

**The original documents are located in Box 18, folder “Grand Rapids - 6th Street Bridge” of the Philip Buchen Files at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

### **Copyright Notice**

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Gerald R. Ford donated to the United States of America his copyrights in all of his unpublished writings in National Archives collections. Works prepared by U.S. Government employees as part of their official duties are in the public domain. The copyrights to materials written by other individuals or organizations are presumed to remain with them. If you think any of the information displayed in the PDF is subject to a valid copyright claim, please contact the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

FROM THE DESK OF —

judy hooker

2/28

Phil -

I felt some info would be helpful to you when you call Mr. Cucco. We are concerned that Mr. Cucco may not have the power to grant the waivers. We have had no formal communications with him - only phone calls from Mr. Frankfurter and the City Engineering Dept.

The City is mostly concerned with losing the design grant \$<sup>(approx)</sup> (100,000) if there is too much delay. State officials as well as City have assured us the new bridge will not be built for at least 2 1/2 yrs.



FROM THE DESK OF —

judy hooker

Thanks for leaving  
me out - it is really  
very important to us  
and our community

Judy  
Monday

P.S. home 949-6489 A M  
office 959-4502 P M

Instead of my calling  
Mr. Cucco on Monday  
would it be possible  
for you to have him  
call me after you have  
talked to him.

We are in the process  
of putting the bridge  
in the National Register  
I've sent Mr. Cucco copies  
of our most recent letters  
with the State Highway  
Dept. cc letter enclosed



# Dyer/Ives Foundation

200-G WATERS BUILDING / GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN 49502 / (616) 454-4502

February 28, 1976

Mr. Robert Crecco  
Community Affairs Specialist  
Office of Consumer Affairs  
U. S. Department of Transportation  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Crecco,

We are sending you the latest information regarding the restoration of the Sixth St. Bridge in Grand Rapids, Mich. We know you have talked to Mr. Frankforter, President of our Historic Preservation Council, and also to our City Engineer' Staff. It is our hope that you can be of help to us immediately because our City Commission will be making a decision Tuesday, March 2, whether or not to replace the bridge.

As you will see from the State's correspondence, it is ultimately up to the Federal Government to grant the necessary waivers in this case. We feel very strongly that bringing the bridge up to H-15 and 24' width would adequately meet the needs of the users of the bridge. (It has not been used for trucks or emergency vehicles for 30 years) It connects two light industrial areas, it is one of five bridges within a mile and a half area, and its traffic count is merely 3400 V.P.D.

Furthermore, restoration to meet the above requirements would save approximately \$1,000,000.00 in Federal and Municipal tax dollars.

Thank you ... we will call you Monday Afternoon, or if convenient please call us at 616-949-6489(AM) or 616-454-4502(PM)

Cordially,

Judith S. Hooker, Sec'y Kent County Council for Historic Preservation

John R. Hunting, Chr. Bridge Committee

Enclosures

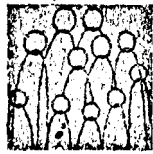
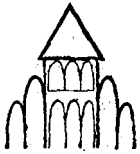
cc Phillip Buchen, Chief Consul to President Gerald R. Ford  
Dr. Martha Bigelow - Director, State History Division



JOHN R. HUNTING, President and Treasurer / JOHN D. HIBBARD, JR., Vice-President / R. MALCOLM CUMMING, Secretary

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: John H. Bowers, Lewis A. Engman, Mary J. Harrington, John D. Hibbard, Jr., Helen J. Hunting, John R. Hunting, Marilyn C. Hunting, Calvin A. Jeter, Stewart R. Mott HONORARY TRUSTEES: David D. Hunting, Sr., Siegel W. Judd, Duncan E. Littlefair





# FOUNTAIN STREET CHURCH

*Durson plans to mention  
this from the pulpit Sunday!*

February 27, 1976

The Honorable Abe Drasin,  
Mayor of the City of Grand Rapids  
City Hall  
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49502

Abe:

I want to put in a word in support of maintaining the Sixth Street Bridge with whatever modification which may be necessary to keep it usable.

I'm not speaking in behalf of sentimental values which are generally quite worthless. I am, however, speaking in behalf of maintaining as many fine old structures in our city as we can. One of the sicknesses of our times is root-lessness. We are losing our connectiveness--our relatedness. It is terribly important that we find ways to relate ourselves to our past so that we can grow into the future with a feeling of tradition and belonging. Old structures can serve this purpose quietly and beautifully. I think they will play increasingly important roles in our culture.

One of the worst decisions made in recent years in this city community was the demolition of the old City Hall. I hope we learn from that mistake and that we will not again make the same in the case of our bridge. Those who have seen the old City Hall in Toronto immediately adjacent to a dazzling, modern building will know the quality of which I speak. Those who have visited Columbus, Indiana will have an even more vivid experience of the beauty of keeping the old along with the new.

I understand there is a financial problem. This, however, should not, at this stage, be determinative of our decision. If there is sufficient community interest, there is no reason why we would not be able to gain a release from the Federal government of some of its efficiency standards. There simply must be appreciation for the cultural, the aesthetic and the spiritual.

The Honorable Abe Drasin,  
Mayor of the City of Grand Rapids  
February 27, 1976  
Page two

If you as City Commissioners can give us some time, I am sure we can arouse a large, strong public support for the project in mind which would surely be of some importance to Mr. Coleman and his Federal group. I beg you to give us as much opportunity as you possibly can.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Duncan E. Littlefair". The signature is enclosed within a hand-drawn oval.

