

MBTA May Store Cars In South Station Yards

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The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority may have finally found a new home for its Cambridge car storage facilities, which must be relocated to make way for the Kennedy Memorial Library.

Under consideration is a site in the Penn Central car yards in South Boston, near the West Fourth st. bridge.

An MBTA source said last night that MBTA and railroad officials have held preliminary talks and that the outlook is encouraging.

Previously the MBTA has tried to move its Cambridge facilities to Dorchester, Milton, Mattapan sq. and South Braintree, but each attempt was met by local opposition.

M.B.T.A. Page 11

MBTA Move Tries to Avoid Protests

★ MBTA

Continued from Page 1

A Supreme Court suit, involving the proposed move to Mattapan, is pending.

The MBTA acquired 10 acres of the South Boston rail yard several years ago when it bought the Old Colony right of way. This land is used by Penn Central under an agreement with the MBTA.

The Broadway viaduct passes over the site, and West Fourth street separates it from the larger site owned by Penn Central which the railroad uses to repair, wash, maintain and refuel passenger cars.

The MBTA, in essence, proposes a swap of its 10 acres with the Penn Central and to buy two more.

PARCEL SWAP

There are several proposals on how the arrangement would work. Essential to all

of them is the need to bring into the proposed 12-acre facility the cars for the new South Shore transit line for overnight storage and maintenance.

This means electrifying some tracks — which when the idea of using some part of the railroad yards was broached last year.

By swapping parcels, it is now proposed, there would be no need of Penn Central and MBTA cars crossing each other's tracks, and possibly getting into trouble with union jurisdictions.

The plan currently being considered would have the South Shore line cars cross over, on a U-shape loop to be built just outside the tunnel portal near Andrew station, to Old Colony line tracks.

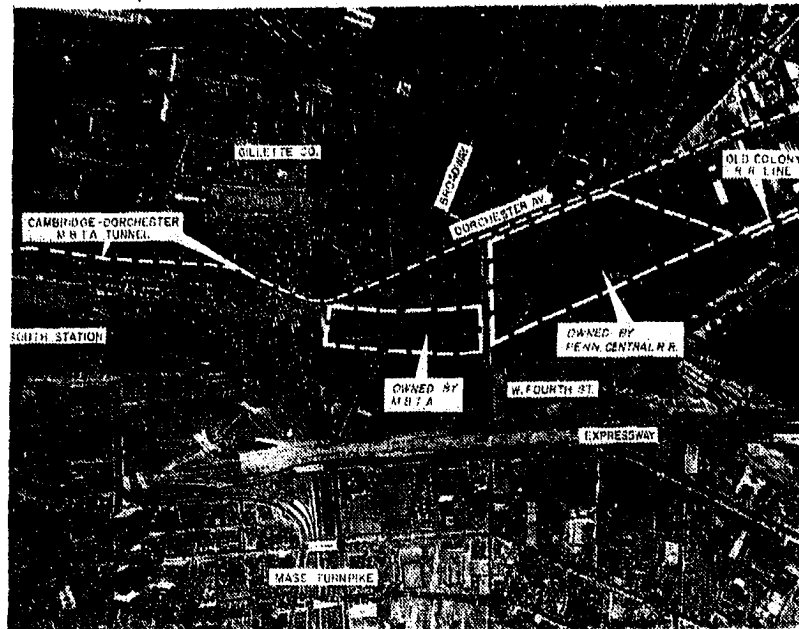
This mile-long strip would take the MBTA cars to the new site near West Fourth street.

Another suggestion is for access to be made directly into the aforementioned site from the MBTA tunnel, which swings under Dorchester av. after leaving its route under the Fort Point channel.

The tunnel, built a half century ago, is about 60 feet down at this point, and the length of a new connecting ramp, plus a possible lack of sufficient room for maneuvering, appears to make this idea impractical.

PRICE RISES

The site that kicked up the biggest local controversy last year, the Mattapan Square terminal of the



SITE OF PENN CENTRAL YARDS

high-speed trolley line from Ashmont station, consists of only about five acres.

Admittedly it would serve only an interim purpose — perhaps until the transit extension to Alewife Brook is finished — but this major turned out to be a big snag move now seems years away. Furthermore, the price tag on Mattapan keeps rising. It is now about \$14.5 million.

Several months ago the

MBTA, concerned about the delay over Mattapan, ordered an engineering feasibility study made in South Braintree.

The consultant's report suggested three possible sites — as well as the possibility of building one Braintree station instead of two.

But local officials and state Sen. James R. McIntyre got wind of it, and was other Mattapan furor was in the making. McIntyre,

who can wield strong leverage because of his chairmanship of the Committee on Transportation, said last week: "We would fight a Braintree site as strongly as the people have in Mattapan."

So the MBTA, wondering when and where it might relocate the facilities in its Bennett-Eliot (Cambridge) yard, has turned to the rail yard possibility near the Fort Point Channel.