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January 30, 2002

BY HAND

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Mr. Vernon A. Williams, Secretary
Surface Transportation Board
Office of the Secretary
Case Control Unit
Attn: STB Finance Docket Nos. 33980 and 34040
1925 K Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

**RE: STB Finance Docket No. 33980, Riverview Trenton Railroad Company –
Acquisition and Operation Exemption – Crown Enterprises, Inc. 204660**

**STB Finance Docket No. 34040, Riverview Trenton Railroad Company –
Acquisition and Operation in Wayne County,
Michigan 204661**

Dear Mr. Williams:

The County of Wayne, Michigan ("Wayne County"), submits this letter to the Board in order to inform it about recent developments affecting these proceedings, including growing concerns raised by citizens and elected officials in affected communities, and evidence that the scope of the proposal by Riverview Trenton Railroad Company ("RTRR") is now much broader and will have more extensive environmental effects than those examined in the Draft Environmental Assessment in STB Finance Docket No. 34040.

As the Board is aware, the plans of Crown Enterprises, Inc. ("Crown") and its affiliate RTRR to build an intermodal facility and have it characterized as a "railroad" subject to the Board's jurisdiction have aroused significant and growing opposition from citizens and elected officials in the communities that would be affected by those plans. Many of the concerns of those citizens and officials were voiced at a public meeting attended by approximately 500 interested persons on January 24, 2002, in Southgate, Michigan, at which representatives of RTRR as well as affected local communities spoke and answered questions from the audience. Among others, speakers at the January 24 meeting included representatives of Senator Carl Levin, Senator Debbie Stabenow, Representative John Dingell, Representative Carolyn Cheeks

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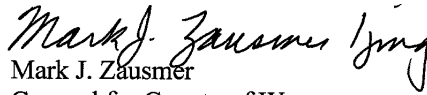
Kilpatrick, and Representative Buzz Thomas, the Democratic leader of the Michigan House of Representatives. Statements were also made by the majority floor leader of the Michigan House of Representatives and the mayors of Melvindale, Riverview, and Trenton.

Enclosed for the Board's information are (1) the agenda for that meeting, (2) a videotape of the meeting, made by LTS Productions of Perry, Michigan, (3) a transcript of remarks at the meeting, transcribed from the videotape by LTS Productions, and (4) a statement by Representative Dingell, which was read at the meeting. Also enclosed are three articles about the January 24 meeting, taken from the online versions of the Detroit Free Press, the Detroit News, and Heritage Sunday. The Board should take the serious issues raised by the growing local opposition to RTRR's proposal into account in acting on the pending notice and petition for exemption in these proceedings.

Among the issues discussed at the January 24 meeting (*see* Transcript pp. 8-9, 17) was RTRR's expanded plans for its intermodal terminal, including the diversion and straightening of Jefferson Avenue (at least in part to allow movement of freight to and from the river). RTRR presented drawings of these plans, which may be seen on the enclosed videotape. Also enclosed is a copy of a full-page advertisement that was placed in The News-Herald (a newspaper serving the Downriver area of metropolitan Detroit) on January 23, 2002, describing RTRR's current plans and showing its proposed new site layout.

The Draft Environmental Assessment prepared in STB Finance Docket No. 34040 says nothing about the environmental effects of the major highway reconfiguration included in that plan, which the Director of Wayne County's Department of Public Service, Cameron Priebe, estimates would cost \$60 million (Transcript p. 17). Wayne County respectfully urges that the Draft Environmental Assessment be supplemented to take into consideration the environmental effects of that extensive road work, which would not occur but for the RTRR project and thus should be regarded as among that project's effects. *See* 40 C.F.R. § 1508.25(a).

Respectfully submitted,


Mark J. Zausmer
Counsel for County of Wayne

Enclosures

AGENDA

Open Public Meeting
Holiday Inn Heritage Center
Northline at I-75
6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
Thursday, January 24, 2002

Welcome	Bob Ranka	2 min
Situation Statement	Greg Gilbert	4 min
Introduction of Head Table	Greg Gilbert	2 min
Senator Carl Levin	Gale Govaere	3 min
Senator Debbie Stabenow	Barbara McCallahan	3 min
Congressman John Dingell	Lauri Elbing	3 min
Congresswoman Carolyn Cheeks-Kilpatrick	Ken Dobson	3 min
Wayne County Position	Cameron Priebe	3 min
Heritage River Overview	John Hartig	4 min
RTRR Current and Future	Micky Blashfield	10 min
Community Sentiment	Blair McGowan	5 min
City of Trenton Statement	Mayor Gerry Brown	2 min
City of Riverview Statement	Mayor Tim Durand	2 min
DCC Position/Resolution	Chairman of the Board, DCC & Mayor of Melvindale, James Kinard	2 min
Audience Comments and Questions	Greg Gilbert	10 min
Close of First Hour	Bob Ranka	2 min

* * * *

Further Comments and Questions (if any)

max. 30 min

Transcript of Open Public Meeting, held at Holiday Inn Heritage Center, Southgate, Michigan, on Thursday, January 24, 2002, 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Mr. Bob Ranka: Ladies and gentlemen, please take your seats. Good evening, everybody. Thank you very much for coming. We appreciate the attendance. What a wonderful show of support. We do have a highly controversial, contestable issue that we want to talk about tonight, but we felt that it would be very important that the public get a reading on what is happening, from several perspectives. So this is meant to be an educational session, for the most. We do have representatives from both sides of the issues around the proposed railroad activity at the old McLouth property. We would appreciate it if you would be very attentive. We do have a question and answer period and we will allow for that at the correct time. We have a packed agenda, so please bear with us. Thanks very much.

{applause}

Mr. Gregory Gilbert: That's Bob Ranka. I'm the moderator this evening, Gregory Gilbert. I'm going to turn on the overhead here. And, this is just to show you how tight our agenda is this evening, and also how many wonderful guests we have and what a nice agenda we do have. As we note, this evening we are here for one purpose and that is our open public meeting concerning the Riverview Trenton Railroad, which is on Jefferson and Riverview, near the Grosse Ile toll bridge. And there's been a great deal of comment, both in the newspapers and throughout the community in reference to this project. Again, this is our agenda this evening, and I'm going to introduce the head table since we are, it's a one-hour agenda so it's pretty tight.

