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JERSEY CITY'S NON-PARTISAN COMMUNITY ADVOCACY LEADER

July 7, 2017

Katherine Marcopul, Administrator and Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer:
New Jersey State Historic Preservation Office
Mail Code 501-04B
State of New Jersey
Department of Environmental Protection
PO Box 420
Trenton, NJ 08625-0420
Re: Comments on the Cultural Resources Identification Report
Conrail Harsimus Branch Abandonment Exemption,
STB Docket No. AB 167 (Sub-No. 1189X)

Dear Ms. Marcopul:

I understand that the NJ State Historic Preservation Office is commenting on the Cultural Resources Identification Report for the Harsimus Branch. I request that you consider the comments below, and also that you submit this letter with your comments to the Surface Transportation Board Office of Environmental Assessment. We apologize for the late date of this note, although we are consulting parties, we were not aware of this report until after the deadline for comments had passed.

CivicJC is a non-profit, non-partisan, community-based organization founded in 2005 to compliment and support existing Jersey City community organizations by actively engaging in lobbying and advocacy initiatives. Our organization has supported the efforts to preserve the Embankment and the Harsimus Branch Railway since our founding.

The railroads were an integral part of the development of Jersey City and Harsimus Branch is one of the few remaining signs of this history. We disagree with the Report that the Branch lacks integrity. Aerial photos combined with what is visible from the street from Marin Boulevard to Chestnut Street, is clear evidence that the Branch retains the necessary integrity in it's entire path to convey historic significance.

The Embankment is one of the defining characteristics of both the Hamilton Park and the Harsimus Cove Historic Districts. It was left out of the original historic district designation only in the interest of time and expediency. The Harsimus Branch from Brunswick Street to the Palisades is the logical natural continuation of the Embankment.

We recommend that the Harsimus Branch in it's entirety be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Pennsylvania Railroad New York to Philadelphia Historic district.

Sincerely,



Esther Wintner, President
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