

Phillis Johnson-Ball  
Surface Transportation Board  
395 E Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20423  
Ref: STB Finance Docket No. 35087

This is in reference to STB Finance Docket No. 35087. CN proposed purchase of EJ&E.

I speak out NOT in favor of the proposed purchase of the EJ&E by CN under the current terms proposed.

Specifically, the grade separation of vehicle, pedestrian and rail traffic of US-RT14, US-RT59, County Line Road (a.k.a Lake-Cook Road/Main street) and the Union Pacific - NW Rail Road rail crossings must be mitigated prior to the increase in rail traffic on the EJE line.

I believe each of these grade crossings needs to be addressed. I have lived in this community my entire life and believe as stewards of the community that these issues must be addressed prior to escalating the number of and/or length of any additional trains on the EJ&E line. Train line right-of-way exists for potentially hundreds of years. These issues must be addressed now, as there will be not be another opportunity to ensure accountability that rail grade separation will materialize in the future.

I understand the need to move freight for the overall benefit of commerce. I have no objections to the rights of the property owners of the EJE line. However, to dramatically alter the use of property with such negative impact and zero benefit to the community requires some special consideration.

Logistically, it is PAINFULLY OBVIOUS the Barrington community is taking a disproportional burden of this transaction with zero benefit. When one looks at a map of the community and how the EJE rail line bisects the community on angle, and how each and every viable road crossing will be simultaneously blocked by an ever increasing frequency AND length of freight trains, and the safety issues imposed by grade level crossings, and the proximity of the EJE to public school access measured in FEET, not miles, there clearly is a problem. Barrington is being asked to carry the burden of a foreign operation all for the pure pursuit of corporate and Canadian profits. There is zero benefit to the community from this proposal in the current form.

Safety issues surrounding the proximity of grade level crossing to the public High School will exist. Your own STB EIS states accidents will occur. It's not IF an accident will occur but WHEN and HOW MANY? Who and how many have to die as the result of the pursuit of profits before the issue of grade level crossing is addressed? How will accountability of the private landowner to require grade separation be constructed AFTER the purchase is complete? Surely, I am not over reacting here. With a public high school a distance away from the EJE grade crossing measured in FEET an accident will happen. It is a fact that judgment of a 14 year old pedestrian walking to school or 16-year-old drivers is not mature. They may mistakes, there is a possibility of bad judgment,

and people will die. For what? It's your decision and the decision of the board to rectify this problem before people die.

The issue at hand can be solved. However, it will take funds to accomplish. Each and every of the aforementioned grade/rail crossings must be mitigated. The aforementioned five significant grade crossings occur within a span of less than 2 track miles. The close proximity of each of the grade crossings would require the below grade operation of the EJE line through the community. Below grade operation has been done before and exists in the village of Winnetka, IL. There are no other alternatives to traversing around the EJE line through Barrington. Just look at the map, look at the rail line, and look at vehicular and pedestrian alternatives. There are simply zero choices for alternatives.

Yes, this will cost significant dollars. However, train lines are not transient or temporary in their nature. This transaction will have impact well over 100 years from today and beyond! Rail traffic will not decrease, pedestrian traffic will not decrease, and vehicular traffic will not decrease. Progress is progress. If these issues are not addressed today, then when will they? At what other opportunity will any government or community body have the leverage to require private industry make the safety investment necessary to correct a problem caused by simple greed and profits? CN may complain loudly over the cost of such mitigation. However, is it not the cost savings and potential revenue from increased freight movement along EJE that is spurring CN's action to buy the rail line? I would strongly suggest that a bond fund be created by CN to mitigate the rail crossings, not just in Barrington, but all communities affected by this transaction. The CN profits and savings directly resulting from their purchase of the EJE line can pay the cost of this bond fund. Surely the cost of this significant rail improvement amortized over a 100-year timeframe is not significant and can be borne by mega-rail CN. However, the alternative of not addressing the issue now will forever destroy the community as there will be no accountability or funding made available to correct the grade issues once the transaction has been completed.

Regarding the rhetoric being publicized by CN concerning the existence of the EJE line prior to these communities being founded. I would suggest CN check their facts. The village of Barrington existed long before the EJE rail line was constructed. Barrington was founded in 1854, incorporated in 1865 and the EJE line was constructed in 1889.

Lastly, as a compromise suggestion, I recognize the need and rights of property owners and the significant amount of investment dollars at risk are serious. One way to allow the transaction to move forward is to allow for the purchase but to legislate throttling of freight volume to current levels until such time all mitigation issues are resolved. This would allow for an overall rail benefit to the region, allow for CN to invest in their future on solid footing, keep accountability on the private party, and provide for very long term and strategic controlled growth, while also providing for the safety of people of the community.

Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter Schaffer", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Peter Schaffer  
228 Monument Ave  
Barrington, IL 60010