So starting with my left, please welcome John Hartig, and he is from the, I think, The Detroit Navigator. And welcome this evening. Micky Blashfield, Micky is from the Riverview Trenton Railroad. From the County of Wayne this evening, Cameron Priebe. Blair McGowan, who needs no introduction. Right? {laughter} Our first spokesman this evening who was of course Bob Ranka, then Lauri Elbing, who's here this evening on behalf of John Dingell of course, Senator {sic} John Dingell. Next to her is Gale Govaere if I'm pronouncing that correctly? I am. And she's from the office of Senator Carl Levin. Also this evening Kenneth Dobson is here this evening. He's here on behalf of the Honorable Carolyn C. Kilpatrick, 15th District of Michigan. Next to Mr. Dobson is Barbara McCallahan, see I knew that, and she is from Senator Debbie Stabenow's office. Welcome this evening. Next to her is the Mayor of Melvindale, is that correct? {yes} James Kinard. Then Mayor of Trenton, the newly elected Mayor of Trenton, which is Gerry Brown, and on the very end again needs no introduction, the Mayor of Riverview, Tim Durand.

There are a number of other honorary and public servants here this evening, and I will have a list of those very shortly and I will recognize those public servants when I have a chance.

The, we have 3x5 cards this evening but you have in front of you, if you notice, the Holiday Inn cards, those little notepads. If you have questions for later on, I'm going to be giving your questions to the parties involved this evening, at the end of the television portion. So if you could write your questions out as they come to you and as you listen to different speakers this evening.

The point of the agenda we're at now of course is where we will hear from Gale Govaere, with Senator Carl Levin.

Ms. Gale Govaere: Good evening. And I first of all want to thank you for inviting the Senator to this important event. I know all of you have many concerns, concerns that the Senator is welcome to hear. Last, I think it was about last winter, last spring, is when this issue first came to the attention of the Senator. There, of all the issues to consider, I would say the issue that raised the greatest interest for the Senator, was the issue regarding the health and safety, that this project could imprint on the citizens. Number one I'm sure you're aware the number of rail lines in this region has increased, or there are a large number. And, as of late, there has been an awful lot of concern about the ability for emergency vehicles and emergency personnel to make it to the citizens. With this project there is the possibility that rail lines could be increased, and of course that is of great concern to the Senator.

Number two, as I'm sure you're aware, the Senator, along with Senator Stabenow and Congressman Dingell, have worked incredibly hard to have the Detroit River Refuge Project passed and it was signed by the President last December. If this project, if this project is going to be in the middle of the wildlife corridor, there may, there may be a possibility that the point of the act may not be realized and that is of great concern to the Senator. He has contacted the Surface Transportation Board, he's expressed your concerns, and at this point his hope is that the Surface Transportation Board offers a resolve through a decision that is equitable for all parties concerned. Thank you.

{applause}

Mr. Gilbert: The next speaker will be Barbara McCallahan, from Senator Debbie Stabenow's office.

Ms. Barbara McCallahan: Good evening. As stated I'm Barbara McCallahan, the southeastern Michigan regional director for Senator Stabenow. I want to thank you for the opportunity to be here this evening, with all of you. Our office really appreciates the opportunity to hear from the community, and to be able to acknowledge that we have heard all of the concerns expressed here this evening. On behalf of the Senator, I would hope that your comments assist the Surface Transportation Board in making an informed ruling on the request to revoke the exemption provided to Riverview & Trenton Railroad Company. As always, we appreciate the opportunity to become better informed on the issues that threaten our quality of life in any community or region in this state.

The Senator supports responsible land usage, that respects and ultimately furthers all of the hard work and years of planning done by local communities, citizens and the elected officials of this area, to create and develop a long-term vision, that preserves and protects the natural resources such as the Detroit River, does not unduly strain public services, or infrastructure, in any way that places an increased burden instead of enhancing the quality of life for the citizens of the Downriver communities.

Initiatives that would possibly negatively impacted are the Greenways Project, National Heritage River, and the International Wildlife Refuge, just to name a few. You've worked very hard down here, and you deserve your voice.

Community meeting such as this help to ensure that the impending decision by the Surface Transportation Board does not {inaudible} acknowledge or acknowledge public concerns. The process must be conducted in a manner in which there will be no question that a full analysis of all data was not conducted. Thank you very much.

{applause}

Mr. Gilbert: From the office of Congressman John Dingell, Lauri Elbing.

Ms. Lauri Elbing: Thank you. My name is Lauri Elbing. I'm district representative for Congressman Dingell. He sent me here today with a statement from him and I will just read that. 'I am pleased that you are all gathered here today to address this important community issue. Unfortunately, I am unable to be here in person due to congressional hearings on the activities of Enron and Arthur Andersen, which caused thousands of Americans to lose much of their retirement savings. Rest assured, I'm working to enact changes so this never happens again. As you know, I have been and continue to be a strong supporter of the local communities with regard to the Surface Transportation Board proceedings for the proposed railroad project on the old McLouth Steel property. I have met with local officials, and I have called and written the chairman of the Surface Transportation Board on our behalf. I must stress that it is important that the Surface Transportation Board hear from you, the residents, who will be impacted. Local leaders have made a compelling case that placing an intermodal facility on McLouth Steel property will have a devastating impact on the quality of life of the region. If the developer is successful in his bid to become a railroad, it would effectively have, it would effectively have a shield from local regulation. Additionally, such a ruling would curtail the ability of Riverview and Trenton to have meaningful input on land use and matters of public safety. It is contrary to the public interest for the Surface Transportation Board to grant the developer authority to operate as a railroad absent public scrutiny. Accordingly, I continue to fully support your efforts.' Thank you.

