



City of Slidell, Louisiana

Olde Towne Preservation District Commission

Agenda

April 19, 2023 at 5:00pm

Council Chambers, 2045 2nd St, Slidell, LA

Agenda packet available at myslidell.com/planning/boards/otpdc

For questions or to provide public comment before the meeting,
email OTPDC@cityofslidell.org or call (985) 646-4320 (M-F 8am to 4:30pm)



SCAN ME
for the
OTPDC website

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call**
2. **Minutes.** Review and approve minutes from March 15, 2023
3. **Public Hearings**
 - a. **CA23-07:** A request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for exterior alterations to Norfolk Southern, City of Slidell Train Depot located at 1827 Front Street, Slidell, requested by National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak).
4. **Other Business**
 - a.
5. **Informational Items**
 - a.
6. **General and Public Comments**
7. **Adjournment**

The next Olde Towne Preservation District Commission meeting will be May 10, 2023.



City of Slidell, Louisiana

Olde Towne Preservation District Commission Minutes

March 8, 2023 at 5:00 pm

Planning Conference Room-250 Bouscaren St. Suite 203 Slidell, LA

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call.** Meeting called to order by Chairperson Darby at 5:00 p.m.

Commissioners Present

Darren Darby, Chair
Jessica Fawer, Vice Chair
Sam Caruso, Jr
Dawn Crippin

Commissioners Not Present

Michelle Cramer

Staff Present

Danny McElmurray, Planning Director
Theresa Alexander, Planner
Erica Smith, Planning Secretary

2. **Minutes.** Motion by Commissioner Fawer to approve minutes of February 8, 2023 as written; Commissioner Crippin seconded. A vote of 4 YAYS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTAIN approved the minutes.

3. **Public Hearings**

- a. **CA23-04:** A request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for new construction and exterior alterations at 236 Robert St., by Jason Clayton on behalf of owner, Rosemary Hemelt.
Chairperson Darby introduced the case. Jason Clayton, on behalf of homeowner Rosemary Hemelt, was present to answer questions by the Commission pertaining to the visibility, construction, and materials being used on this project. Chairperson Darby expressed concern over the project looking modern with a vintage home. Clayton reassured the Commission that the addition will look like what was used in the 1930's and will retain a classic look. The request for Certificate of Appropriateness was approved on a motion by Commissioner Fawer, seconded by Commissioner Crippin, and a vote of 4 YAYS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTAIN.

4. **Other Business**

- a. Commissioner Caruso announced his intention to resign from the Commission, and that he will submit a formal Letter of Resignation to the Mayor this week.
- b. It was brought to the Commission's attention that the April 12, 2023 meeting is scheduled during Spring Break, and this may not be a good time as school will be out, and people will be out of town. The meeting was rescheduled for April 19, 2023 on a motion by Commissioner Crippin, seconded by Commissioner Darby, and a vote of 4 YAYS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTAIN

5. **Informational Items**

- a. Director McElmurray presented and discussed with the Commission a flyer "Initial Focus of Revisions".
- b. Director McElmurray and the Commission discussed the expiration dates of Certificates of Appropriateness.

6. **General and Public Comments.** There was none.

7. **Adjournment.** Meeting adjourned at 5:43p.m. on a motion by Mr. Caruso, seconded by Mr. Darby, and a vote of 4 YAYS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTAIN.

Location: 1827 Front Street

Zoning: C-3 Central Business/OTPD Olde Towne Preservation District

Historic Status: added to the National Register of Historic Places on October 24, 1996

Request: Certificate of Appropriateness for exterior changes to train platform for ADA compliance

Owner/Applicant: AMTRAK

OTPDC Meeting: 4/12/2023

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Approval

1. FINDINGS

A. The Olde Towne Railroad Station located at 1827 Front Street (*Figure 1*) was added to the National Register of Historic Places on October 24, 1996, based on Significance Criteria A “Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history”. Of note, Criteria C, architecture, and design, was not a reason for inclusion on the National Register.



