

PH 0665631

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED MAR 27 1978

DATE ENTERED JUN 7 1978

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME West Philadelphia Station, Pennsylvania Railroad Station,
Pennsylvania Station 30th Street, Penn Central Station,
Penn Central 30th Street Station

AND/OR COMMON 30th Street Station

USE THIS COPY
FOR DUPLICATING

2 LOCATION STREET & NUMBER West River Drive, Market, 30th and Arch Streets

CITY, TOWN Philadelphia

VICINITY OF

2nd

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE Pennsylvania

CODE 42

COUNTY Philadelphia

CODE 101

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Antrak

STREET & NUMBER

Suburban Station Bldg., 1617 J.F.K. Boulevard

CITY, TOWN

Philadelphia

VICINITY OF Pennsylvania

STATE

19104

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Custodian of Penn Central Transportation Company Records

STREET & NUMBER

1528 Walnut Street

CITY, TOWN

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

Box 1026

CITY, TOWN

Harrisburg

Pennsylvania 17120

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Introduction

The Philadelphia 30th Street Station is a monumental building in the modern classic style. The Chicago firm of Graham Anderson Probst and White designed the station, which was built between 1929 and 1934. Situated on the west bank of the Schuylkill River, the station is near to Philadelphia's central business district directly across the river. The subway running beneath Market Street connects the station to City Hall, which lies ten blocks to the east of the river.

Plan

The structure appears as a cruciform in plan. The long axis, paralleling the river for 639 feet, is bisected by a heavy rectangular volume which projects above and beyond it, terminating in porte cocheres on either end. This shorter, east-west axis reflects the shape and orientation of the dominant interior space, a grand high-ceilinged concourse which serves primarily as a waiting room.

Structure

The station and its surrounding roads and parking lot are built on an elevated deck, allowing the several rail lines as well as the Schuylkill Expressway to pass under the station in alignment with the north-south axis. Supporting the column foundations of the station, massive caissons carry the load down to bedrock, roughly eighty feet below grade. To prevent the transmission of track and road vibrations to the station itself, the footings of the track slabs and roads are tectonically independent of the structure supporting the station. For the same purpose, all column bases of the station rest on anti-vibration pads of lead, asbestos and steel.

Exterior

Constructed of non-bearing masonry and faced with Alabama limestone, the facade, typical of classical design, is free of detail. On either side of the projecting porte cocheres seven vertical bays of iron-framed windows punctuate the facade, recapitulating the verticality of the six Corinthian columns which screen either of the main entrances. A deep-crowning entablature with a modillion and dental freeze surmounts these columns and continues around the building, forming a horizontal emphasis. Further unifying the design, a projecting, protective granite ledge is continuous around the base of the building. The four corners of the long axis are topped by square flag pavillions.

Arriving passengers generally enter the station through the five bays of doorways behind either porte cochere. Framed by fluted granite, these glass and iron bays extend upward for several stories, terminating at the line of the heavy cornice which is carried around the entablature of the long axis of the building. Large bronze "moderne" wall lighting fixtures hang from ornamental brackets on the stone walls separating the entrance bays.

Continued..

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Defining the shorter cross-axis, a second entablature forms a parapet around the roof of the concourse. This entablature, like that of the other axis, is detailed with three equally spaced cornices; the middle cornice is the most elaborate, being ornamented with carved modillions and dentils. The north and south faces of the high entablature are relieved by a series of ornamental square stone panels. While not visible from the exterior, large light courts run alongside the main concourse, allowing light and air to enter this room from all four sides.

Repeating the treatment of the entrance bays, the window bays are built up of iron casement windows with ornamental iron spandrels connecting them between floors. The corner bays each include a doorway which, in keeping with the main entrances, is framed in fluted granite. These final bays on each facade are slightly articulated, projecting enough to form the square flag pavillions at each corner of the long axis.

The north facade of the building incorporated the pre-existing suburban tracks and platforms, which enter the station building through the northern-most bay on the east and west facades. Shielded by a dark iron and glass canopy, this functional intrusion does not destroy the apparent symmetry of the station.

