

1 SCOPING MEETING FOR THE PROPOSED CANADIAN
2 NATIONAL RAILWAY COMPANY ACQUISITION OF THE
3 ELGIN, JOLIET AND EASTERN RAILWAY COMPANY

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STATEMENT OF:

10

SCOTT GIFFORD

11

AUGUST 27, 2008

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BARRINGTON HIGH SCHOOL

15

616 MAIN STREET

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BARRINGTON, ILLINOIS

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22 REPORTED BY: Cheryl L. Sandeck, 084-03710

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MR. GIFFORD: As the president of
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2 the Village of Deer Park, I represent Deer Park
3 residents who have a vested interest in the
4 Barrington and Lake Zurich communities as well
5 as their own village. I would like to state my
6 strong opposition to Canadian National
7 Railroad's acquisition of the EJ&J Railroad.

8 My specific reasons are spelled out
9 below. Disruptions to various businesses,
10 negative impact on property values and
11 hesitancy to build will impair realization of
12 the current and future plans within Deer Park.

13 In addition, delays from 400 percent
14 increase in train traffic will negatively
15 impact public, vehicular and pedestrian safety.

16 The average train lengths of 10,000
17 feet will block the Deer Park, Barrington and
18 Lake Zurich at-grade crossings and all major
19 arterial roads bringing traffic through the
20 Barrington and Lake Zurich downtowns to a
21 standstill.

22 The added delay will increase the
23 emergency response times resulting in the
24 possibility of unnecessary loss of life.

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1 The Community Unit School District
2 95 educates many Deer Park children. Their
3 buses cross Lake Zurich's at-grade crossings
4 233 times per day, which means an increase in

5 train/school bus conflicts. Similar conflicts
6 exist with regard to Deer Park children who
7 attend Community Unit School District 220 in
8 Barrington. Their buses cross Barrington and
9 Deer Park's at-grade crossings a total of 840
10 times per day.

11 Lake Zurich High School and May
12 Whitney Elementary School of Community Unit
13 School District 95 directly abut the existing
14 EJ&J tracks. Barrington High School is only
15 600 feet west of the existing EJ&J tracks.
16 Freight traffic increased by 400 percent
17 presents a hazard to students, teachers in
18 particular, who may hurry and behave
19 impulsively while crossing the tracks traveling
20 to and from school, despite the danger and the
21 warnings.

22 This transaction will seriously
23 jeopardize the proposed STAR Line's viability
24 to relieve the region's traffic congestion and

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1 air quality.

2 The Surface Transportation Board
3 must require Canadian National to be
4 100 percent financially accountable to mitigate
5 all of the adverse public safety and
6 environmental impacts imparted on the affected
7 communities.

8 The Surface Transportation Board
9 should not ignore our pleas for full
10 consideration of the mitigation measures stated
11 below.

12 Environmental impact, the impact of
13 this transaction will dramatically increase
14 noise, increase smoke from standing cars
15 waiting for the train to pass, and increase
16 particulate matter from dust raised by the
17 passing trains.

18 The full extent of the environmental
19 impact, especially to the number of sensitive
20 forest preserves they will pass through, has
21 not been adequately studied.

22 Land use and socioeconomics, it is
23 submitted that the home values near the rail
24 line will decrease an average of 20 percent due

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1 to the 400 percent increase in freight trains.
2 This will make areas planned or approved for
3 residential and other uses no longer viable
4 projects.

5 Our current road infrastructure
6 cannot handle the vehicular traffic congestion
7 created by this large of an increase in rail
8 traffic.

9 Safety, greater train frequency
10 through our village will increase the

11 probability of rail-related accidents. The
12 installation of barrier walls along the rail
13 adjacent to residential and school property,
14 pedestrian crossing bridges and controlled
15 access points should be provided at no cost to
16 Deer Park.

17 Hazardous materials and
18 transportation, local emergency service
19 responders must receive a detailed manifest of
20 all hazardous materials being transported
21 through our community. Response training,
22 evacuation planning and response and recovery
23 resources as it relates to the hazards being
24 transported should be provided at no cost to

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1 Deer Park.
2 Noise and vibration, the Quiet Zone
3 currently in place through Deer Park,
4 Barrington and Lake Zurich should be maintained
5 and honored by Canadian National.
6 Additionally, Canadian National should contact
7 every property owner residing within 500 feet
8 of the EJ&J tracks to discuss landscape buffers
9 and/or fencing. Noise walls or other types of
10 sound barriers should be built to mitigate
11 sound and prevent egress and ingress into the
12 railroad right-of-way at no cost to Deer Park
13 or its residents.

14 Transportation services, the EJ&J
15 crossing at Cuba Road in Deer Park will
16 experience westbound traffic backing up over
17 Ela Road, especially during peak times.
18 Canadian National should fully fund
19 construction of a trench and/or underpasses at
20 this crossing. We believe that mitigation for
21 this at-grade crossing is appropriate and
22 warranted.
23 Canadian National has expressed no
24 sincere interest in the environmental and

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1 economic needs of the communities that will be
2 impacted by their operations. They have, in
3 fact, been less than cooperative with our local
4 Deer Park, Barrington and Lake Zurich
5 officials.
6 This matter is of such importance
7 that its approval should be delayed until after
8 the upcoming Presidential Inauguration when new
9 members of the Surface Transportation Board
10 will be appointed. These newly appointed
11 members should be involved in the Canadian
12 National decision-making process as they are
13 officials who will be in the office to face the
14 consequences of the board's decision.

15 In closing, I encourage the Surface
16 Transportation Board to reject the Canadian

17 National Railroad acquisition of the EJ&J
18 Railroad given the catastrophic impact it will
19 have in Deer Park, Barrington and Lake Zurich
20 and all of the affected communities. Thank you
21 for your time and thoughtful consideration.
22 Scott Gifford.
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