

**Summary of response of Save the Northfield Depot (STND) re:  
2-14-23 Schematic Design of Pavilion and Transit Hub<sup>1</sup>**

**Compatibility:**

East façade of Transit Hub: The revised east façade in the 2-14-23 plan is an excellent example of compatibility without duplication of the depot façade..

Brackets and columns: The proposed brackets duplicate the 1888 brackets which gives the erroneous perception that it was built the same time as the depot.

The columns on the pavilion would be compatible with the depot if the brackets were simplified or removed – removal would also be less expensive and require less maintenance (see 1917 and 2013 drawings that did not have brackets). Steel posts (vs. wood) for the columns would be easier and more economical to make rigid moment connections to resist wind loads. Wood could be used for the rafters and exposed deck.

The brackets on the Transit Hub could be simplified without the detail of those on the depot. Compatible hub brackets could have the same three major pieces that serve a support function as on the depot but without the details, i.e., similar but not duplicated.

Roof connection to Depot: Depending on the decision outcome from SHPO, one of two options would be as follows:

1) *The pavilion roof can be attached to depot:* If allowed by SHPO, we do not believe the currently proposed “connecting” element between the pavilion and the two adjacent buildings is compatible (see discussion of compatibility and other issues below in our “preferred plan”).

2) *The pavilion roof cannot be attached to the depot.* We are suggesting that the pavilion roof not be attached to the depot for reasons of depot integrity, safety, and aesthetics.

a. Integrity. The pavilion was never built; thus, the roof of the depot was never attached to another structure.

b. Safety on steps and plaza. The current design with the smaller structure results in four roof valleys which increase the safety hazards by exposing more of the pavilion and steps to water runoff and freezing. The design would require a significant, complex gutter system with inevitable freezing and melting from the system onto the steps and plaza.

c. Aesthetics. While the intention of making the connecting structure smaller was to make it “subordinate”, the contrast of the narrow connecting structures only seems to emphasize the pavilion making it a third dominant building rather than deemphasizing the structure.

Our preferred roof plan (see below): We propose that the roof of the pavilion and the roof of the depot be adjacent with one gutter system that runs the full width of the pavilion overhang (vs. smaller proposed connecting structure). This plan would address our concerns as follows:

Safety: This design would be much safer by eliminating the four roof valleys and significantly reducing the steps and plaza floor area vulnerability to water and icing.

Integrity. A gutter is not a permanent feature (similar to a solar panel that is allowed on an historical building because it is not permanent and part of the structure), thus, it would not compromise the integrity of the depot.

Aesthetics. A smooth visual transition from one building to another is less distracting and much more in harmony with one another. The roof lines of the depot and pavilion do not compete.



### Functioning of Complex:

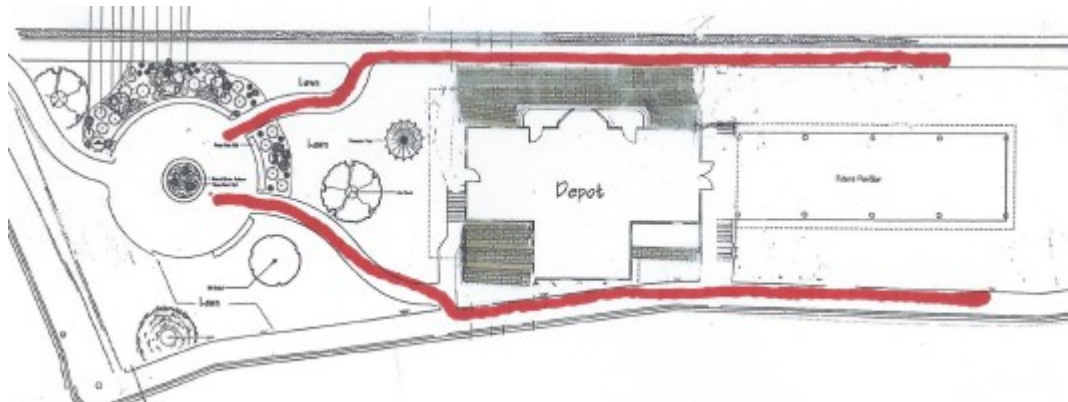
Track side (west) Fence: The fence and brick columns are missing from the plan for the pavilion and transit hub areas. Because the fence is essential for safety, it is in the agreement with the railroad that their donated funding for the fence that would extend between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Streets. Fencing for installation on City property is in storage; bricks for columns are on site.

Track side (west) Sidewalk: We support the recent change in location of the steps to the pavilion plaza near the depot which allows for a continuous at-grade sidewalk in support of appropriate connectivity between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>.

#### Handicapped access:

The plan includes a handicapped access on both sides of the pavilion which seems duplicative and also reduces space for amenities such as bike racks.

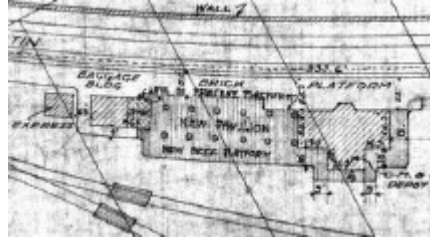
Concern was expressed at the Feb. 14<sup>th</sup> meeting about a scenario in which a person in a wheel chair in the depot garden would be disadvantaged and would be required to go around to the east (along 3rd St.) and then north along the N-S drive to the ramp. Thomas tried unsuccessfully to explain that the garden is in the middle of the south side with two sidewalks leading north out of the garden, one on the west side and one on the east side of equivalent distance to the proposed ramps on each side (see below). The 2-14-23 drawing that includes the ramp on the east side would seem to serve the transit traffic much better than the ramp on the west side and would not disadvantage a disabled person in the garden area.



Width of pavilion floor plaza and related pavilion roof design:

It is not clear from the 2-14-23 drawings that the pavilion is wider than in the first plan. At the first planning meeting there seemed to be a general endorsement of creating a flexible event space vs. a passage in the pavilion as drawn:-

This could be achieved by placing the pavilion columns to be even with the outside E and W walls of the depot (see 1917 drawing below). The overhang on the east side may then provide some weather protection for the ramp; the overhang on the west side could provide protection for bike racks.



#### Location of doors on Transit Hub

The Transit Hub and Depot serve two very different purposes and publics. The depot was designed for public travel via train with its “street” (the tracks) on the west side - and may do so again in the future. The Transit hub is intended for use by public motorized travelers who are best served with primary access on the east side “street” where they would most conveniently enter and exit. Both have access to and are served by the pavilion. As noted in the 2-22-23 memo (see Attachment A for more details), we believe the Transit Hub should be designed to best serve the motorized public transportation.

<sup>1</sup> “2-14-23 drawings” = drawings found on the HPC website packet for their March 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting. Save the Northfield Depot Board used those drawings as the basis for the above assessment.