Interior

Measuring 290' by 135', the main concourse is a grand and impressive place. The marble and travertine walls rise 95' to a finely detailed plaster coffered ceiling which retains its original color scheme of red, gold, and cream with red predominating. Articulated by massive fluted Corinthian columns, the east and west walls mimic the facade of the porte cocheres. A double-panelled glass wall behind these columns encloses steel and glass-block catwalks connecting the floors of the longer axis of the building, which are otherwise separated by the concourse. High window bays alternating with travertine-faced piers make up the north and south walls of the concourse. These clerestory windows are composed of iron-ornamented strips of molded glass illuminated by the outside light courts previously mentioned. Ten prismodal lamps hang from the ceiling in two rows. Eighteen feet long, the fixtures are fashioned of translucent glass set in bronze frames. Although rigging in the attic may originally have been designed so that the lamps could be lowered for repair and cleaning, it is not currently used because the complex machinery is deteriorated and because the fixtures themselves are fragile and irreplaceable. Standing just inside the east entrance, a large bronze sculpture of Winged Death and her captive hero commemorates the employees of the Pennsylvania Railroad who died in the Second World War.

The waiting room and ticket lobby immediately north of the main concourse are notable for their highly decorative ceiling and allegorical terra cotta plaque, symbolizing the evolution of transportation, on the west wall of the waiting area.

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This plaque, a creation of Karl Bitter, depicts the "Spirit of Transportation" as a triumphal procession, with "Transportation" herself riding in a golden chariot. A child holding a model of an airship leads the procession; a covered wagon brings up the rear. Originally installed in the old Broad Street Station, this work was moved to the 30th Street Station in 1933.

The space to the south of the concourse is used for concessions, employee toilet facilities, and public telephones. Botticcino marble decorates those areas designated for the railroad company's use, while verde marble is employed in the commercial areas for wainscotting. Ornamentation is limited to a canted cornice painted with chevrons.

The four upper floors of the long axis are devoted to office space. In this area of the building, the door and transom frames, although metal, read as molded, two-lane architraves of classical derivation. Their finish is grained to resemble mahogany, suggesting the lesser importance of this area in the overall station scheme.

Tracks and Platforms

The main set of tracks lies below the concourse on the north-south axis. The high-level island platforms, nearly 24' wide and 1,500' long, are protected by the Market Street deck to the south and a canopy in the open area to the north. For each platform an escalator and adjacent stairway and a separate larger stairway connect directly to the main concourse.

Renovations and Additions

A cantilevered balcony, added to the original design in 1944, projects into the waiting area. The surrounding railing incorporates the logo of the Pennsylvania Railroad as a repeated motif in the metal work.

The major renovation to the interior has been the conversion of the bus terminal and concession area in the north end of the station to commercial bowling lanes now closed. The elevated suburban tracks and platforms run directly over this area. These two changes are the basis for designating the structures as "altered."

The most recent renovations have been undertaken by the Federal Railroad Administration. Under Title X of the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1974, the station has benefited from general cleaning and repair work; escalators have been replaced; and the public restrooms have been remodeled. None of this work has involved structural changes to the exterior facade.

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Conclusion

The 30th Street Station has endured as one of the last examples of the architecture of the past great railroad era. It is a building of self-evident importance and a significant landmark for the City of Philadelphia.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	Urban Planning
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1929-34

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Graham, Anderson
Probst and White

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Built during the Great Depression, the 30th Street Station has served for more than forty years as Philadelphia's principal passenger station. Once used as the headquarters of the Pennsylvania Railroad, the station and its attendant trackage have undergone little change, other than those previously mentioned, since the completion of their construction in 1934.

The present station represents one in a series of designs proposed for the site between 1925 and 1929. This final design exhibited a post and beam aesthetic and represented a transformation from, the then dominant, neo-classicism to a more modernized style. Representative of this transformation was the different treatments given to the exterior and interior. While the exterior maintained a strict neo-classicism, the interior reflected a more freely interpreted classicism. Further, the station incorporated several features which were novel to station design at the time, including a chapel, a mortuary, and 3,300 square feet of hospital space. The reinforced concrete roof of the concourse section was designed to allow a landing space for small aircraft. An elaborate buzzer and intercom system and a pneumatic tube network for internal communications were incorporated into the station, providing an efficient communication system without compromising the desired monumentality. These features have either been altered to satisfy changing functional needs or are no longer used. The chapel, mortuary and hospital space have since been converted to office space, a conference room, and a ConRail infirmary, respectively; while the landing space and internal communication system are no longer used.