{applause}

Mr. Gilbert: I have a list of other honorary figures here this evening, and I'd like to welcome this evening Lynne Lanchette, from the Riverview City Council. Want to wave your hand? There she is in the back. I would also like to welcome Betty Criscorn, also

from the City Council of Riverview, she's waving down the other side of the room. Also we have Ray {unintelligible} representative from Taylor. We have Elmer Trombley, he's {Councilman Riverview} Very good, sir. He's got the red, white and blue jacket on. We have {unintelligible} Caroly from the Flat Rock, waving his hand, seated. George Vans is here this evening, from uh, in the very rear of the room. Thank you. We also have Kim Priebe, {unintelligible comments from audience} Kathleen Lawser this evening, Mayor Pro Tem of {unintelligible} and we have {unintelligible} Crooks, from the Trenton Council, and she's in the front. And ah, I'm trying to read these names and hopefully I'm not missing anybody. Is it Peter, I can't make out the name, he's here this evening, a former mayor of Riverview, Peter {unintelligible} There he is. Thanks for the, I smell money, remark on television. {laughter}

Our next speaker this evening will be from the office of Congresswoman Carolyn Cheeks-Kilpatrick, and that's Ken Dobson.

{Audience: You forgot a couple. {unintelligible} of Riverview and also Mark Miller, Councilman from the city of Riverview.}

Thank you very much and I apologize. Anybody I missed?

{Audience: Bill O'Neil, Bruce Patterson, Joe Palamara} Well OK, a couple, you know. {laughter}

{Audience: Mayor Lenny Sabuto from Wyandotte}

Mr. Ken Dobson: Good evening. I'm going to have to pay Lauri back, she told me this was going to be a very small meeting tonight. {laughter} My name is Kenneth Dobson, I'm the District Corporation Director for Congresswoman Carolyn Kilpatrick's office. As other representatives, she's in Washington with other important issues, so she sent me. I'm not going to take a lot of time speaking tonight, because I really only came for one reason. I came down to listen to your concerns and your suggestions, regarding the proposed project. Your concerns are a very important part in our decision-making process, in Ms. Kilpatrick's office. Community input and community support is vital to any development project, whether that project is large or small, located in the big city or small city. Your voice needs to be heard. Your suggestions need to be considered. In my line of work, there's a lot of public speaking, but tonight I'm here just to listen. I would like to thank everyone for inviting us to be here. It's a pleasure to be here. If there's anything Congresswoman Kilpatrick or myself can do for you, let us know.

{applause}

Mr. Gilbert: Stating the Wayne County position this evening is Cameron Priebe.

Mr. Cameron Priebe: Ken, welcome down here this is a small meeting by Downriver standards. {applause, laughter} Let me thank particularly if I could, Congressman Dingell, whose really provided leadership on this issue as he has for so long in the

Downriver area and Carolyn Cheeks-Kilpatrick is going to have some big shoes to fill, on taking over part of that district. So again, get used to this {unintelligible} group. Several state representatives have really worked this hard on this one, too. George Mans, Bill O'Neil, and Bruce Patterson. You should be aware of that, they represent your district, they're doing their best to represent your interests, and Senator Chris Dingell has worked with us very very hard on this and we appreciate their efforts and their help.

One of the things which Wayne County has done is on two separate occasions, passed resolutions by unanimous votes. Now, that's significant because normally they cannot unanimously agree upon the day of the week {laughter} and of course Joe Palamara and Ed Blakey, provided the leadership at that end. And guys we really do appreciate your help. Good job.

Basically, the county's role in this has been, from the very beginning, we've been involved in the federal circuit court case, we are involved along with {unintelligible} and the Canadian National Railroad, or CN whatever that stands for, at the Surface Transportation Board trying to stop the designation of railroad, or reverse the designation of railroad for this particular site. So that other things can potentially take place at that site. I think what the County Executive and County Commission's position is is primarily one of quality of life. The quality of life issue. It gives us an opportunity, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity potentially, to re-develop as much as a mile and a half of Detroit River frontage. Not all this is part of this Riverview Trenton Railroad issue, but what could be re-developed, a very unique opportunity. Again, a once-in-a-lifetime chance. That waterfront has been heavy industry for a century or more. It's time to turn it back to the people so it can be used by all people. {cheers, applause}

In addition to that the county's interests are of course traffic issues with regard to trucks coming and going and the impact on the roads and neighborhoods and those of you that use those roads, the rail issues, the rail in this particular portion of the county is already very congested—those of you that commute in that area know that you're stopped by trains all the time—that would only be worsened by this type of development. Those of you that live on the island, yes, in fact, and there's some question as to whether there will be boat or barge traffic. If there's boat or barge traffic those of you on the island will have problems with regard to the bridge opening. I can picture BMWs lined up for a mile over there. {laughter}

The bottom line, the whole question is quality of life. Let's re-develop this site, and let's do it the right way this time so that Downriver can be all that it can be. {applause}

Mr. Gilbert: Next speaker will be the Heritage River overview, the Detroit River Navigator, John Hartig. {applause}

Mr. John Hartig: I don't know if I can do this in a few minutes, but. We have a wonderful place we call home. And part of that home is the Detroit River, and that's been celebrated many times, with an American Heritage River designation, one of fourteen in the United States, a Canadian Heritage River designation, making this the first

international Heritage River system in North America, and now an international wildlife refuge, the first in North America. It makes it very special.

We've worked really hard for a number of years, many of the communities and businesses up and down the river to reach a vision. I'd like to read that to you. 'Our vision, from stakeholders up and down the river, we are filled with pride for our magnificent river. And we have a shared vision for its regeneration. Our vibrant international waterway inspires a community burning with fun and excitement, rest and relaxation. A broad diversity of jobs, housing, historic interpretation, recreation and culture, breathe life into a twenty-four hour a day waterfront. Industry, commerce and tourism growing in harmony with the {unintelligible} environment, sustain fish, bird, animal and plant habitats. The river has become the region's front door. With access to all inland communities. Its beauty and integrity have been restored, and we thrive in that eco-system.' That's the vision that was generated by all the stakeholders in the process, and the one that we continue to put out in front of everyone, to think big, to think long-term, to think about the next generation.

We've identified six priorities for the American Heritage River initiative. There are no surprises. Belle Isle. Re-opening Fort Wayne. Greenways. Soft engineering. Remediating Black Lagoon, and a model brownfield re-development site at the SC site here in Riverview and Trenton. The city of Trenton has taken the lead in acquiring some funds from federal sources, state sources, some brownfield grant money, over two hundred thousand dollars to hire the foremost architect, William McDonough, on sustainable re-design. Their in partnership with Smith Group, JJR {?} right now, to work with the property owners, the communities and the public, to say, what could be at the DSC site? What could we, and should we, have, for the next generation? So look at that broadly and say, could we have parks, greenways, some businesses, some housing. That's overwhelmingly the message that we've gotten. Wayne County had a survey, a little over a year ago, and from that survey seventy-four percent of the respondents thought river, thought development should focus on recreational areas for residents, including parks, marinas, and opportunities for fishing and boating.

