The National Bulletin's Standards of Integrity Applied to Danville Depot.

Conrad Ross Meaders

July 2021

Revised July 2023

The following describes how the National Bulletin's Standards of Integrity apply to Danville Depot. Please refer to page 44 of the National Bulletin for definitions of each of the standards of integrity and instructions as to how they are applied.
https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/upload/NRB-15_web508.pdf

Location.

Danville Depot has never been moved and retains its original footprint.

Design.

Danville Depot is a good example of a simple Stick style train station in a rural setting built in the summer of 1871. The façade mostly reflects what the building looked like after a significant renovation sometime around 1907. By comparing photographs from before and after the aforesaid renovation, one can discern that the overall design was unchanged even though doors and windows were moved around on the south side. See page five *The Details of The Depot, Special Edition* for further explanation as to how the circa 1907 date was determined.

The building's dimensions are currently 64' 8", from east to west, by 24' 6", from north to south. An addition was built on the east side around 1907 and later demolished sometime before 1954. According to the floorplan of the depot drawn by the Interstate Commerce Commission in 1916, (published in 1994 under the authorship of R. W. Nimke) this addition's dimensions were 24' 4", from east to west, and 36' 6", from north to south. By comparing photographs of the building taken around 1907 and 1916, one can discern that renovations took place on the addition sometime between these two dates.

The current building is divided into a freight room and a passenger waiting room; although, it has remained mostly unchanged since the aforesaid renovation. The passenger half of the building includes the ticket office, waiting room, along with men's and women's restrooms, which are no longer in service. The freight room would likely have been unfinished with access to a loft above the passenger half until a renovation took place in the early 1990s to convert that half into a recycling center and build a ceiling above the freight room. The frame is entirely sawn and is primarily timber-framed with aspects that are typical of balloon frames. For instance, the floor of the loft, which was constructed sometime around the time of the first renovation mentioned, sits about two feet below the top of the plate with no firebreak.

Setting.
Danville Depot was built for the Portland & Ogdensburg Railroad in the summer of 1871 and served as a passenger and freight depot for more than a century under the Portland & Ogdensburg Railroad and the Saint Johnsbury & Lamoille County Railroad. The rails adjacent to the depot were removed in the first decade of this century, and the rail bed has been converted into a highway, known as the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail, that serves hikers, horses, and non motorized vehicles in the warmer months and snowmobilers, cross country skiers, and snowshoers in the colder.

Workmanship.
The building's exterior is clapboarded with a section of the original canopy on the south side, an original decorative truss under the west gable, and a ticket office bump-out on the south side, which dates to a renovation that took place sometime around 1907. The canopy brackets, in the shape of scissor trusses, and the gable truss are constructed of rectangular wooden posts with chamfered edges. Below the sill of the ticket office bay window is faced in vertical tongue & groove beadboards. Most of the sashes are six over six; the ticket office window has two over two. The doors on the south and west sides date back at least to the 1907 renovation; although, the frame suggests that their apertures are original. These doors have five panels or two below and two above a center panel. The heads of the window and door frames are slightly extruded with a short gable. The door to the north side has four panels and appears to have been constructed in the late 19th century; however, its door frame was constructed in the late twentieth century, and the door was crudely shortened and thickened. According to the floorplan of the depot drawn by the Interstate Commerce Commission in 1916, published in 1994 under the authorship of R. W. Nimke, there was once a large sliding door where is now the four-panel door on the north side and there was a window where is now a cargo bay on the north side. Opposite the sliding door on the north side was once another large sliding door, which can be seen in the 1916 floor plan and historic photographs. The frame of this door and the door itself have both changed in size, been adjusted, and moved several times throughout its history and currently no longer functions as a door.

The entire passenger half is finished with gloss-stained woodwork with profiles that range in complexity. Above the baseboard, there are rows of vertical tongue & groove beadboard, then a chair rail below rows of horizontal tongue & groove beadboard, topped with a crown molding to transition into tongue & groove beadboard on the ceiling. All doors except one are five-panel doors as described above; the top half of the ticket office door can be opened by itself or wholly as a door with four panels in the top half and four panels in the lower half.

