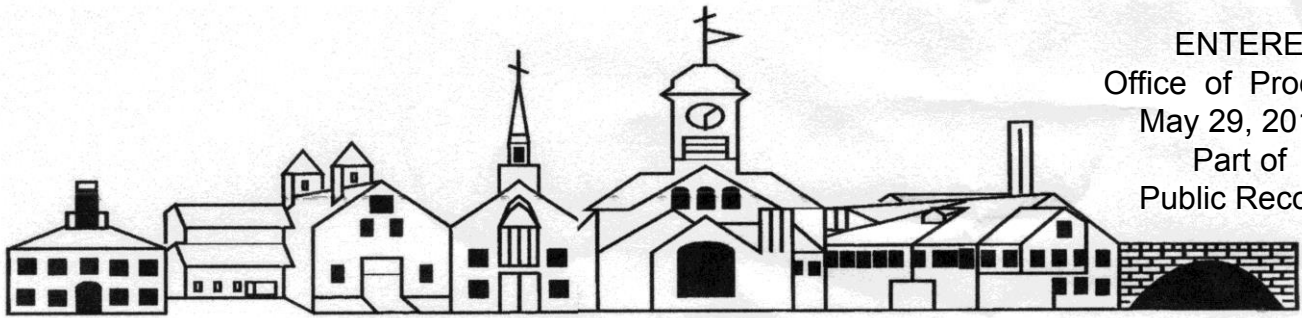




Wilton Heritage Commission

PO Box 82 Wilton, NH 03086

heritage@wiltonlibrarynh.org

Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20423

Reference Docket No. AB 1256

The Wilton Heritage Commission is writing in strong opposition to the request by the Boston and Maine Corporation and the Springfield Terminal Railway Company, collectively known as Pan Am, to discontinue the operating authority held by the Milford-Bennington Railroad Company over a rail line on the Hillsborough branch.

The Wilton Heritage Commission has been charged by the town of Wilton, NH to identify and protect historically and culturally significant buildings, sites, and features around town. To that end, it is our strong wish that the Milford-Bennington Railroad Company continues to operate in town. The advent of train service in the 1850s was the making of Wilton. Our woolen mills sent goods around the world, our dairy farms served customers as far away as Boston, and we were a major producer of apples, all thanks to regular freight service. Passenger trains brought visitors to town and led to the formation of a summer colony that contributed substantially to the town. We believe that discontinuation of the Milford-Bennington Railroad Company's operating authority will mean the end of any and all rail service in Wilton, a lost link to our past and one that will cut us off from future benefits to be derived from any revival of rail traffic in the region.

We greatly value the running of the Milford-Bennington gravel train through town as a continuation of the tradition of a strong working railroad. We believe that the gravel train will not survive under the circumstances proposed by Pan Am and that heavy trucks full of gravel will begin to run over our rural roads that will not be able to withstand such heavy use. Additionally, we continue to hope that more freight use will be made over the Hillsborough branch in the years to come as more industries move into our area. Of immediate concern is the fate of the tourist train which is on the verge of being revived. The train will be a welcome boon economically to our struggling downtown merchants. There is strong and enthusiastic public support for the return of the tourist train, led by the Wilton Economic Development Committee. In particular, we should not like to see any part of the rail line to Nashua be turned into a Rail Trail, which would be an irrevocable loss of potential and possibilities.

We urge the members of the Surface Transportation Board to reject Pan Am's proposal, implementation of which would have very negative consequences for the future of Wilton and the region.

Thank you,

Stanley Young, Chairman, Wilton Heritage Commission
Wilton Heritage Commission
P.O. Box 82
Wilton, NH 03086
heritage@wiltonlibrarynh.org

I certify that I have this day served copies of the document upon the Parties of Record in this proceeding, by U.S. Mail or E-mail.

Signature
/s/
Stanley T. Young
Date: 5/26/2018