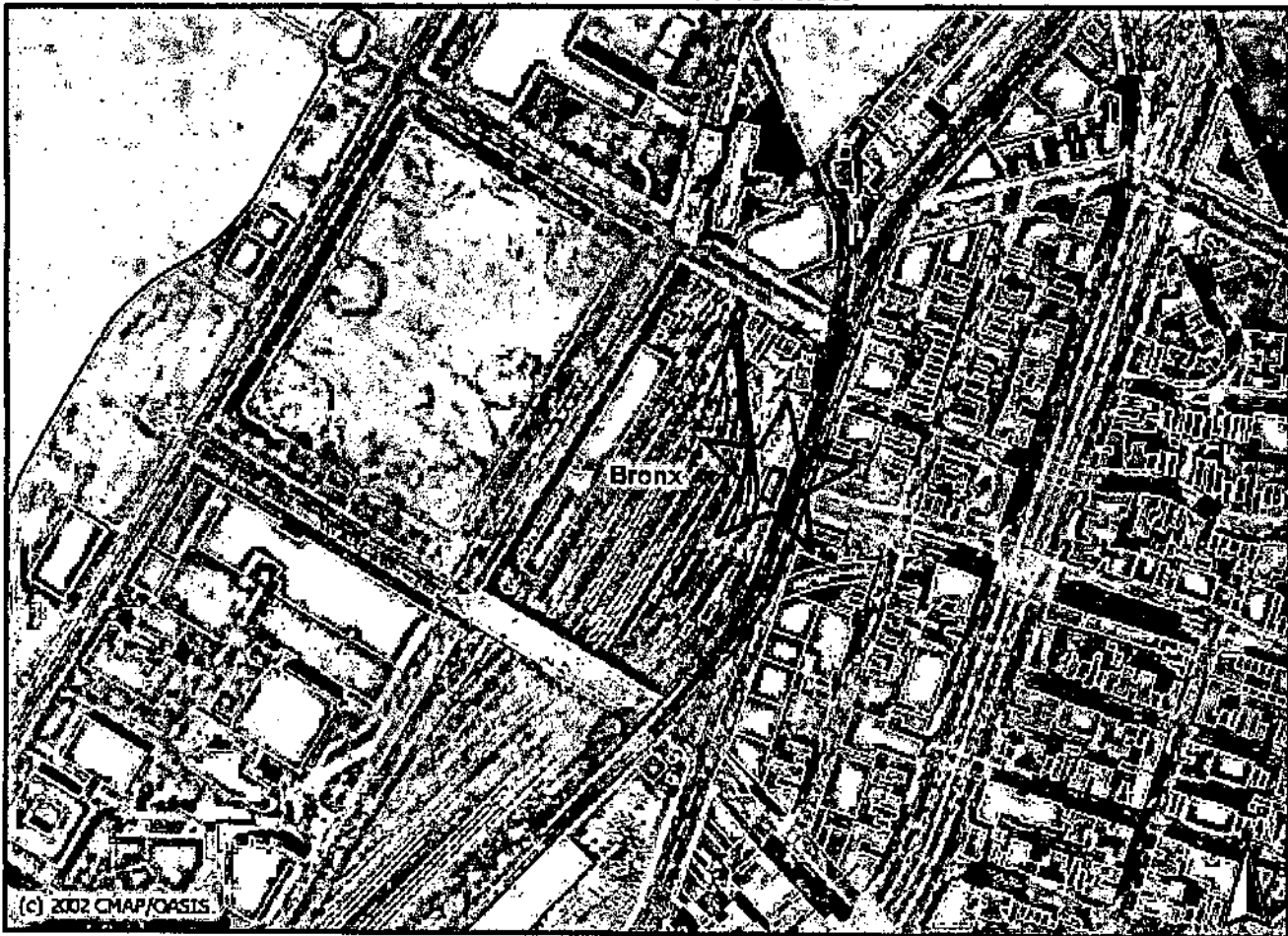


↑
 N
 Hagstrom map, 1998
 1" = 1,750'

Concourse Yard Substation
 319 Jerome Ave.
 Bronx Co, NY

OASIS Map

Concourse Yard Substation



width of map is 0.61 miles.

 Streams, Lakes, Waterbodies

 NJ Lakes

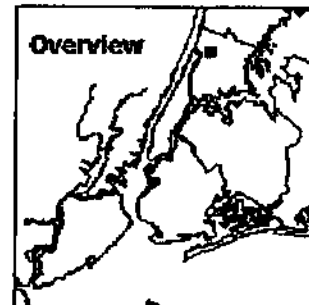
 Buildings

nyc
oasis

Map provided by the
Open Accessible Space
Information System
(www.OASISnyc.net)
of New York City

NYC Basemap copyrighted by the New York City
Department of Environmental Protection, 2000.

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The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission

1 Centre Street, 9th Floor North, New York NY 10007 TEL: 212-669-7922 FAX: 212-669-7797

<http://nyc.gov/landmarks/>



RONDA WIST
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
rwist@lpc.nyc.gov

February 3, 2005

Ms. Ruth Pierpont, Director
New York State Office of Parks Recreation
and Historic Preservation
Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau
Peebles Island
P.O. Box 189
Waterford, New York 12188-0189

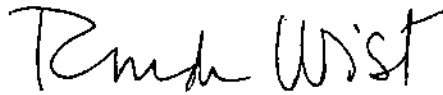
Re: The Historic Resources of the New York City Subway
System, various counties, New York

Dear Ms. Pierpont:

I write on behalf of Chair Robert B. Tierney in response to your request for comment on the eligibility of The Historic Resources of the New York City Subway System (Bronx, Kings and New York Counties) and the individual substations and related buildings nominated for the State and National Registers of Historic Places.

The Commission has reviewed the materials submitted by the Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau and believes that the Joralemon Street Tunnel, Subway Substation 7, Substation 13, Substation 17, Substation 42, Substation 409, Substation 235, Central IND Substation, Substation 219, the 207th Street Yard—Signal Service Building and Tower B, the Coney Island Yard Gatehouse, the Coney Island Electric Motor Repair Shop, the Concourse Yard Entry Buildings, and the Concourse Yard Substation appear to meet the criteria for inclusion on the State and National Registers of Historic Places.

Sincerely yours,


Ronda Wist

cc: Robert B. Tierney, Chair
Mary Beth Betts