The frame is primarily sawn timber but has aspects that are typically found in balloon frames. All corner brackets and framing for original apertures are 4" by 4". Most of the posts and parts of the plate and sill are 8" by 8"; the north and south plates are 6" by 8" for

economy; the posts around the passenger half are comprised of 4" by 4"s through-bolted to 8" by 4"s in the corners of the west wall, and 8" by 4"s along the walls effectually making the walls of the passenger half thinner. It is unclear whether the thinner posts are original as signs of brackets on the north and south walls having been removed and blocked up mortices on the bottom of the plate of the west wall are visible. The posts of the north and south walls are connected to one another with 8" by 8" cross beams on a north to south axis. One of these cross beams has a mortise and tenon in its center, about 24' from the west wall, that was sawn off when a post was removed. This cross beam also has the tenons still in the mortices of where brackets would have been attached. There is also the mortar outline of a long-lost chimney on the west face of this same cross beam. The outline of the chimney is also on the rafters with the hands of a mason printed in mortar on either side. Most of the joinery is mortise and tenon, although some members are toenailed with cut nails and modern common nails.

The rafters are all 2" by 7" with various spacings that average 28" on center. The roof sheathing on the north side consists of boards of various widths and spaces between them and shingles nailed to the sheathing with small cut nails; curved saw marks are visible on the shingles. The roof sheathing on the south side consists of boards of various widths and no spacing. The top layer of the roof is corrugated metal with metal flashing.

Feeling.

The passenger half of the depot has remained mostly unaltered since a significant renovation that took place sometime between 1905 and 1908 based on photographs from before and after the renovation. The gloss-stained tongue & groove beadboard, which adorns all the walls and ceiling in a similar manner to that of the sanctuary of the Union Christian Church at the Calvin Coolidge Homestead in Plymouth, is of such a good design that it has stood the test of time for more than a century. If one were to look towards the north wall, one would see the tongue & groove beadboard seating built into the wall under a row of three windows and could imagine the multitude of passengers who have been seated before them waiting to take their seat on the next train. If one were to be seated under the windows of the north wall, before them would be the ticket office where they could imagine a line of passengers receiving their tickets from the corner counter beneath an opened sash window. In the ticket office, one with an open mind to superstition might hear the faint clicking of Perley J. Perrsey at his desk, sending us a telegram that echoes through the decades. To the east, there is the lady's room with its original tongue & groove beadboard stall. Adjacent to the bathroom, there is the men's room complete with woodwork that is unfaded by the light, and a six over six single sash window of a different style than the windows on the exterior walls that once shed light into the closet from the freight room.

Though there have been various alterations to the exterior, since the circa 1907 renovation, all can be undone with the assistance of documentation and a change of color palette; effectually giving anyone who passes the sense of grandeur that the presence of the depot

would have invoked shortly after the aforesaid renovation. In fact, there are large samples of the ochre and red paint, which were on the building around the time of the renovation, above the ticket office bump-out on the south side of the depot. This surface is not visible from the ground and inaccessible to any painters; thus, it has not been painted over since the ticket office bump-out was added as one of the many new features of the renovation.

Two frames built atop one another, visible from the attic on the south wall, for a long-lost wide sliding door that led into the freight room still indicates where it was, where it was moved, and later removed. A frame for a long-lost window, visible from the attic on the north wall, still indicates where it was. The frames of two long-forgotten apertures are still visible from the attic on the east wall. There is sufficient evidence through historical photographs, maps, and drawings to determine what the depot looked like on all sides around the year 1916, and build some version of it with a reasonable degree of accuracy. (See page nine of *The Details of The Depot, The Special Edition*.) Through maps, historic photographs, and surveying, the dimensions of the platform before and after the renovation can also be determined and rebuilt. Furthermore, a small portion of the canopy on the south side is still where it was long before the renovation and can be restored within the highest degree of accuracy achievable. All of these features, if restored, will significantly increase the historical integrity of Danville Depot.

Association.

Danville Depot is associated with the Portland & Ogdensburg Railroad and the Saint Johnsbury & Lamoille County Railroad. These railroads were the driving force of Danville's economy for over a century.

Bibliography

Meaders, Conrad R. The Details of The Depot, The Special Edition. January 2022

National Park Service "How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation." U.S. Government Printing Office, 2005,
https://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/pdfs/nrb15.pdf.

Nimke, R. W. The St. Johnsbury and Lake Champlain Railroad Plans 1994