B. The Olde Towne Railroad Station was constructed in 1913; it underwent a major renovation after its ownership was transferred to the City of Slidell in 1996. National Register listing identifies the following as “...major character-defining features important to the property’s design, significance, and historic integrity:



Figure 1: Olde Towne Railroad Station

- Emphasis on the horizontal plane and parallel orientation to railroad tracks.
- Hip-roof center section with half-hipped flanking subordinate wings.

- Deep, boxed eaves with beadboard soffit supported by decorative wood knee braces.
 - Original windows, where present.
 - Common-bond brick veneer.
 - Projecting “station master’s bay” on the track side (northwest) that indicates historic location of the station master/ticketing office”¹.
- C. The depot building sits on a concrete foundation that extends beyond the building walls and forms a concrete walkway around the building’s perimeter providing access to multiple entrances, connecting the building to the AMTRAK platform, and connecting the building to the walkways that lead to the parking lot.
- D. The train depot is still in active use today housing an AMTRAK station that services two trains daily. AMTRAK owns the train platform and leases a waiting area inside the depot from the City of Slidell.
- E. The City of Slidell owns the parking lot and the walkways connecting the parking lot to the platform and waiting area.

2. PROPOSED EXTERIOR CHANGES

- A. Project Summary (*Figure 2*). The proposed train platform renovation project would bring the train platform up to ADA standards and extend the train platform north approximately 425’ feet towards Pennsylvania Ave, which should allow the AMTRAK train to clear Bayou Lane when its stops to pick up or discharge passengers.
- B. The proposed project would not alter or remove any character-defining features to the train depot building. Proposed changes are designed to be distinct but not contrast with the historic elements of the building’s architecture².
- C. Proposed project elements include³:



Figure 2: Project Area and Platform Extension

¹ AMTRAK ADA Stations Program (ADASP), Slidell (SDL) Station, 1827 Front St, Slidell La, LA plans, Attachment 4: Cultural Resources Information, p. 7.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

1) **Replacement & extension north by approximately 425 feet of the train platform.** The existing concrete train platform is cracked and uneven. The project would remove the old concrete and replace it with a new concrete platform and extend the platform approximately 425' north towards Pennsylvania Ave. (Figure 2)

2) **Addition of new ADA paths.** Three ADA paths are proposed to connect the platform to the parking lot and the AMTRAK waiting area. Each path would consist of concrete walkways and ramps with black metal picket style guardrails. One path would connect the parking lot to the north end of the extended platform. Another path would connect the AMTRAK waiting room to the platform. The third would connect the platform to the walkway that runs along the southern and eastern end of the depot building then to the parking lot (Figure 3).

3) **Addition of a wheelchair lift enclosure.** AMTRAK uses a mobile lift to transfer wheelchair users between the platform and the train car. Currently, the mobile lift is stored in the open air on the platform when not in use (Figure 3). The project will construct a permanent enclosure to store the wheelchair lift in so that it is out of the weather and not visible when not in use. The structure will be clad in corrugated

