



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
 William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth
 Massachusetts Historical Commission

January 29, 2024

Danielle Gosselin
 Director, Office of Environmental Analysis
 Surface Transportation Board
 395 E Street SW
 Washington DC 20423-0001

RE: STB Docket No. AB 55 (Sub-No. 813X), CSX Transportation Inc. Abandonment Exemption, Albany Division, Boston Subdivision, Fitchburg Branch, Between Milepost QBU 4.2 to Milepost QBU.4.58, Municipality of Leominster, Worcester Co., MA. MHC #RC.73938.

Dear Director Gosselin:

Staff of the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC), office of the State Historic Preservation Officer, have reviewed the Surface Transportation Board (STB) Decision dated December 15, 2023 for the undertaking referenced above, received by the MHC on January 5, 2024, and the MHC's files.

Review of the MHC's files indicates that the undertaking consists of the abandonment of an approximately 0.38 mile section of rail line of CSX Transportation Inc.'s (CSXT) Albany Division, Boston Subdivision, Fitchburg Branch, located between Milepost QBU 4.2 and Milepost QBU.4.58, in the City of Leominster, in Worcester Co., Massachusetts ("the Line").

The STB Environmental Report dated October 10, 2023, received by the MHC on October 18, 2023, indicates that the undertaking consists of the following: "CSXT intends to sell the Line to the City of Leominster (the 'City') [...]. The purchase by the City will extend its current trail that runs between QBU 40 – QBU 4.2. Abandonment of the Line will result in the removal of the rail, crossties, and possibly the upper layer of ballast. CSXT does not intend to disturb any sub grade or sub grade structures. Any trail related structures, such as bridges, trestles, culverts and tunnels will not be salvaged."

The STB Decision dated December 15, 2023 ordered CSXT to retain its interest and take no action until the "Section 106" process has been completed. The Decision indicated that the STB's Office of Environmental Analysis had not received comments from the MHC.

STB, as the involved federal agency, is responsible for findings and determinations, following the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's regulations 36 CFR 800, Procedures for Protection of Historic Properties, that implement "Section 106" (54 USC 306108) of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 as amended (36 CFR 800.2(a) and 800.2 (a)(3)).

The SHPO advises and assists federal agencies in carrying out their "Section 106" responsibilities (36 CFR 800.3(c)(1)(i)).

Review of the MHC's files indicates that the MHC did not comment on the undertaking within thirty (30) days of receipt of information provided by STB and by CSXT. Because the MHC did not comment, no further MHC review is required for this undertaking (see 36 CFR 800.3(c)(4)).

The MHC advises STB that a determination by STB of "no historic properties affected" (36 CFR 8004(d)(1)) is appropriate for the undertaking.

These comments are offered to assist in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 as amended (54 USC 306108; 36 CFR 800). Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Edward L. Bell
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
Massachusetts Historical Commission

xc:

Kevin Hardee, CSXT, Jacksonville, FL
Hon. Dean J. Mazzarella, Mayor, City of Leominster