The Chicago firm of Graham Anderson Probst and White, the successor office to D. H. Burnham and Co., was responsible for the final design. The Pennsylvania Railroad's commission for the station came to the firm after the death in 1924 of their chief designer, Beaux-Arts trained Pierce Anderson. Accordingly, the ultimate design which integrated new ideas into the classical vocabulary, was probably the product of younger men in the firm such as Alfred Shaw, Charles T. Murphy, and Sigurd Naess, all of whom were associated with the firm by 1930.

The evolution of the station design reflected variations of the classical style evolving during the late 1920's. These variations expressed the prevailing optimism about and commitment to progress through industrialization. As first envisioned in 1927, the station was to have been a Beaux Arts structure inspired by the Baths of Caracalla. Based on the interplay of two axes, as in the present structure, the original design employed a steel arched structural system together with doubled columnation and Baroque ornamentation on the east facade.

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A later concept, although indicative of the Beaux Arts style, was more reflective of industrial technology. Using a plan similar to the one first proposed for the station but of more extravagant proportions this scheme called for an enormous central area spanned by arching iron trusswork and a more restrained treatment of the exterior ornamentation. The proposed "grand concourse," a room twenty-five feet wider and one hundred seventy feet longer than the existing concourse, would have combined the waiting room with the arrival and departure concourse into one monumental space.

While the building is an impressive architectural statement in its own right, it takes on particular significance when viewed in the context of the history of American railroading and urban planning. One of the last of the former "gateways" to major American cities, the station was part of an overall central city improvement program begun in 1925 by both the City of Philadelphia and the Pennsylvania Railroad Company. Planned as a replacement to the landmark trainshed terminal in center city, the 30th Street Station marked the commitment of the railroad to electricity as a preferable energy source for trains.

The old Broad Street Station, built in 1881 in the city center about one mile from the main line tracks, was by 1920 the center of the heaviest passenger traffic of the Pennsylvania Railroad. It was a stub station, however, necessitating a half-hour delay as trains had to travel to the yard west of the Schuylkill to turn around. As early as 1910, when the plan for a diagonal parkway from City Hall to Fairmount Park challenged any expansion of Broad Street Station, the railroad began to study the possibilities for a new station site.

In June, 1925, the company entered into an agreement with the City of Philadelphia whereby, in return for tunnel rights to 15th Street, the railroad agreed to surrender for the parkway certain land near City Hall and for new development the corridor occupied by its elevated tracks to Broad Street Station. The railroad further agreed to build a central station for suburban passengers as well as a new station west of the Schuylkill.

The site on the west bank of the Schuylkill gave the railroad the opportunity to lay out loop tracks in an area south of the station so that New York trains bound for the west could be turned around within the terminal area in a continuous movement.

Construction on the major portion of the station started almost simultaneously with the onset of the Great Depression, resulting in economic problems which had not been anticipated in 1925. Consequently, what had begun as a model agreement between government and private enterprise became increasingly government dominated as the Public Works Administration intervened to finance the completion of the electrification work and the station building itself.

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The slow recovery from the Depression coupled with the delay in construction work during World War II postponed development east of the river. Accordingly, the reconstruction of the Filbert Street corridor was not realized until the 1960's. Now, the 30th Street Station stands as a monumental terminus to a boulevard only recently completed. While the station complex is in large part surrounded by an elevated highway unanticipated in 1925, the absolute scale of the station allows it to retain its architectural integrity and forceful presence despite the changing conditions of the city-scape.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- o Pennsylvania Railroad Co. floor plans, Pennsylvania Station (Phila. 1930)
- o Graham, Anderson, Probst and White, Architects. The architectural work of Graham, Anderson, Probst and White, Chicago. London: BT Batsford Ltd., 1933
- o Burgess, George H. and Miles C. Kennedy: Centennial History of the Pennsylvania Railroad Co., Philadelphia: Pennsylvania Railroad Co. 1929
- o Meeks; C.L.V., The Railroad Station, An Architectural History, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1956

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 8.36

UTM REFERENCES

A	18	4841420	44221660	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The station is located west of Philadelphia Central Business District and across the Schuylkill River. The Station is bounded on the north by Arch Street, on the south by Market Street, on the east by West River Drive and on the west by 30th Street

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Edward Dunson

February 3, 1978

ORGANIZATION

DeLew, Cather/Parsons & Associates

DATE

452-5761

STREET & NUMBER

1201 Connecticut Ave., N.W.,

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Washington, D.C. 20036

STATE

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

William J. Wewer

TITLE William J. Wewer, Executive Director
Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission