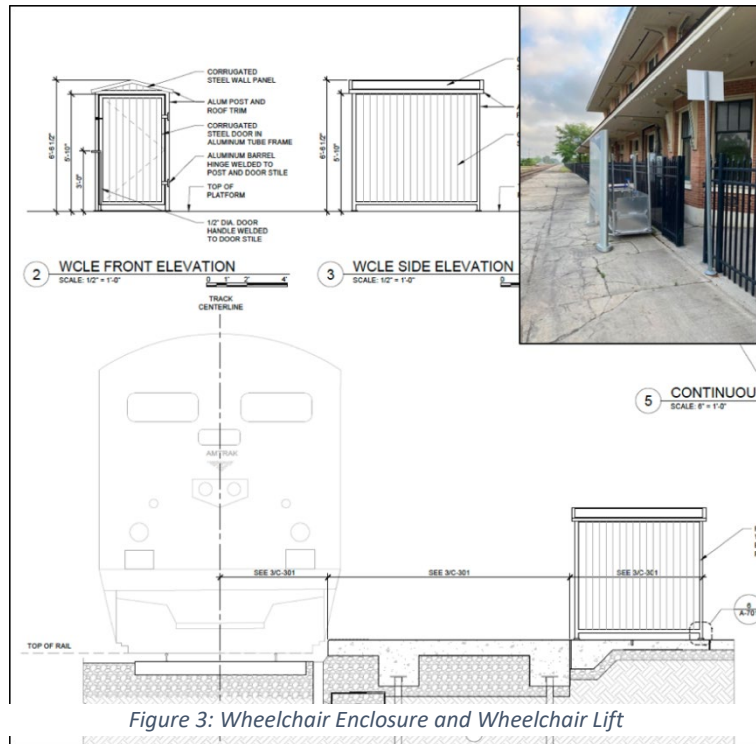
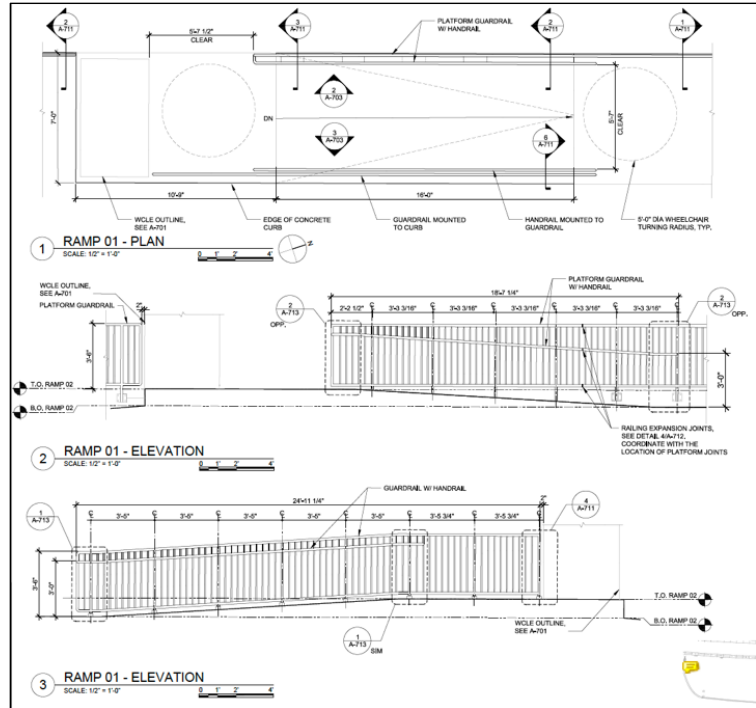


Figure 3: Wheelchair Enclosure and Wheelchair Lift

steel wall and roof panels. AMTRAK has not decided on the color to paint the metal panels and is open to suggestions from the Preservation Commission⁴ (Figure 4).

4) **New platform lighting.**

Currently, there is no lighting for the platform or the ADA path between the parking lot and the north end of the platform. Project would install new 10' tall black metal light poles to illuminate the ADA path and platform. The addition of lighting would improve safety in boarding and de-boarding and movement between the platform, waiting area, and parking lot.

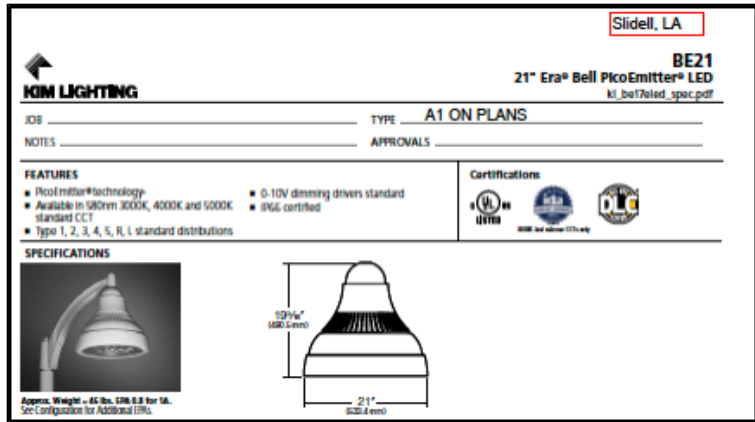


Figure 4: Light Fixture

5) **Salvage and reuse of existing signage and the addition of new signs.** Existing signage would be removed during construction, to be replaced at the conclusion of the project. New ADA signs that comply with U.S. Department of Transportation's Standard for ADA would be added throughout the project area (Figure 5).