Duncan E. Littlefair

DEL/vm

c: Commissioners  
Thomas Warke,  
M. Howard Rienstra,  
Harold Dekker,  
Norene J. Brooks,  
Joseph Sypniewski, and  
William A. Johnson



HIGHWAY COMMISSION  
PETER B. FLETCHER  
CHAIRMAN  
Ypsilanti

CHARLES H. HEWITT  
VICE CHAIRMAN  
Grosse Pointe Farms

CARL V. PELLONPAA  
COMMISSIONER  
Ishpeming

HANNES MEYERS, JR.  
COMMISSIONER  
Zeeland

STATE OF MICHIGAN



WILLIAM G. MILLIKEN, GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF STATE HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

STATE HIGHWAYS BUILDING, 425 WEST OTTAWA      PHONE 517-373-2090  
POST OFFICE DRAWER K, LANSING, MICHIGAN 48904

JOHN P. WOODFORD, DIRECTOR

February 25, 1976

Mr. W. D. Frankforter, President  
Kent County Council for Historic Preservation  
54 Jefferson Avenue, S.E.  
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49502

Dear Mr. Frankforter:

It is with pleasure that I take this opportunity to respond to your recent letter on the preservation of the Sixth Street Bridge in the City of Grand Rapids. The membership of the Kent County Council for Historic Preservation should be congratulated for their interest, concern and hard work in preserving landmarks within your metropolitan area. Based on the material presented in your letter, the Sixth Street Bridge may fall under the category of objects to be preserved for historical value. The Michigan Department of State Highways and Transportation does not have the power and authority to make such a determination, therefore, we rely upon the Michigan History Division of the Secretary of State Office for making such a determination.

Upon investigation, I have found that the Sixth Street Bridge has been recognized by the Federal Highway Administration as a high priority project for replacement under the Federal Bridge Replacement Program. Funds have been made available for the preliminary engineering phase. During the preliminary engineering phase, the City was informed that all Federal requirements would have to be adhered to before we proceed to the construction phase. This would include environmental requirements, public involvement programs, permits from local, state and federal agencies and the preparation of final plans and specifications in accordance with the most current design standards.

The program as submitted by the City and approved by the Federal Highway Administration is for the removal and replacement of the Sixth Street Bridge at the same location with four lanes at 52 feet face to face plus a five foot sidewalk on each side. As of this date, no official action has been taken by the City to revise the original program.



MICHIGAN The Great Lake State



It should be pointed out that if the program is changed by the City, it would require that the project be reassessed.

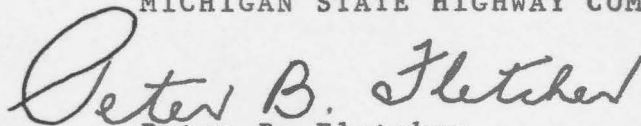
Funds under the Federal Bridge Replacement Program are made available for the replacement of inadequate structures on the basis that they will be designed to meet future traffic volumes 20 years from the date of construction and that design loading will be a minimum of H-20 or HS-20 if traffic volumes and mixture require such design. The Federal Bridge Replacement Program has not made funds available for the rehabilitation of existing bridges to substandard design loading and cross sections. The AASHO Geometric Design Guide for Local Roads and Streets outlines in detail the requirements of design and does not allow for any deviation from these standards. Also the Federal Aid Highway Program Manual 6-7-4, Subsection 1, Special Bridge Replacement Program under eligible projects requires that "the replacement structure must meet the current geometrics and construction standards required for the type and volumes of traffic which the facility will carry over the design life."

The Michigan Department of State Highways and Transportation is bound to adhere to the requirements outlined within the Federal guidelines for the Bridge Replacement Program. We, therefore, regret to inform you that the design criteria outlined in your letter would not meet the minimum Federal requirements under the Bridge Replacement Program.

Please feel free to contact me at any time relative to this project or any other matter relating to transportation improvement.

Sincerely,

MICHIGAN STATE HIGHWAY COMMISSION

  
Peter B. Fletcher  
Chairman

cc: Governor William G. Milliken  
John Hunting



KENT COUNTY COUNCIL  
for  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
Grand Rapids, Michigan

February 20, 1976

Mr. Peter Fletcher  
State Highway Commission  
P. O. Drawer K  
Lansing, MI 48933

Dear Mr. Fletcher:

Thank you for your willingness to consider our plight. The following items are enclosed for your understanding of the problem.

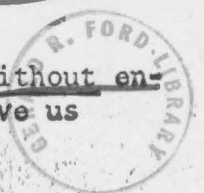
1. Letter from Martha Bigelow, Director, Michigan History Division.
2. Original letter to the City Commission (presents rationale for keeping the bridge).
3. Estimates of Robert M. Darvas and Associates for three alternatives to demolition and new construction.
4. Simplified comparison of costs of most expensive renovation as opposed to new three lane bridge. (Savings will be even greater if State insists on a four-lane bridge).

The problem is very simple. If the City Commission even attempts to get a waiver on certain aspects of the State and Federal requirements, the Department of Highways, we have been informed, will lower the priority of the bridge and consequently the City may well lose all of the Federal money and be left holding the bag (i.e., the bridge, which does need repair).

The two waivers we would ask for are: (A) Reduce from H-20 loading to H-15, which would allow for trucks up to 30,000 lbs. (No trucks can use the bridge now). (B) Widen the total span to 24' (two 12' lanes) instead of 30' as required by table 8, page 10, Geometric Design Guide for Local Roads and Streets, American Assoc. of State Highway Officials.

We feel that the weight reduction would not adversely affect the traffic in the area as no trucks are using the bridge now. We also feel that the additional 6' width requirement is totally unnecessary in this case because the bridge is not located in an area where cars are approaching at any high speed. In fact, Sixth Street is a very short street and furthermore, there are traffic lights immediately on both sides of the bridge. As it is, all kinds of vehicles have been using the 9' lanes for almost ninety years, with no accident problems that we are aware of.