What we're talking about is a re-infrastructure. Urban infrastructure means roads and sewers. Green infrastructure's a natural resource foundation that provides the essential services and related social and economic benefits. Greenways sought engineering, brownfield re-development, mixed-use re-development of the DSC site, and international wildlife refuge enhance green infrastructure. Experience has shown throughout Canada and the United States that there are substantial returns on these investments. And I'd like to give you one example.

Canada was here, literally, ten years ago in Toronto. And they looked at and they said it's an overwhelming problem. We have a waterfront dominated by industry, and they went through the same process that we're facing right now. And they went through it and are cleaning up right now, with substantial dollars, the watershed and the waterfront, and going to mixed-use re-development. They are spending about nine hundred and sixty-four million on cleaning up the downriver watershed in Toronto. And there's about one

point four million dollars in annual operating costs. There are some savings from doing that, and I can't go into specifics right now, but forty-two million dollars in savings. There's annual user benefits of about fifty-five million, and annual savings of eleven million. In addition, province-wide increases in income of about three point six billion dollars, associated with the capital investment, and five billion associated with expanded economic activity.

So, if we followed what Toronto did, for mixed-use re-development, there could be substantial economic return on these investments. And there would be substantial improvement of the quality of life.

You've heard it said many times, by Congressman Dingell, by Representative Mans. What will attract our children and grandchildren to make Downriver their home? What will help attract and retain employees for our businesses? Certainly, people are our greatest asset Downriver. Our next greatest asset are the natural resources like the Detroit River and our tributaries. People overwhelmingly want greenways, parks, new waterfront developments that provide public access. Unique destinations that are provided by parks and the international wildlife refuge. And new or expanded economic development. All this will improve quality of life and ensure economic sustainability. We need to go through the process, with William McDonough and Smith Group JJR. If anyone can sell this, as to what the benefits are for mixed-use re-development, they can. I think we need to go through that process, and we will all be pleased in the end. Thank you very much.

{applause}

Mr. Gilbert: The next speaker will be Micky Blashfield, and he is from the Riverview Trenton Railroad. {applause}

Mr. Micky Blashfield: I sincerely want to thank you for your, for your inviting us down here tonight as well as for your warm response. I have to be very honest I wasn't quite sure what we were getting ourselves in for. But we're always welcoming the opportunity to share the facts about what our development over the last two years has been pointed toward and what I see our future as and hope that as you start to begin the process of sorting through those facts, that you can come to some conclusions that we may be able to work together. As we have done with the communities of Trenton/Riverview incorporating suggestions of their community leaders into what we have on the drawing boards now.

Unfortunately, things didn't start off in the best way. It started in court because the land was uh, you know there was a threat of condemnation against the land, that we had purchased in 2000. As that land was being cleaned up and prepared for use, and I can tell you today that it's cleaner than it's been in fifty years, for the first phase of our operation with the intermodal facility, that's just the beginning. More is, more is in store with that.

We talk about the river. John's excellent presentation of the Heritage River area. And certainly it is a, it is a national heritage and it is our front door. We well know that. Our family of transportation companies with, with the Ambassador Bridge, thrives on the river. And more importantly we all celebrated recently with this region, the three-hundredth anniversary of Detroit. One of the, one of the items with that celebration was the re-enactment of Cadillac paddling a canoe up to the shores, and coming forward and one of the first things he did was, was establish a fur-trading outpost here on the Detroit River and our region has thrived on commerce and trade ever since. That's exactly what we're talking about today with the Riverview Trenton Railroad. Our vision of, in fact our company solely exists not transporting our own goods or running, running around just for the sake of doing it, we do it because we carry precious commodities back and forth between employers, manufacturers, and consumer, consumer goods, in order for, in order for our economy to blossom and that's exactly what the intent of an intermodal facility is.

I want to share with you some, some visual concepts and I will apologize before-hand because I was invited to bring my boards down and we thought with the size of the group that that would be able to accommodate everyone, but I'll have these available afterwards to take a closer look at if you'd like.

{pause while he sets up visual aids}

To give you just a bit of an overview, this process of applying for the railroad designation, started approximately two years ago when we acquired the property that we have that's situated right on the border of Trenton and Riverview. And we have, we made the appropriate filings with the Surface Transportation Board as you know, and during that process over the course of the last year, an extensive environmental analysis has been conducted, looking at many of the things that have been raised here tonight. And those, those issues have been, have been looked at accordingly to the various federal thresholds, and as you probably know, the initial findings of that was that there was no significant negative impact. Now that's not to say that there aren't impacts that change the way that we all operate. But in addressing those impacts we look forward to addressing those in a way that can enhance the, truly against the quality of life, because the core of what this operation does is ensure that the, from a bigger picture standpoint, that the goods moving in commerce that our employers, that our, that our consumer shelves when we go to the grocery store are well stocked, and they have to get there one way or the other. We suggest that they get there, the other. The most economical way, and that's what an intermodal facility, that transfers the goods between rail, bringing it in in the most economical fashion, and distributing it to, in this case, some of our region's largest employers, the auto industry. That was, that's been underway and the public input has been welcomed at each stage of those sorts of things, the filings and even the filings with the Surface Transportation Board. But what we endeavor to do is go even well beyond that. As we've met with community leaders, we've had a vision of what is something a little bit better, a little bit bigger than what our current operation handles. Because we envision that it is entirely possible to restore the riverfront, to bring it back into a public use and that's what we've offered, in fact if folks had seen the advertisement that was in the newspaper in Wednesday, we had an overview with, with what we saw

and what we've been working with local officials for a future phase of this project, that would restore riverfront land for the first time in this area and have it restored in a clean way in a way that the communities had wanted. As we talked with the cities of Trenton, economic development and, and job-generators as well as tax-revenue generators were one thing that were important. In this city of Riverview, park-front land, and we've accommodated that and have talked with them in this working process, working process concept that we have, that we have developed for the future. One of the key things that we had, we had heard about and we truly listen as we listen to the officials, and that was diverting and straightening out Jefferson. Better able to, being, being better able to accommodate the traffic that as we all know has grown with, with the growth of our economy. That is accommodating the vision of the {unintelligible} track. I just had delivered this afternoon, a little more detailed phase—you can imagine that for the newspaper it couldn't be quite as detailed, but here's a little bit more of a conceptual rendering of what that could look like. And it's not the, the myths that I know have been circulating and the rumor mill is wonderful at that. But I'd like to address some of those myths about the operation. In fact the, the article or the advertisement that was in the newspaper addressed some of those as well, too.