DATE

3/16/78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

Calvin Cole

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

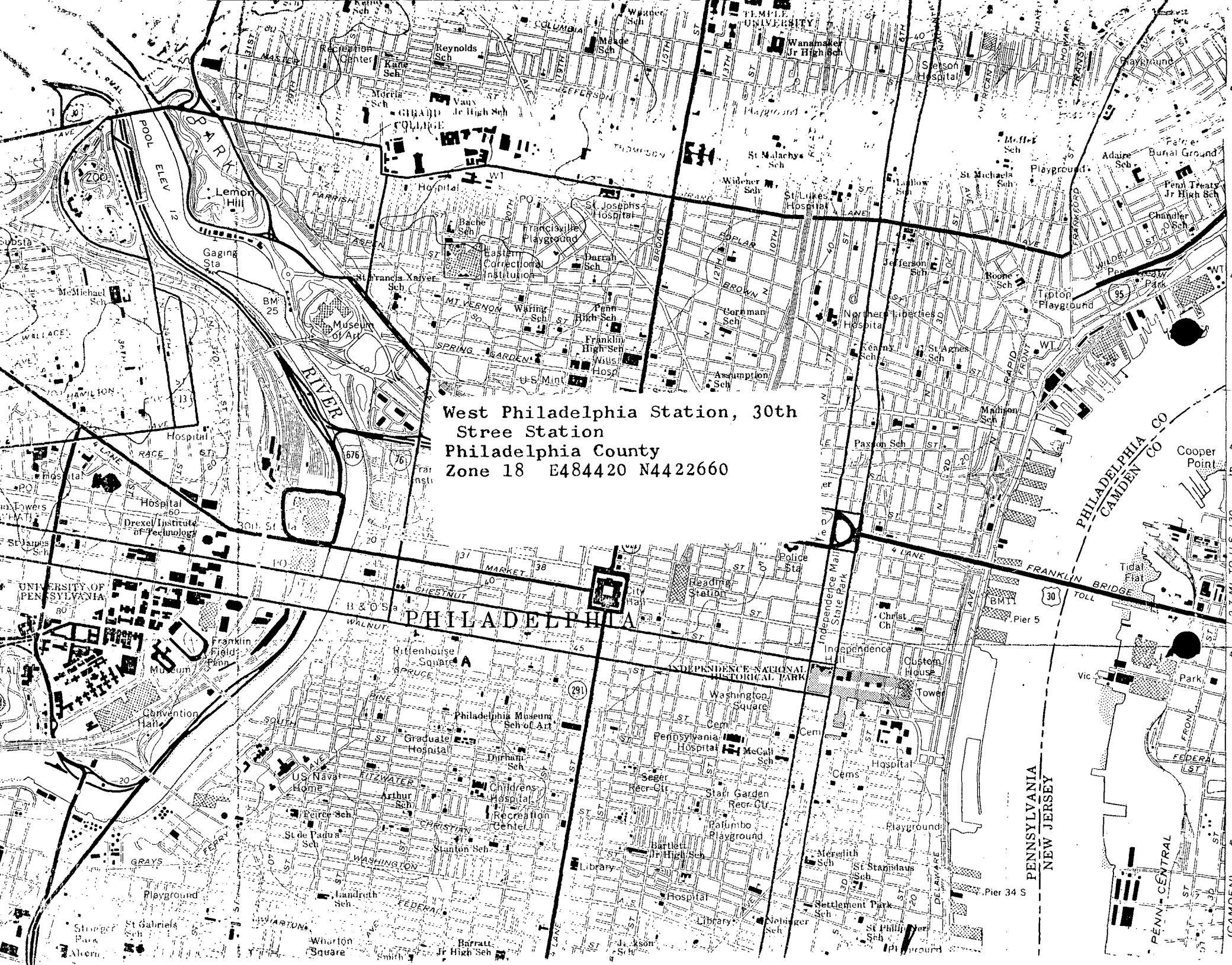
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

6/2/78

DATE

6.6.78



West Philadelphia Station, 30th
Stree Station
Philadelphia County
Zone 18 E484420 N4422660

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PENNSYLVANIA
NEW JERSEY

PHILADELPHIA CO
CAMDEN CO

PENN. CENTRAL