Therefore, we would like the City to be able to request these waivers without endangering the available critical bridge funds. Any guidance you can give us





Mr. Peter Fletcher  
February 20, 1976  
Page 2

would be gratefully appreciated.

I shall be out of Grand Rapids February 23 - 29. Therefore, if you should want to call concerning this matter, may I refer you to Mr. John Hunting, office number 454-4502 or residence number 454-2876.

Sincerely,

W. D. Frankforter, President  
Kent County Council for Historic Preservation  
54 Jefferson Ave., S.E.  
Grand Rapids, MI 49502

WDF/ep  
Encls.

P.S. Unfortunately the City Commission has given us only until March 2nd to resolve this problem, so we are under considerable pressure for an answer fairly soon.



December 18, 1975

Mr. Robert Crecco  
Community Affairs Specialist  
Office of Consumer Affairs  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Crecco:

I would like to provide you with some additional information that might be helpful in responding to the December 12, 1975 letter to you from Mr. John D. McDermott, Director, Office of Review and Compliance, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

In August, 1975 the Vermont Highway Department announced through the A-95 circular its intention to apply for federal funds as part of the Special Bridge Replacement Program to replace the Elm Street Bridge in Woodstock Village. The Elm Street Bridge is included as part of the Woodstock Village Historic District and on the National Register of Historic Places and is also included in the Historic American Engineering Record.

Comments made during the A-95 review were adversely critical of the potential destruction of this historic site and as a result the Vermont Highway Department withdrew the application rather than submitting it and setting in motion the procedures required by Section 106 of the Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act.

The reason for this, we are told, is that funds available through the Special Bridge Replacement Program could not be used simply to make the bridge structurally safe (while preserving the bridge in its present form) but could only be applied to a project that would conform to "current geometric standards." In the case of the Elm Street Bridge current geometric standards would mean a complete replacement of the bridge because it would need to be considerably widened.

The Ottauquechee Commission feels that this position is in conflict with the intent of federal legislation protecting historic sites and in providing highway funds to eliminate bridge safety programs.



December 18, 1975

We agree that the Elm Street Bridge needs work done on it to make it a safe structure. The cost of this would be possible to meet with funds available in the Special Bridge Replacement Program. Yet, to use these funds and this program a waiver on the regulations concerning current geometric standards would be required.

We believe the authority to waive these standards do exist in the two federal acts mentioned above, as well as through the executive orders made on this subject.

Therefore, the major question we are trying to answer is: can the Department of Transportation waive the standards of the Special Bridge Replacement Program so that the Elm Street Bridge can be restored with funding under that program without destroying the Bridge's historic character?

If the answer to this question is yes, I believe we will have found a basis for moving forward agreeable to all parties concerned. I would appreciate your response. If you would like any additional information I will be happy to provide it.

Sincerely,

Ribhard W. Carbin  
Executive Director

RWC:mp

cc: Mr. John McDermott





KENT COUNTY COUNCIL  
for  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
Grand Rapids, Michigan

January 11, 1976

Commissioner Joseph Sypniewski  
Community Development Committee  
City Hall  
Grand Rapids, MI 49502

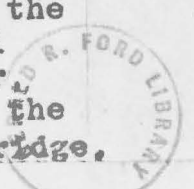
The Kent County Council for Historic Preservation wishes to express its appreciation for the efforts made by the City, and particularly by its engineering department, with respect to the historic and aesthetic value of the Sixth Street Bridge. Furthermore, we hope that this activity and goodwill will continue, as we feel it is very important for maintaining a cohesive community--appreciative of the past as a guide to the future.

We do have several concerns about the Sixth Street Bridge as follows:

1. According to the Prein and Newhof historic report, there has not been any estimate as to the costs of restoring the existing structure. The Council would like to request that this alternative be included in the list of options presented to the City Commission. We also feel it would be better for everyone concerned with this issue if a thorough breakdown of costs for all alternatives were presented, to enable all parties to have a more realistic discussion of the issue.
2. The Council would like to request that the City make inquiries as soon as possible towards the availability of government funds for restoration purposes--both on a State and Federal level.

For your information, we have checked with the fireman at the Leonard Street fire station, and he stated that the Bridge was not used by them because they do not accept calls south of Sixth Street, and that the Leonard Street bridge is the logical route to use for west side calls.

There is not only the historic significance of the Bridge at stake, but we are interested in the preservation of this whole historic area. On the west side of the Bridge is situated the Turner House, which has already been placed on the National Register. On the same side of the river is the Fish Ladder, which while not historic in itself, definitely compliments the entire area. On the east side of the river, next to the Bridge.



is the Comstock Building (801-805 Monroe), which was built in 1875 by one of our earliest and best known pioneers, C.C. Comstock. According to Mr. Kaastra, its current owner, the building is still in excellent condition. It is most unusual, in that during its 100-year history, its front has hardly been touched, and is one of the few remaining examples of commercial structures built in that era. It is an excellent example of Victorian-Italianate architecture, complete with all its original fluted pillars and decorative brackets. Complimenting both the Bridge and the building on the east side of the river, of course, will be the new city park, which the City Commissioners have wisely established.

In summary, the historic Bridge would neatly tie together the park, the two historic buildings, and the Fish Ladder, creating a delightful historic area--each specific item unique and yet each one complimenting the other.

Considering the cost to the taxpayers of building a new bridge, as well as the lack of evidence for the necessity of a four-lane bridge, and considering the historic and aesthetic values involved, we would appreciate any action by the City Commission to explore alternatives to demolition at the Community Development meeting this Tuesday.

Thank you for your consideration.