But the rumor is generated that we would be implementing a deep-water port. That we import Canadian garbage, which I know is a lightning-rod emotional issue with good people on both sides of that, but let me just tell you here and now, as we've said every time we've been asked: absolutely no trash. That's not our business, that's not in any way shape or form part of this operation of getting goods between manufacturers and assembly plants. The, the, that was one of the major issues that was raised, and I can lay that to rest immediately.

We've heard plenty of concerns and we've heard plenty of good suggestions as we've been able to describe the, the, the development. And what I would suggest as a, as a way—I know that the timing's been short tonight and so that everybody can get their time in—what I'm suggesting and I'm delivering tonight to Mr. Ranka, who invited me to the meeting tonight, a letter of invitation, that out of this group, if ideas can be coalesced and we can get, if you folks can appoint a committee clearinghouse of four, four to six people that can sit down with us and look in a detailed way at the concerns that are there, I think that you'll find that our approach and our proposal and our initiative that's going forward with the transportation facility does accommodate; and not only accommodate, but enhance the initiatives that are underway, regarding the Heritage River, regarding the wildlife refuge and regarding the efforts to improve quality of life Downriver.

With that in mind, I, I would again want to thank you for, for inviting us here tonight, and we look forward to continue that dialogue that we can, we can address the facts, listen to suggestions and incorporate those, and truly restore this area to one of the components of a National Heritage River, and that's thriving economic development in the context, in the context of improving the, the riverfront as well, too.

Thank you very much for your time tonight and Bob, I have a copy of that letter and that's also available on the table outside.

{applause}

Mr. Gilbert: We're actually making quite good time this evening. I do have a note that there's in the audience this evening, Buzz Thomas. Ok, is here, the House Majority Leader, and from his office is Victoria Ginnis {?} is that correct? So if you can come to the front in a few minutes, we'll have a chance to have you say something. Thank you. Next, expressing local sentiment, will be Blair McGowan. {applause}

Mr. Blair McGowan: Good evening. As a newcomer to Downriver, who hitch-hiked here in 1974, I remember the first night I was here. I went to the foot of the Ambassador Bridge in February and I walked across it. In those days they weren't as concerned about security—I walked right past the guards, I got right up on top of the bridge, and I looked down and I saw these giant fjords of ice and I felt the cold, midnight wind, and I was struck by the river—it was so mighty and so mysterious and so majestic. I've been fascinated by the river, as all newcomers to Downriver are fascinated by the river. Many of us have been here our whole lives. But those of us who have come to the Downriver community, harken back: wasn't one of the first things you did was go check out the river? Because it is our greatest natural resource in southeastern Michigan. And it's the resource that we're going to re-deploy, to re-position ourselves for this next century. And this is the first moment we've had, in over a hundred years, where citizens could decide what the river would be like. You saw it in river in Wyandotte, where BASF, an enlightened corporate partner, knocked a clear mile of old chemical factories, and opened up the river, for the first time in a century, to the people, so we could go down and visit the river, in parks, and a yachting club, and a golf course. And because of the River Heritage nomination from the federal government, and because of our collaboration with Canada in calling this part of the river an international wildlife refuge, and because of the Greenway initiatives where we're trying to create trails from the Grosse Pointes to Dearborn to Erie Metro Park, where we can ride a bike or rollerblade or push a stroller; we're creating a new image and a new reality Downriver. And we're doing this with the painful, yet exciting process of bumping up against each other. Businesses bumping up against citizens, republicans bumping up against democrats, our pushing our governments our educating ourselves, we make a huge movement in the right direction.

Typically when people move down, move to metro Detroit to get a job at one of the Big Three or CompuWare, they take a peek at Downriver because it's so close to Detroit and it just seems like a logical place to live. You don't have to get involved in all that traffic in the golden corridor up in Oakland County. But it takes one peek, and they start hearing the words about the smokestacks and the refineries and the chemical plants, and they decide to move elsewhere. Consequently, our property values, our major investment in our lives, doesn't appreciate the way it should appreciate. But that's changing. Over the last decade, indeed over the last five years, our houses are worth more and increasing in value quicker than other communities in southeastern Michigan. And the reason? Because of the greening of Downriver. Because of this River Heritage movement.

And what we've got at stake here, is a critical moment. And the middle of next month, February, around Valentine's Day, I'm hoping that we're going to get a Valentine's note from the Surface Transportation Board. They're looking at one little issue. And that issue, is the issue that Mr. Moroun's spokesperson wants to confuse, wants to throw enough dust in the air that we stop and don't do what we should do.

There's one little issue that's being focused on at this time. And that is: Is the McLouth factory, a railroad? Chris Dingell says, the Detroit Zoo has more tracks than McLouth factory. {laughter, applause}

What's at stake is this. If Moroun can get this declared to be a railroad, he's exempt from local control. The city of Riverview's master plan will have no jurisdiction over the property. Nor will the master plan of the city of Trenton. Zoning, land use – no influence. It'll all be up to the railroad.

Another privilege railroad's get through federal law is the right to eminent domain. They can condemn the property near them. Berlin's {?} people put this full-page ad in the News Herald yesterday. If you study it and spend a few minutes at it, you'll realize that they're condemning a huge swath of property.

Mr. Moroun's spokesman has said that he would like to enter in a partnership and have four or six of us meet with him. That's not the way we do business Downriver—we elect our representatives. And if we don't like it, we tell 'em we don't like it. If they don't change their mind, we vote 'em out and put somebody else in. {applause} That's how we run our government.

We don't need four or six people. We need to set up planning commissions, city commissions, we've got mayors, we've got congress people, and when you hear this litany of congress people and this litany of state representatives, and you hear about the resolution that was passed by the Michigan House of Representatives yesterday, with republicans and democrats universally saying this is a mistake, it should not be a railroad; there's something going on that we should pay attention to.

