

REPORT OF MEETING

DATE: SEPT 1, 1992

LOCATION: AME ZION CHURCH, WINDSOR, CT.

SUBJECT: FRONTAGE ROADS, INTERSTATE 91, PROJECT 164-178

ATTENDANCE: ARCHER MEMORIAL/A.M.E. ZION CHURCH
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
STATE ARCHAEOLOGIST
LUCHS AND BECKERMAN, DESIGN CONSULTANT
SEE ATTACHED SHEET

The Connecticut Department of Transportation (ConnDOT), as part of project 164-178, is planning to construct a frontage road system adjacent to Interstate 91 in the Town of Windsor CT. The department's on call archaeological consultant, Public Archaeological Survey Team, (PAST) has uncovered four potential grave sites within the proposed Rights-of-Way (ROW). The sites are located adjacent to a cemetery belonging to the AME Zion Church. Work in the area has been suspended pending the development of an acceptable mitigation plan. The purpose of this meeting is to develop such a plan.

David Poirier, of the State Historic Preservation Office inquired as to the possibility of shifting the road either to the north or south, to completely avoid the grave sites. Neither of these options is considered feasible. A shift to the north would require major changes to the frontage road system south of Hayden Station Road. This would involve addition wetland impacts and would not be acceptable to the resources agencies. A shift of the alignment to the south would bring the proposed frontage road closer to the Church and would not be acceptable from the Churches perspective.

Reverend Bernard Richardson, representing the AME Zion Church, stated that he is very concerned that any relocation be conducted in a proper manner. Reverend Richardson, indicated that the Church may be willing to permit the re-interment of the graves within the existing cemetery. A discussion followed as to how this could best be implemented. During the course of the discussion, several areas of concern were identified.

1. WHAT ARE THE LEGAL REQUIREMENTS AND PROPER PROCEDURES INVOLVED WITH A RE-INTERMENT?

Nick Bellantoni, the State Archeologist will coordinate with the State Medical Examiner and the Health Department of the Town of Windsor as to what procedures to follow.

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2. IS THERE SUFFICIENT AREA IN THE EXISTING CEMETERY TO ACCOMMODATE FOUR ADDITIONAL GRAVE SITES?

The existing cemetery is unmarked and additional study will be required to insure that the re-interment does not disturb any existing grave sites. In order to avoid this situation, ConnDOT will hire a consultant to conduct ground penetrating radar and/or electrical resistivity test to locate any existing sites. The existing sites will be identified and clearly marked. The Church will be provided with a copy of all of the documentation prepared during the course of the study. The consultant will be directed to coordinate with the Church prior to conducting any activities within the boundaries of the existing cemetery.

3. IN THE EVENT THAT THERE IS INSUFFICIENT AREA IN THE EXISTING CEMETERY, AN ALTERNATE BURIAL SITE MUST BE FOUND.

James Ware, of the Federal Highway Administration suggested that ConnDOT investigate the feasibility of releasing a parcel of excess property to the church to be used for burial purposes. Robert Ike, ConnDOT ROW, will investigate this suggestion and report his findings through the proper channels. Any such area identified as a possible alternative burial site will be included in the ground penetrating radar study discussed in item #2. Release of a portion of the excess property to the west of the cemetery appeared to be the best choice, as proposed driveway adjustments and provisions for electrical feeds can be accommodated.

4. THE CHURCH IS VERY CONCERNED THAT THE RE-INTERMENT BE CONDUCTED IN A RESPECTFUL MANNER.

ConnDOT agreed to provide some type of memorial stone for the four grave sites. The selection of the memorial will be coordinated with the Church.

This concluded the meeting.

SUBMITTED BY:

Raymond W. [Signature]

DATE:

9-14-92

APPROVED BY:

Carl [Signature]

DATE:

9-14-92

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Archer Memorial AME Zion Church
Commission

Attendees:

James E. Ware	FHWA
Carol Adkins	FHWA
Dave Nardone	FHWA
Fred Monteleone	ConnDOT - Construction
Paul Giacopassi	ConnDOT - Construction
R.W. Ike	DOT - Rights of Way
Alen Atighechi	DOT - CE Design
Roger Levesque	DOT - CE Design
Robert Johnston	Luchs & Beckerman
Remo Lalama	Luchs & Beckerman
Allen Smalls	Archer AME Zion Church
Cora Murray	State Historic Preservation Office
Carl F. Bard	ConnDOT - Dep.Comr's Office
L. Brian Castler	ConnDOT - Construction
James Connery	ConnDOT - Construction
Nick Bellantoni	State Archeologist
David Poirier	State Historic Preservation Office
Ralph Steadham	ConnDOT - Environmental Planning
Rev. Bernard Richardson	Archer Memorial AME Zion Church

Cora Murray
Monthly Report
1/6/93

Central Valley

The Archer Memorial Church was the site of a meeting between state and church representatives regarding the church's cemetery and the CDOT I-91 access road. The Rev. Richardson called for the meeting to clarify some procedural matters. The Reverend received a call from CDOT's archaeologists saying that the four burials found in the path of the proposal access road were about to be removed and taken to UCONN for study. The church members were surprised and concerned about the call since they were not told what exactly would happen to the remains at UCONN; and when or where they would be reburied. Rev. Richardson called for the meeting to clarify matters and to make it clear to CDOT that the church members and the community wanted to be informed of every step involving cemetery, site work.

The meeting was abruptly ended after about 30 minutes because the Deputy Commissioner insulted the church representatives by implying that the church was trying to get something for nothing from CDOT.

The files of Mr. John Rogers have been located at his daughter's ^{home} on Canterbury St. in Hartford. Mrs. Andrews and her sorority have arranged for the Wadsworth to take the files. They are currently being catalogued by Wadsworth staff and will become a part of an African-American resource library associated with the Simpson collection.

Another potential State Register site has been identified. The home of Mr. Wilfred Johnson at 208 Tower Avenue in Hartford. Mr. Johnson was the first African-American state representative in Connecticut.

In addition, information on the first Black Muslim meeting site in Hartford is being investigated. The current offices of the CT DOH at 1179 Main Street have been mentioned as the site

Continued discussions with local teachers regarding CHC and the services it provides.

Archer Memorial AME Zion Church
321 Hayden Station Road
Windsor, CT 06095

Archer Memorial AME Zion Church was the center of activity for the black community that resided in the Hayden Station area of Windsor. After the Revolutionary War, a number of black families settled in this area, where a small black population had lived for many years.

The first church structure was constructed by the first resident minister, Reverend Dennis Scott White. He constructed the building next to a pine grove north of the intersection of Hayden Station and Pond Roads in the late 1800's after receiving financial assistance from Frederick H. Thrall, described as a philanthropist of the day. Rev. White also built a store in the area.

During the summer months of the late 1880's and 1890's, Rev. White conducted camp meetings in the pine grove. The meetings were held for two to four weeks in late summer and would last all day on into the evening. People would come from as far away as Torrington and Springfield to attend these meetings.

Also in the area, at the northwest corner of Hayden Station and Pond Roads was a pond which the church used for baptismal services and the community used for social activities such as ice skating and swimming.