Judith S. Hooker, Secretary

Weldon Frankforter,  
President

William Thrall, Vice  
President

cc: Bob Spry  
John Hornbach  
Harold Dekker  
John Kern



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
RICHARD H. AUSTIN SECRETARY OF STATE



LANSING  
MICHIGAN 48918

MICHIGAN HISTORY DIVI  
ADMINISTRATION, ARCHIVES  
HISTORIC SITES, AND PUBLIC  
3423 N. Logan Street  
617-373-0510  
STATE MUSEUM  
505 N. Washington Avenue  
617-373-0515

February 2, 1976

Mr. Joseph Sypniewski, Chairman  
Community Development Committee  
City of Grand Rapids  
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49502

Dear Mr. Sypniewski:

As you already know, the Michigan History Division, Michigan Department of State, regards the Sixth Street Bridge in Grand Rapids as a structure of great historic significance. Inasmuch as this is the longest-oldest metal truss bridge in the state and one of the most unique in the entire nation, the preservation of this structure would be an achievement of outstanding importance.

Through communication with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the U.S. Department of Transportation, and the Michigan Department of State Highways and Transportation, we have learned that there is no obstruction to use of federal funds for rehabilitation of the Sixth Street Bridge, provided that such rehabilitation will comply with state and federal specifications for loading and lane-width. We have also learned that to obtain such funding the City of Grand Rapids should next make a formal and specific request for federal funds to rehabilitate the bridge. This request should be relayed from the Grand Rapids City Engineer's Office to the Local Government Division of the Michigan Department of State Highways and Transportation.

Again I wish to express our great interest in the rehabilitation of the Sixth Street Bridge and I wish to assure you that the Michigan History Division staff is fully prepared to cooperate with the City of Grand Rapids in supporting this important undertaking. Thank you for providing me with an opportunity to comment on this project.

Sincerely,

*Martha M. Bigelow*

Martha M. Bigelow  
Director, Michigan History Division  
and  
State Historic Preservation Officer  
cc: Mr. Abe Draisen, Mayor

MMB/JK/cw





Att: Rick Carbin



*Woodstock, Vermont* The Shire Town of Windsor County

TOWN-VILLAGE MANAGER GOVERNMENT

Town Hall, Woodstock, Vermont 05091 • 802/457-3456

January 28, 1976

The Honorable William T. Coleman  
Secretary  
Department of Transportation  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Secretary:

For the past several years the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Woodstock, Vermont have been wrestling with a problem that we now feel can only be satisfactorily resolved at your level.

The subject of our concern is the Elm Street Bridge which crosses the Ottauquechee River in Woodstock Village. The Village is an historic district included in the National Register of Historic Places. The Bridge itself is an historic site within the district and is also listed in the Historic American Engineering Record.

The Vermont Department of Highways has determined that the Elm Street Bridge is one of the state's most critical bridges and as such should be replaced. In August 1975 the Highway Department announced through the A-95 circular, its intention to apply for federal funds as part of the Special Bridge Replacement Program to construct a new bridge.

Comments made during the A-95 review process were adversely critical of the potential destruction of this historic site. Although there is strong opposition on the part of local citizens, the Ottauquechee Regional Planning and Development Commission, the Vermont Scenic Preservation Council to disturbing the historic character of the Bridge.

It has been suggested by those opposed to a modern reconstruction of the bridge that the funds available in the Special Bridge Replacement Program be used for restoration. This alternative would meet the major requirement of the Special Bridge Replacement Program: to assure a safe, structurally sound bridge, while at the same time preserving the historic quality of the bridge and its relationship to Woodstock Village.

The Woodstock Board of Selectmen would support such an alternative. However, we have been informed by the Federal Highway Administration and the Vermont Department of Highways that funds available through the Special Bridge Replacement Program could not be used simply to make the bridge structurally safe but could only be applied to a project that would conform to "current geometric standards." In the case of the Elm Street Bridge current geometric

standards would mean a complete replacement of the bridge because it would need to be considerably widened.

The regulations of the Special Bridge Replacement Program may be reasonable guidelines to follow in most cases, but when an historic district or historic site is involved, an obvious conflict arises.

It would appear, however, that under the principles of prevailing federal law, particularly section 106 of the Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and Section 4 (f) of the Department of Transportation Act, the authority to waive federal regulations in conflict with historic preservation exists.

The Woodstock Board of Selectmen respectfully request, therefore that the Department of Transportation waive the standards of the Special Bridge Replacement Program so that the Elm Street Bridge can be restored through funding under that program without destroying the Bridge's historic character.

In order to assist you in reaching a decision in this matter we are enclosing relevant material which more fully describes the situation we now face. If any additional information is required, we would be more than happy to provide it.

Sincerely,

*Howell D. Chickering*  
Howell D. Chickering  
Chairman

Woodstock Board of Selectmen

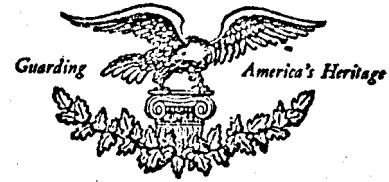
HC/dak  
Enclosures

# National Trust for Historic Preservation

740-748 JACKSON PLACE, N. W.

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20006

(202) 382-3304



## HISTORIC PRESERVATION

### CONSUMERS' INTEREST PROTECTED AND ENCOURAGED IN TRANSPORTATION AREA

By Robert F. Crecco

In a little more than two years, our Nation will be celebrating its 200th birthday. The American Revolution Bicentennial will bring us closer to our American Heritage. The country will literally experience a rebirth of interest in exploring its existing historical sites and monuments in 1976.

Preservation of our national heritage has been difficult as technology and affluence, needs and growth, infringed upon and even destroyed sites, districts, monuments, objects, architecture, parks, buildings, archaeological and other aspects of our historical past. Despite the difficulties, however, there is a growing spirit of appreciation for America's history.

