

01741, 020308. Hilgart. PC72. 60010. O. N

February 3, 2008

Re: CN National proposal to purchase EJ&E line Docket #35087

Phillis,

I am sending you a hard copy of an earlier e-mail, just to make sure that you receive this. Our community will be devastated by the purchase of the EJ&E line by CN. There are no alternative routes around and through Barrington. The traffic jams and congestion in Barrington and surrounding areas are going to be awful. This proposal needs to be rejected.

Here are the facts:

Barrington already has more than it's share of train traffic:

32 eastbound 5am – 12 pm only 3 do not stop in train station

33 westbound 7am – 1:30 am only 3 do not stop in train station

The average time in station 3-5 minutes gates close twice across Route 59 for each train

There are also UP freight trains which use the Union Pacific commuter tracks

EJ&E runs 4 trains per day

The EJ&E tracks cut the town in half:

EJ&E tracks cross 4 intersections at grade level and a very active commuter line within a little more than a mile.

The commuter line crosses local roads at grade level at 2 other intersections

The track configuration by the high school and intersection with the commuter lines would require the train to proceed slowly through town

A long freight train could take ten plus minutes to completely pass all four intersections, if there is a conflict with a commuter train it will at times completely cut the town in half and prevent emergency services from reaching the north section of town and prevent them from reaching Good Shepherd Hospital. This is going to cause serious safety concerns for all Barrington residents.

Barrington roads are already very congested:

Route 14 is a 4-lane highway and is heavily traveled in morning and evening rush.

Route 59 is a heavily used 2-lane highway, which is heavily traveled in morning and evening rush as well as a major artery north and south bound in the summer.

Traffic would be snarled, if these trains would be allowed during the day barely one train related traffic jam would end and the next one would begin.

Severe effect on local business:

Local businesses are already struggling with the congestion caused by the commuter train line and the fairly infrequent EJ&E train

This congestion would cause residents on the north side of the city to completely forsake local businesses and shop in neighboring towns causing a loss in tax revenue to the town

Children and schools will be negatively affected:

Children will have to spend more time on the school buses because of the multiple crossings.

Future commuter line:

The line is also being considered as a commuter route, which would provide residents access to the northern and southern suburbs. This would at least have a beneficial affect for the residents along the track. Once the right of way is sold to CN this would be very difficult and expensive to accomplish.

Impact on the environment, forest preserves and wetlands:

This will bring more pollution and noise, endanger wildlife and affect the eco systems of our protected areas. The EJ&E runs through countless forest preserves and wildlife habitats. The incessant whistle blowing of the EJ&E on its' relatively few trains will be increased five-fold. The chance will also increase the possibility that there might be train wrecks in the heart of our community possibly with toxic chemicals that could have a devastating effect us. Once CN gets a hold of this line it is only a matter of time before it adds an additional track the length of the line (it is already proposing two tracks in some areas). Who knows then how many trains they will be running a day.

There is no good reason to allow this:

There are more direct, freight lines that CN can use to move their trains between these two points. These lines are signaled and are much more capable of handling these freight trains. This is merely a convenience for CN (and I am sure a cost savings) to have their own little rail spur at the inconvenience of all the residents along the route. Will they reimburse our businesses for lost revenue or our town to lost taxes due to increased train traffic? Will they compensate us for our losses if emergency services aren't available to our community? Sometimes it is only a matter of minutes between life and death when it comes to how quickly the emergency services arrive and are able to transport someone to the hospital. Will they reimburse us for time lost waiting to get from one part of town to another? I must travel route 59 north & south to go to work now and the commuter line probably adds 20 minutes to my commute now. Will they reimburse us for the loss in property value will recognize when this becomes a more active train route?

Not only is this something that would place a heavy burden on all the residents along the right of way it would place a severe burden on residents of this community and should be rejected. A foreign corporation will not be concerned about the needs of our community and should not be allowed to purchase this line. If there was a specific need for this, something that would benefit our community or was needed to improve rail transportation, I could understand it.

Please make sure our opinions are heard.

Thank You,

Bob & Linda Hilgart
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Barrington, Illinois 60010

(847) 381-2897

3rd Street Community Center

400 N. 3rd St. - 1st Floor

Logan, Illinois

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