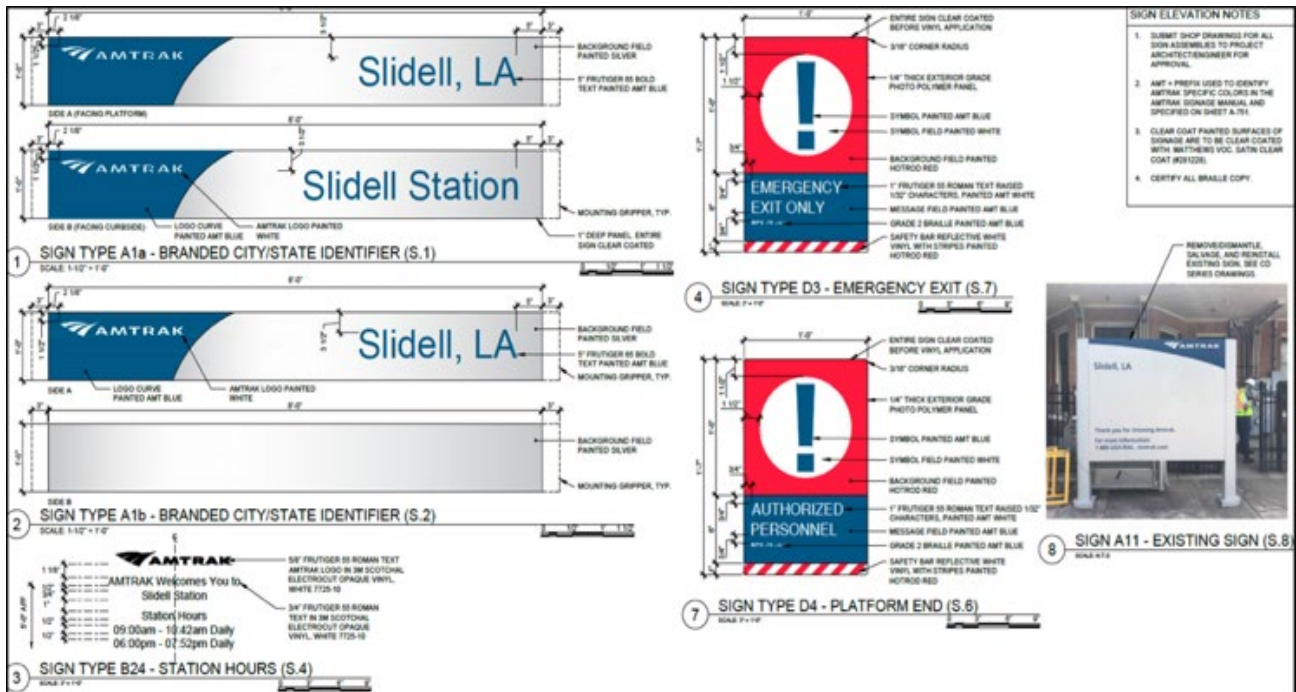


Figure 5: Wayfinding Signage

⁴ Phone conversation between Eric Lundin and AMTRAK representative on April 5, 2023.

- 6) **Removal of black ornamental rail fence.** The existing black ornamental metal picket fencing separating the platform from the depot building is proposed to be removed where it abuts the renovated platform and new northern extension (Figure 6).



Figure 6: Existing Ornamental Fence.