The Department of Transportation believes that Historical Preservation is progress. It is in the field of transportation that Congress first provided laws inhibiting and prohibiting the destruction of historic sites in Federally financed transportation construction programs. Until 1970, transportation programs were the only Federal public works activities that were so controlled. It was entirely appropriate to apply such safeguards to the activities of the Department of Transportation, since the Federal-aid highway program has generated some of the more noteworthy problems regarding historic preservation.

There are six pieces of legislation that give the Department guidance in the field of historic preservation. Chronologically, they are:

1. National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA)
2. Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 (DOT Act)
3. Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1968
4. National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA)
5. Urban Mass Transportation Assistance Act of 1970 (UMTA)
6. Airport-Airways Development Act of 1970 (AADA)

In addition, the Department of Transportation has the responsibility, as do all Federal agencies, to protect and enhance the cultural environment under a Presidential Executive Order signed on May 13, 1971.

As a result of this order, an inventory of DOT property has been completed and historic sites, primarily Coast Guard owned lighthouses, have been placed in the National Register of Historic Places (a publication listing all protected properties).

### Legislation

Before 1966 Federal legislation provided limited protection to some historic sites under the Antiquities Act of 1906 and Historic Sites Act of 1935. Both Acts did little to protect privately owned properties from destruction in cases where owners or governmental authorities desired to put them to other uses. And they did nothing to restrain such destruction by the United States Government itself.

However, in 1966, Congress enacted two landmark Federal statutes that addressed the problem: The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) and the Department of Transportation Act (DOT Act).

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) establishes both policy guidance and machinery for intensified efforts toward preservation in general, and particularly on the Federal level. It expanded the national register of districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects significant in American history, architecture, archeology and culture which has become known as the National Register of Historic Places. It is the only official master list of all such properties worth saving and is the legal instrument to insure that registered properties threatened by Federal or Federally assisted undertakings will be the subject of comment and review as prescribed by Section 106 of NHPA.

The Act established the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, with the Secretary of Transportation a member of that body. Under this Act, the Secretary must take into account the effect of the project on the National Register property. He must also be sure that the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation has a reasonable opportunity to review and comment on the project. Thus the Advisory Council's comments may provide a strong basis for the agency head to follow through on the obligations required by the law.

The Department of Transportation Act declared that special effort should be made to preserve historic sites. The same Act provides, in Section 4(f) that the Secretary of Transportation "shall not approve any program or project which requires the use of . . . any land from a historic site of national, state or local significance . . . unless (1) there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of such land, and (2) such program includes all possible planning to minimize harm to such . . . historic



site resulting from such use." This requirement also covers parklands and is given equal importance.

These two sections apply to all activities of the Department of Transportation--not only highways but also aviation, urban mass transit, railroads, rivers, harbors and coastal waterways. National Register properties are automatically entitled to protection under the DOT Act as well as NHPA. A non-National Register property, if it is determined to be of significance by other authorities such as State or local landmarks commission, also qualifies for protection under the DOT Act.

In 1968, the dramatic environmental provisions of 4(f) in the DOT Act were clarified in the Federal-aid Highway Act when it was amended and the two provisions became identical.

An example of the application of the feasible and prudent alternative to going through a historic area was in the construction of the Riverfront Expressway in New Orleans in 1969. At that time, the Secretary of Transportation refused to grant Federal Highway Funds for the proposed expressway because the highway would have seriously impaired the historic quality of the famed French Quarter, the Vieux Carre. Several months later, when it appeared that the proposed Miami Jetport as then planned would seriously damage the ecological quality of the Everglades National Park, construction was brought to a halt. In another case the Secretary directed that an Interstate highway which threatened the historic and scenic quality of the Old Man of the Mountain at Franconia Notch in New Hampshire be rerouted in order to preserve the integrity and quality of the area. In South Carolina, a proposed bridge from James Island to Charleston was rejected by DOT on the basis that while the bridge would not involve taking of historic properties it would increase the traffic through the Historic District in that community, thus endangering the District's environment.

#### National Environmental Policy Act of 1969

On January 1, 1970, the President signed into law the noteworthy National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). This law clearly establishes historic preservation as a national environmental objective and sets up procedures which are applied to all federally assisted public works projects which should stop unnecessary destruction of historic places.

In this Act, Congress set up procedural requirements that all agencies use "a systematic, interdisciplinary approach" to discuss and make known in advance the consequences of their proposed actions. Whereas the DOT Act set priorities, NEPA stated that an agency head or his representative must institute an environmental statement for major federal actions significantly affecting the human environment. Under this procedure, the Federal official must consult with and obtain the comments of any Federal agency which has authority by law or special expertise regarding any environmental impact involved. If an adverse effect is



determined, then the impact statement must consider various alternatives to any proposed project including the alternative of not building at all the project affecting the historic site.

In 1970, historic site protection provisions of the Urban Mass Transportation Act further strengthened the Department's hand in transportation projects. This Act accorded protection to sites of "national, State or local significance." Such a site might be one considered of local historic importance by the experts but not yet included in the National Register nor designated by an official local landmark commission.

Similar provisions for environmental protection are contained in the Airport and Airway Development Act of 1970. The Secretary is prohibited from authorizing any airport development project found to have adverse effect until he renders a finding in writing. The finding, after a full review of public record, must show no feasible or prudent alternative exists and that all possible steps have been taken to minimize such adverse effect." Public hearings are required for considering the economic, social, and environmental effects of the airport location and for consistency with urban planning by the community.

#### What You Can Do

Congress has passed the legislation necessary to help protect our historic properties. What is needed now is citizen participation and help in carrying out the law long before it is necessary to confront the bulldozers. Historic preservation problems should be settled locally and early in the first stages of planning. Our communities are changing. Some changes have been under planning for years, others are just beginning. Now is the time to survey your community for historic areas that may not be listed on the National Register so their existence can become known before a project endangers them.

This way transportation projects and historic sites will not be in confrontation at the Federal level, but will be settled by local and State governments which are closer to citizen interests. The Federal Government's role is one of setting criteria to guide the process.