And what our role is, is to communicate with the Surface Transportation Board, everybody here can make a difference. Outside you've got pieces of paper with the address of the chairperson of the Surface Transportation Board. Send him a note. That's what's going to influence the Surface Transportation Board. And if we can deny Moroun's request to be considered a railroad, we'll still negotiate with Mr. Moroun's spokespersons, but we'll do it as partners and as equal citizens, not as somebody that's a serf, or somebody that has to be beholden to Mr. Moroun. No other business Downriver, no other citizen, no other homeowner, gets to tell the city what they want to do. You negotiate—that's how we do things. And we're great negotiators Downriver. We created the UAW. People in this group were on the bridge. There's republicans and democrats here. We know how to negotiate. And we understand the value of taxes. And

jobs. But we're not going to be beholden to Mr. Moroun. I urge you. Get a piece of paper, send a note. Send it this week, and maybe, we'll get a Valentine's Day present.

{applause} {change tape}

Mr. Gilbert: ...he's outside and he has presented a resolution. If we could get Bruce in here, he will. Oh there he is. Hi. In my hand here is the resolution, I presume? {Yes, sir} Thank you. If you could make your way forward, maybe we'll take a couple of people in advance as we're running short of time. If we could have the city of Trenton statement in the interim from Mayor Gerry Brown. {applause}

Mayor Gerry Brown: Just out of curiosity, how many people here are residents of Trenton? Just show me your hands? Excellent. {applause}

I have a prepared statement, I want to make sure that my message gets across so bear with me on this. First of all I want to begin by thanking the organizers of this public forum for inviting me to attend this evening's program.

As you may be aware, the city of Trenton supported Wayne County's efforts to reclaim the property acquired by Crown Enterprises, for the purposes of alternate development. When Crown moved to create a railroad on this site and pre-empt the county's condemnation, the city joined Wayne County and other communities in filing objections to the railroad formation with the Surface Transportation Board in Washington, D.C. To date Trenton, in addition to assigning its own city attorney to the project, has contributed some thirty-five thousand dollars to joint legal fund for the retention of outside counsel in Washington and Detroit, to oppose the project. The STB is scheduled to decide the railroad question in February. And will likely be determined at that time. A loss there will start the search for alternatives.

While still relatively new to the office of mayor, my lifetime involvement in school and community affairs, and residency along the Detroit River, has given me sincere respect for the river, its potential beauty and its rich heritage, as an artery of transportation and commerce over the centuries. It is what made the metropolitan area both a center for nature and commerce nearly four centuries ago. Because in recent history, much of our waterfront was devoted to industrial use and for that reason became a brownfield. The challenge of time and money to reclaim the sites is enormous. It will not be done overnight. It will not be done during my term of office. But we can make a start, and that start does include working with the owners to halt further deterioration, and begin the process of reclaiming the riverfront piece by piece, where and when the opportunities present themselves.

It means investing the revenues derived from the current uses in the clean-up and acquisition process. The {unintelligible} community is located on but a small portion of the river. In my elected position as mayor, I view it as my duty and obligation to preserve the same balanced use of the waterfront that we have historically enjoyed.

I'm here tonight to listen and to learn the exchange of views. I have pledged to work with all sides of development policy with respect to the use of the property. From this exchange and others, we hope to be able to identify a fair and balanced policy that respects both the rights of the owners, and those who reside in the area. The search for a resolution will not come overnight. As sure as we are here, it will come, and I hope without bitterness or fanfare, we will create the model for the cohabitation of business and residents along one of America's great waterways.

I look forward to hearing the remaining debate, and again I thank you for not only the invitation to attend, but also the opportunity to share my views with you.

{applause}

Mr. Gilbert: And now from the House district, 21st District, please welcome Bruce Patterson, Michigan House Majority Leader. {applause}

Rep. Bruce Patterson: Thank you very much I was out in the hallway because there's such a packed crowd here that got here on time—I apologize for being a little bit late. I think there was reference made to this brown envelope that has a number of items in here including a resolution that was passed by the Michigan House on Tuesday. It was a collaborative effort, bipartisan effort that was joined in by Rep. George Mans, who I know is here, my colleague Rep. Bill O'Neil with whom I served four years on the Wayne County Commission. It's a result of a work group that basically was headed up by Mr. Bob Ranka and others. It's based upon certain information that was provided to the House members that I've identified along with Rep. Ray Basham and Gloria Schermesser and Bob Brown, Glen Anderson, and I have transmitted this to the secretary of the Surface Transportation Board in Washington that sets forth what we feel are critically important factors that jeopardize the health, safety and welfare of the Downriver area that would be most impacted by this. So, thank you for the opportunity to speak. Appreciate the opportunity very much.

{applause}

Mr. Gilbert: From {unintelligible} {Innis?} Buzz Thomas, House Minority Leader.

Rep. Thomas's spokesperson: On behalf of Rep. Thomas, we one, like to thank you and we're honored to come out. Right now what we're doing is basically a fact-finding mission. What we have found and we're from Detroit, the tenth district, is that if our communities are going to thrive, that we have to share information and support each other. So what we're doing today is gathering data and assisting in any way we can. Rep. Basham has invited us out here and we're here to support you in any way we can. And finding information and making sure that there will be an informed decision. Thank you for having us out here.

{applause}

Mr. Gilbert: From city of Riverview, Tim Durand. Mayor Tim Durand. {applause}

Mayor Durand: I've got a prepared statement, but first of all I just want to acknowledge somebody here. This has not been just the last three months, six months, a year, two years, three years; as a matter of fact as I was sitting next to the Mayor Gerry Brown from Trenton, this is the third Trenton mayor I've been working on this project with. So, it's been going on for well over three years to try and reclaim our riverfront. And I want to thank somebody who was really, every time it's kind of slowed up, every, when we first initiated this and we had one of our first meetings in this building; but, Kim Priebe I just wanted to thank—he's been in this in the forefront so, I think everybody owes him, I don't think we'd probably be here this evening—a lot of people have joined lately when they became aware of what was going on, but I just want to thank Kim for his starting this and keeping it going. Kim, Thank you. {applause}

The city of Riverview is here this evening to acknowledge your concerns and objections to the efforts of the Riverview Trenton Railroad to petition the Surface Transportation Board to be designated a railroad. The city of Riverview believes this is a maneuver, this maneuver is simply an attempt to circumvent local control. And granting the designation of a railroad to be sighted along the waterfront in the communities of Riverview and Trenton, the quality of life of the entire Downriver area is threatened. The city of Riverview has been in the forefront of legal proceedings before the Surface Transportation Board. We continue that endeavor and look forward to a favorable ruling. Beyond the date of the Surface Transportation Board ruling, the city of Riverview will explore all options available to it. Because we are in litigation, our city attorney has dictated that it is inappropriate to discuss specific details of this case in a public forum. So therefore we are going to refrain from making specific comment or answering questions on strategy. However, we encourage everyone here, everybody you know, and all interested members of the Downriver community to express your views, concerns and objections to the Surface Transportation Board. We believe that communications from the community and its leadership are a vital component of the process for ensuring that the Surface Transportation Board is educated on these issues.

