



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

4219 CAMPBELL AVENUE
LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA 24501

STEPHEN C. BRICH, P.E.
COMMISSIONER

February 7, 2020

Project: 0653-062-817, B655, C501, P101, R201
UPC: 112865
COUNTY: Nelson
FUNDING: Federal
PERMITS: Undetermined
VDHR FILE: 2019-0486

Ms. Julie V. Langan, Director
Attn.: Mr. Marc Holma, Resource Services and Review Division
Virginia Department of Historic Resources
2801 Kensington Avenue
Richmond, Virginia 23221

Subject: Identification of Historic Properties

Dear Ms. Langan:

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) is proposing replacement of the Route 653 Bridge #6052 which spans the Norfolk Southern Railroad in Nelson County. The project will be federally funded and may require water quality permits from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The VDOT is coordinating this project with your department on behalf of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (1966, as amended) and its implementing regulations, 36 CFR Part 800. The purpose of this letter is to convey to your office the results of our studies to identify historic properties in the project's Area of Potential Effects.

Identification of Historic Properties

The VDOT has completed efforts to identify potentially affected historic properties within an area of potential effects (APE) for below-ground resources that is the direct construction footprint of the undertaking, including all proposed right of way and any permanent or temporary

easements. The APE for above-ground resources included all resources over 50 years of age on parcels within or adjacent to the construction limits that may be directly impacted by construction or indirectly impacted through auditory, visual, or traffic pattern changes, etc. resulting from the project.

Architecture

The VDOT Western Region Architectural Historian has completed a survey of the APE for above ground resources. This survey resulted in the identification of two previously recorded resources and no new resources.

VDHR #062-0085 - Oak Ridge Railroad Overpass (VDOT Bridge #6052) is a 100-foot single span, Pratt through truss that was originally constructed in 1882 and then moved by Thomas Ryan to the current site in 1906 to carry Route 653 over the Norfolk Southern Railway. The bridge was listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in 1978 as an excellent example of its type. A Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) was completed in 1994.

VDHR #062-0011 - Oak Ridge/Mansion Historic District is an 1802 Federal house that was substantially renovated into a Colonial Revival mansion in 1908 by Thomas F. Ryan who also expanded the property to 4,800+ acres and constructed agricultural and equine facilities, tenant housing, landscaping, and other support buildings for a working estate.

The district was first investigated in 1992 for listing on the NRHP. DHR's original NRHP nomination of 1994 included all 4,800+ acres with 57 contributing structures. The Route 653 truss bridge was listed as a non-contributing resource. In 2007, DHR revised the nomination to 1,000 acres and focused on the mansion, grounds and related agricultural buildings. Currently, the polygon for the district in VDHR's VCRIS database is 400 acres, which is the portion of the tax parcel bounded by the railway, Route 653 and Route 650, incorporating the mansion and grounds (see attached VCRIS aerial map).

Archaeology

The archaeological APE for direct impacts encompasses approximately 4.3 acres (1.74 ha), extending 125 ft. (38 m) on either side of Route 653 and 256 ft. (78 m) from the edge of the Oak Ridge Railroad Overpass. The William and Mary Center for Archaeological Research (WMCAR) completed an archaeological survey of the APE on October 21-23, 2019. The results are provided in the attached management summary. No archaeological sites and no archaeological locations were identified and no further work is warranted.

Consulting Parties

As reported in our letter of August 2, 2019, the VDOT has assisted the FHWA in seeking consulting parties to the Section 106 process. As of August 2, Nelson County, the Nelson County Historical Society and the Oak Ridge Estate (Ms. Rhonda Holland) had accepted invitations to participate. Since that time, the VDOT has received requests from the Piedmont

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Environmental Council and local property owners Arthur F., III and Dianne Wilson and has added them to the list of consulting parties.

The VDOT and consulting parties met on December 5, 2019 to discuss the proposed project and potential means to avoid, minimize or mitigate effects of the project on historic properties. The VDOT anticipates that the project will have no adverse effect on the Oak Ridge/Mansion Historic District. Currently, the VDOT is in the process of gathering additional information on the cost of a potential rehabilitation of Bridge #6052. Our intention is to hold a second meeting of consulting parties to present this information in late winter or spring 2020. If it is determined that adverse effects to this resource cannot be avoided, the VDOT will work with the consulting parties identified above on the overall replacement bridge design features and aesthetic treatments for the bridge to minimize effects and to document these and any additional agreed-upon measures in a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA).

We invite you to concur with the VDOT's findings by completing the signature block below, and returning the original signature to my attention within 30 days of receipt of this letter. Please contact me at (434) 941-8488, or at randy.lichtenberger@vdot.virginia.gov if you have questions about this project.

Sincerely,



Randy Lichtenberger
Regional Archaeologist

cc: Mr. Kevin B. Jones, Federal Highway Administration
Mr. Stephen A. Carter, County Administrator, Nelson County
Ms. Deborah Harvey, President, Nelson County Historical Society
Ms. Reagan Holland, Oak Ridge Estate
Ms. Julie Bolthouse, Piedmont Environmental Council
Mr. and Mrs. Arthur F., III and Dianne Wilson

Attachment
Enc.

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The Virginia Department of Historic Resources concurs with the Virginia Department of Transportation's determination that there are no archaeological resources located within the area of potential effects for VDOT Project # 0653-062-817, B655, C501, P101, R201 (VDHR File # 2019-0486), and that no further work is recommended.

Julie V. Langan
Director
Virginia Department of Historic Resources

Date