Recently, an Appalachian community found itself in an unhappy situation with its only significant historic site and building about to be demolished by a Federally-aided highway. The house, a structure built by a cousin of Abraham Lincoln, was not listed in the National Register. Its owner had signed a contract for the sale of the land to the State highway department with the owner having the rights of salvage to any or all of the house. Within a few days of the structure's demolition, the owner requested its nomination to the National Register and it was accepted but too late to save it for posterity. It was worth saving. The time to have done that was months or years ago when the State, county or city // first planned the project.

Citizen participation should be more than a cosmetic which is applied after the fact to make decisions appear to have community participation and support. People can make historic preservation a fact in their communities.

Here are some suggestions:

--Know your State Historic Preservation Officer and officials in State, county and city historic associations.

Be sure your community's historic places are surveyed and known.

--Work with your Governor's appointee, the State Historic Preservation Officer, to have sites nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

--Check the Federal Register in your library for new nominations of historic places in the National Register. The entire National Register of Historic Places is printed annually in the Federal Register and bound copies of the National Register (giving descriptions of properties and photographs of many of them) are available from the U.S. Government Printing Office.

--Be alert to public and private development projects that may endanger historic properties. Do this early in the planning stages.

The Department of Transportation is committed to preserving historic sites not only for 1976 but for posterity. Historic places form an important aspect of our American heritage and proud evidence of this Nation's 200 years of greatness and growth.

(Mr. Crecco is on the professional staff of the Office of Consumer Affairs, U.S. Department of Transportation)

Cost of new three lane Bridge*	\$2,150,000
Cost of <sup>restored</sup> <u>most expensive</u> 2 lane bridge	<u>1,425,700</u>
Cash savings	\$ 725,300

Two lanes vs. three lanes

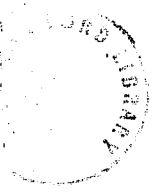
City of Grand Rapids saves historical Bridge

Federal government saves	\$507,710
--------------------------	-----------

City of Grand Rapids saves	<u>217,590</u>
----------------------------	----------------

Total cash savings	\$725,300
--------------------	-----------

\*Based on engineering report, Jan 19, 1976, by Prein & Newhof, Consulting Engineers, Grand Rapids, Mich. They also estimate a new four lane bridge would cost \$2,500,000.



Tuesday 3/23/76

11:10 Judy Hooker called. She wanted you to know (616) 949-6489  
they saved their Sixth Street bridge in Grand Rapids. 454-4502

Said a new bridge would have cost close to \$2-1/2 million.  
The city has decided to turn it down and for \$150,000  
they will restore the bridge as is.

Wanted to thank you again for your part.

Asked if you would tell Jerry Ford his home town is  
saving his money.

Asked if I would also let Mr. Seidman know.

*For filing  
P.J.*

cc: Bill Seidman



THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

April 12, 1976

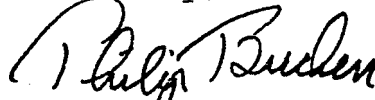
Dear Mrs. Byrd:

Following your kind suggestion the other noon that you would be interested in hearing more about the Sixth Street Bridge in Grand Rapids, I am enclosing a copy of the newspaper clipping from The Detroit Free Press which came to me without a date and also a set of glossy prints showing features of the Bridge.

If you desire any further information, I would suggest that you call Mr. John R. Hunting or Mrs. Robert Hooker at 616-454-4502.

I was delighted to have the opportunity to sit with you at the luncheon given by the Argentine Ambassador.

Sincerely,



Philip W. Buchen  
Counsel to the President

Mrs. Richard E. Byrd  
Special Assistant to the  
President  
National Trust for Historic  
Preservation  
740-748 Jackson Place, N. W.  
Washington, D. C. 20006

Enclosures

6th St.  
Bridge  
(see  
Byrd,  
Rich. E.)

*Mrs. Richard E. Byrd*

SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT

NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

710-718 JACKSON PLACE, N.W. (202) 382-3304  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20006 638-5200 (202) 382-3821