On behalf of the city of Riverview and coun—the entire council, I want to thank everybody supporting this endeavor. Thank you for having the city of Riverview here this evening.

{applause}

Mr. Gilbert: I want to ask those of you with questions to please pass your questions to the left, all the way to the end of the room. I'm going to ask Councilman Tony Polakowski {?} if he'd be kind enough to pick up those questions. So just pass them along to your left, my right, to the end of the room and then I'll be asking questions of the guests. Giving the DCC position and resolution, this evening, please welcome the Chairman of the Board of the Downriver Community Conference, the mayor of Melvindale, James Kinard. {applause}

Mayor James Kinard: You know the last time I served on a panel with Kim Priebe and John Hartig, I ended up in the hospital for seven days, so. {laughter} I certainly hope it's not a repeat performance, because it'll never happen again. Ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of the Downriver Community Conference, we adopted this resolution on January 10, 2002. I would like to read it to you this evening.

'Whereas, the Downriver Community Conference, a consortium of eighteen member communities in Wayne County, whose total population exceeds five hundred thousand, has joined in an effort to improve local government, and enhance a quality of life for area residents through the municipal cooperation; and

'Whereas, Crown Enterprises, Incorporated, has purchased approximately seventy-five acres of land within the cities of Riverview and Trenton, which were formerly McLouth Steel properties adjacent to the Trenton Channel of the Detroit River; and,

'Whereas, Crown Enterprises is attempting to create an intermodal transportation facility, and has requested designation as the Riverview Trenton Railroad; and,

'Whereas, the petition for exemption from federal regulations is currently before the Surface Transportation Board, in order to operate a short line rail operation on existing railroad tracks; and,

'Whereas, within the environmental assessment as required, or excuse me, as requested by the Surface Transportation Board, proposals have been made to increase truck traffic by over three hundred vehicles a day, and significantly increasing train crossings at a grade level, with no review of the impact on water transportation for port operations as part of the intermodal facility; and,

'Whereas, the proposed use of this land will generate little or no taxable improvements, thereby minimizing much-needed revenues to the local communities; and,

'Whereas, the cities of Riverview and Trenton, as well as the Wayne County Board of Commissioners, have gone on record opposing the proposed development.

'Now, therefore, be it Resolved by the Board of Directors of the Downriver Community Conference, reiterates its opposition to the creation of the Riverview Trenton Railroad.

'And be it further Resolved that the Surface Transportation Board denies the petition, as submitted, by the Riverview Trenton Railroad, given and, given the adverse environmental impact of the increased truck traffic and train traffic within the region, and limited public benefit from proposed facilities.'

This was signed by Kurt Kovaline {?} the secretary of the Downriver Community Conference on January 10, 2002.

{applause}

I would like to put my mayor's hat on. I'm Downriver, but I'm way up river from you. About ten years ago, we had a trucking company invade—and I use the word invade—my city. And it was to assist in rail operations. They came in and they said there was going to be a hundred and fifty trucks a day. We fought it, we lost. Today, there's over three hundred trucks a day. If these people are coming in with three hundred now, you can imagine what it's going to be later. Thank you.

{applause}

Mr. Gilbert: This is the part of the agenda reserved for questions and answers, and I have my first question here. First question, if you can hear me Okay, the, has the Riverview Trenton Railroad presented the county or cities or the board, the Surface Transportation Board, a detailed operating plan, that shows how its rail operations would be conducted. How can anyone reasonably assess the impacts of the Riverview Trenton Railroad's operations without one? I guess Micky could answer that one?

Mr. Micky Blashfield: Sure, in the, in the application process, there was a necessity to be as specific as possible with exactly what would be conducted but when a railroad such as myself that is seeking that application, there's not a, there's not a, it's a new rail application; there's not a benchmark to go by. What we have done, though, is, is submit exactly who our, who our, our product line is going to be; what it is that's going to happen; then of the course the environmental analysis, looking at where the rail transportation would come and go. Predominantly over the grade separated crossing, over King Road. In fact, our friends at Grand Trunk have suggested that they were not going to make available the at-grade crossing, which eliminates a lot of questions with that. So there has been, there has been substantial submission with that and will continue to be.

Mr. Gilbert: Next question. I understand that the heavy trucks that would serve the proposed facility could force local authorities to pay millions of dollars in street improvements and repairs. Can the county force Mr. Moroun's group to pay, or reimburse these costs, if Mr. Moroun's group is decreed a railroad? Or will we have a big tax increase to pay for repairs. Question is directed to Cameron Priebe.

Mr. Cameron Priebe: No new taxes: read my lips. {laughter} No, we cannot force Riverview Trenton to pay for road improvements, and of course if this should occur, and the additional truck traffic should occur, there would be more burden than ever placed on these roads and more need than ever to upgrade the roads. I basically had people in our engineering group do a quick, down and dirty engineering study on a couple of proposals. Before I talk about that let me suggest, that any of these roads that surface this area, can be used by trucks virtually all the time. Even Class B roads are usually—not always but usually—available to heavy truck traffic. Only during the times that we have the frost laws in effect and they haven't gone into effect at all this year, they didn't go into effect last year at all, so even Class B roads could be used by heavy trucks. What our folks did is two things. One, if this facility is going to be constructed and operated, likely the

trucks are going to want to access I-75. So our guys simply took a look at Sibley {?} Road. And these numbers will virtually translate to other roads as well—Sibley Road is troublesome because it's a fairly straight shot from this site to I-75 where an interchange exists. Pennsylvania Road, for example has an interchange. We didn't cite that one. It would cost us about twenty-two million dollars to upgrade the roads to service this facility. Probably not a good investment when likely we could acquire this facility far cheaper.

