

WINBROOK MANAGEMENT, LLC
AS MANAGING AGENT FOR
NORWOOD SQUARE SHOPPING CENTER, LLC

September 15, 2008

Ms. Phillis Johnson-Ball
STB Finance Docket No. 35087
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20423-0001

**Re: CN-Control-EJ&E;
Village of Park Forest;
Norwood Square Shopping Center, 100-800 Norwood Square Drive, Park Forest, IL**

Dear Ms. Johnson-Ball,

The letter is intended to serve as the written comment of Norwood Square Shopping Center, LLC, on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (the "Draft EIS") by the Section of Environmental Analysis of the Surface Transportation Board ("STB") for the proposed acquisition of Elgin, Joliet & Eastern Railway Company ("EJ&E") by Canadian National ("CN").

We strongly oppose the proposed acquisition, unless adequate traffic mitigation measures can be implemented, as outlined more fully hereinafter. As a general matter, we strongly feel that rerouting of traffic in the greater Chicago area (the "Proposed Action") will have a disastrous effect on private enterprise located in the vicinity of the EJ&E rail line resulting from the dramatically increased rail traffic and traffic stoppages. More specifically, our concern lies with the potential economic devastation that will precipitate the Village of Park Forest and surrounding communities if traffic conditions at the Western Avenue crossing ("Western Crossing") are not adequately addressed.

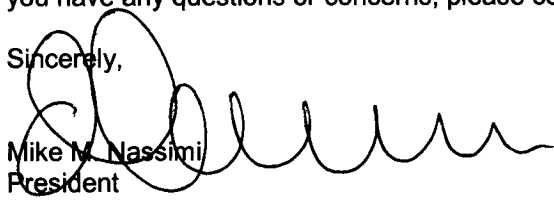
In March 2008, our firm purchased from the Village of Park Forest a Shopping Center on Western Avenue, in close proximity to the Western Crossing, as part of a broader public-private effort by the Village to revitalize the local economy and spur investment in the community. Our preliminary plan includes investing several million dollars towards upgrading the facilities, renovating existing structures, and drawing new retail tenants to the shopping center – which in turn would lead to job creation, increased revenue for the Village and ultimately aid in the resuscitation of the struggling local economy.

In August 2008, we learned of the pending acquisition of EJ&E by CN and the Proposed Action and began an informal study of the consequences to local traffic patterns from the increased volume. According to STB's Draft EIS, based on statistics provided by CN, the Proposed Action will result in a 400% increase in the number of trains, 500% increase in train cars, and 700% increase in gross tonnage along the line passing EJ&E line. The Draft EIS labeled the Western Avenue crossing as one of 15 at-grade crossings that will be "substantially affected" and will "require mitigation under the Proposed Action," with *total vehicle traffic delays* increasing more than 10-fold from 277.2 minutes per day to 2958.2 minutes per day (see Table 4.3-8 in Draft EIS). An informal investigation performed by the Village of Park Forest indicated that these numbers might in actuality be too conservative, and the total vehicle delays resulting from the Proposed Action could be significantly higher. Such severe congestion along a major thoroughfare would be crippling to a retail corridor, and it is highly unlikely that any retail shopping center in the vicinity could draw sufficient traffic to be economically viable. Consumers would be driven away from the area, and retail business would deteriorate from lack of consumer traffic.

The highly uncertain future of Western Avenue has left commercial enterprise in Park Forest, including Norwood Square, in a precarious position. Until we have a firmer grasp on the remedial measures that will be taken at the Western Crossing, we have little choice but to defer our development plans. If traffic delays are not sufficiently mitigated by a separated crossing, the possibility exists that our revitalization plan might be adjourned indefinitely. We feel that we are not alone in this regard. Private enterprise in the Village will be unable push forward with the desperately needed investment in the local community until the adverse impacts of the Proposed Action are dealt with. We fear that failure to properly provide for a separated crossing at Western Avenue will devastate commercial business and cripple the Park Forest economy, and it is the proper responsibility of CN to mitigate the damage that will be caused to the community at-large as a result of the Proposed Action.

Thank you for your review of this correspondence. Your consideration in mitigating the effects of the Proposed Action on the Village of Park Forest and the greater Chicago area is appreciated. Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at your convenience.

Sincerely,



Mike M. Nassimi
President

Winbrook Management, LLC
as Managing Agent for
NORWOOD SQUARE SHOPPING CENTER, LLC

cc: Congressman Jesse Jackson, Jr.
Senator Dick Durbin
Senator Barack Obama
Milton R. Sees, Secretary Illinois Department of Transportation