Grand Rapids Combining Best of Past with Progress

# *An Example of Keeping a City Vibrant*

BY DAVID COOPER

Free Press Associate Editor

AN IRON BRIDGE 90 years old is the latest

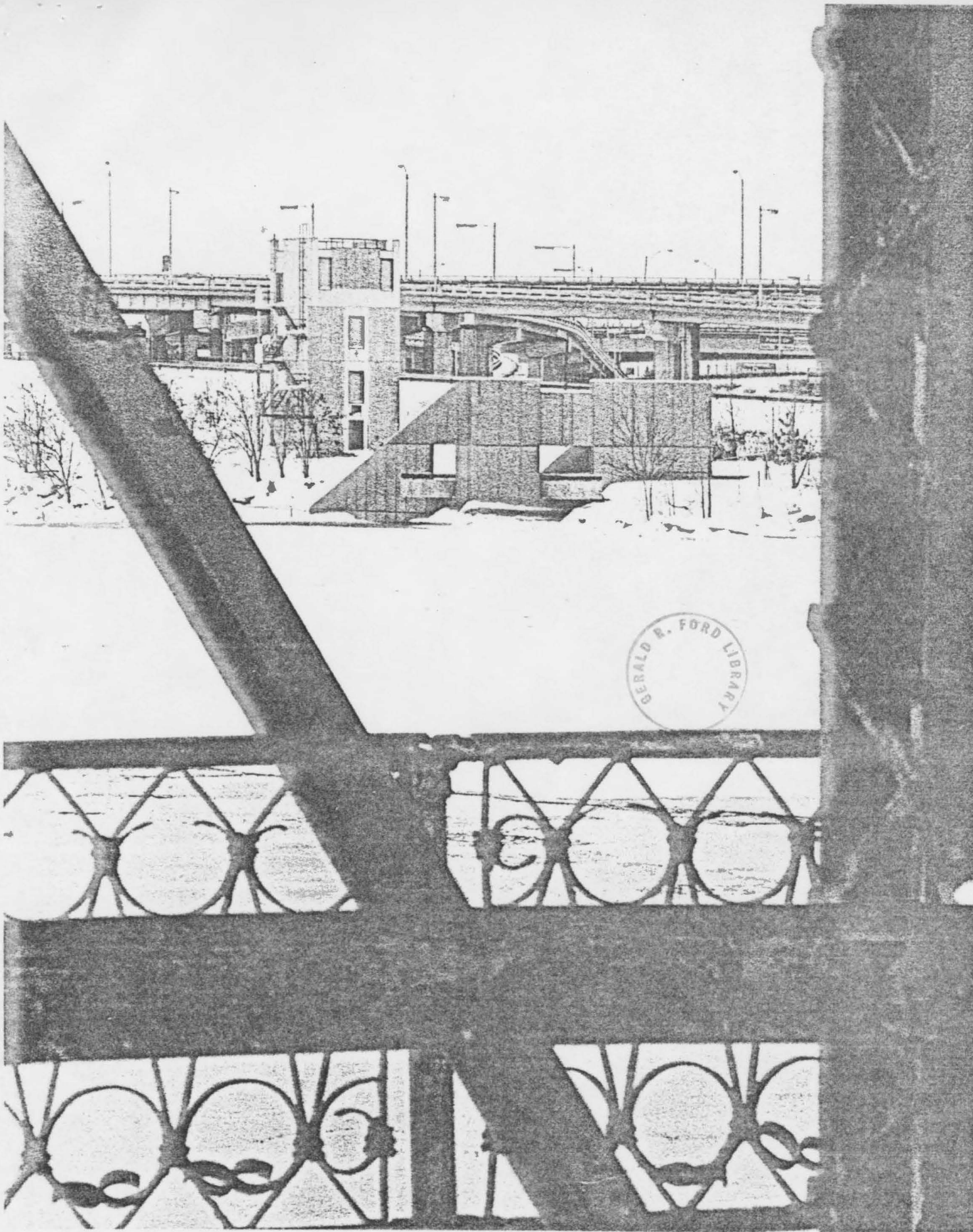


W. R. FORD LIBRARY

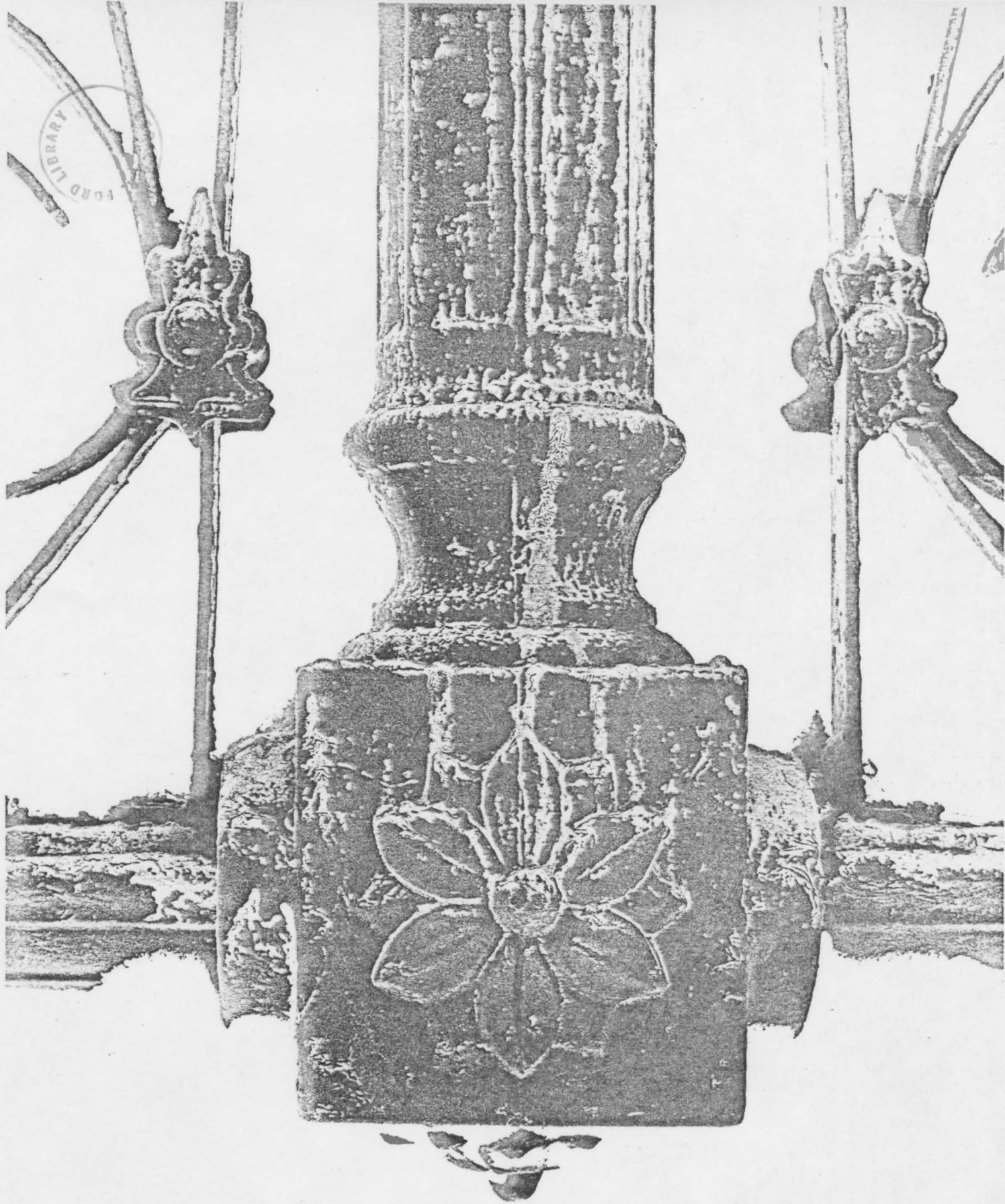
Ra  
in  
no  
G  
kn  
tu  
is  
le  
ha  
G  
w  
ha  
in

Some items in this folder were not digitized because it contains copyrighted materials. Please contact the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library for access to these materials.

