

September 25, 2008

9/25/08

ORIGINAL
NOT READABLE

Phillie Johnson-Rall

Surface Transportation Board

Washington, D.C. 20423

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Dear Ms. Johnson-Rall,

RE: Draft EIS for docket number FD 3508 / Canadian National Railway Company and Grand Trunk Corporation - Control - Erie West Company.

My comments on the DEIS are as follows:

Emergency Services Response Time will be greatly delayed. A sensitive receptor, Rush Copley,

did not see this addressed in the DEIS. In general, the first responder impacts appear to be seriously down played in the DEIS.

No alternatives to the CN acquisition seemed to have been reviewed. Was CKEA IE reviewed or analyzed?

The noise assessment appears to be outdated. Construction noise also needs to be addressed in the DEIS. It appears that 19 miles of new tracks will be added if CN acquires the CKEA. This

DEIS needs to be detailed and CN and their contractors and construction firms need to be

construction traffic and air quality. The DEIS lacks construction impact details and mitigation.

November 2008. The final EIS needs to ensure that this quiet zone is honored.

The DEIS does not properly address the potential for increased noise impacts from the

off by 300%. The EIS needs to reflect accurate traffic counts. The impact of these counts and the

mitigation

impacts will be. The EIS must consider the effect of the proposed changes on the quiet zone.

is tremendous.

Additional, the EIS must consider the effect of the proposed changes on the quiet zone.

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negative impact that the CN acquisition will have on the quiet zone. The EIS must consider the effect of the proposed changes on the quiet zone.

necessary infrastructure to accommodate 2 mile long trains passing by 42 times a day.

Indian Prairie School District 204 transports 17,500 students each day. The EJ&E tracks run through more than 11 miles of this district. Seven schools (sensitive receptors) are located within a half mile of the tracks. There are two at-grade crossings that are used frequently to transport our children. School buses cross the Ogden Avenue tracks a total of 164 times each day and the Montgomery Avenue tracks 139 times each day. Gate closures are anticipated to increase up to 10 minutes per train. Delays created by rail traffic will force students to ride on the buses longer and cost our district more money to run the buses for a longer time. Buses will pollute our environment as they idle waiting for trains to cross. Please incorporate this pollution count into your FEIS.

Peterson Elementary School in District 204, 4008 Chinaberry Lane, Naperville, IL. (between 111th and 103rd) is one of the sensitive receptors. Hazardous materials will be transported on an average of one per day through residential neighborhoods and very close to Peterson School. For the safety of our children, is it possible NOT to transport hazardous material while they are in school? It appears that the plans are to add a THIRD track near Peterson Elementary School for storage. Why is CN allowed to store their trains so close to an elementary school? What are the plans for construction noise, storage, and switching? What is being done to ensure that our children are safe and that their school is not being used as a storage yard? The construction of the additional track appears that it will be done in multiple phases. What is being done to ensure that the construction is not done at a time when residents are not sleeping?

The DEIS only projects out for 3 years. The Final EIS needs to extend to 2015. There is anticipated growth in the area and the DEIS does not take into account the future growth. We need an accurate understanding of the true impact. The FEIS must address full capacity of the proposed STAR line and the impact of CN's increasing shipments of hazardous materials.

The planned commuter STAR line will likely no longer be feasible. Naperville/Plainfield already purchased approximately 100 acres for the STAR line. Why isn't anything being done to ensure that CN will allow the STAR line to co exist with them in the future? What is the assurance that CN will help implement the STAR line. If CN is operating the tracks at capacity, how can the STAR line be implemented? Unless find it contradictory, that is a better question to ask CN: how can they operate the future STAR line while conducting the DEIS.

It is estimated that to support the new communities along the STAR line it will cost \$100-\$120 million alone. How are we going to fund this?

The purchase price for CN is \$200 million. The land is being sold for \$100-\$120 million alone. How are we going to fund this?

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Along the STAR line, about 20% of the land is residential and 20% is habitat. If the CN purchase is allowed, the negative environmental impact of our parks and

suffer habitat loss if the CN purchase is allowed. The negative environmental impact of our parks and

and detail mitigation and accountability for mitigation.

Home values will likely decrease. The DEIS simply stated that "home value within 250 feet of the tracks will experience a decrease in home value. Why weren't they further analyzed and this analysis made a part of the DEIS?

The "benefits to the region" were not outlined in the DEIS and nothing holds CN accountable for long term guarantees that traffic on the current tracks will not increase at a later date.

The DEIS did not address true safety mitigation but simply acknowledged issues and impact. In light of the recent MetroLink collision with a freight train in the Los Angeles area, what safety mechanisms are in place to ensure the safety of commuter rail passengers?

Overall, Canadian National has not demonstrated a willingness to meet the needs of the communities along the EJ&E line. CN has not provided long-term commitments to the region or guaranteed full cooperation with the proposed STAR Line and current Amtrak service. I have not heard of any Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) between CN and the various cities and villages that they will negatively impact. How will CN be held accountable?

Senator Dick Durbin wrote, "Joined by other members of the Illinois Congressional delegation, I met with Canadian National Railroad President E. Hunter Harrison to seek further details of the proposal. Mr. Harrison explained why the transaction would be good for CN's business, but he was indifferent to the potential burden on suburban communities in terms of traffic, safety issues, quality of life, and the undue tax burden associated with supporting this private transaction."

If our Senator is reporting that CN already appears to be "indifferent to the burden" on our communities now, then how can we expect CN to carry their fair share of the financial burden once they are running their trains on the tracks?

I respectfully request that you address these issues and report on the true negative impact that the CN acquisition will have in your Final EIS.

Sincerely,

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