

1 SCOPING MEETING FOR THE PROPOSED CANADIAN
2 NATIONAL RAILWAY COMPANY ACQUISITION OF THE ELGIN,
3 JOLIET AND EASTERN RAILWAY COMPANY
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9 STATEMENT OF:
10 GEORGE MORTIMER
11 AUGUST 25, 2008
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14 HOLIDAY INN
15 500 HOLIDAY PLAZA DRIVE
16 MATTESON, ILLINOIS
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19 CHIMNIAK COURT REPORTING & VIDEO
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23 REPORTED BY: Rachel F. Gard, CSR, RPR, 084-3324
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1 MR. MORTIMER: My name is George Mortimer,
2 M O R T I M E R. I'm a resident of Park Forest.

3 And I guess my basic concern is why the
4 Canadian National Railroad thinks it can take over the
5 EJ&E without making appropriate modifications to the
6 structure that they're purchasing -- in other words, the
7 railroad right-of-way -- in order to make it more
8 appropriate for that large amount of traffic they're
9 going to add to the tracks.

10 We live approximately a quarter of a mile from
11 western Avenue and just south of the tracks at Western
12 Avenue. That is the only major entry to the Village of
13 Park Forest from the north. And it's a major street,
14 and it's a one-mile -- an every-mile major street. It
15 is one of them.

16 And yet CN does not think it necessary to
17 provide an underpass there. I think that's a big
18 mistake on their part. Or I should say not necessarily
19 a big mistake on their part but a big mistake on the
20 part of anyone who would allow this to go through that
21 they could make this acquisition without taking
22 appropriate steps to make the acquisition appropriate
23 for the increased usage that they're planning.

24 I think, yeah, the problem with access, the

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1 problem with blocking, as was mentioned by one of the
2 speakers earlier, all of the major medical facilities
3 are north of the tracks. We live south of the tracks,
4 okay. If those tracks were blocked, our closest
5 hospital would be what? St. Margaret's of Dyer. That's
6 a heck of a lot further away than St. James right up the
7 road, right down the street and across the tracks in

8 Chicago Heights.

9 The communities of Chicago Heights, Park
10 Forest, Matteson, Mokena, Frankfort all the way down the
11 line, all these communities are going to be in the
12 situation and, for that matter, the tier below them --
13 Crete, Steger, Richton Park, University Park -- all of
14 these communities will essentially be cut off from
15 primary emergency services by this acquisition unless
16 appropriate mitigations are made and made by CN, not
17 forced upon the communities who don't have the money to
18 do it in the first place. But all these -- All these
19 mitigations, they should be primarily -- not primarily
20 but totally the responsibility of CN.

21 I'm concerned with accidents, the possibility
22 of more train traffic, more train traffic with more
23 frequency. Drivers are going to be getting more
24 frustrated. There's going to be more potential for

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1 people to try to beat the crossing. And, unfortunately,
2 those kind of events usually end in a tie; and ties do
3 not go to the driver. So there's -- I foresee a large
4 increase in the amount of grade-crossing accidents
5 occurring because of this acquisition.

6 I just think that unless CN is forced, and I
7 have to use the word "forced" because they obviously
8 will not do it on their own, haven't suggested anything
9 yet -- in fact, they've already said that Western Avenue
10 mitigation is not a priority for them.

11 So unless they are forced with the potential
12 of not being allowed to make this purchase in the first

13 place, they probably won't do anything to mitigate the
14 issues of isolation from emergency services, the
15 potential for increased rail/vehicle accidents, the
16 destruction of the communities, the economic value of
17 the communities.

18 We live right near the Norwood shopping
19 center, which is currently a dead mall; but it has a new
20 purchaser that just purchased it and is planning on
21 trying to bring it back to life. How can that happen if
22 their major access, Western Avenue, is cut off for
23 multiple hours of the day by two-mile long trains? It
24 doesn't make any sense to anybody except the ivory-tower

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1 people at Canadian National. I don't know what else to
2 say. That pretty much covers it.

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