3. STANDARDS REVIEW

A. Train Platform (Figure 2).

- 1) **Renovation.** The project would remove the old, cracked concrete and replace it with a new concrete platform that is extended approximately 425' to the north towards Pennsylvania Ave.
- 2) **Analysis.** The concrete platform is not considered a character-defining element of the site. As the concrete platform is not a character-defining element, its removal and replacement with a similar concrete platform and extension should not affect the building's National Register status.
- 3) **Recommendation.** Appropriate.

B. ADA Compliant Pathway (Figure 2).

- 1) **Renovation.** Three concrete accessible paths with black metal guardrails would be constructed to connect the platform with the parking lot and AMTRAK waiting area.
- 2) **Analysis.** The addition of concrete ramps and black metal guardrails are consistent with the design of the existing ADA concrete ramps and guard rails (Figure 7). The existing ramps and guardrails were not part of the building's original design and were not considered a character-defining element. Therefore, the addition of proposed walkways, ramps, and guard rails should not affect the building's National Register status.
- 3) **Recommendation.** Appropriate.

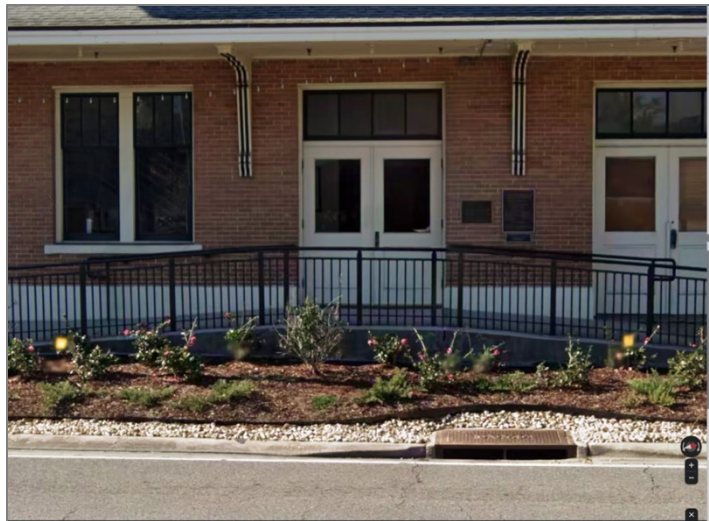


Figure 7: Current ADA Path and Guardrails

C. **Wheelchair Lift** (Figure 3).

- 1) *Renovation.* AMTRAK proposes to construct a permanent wheelchair structure to house the mobile lift equipment out of the weather and conceal it from street view when not in use.
- 2) *Analysis.* The structure's location on the non-historic train platform will keep it from detracting from the building's historic appearance and therefore should not affect the building's National Register status.
- 3) *Recommendation.* Appropriate.

D. **Platform Lighting** (Figure 4).

- 1) *Renovation.* New 10' tall black metal light poles are proposed to be added to the platform and ADA walkways.
- 2) *Analysis.* There is no evidence that shows whether the original building design included platform lighting or if original platform lighting was removed years ago. Platform light fixtures were not considered a character-defining element. Therefore, the addition of the light fixtures should not affect the building's National Register status.
- 3) *Recommendation.* Appropriate.

E. **Signage** (Figure 5).

- 1) *Renovation.* The existing signs are proposed to be re-installed and new ADA compliant signage would be added.
- 2) *Analysis.* The wayfinding and ADA signs were added post original construction and were not considered a character-defining element. Their reuse and the addition of required ADA signs should not affect the building's National Register status.
- 3) *Recommendation.* Appropriate.

F. **Removal of ornamental fencing** (Figures 2 and 6).

- 1) *Renovation.* The existing iron picket fence is proposed to be removed where it abuts the renovated platform and the new platform extension.
- 2) *Analysis.* The existing iron picket fencing was not part of the building's original design and was not considered a character-defining element. Therefore, the removal of iron picket fencing should not affect the building's National Register status.
- 3) *Recommendation.* Appropriate.

4. RECOMMENDATION

- A. **Issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed project.** Proposed alterations or additions do not affect a character-defining element of the Olde Towne Railroad Station and therefore should not affect the building's National Register status.