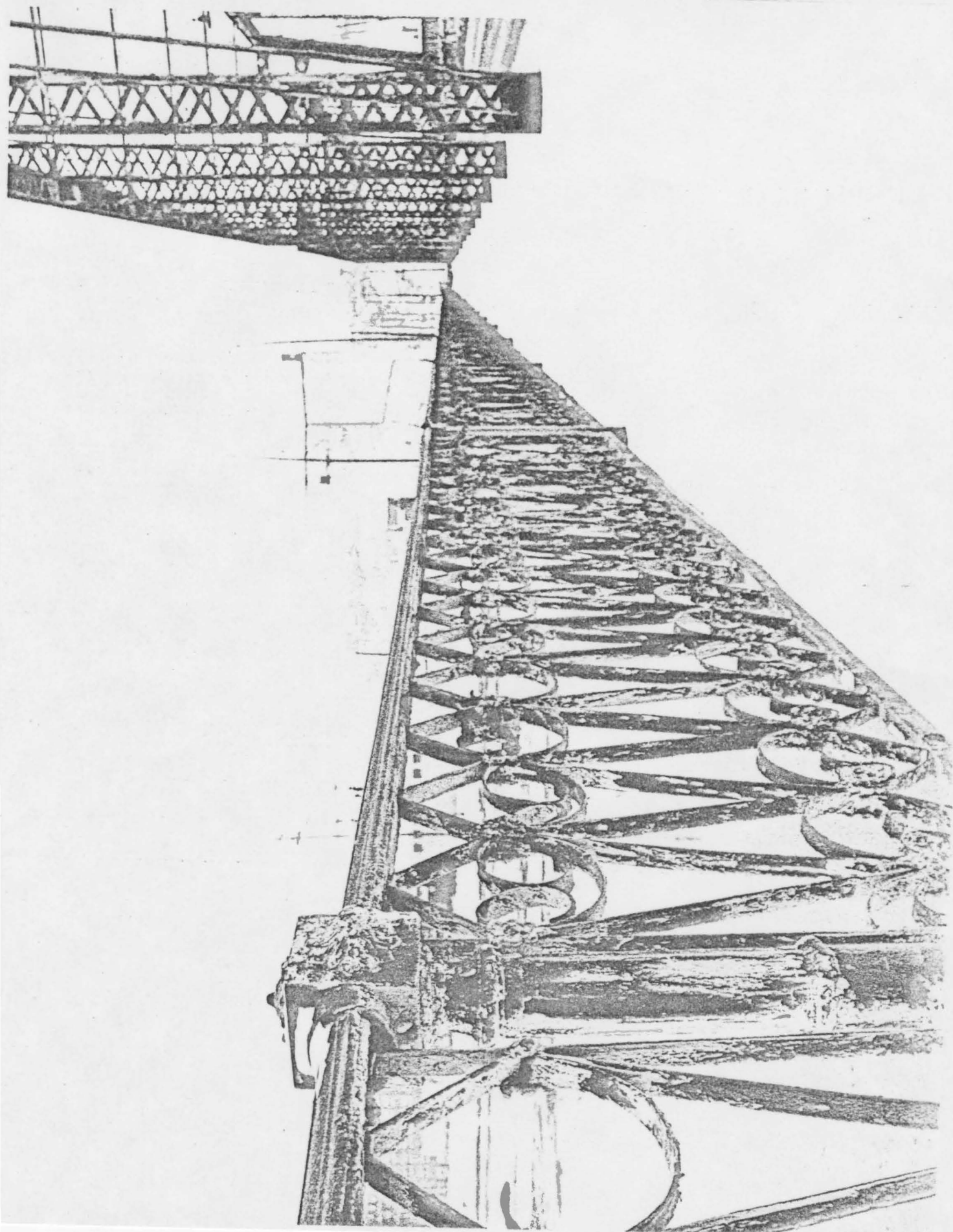












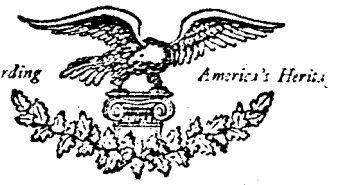
6th St  
Bridge

# National Trust for Historic Preservation

740-748 JACKSON PLACE, N. W.

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20006

(202) 635-5200



April 27, 1976

Mr. Philip W. Buchen  
Counsel to the President  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. Buchen:

I was interested to receive the information regarding the Sixth Street Bridge in Grand Rapids, Michigan and the set of photographs you included with it. I have sent this to the editor of our monthly newspaper Preservation News only to find that they were already planning to include an article on the Sixth Street Bridge in our next issue of the paper. When it comes out I will send you a copy.

Dick and I are delighted you can join us for lunch at "Rosemont" on May 9th. The most direct way is to drive out Route #7 through Leesburg continuing on Route #7 over the Blue Ridge Mountains to Berryville. I am enclosing a map since we have recently put through a by-pass and it will help you find the house.

Looking forward to seeing you.

Sincerely yours,

*Helen B. Byrd*

Mrs. Richard E. Byrd  
Special Assistant to the President

enclosure