In addition, we cannot, the company may be able to regulate or attempt to regulate where the trucks could go, internally somehow but we cannot enforce them not to take other routes. Those of you that are familiar with the shopping district along Eureka {?} Road, know that it's already congested. Potentially trucks could utilize that roadway. Or they could utilize West Road, which is already congested to those from that part of the Downriver area. Or worse still, they could utilize Biddle, particularly truckers heading north, basically the shortest way to get to Detroit, take Biddle to Southfield, Schafer, around those roads to access I-75, and run that heavy truck traffic through Wyandotte, and downtown Ecorse and River Rouge.

The impacts could be catastrophic on the quality of life for a number of communities. And the costs associated with upgrading would be very significant. In addition—apparently it's time to quit because he just pulled on my coat—{laughter} in addition, the roadway that's talked about on here, in order to allow access to the river, is intended to be, based upon discussions we've had with the people from, from the Manny Moroun group, and elevated roadway to allow cargo to and from the river. That elevated roadway is estimated to cost sixty million dollars. So potentially that elevated, relocated Jefferson, and improvements along the east-west road, would cost in excess of eighty million dollars, money which we do not currently have, money which would have to be later on acquired. Should this development occur, I suspect, we would change hats and try to partner with the developer, to acquire state or federal funds. What I can assure you is that will not be an easy process because there are so many transportation needs these days.

{applause}

Mr. Gilbert: We'll close the ComCast portion now, with a statement from Bob Ranka.

Mr. Bob Ranka: Well, folks, you've heard from the federal auth—the federal officials, you've heard from the state officials, you've heard from the county, you've heard from the local cities. It's now time for you—and you've heard from the people proposing the development. It's time for you to decide what you think. It's time for you to take action, and we encourage you to, to in some way communicate with the Surface Transportation Board. You can do that using the forms that were passed out here tonight, you can call your local Board of Realtors office at 734, 287, 8060, if you need some help. We would all the community support we can get. Now we're going to close the regular agenda and then we're going to re-open in a minute with questions, answers and audience input. But the television portion is ending. Again that number, 734, 287, 8060, for help with writing

the Surface Transportation Board, that's your local Downriver Board of Realtors. Thank you very much.

Mr. Gilbert: We're going to continue, as Bob indicated, with more questions for our guests. First question, indicates 'I'm confused. If Mr. Moroun believes the project is good for the community, why has he gone to the Surface Transportation Board to prevent land controls, or excuse me, local controls and to the court to stop the local community from using its authority over the property. It sounds like Mr. Moroun thinks he knows what's in our own interests, the best interests, better than we do.' And this question is for Blair McGowan.

{voice of Mr. Blashfield: Well I'd like to respond, too. Voice of Mr. Gilbert: Okay.}

Mr. Blair McGowan: I'm confused, also, I see in the public record that in November, a sister company of the railroad, another company owned by Mr. Moroun, told the Riverview Planning Commission that there would be no railroad involved at all. That was in November of 2000. Then today, I read the newspaper, and I see a development on the river and it says, 'no ships.' And, yet, there's a spot with the deep-water port is part of their development. We've heard him say there will be no trash importing, but at the same time he seeks to be, avoid any kind of local control. So, I'm very confused, and this is not the first time that Moroun's companies have applied for this kind of exemption, by saying a property is a railroad when it wasn't. The last time they tried this in Detroit they failed. The Surface Transportation Board told 'em no, it's an inappropriate application. And that's why I'm hoping that we communicate, that we'll get that Valentine's card.

{applause}

Mr. Micky Blashfield: Our, our company got into this issue because of a threat of condemnation. Which I saw when Mr. McGowan was talking about it earlier a few bristles in the audience. That's exactly what, that's exactly what came in here. And as far as rail operations, as far as any of us, you know as far back as any of us can remember, this has been operated by trains running up and down the tracks. Not in the most economical fashion, not in the fashion that we're talking about as far as an intermodal facility, but that is the initial start of this and that's what attracted us to this area was that it was close to the mainland rail, close to the highway transportation system, and had access for, for water down the road if that should, if that should become available. Of course there's been a deep-water port that's operated there for over, you know, for all the years of {unintelligible}. But regarding what's good for the community, with that, or why we went to the Surface Transportation Board, is that's how a railroad is designated and Mr. McGowan's characterization of in November we weren't, and in December we were, is absolutely incorrect. And the record in the federal court, the injunction action which was, was the temporary injunction was issued, because of the testimony under oath, without hyperbole and without mischaracterization, that determined that there was, that was, that was our intent—in fact the first week after, after this issue, the property was filed, the property deed was filed, our {unintelligible} recalled and had inquired from day one, we made no secret that this was going to be an

intermodal transportation facility, with amendments that go along with that. So this is not about, this is not about pulling a fast one, which has been one of the mischaracterizations. This is part of, I wish, you know, as a transportation company, just like a cobbler can't deny that he builds shoes, prior to 1946, we weren't a trucking company. Prior to 1975 we were not a customs brokerage. Prior to 1979 we were not an international border operator. And on down the line we were various, the various services that are necessary to our economy, getting goods from here and there. Today, we look forward to developing a premier, world-class, state of the art intermodal facility that accomplishes the goals that you folks have set out, too, and that's what we've offered as far as putting back, putting back the riverfront and enhancing that and enhancing all of the {unintelligible}.

{audience: Put it in your backyard. Yeah.}

Mr. Gilbert: This is also for Mr. Blashfield and I'll read this question, keep him right up here with me. We've heard {unintelligible} of waterborne traffic. I understand when you bought this property you specifically paid for rights to the marina. I also understand you told the Surface Transportation Board you eventually plan to serve waterborne freight. Now I see a new ad saying, 'no ships.' Is that too phrasing, can you commit to us this evening that there will be no waterborne freight of any kind handled at the terminal, including barge. If so, why did you pay for the marina and tell the Board that there would be no waterborne freight. Or that there would be waterborne freight.

Mr. Blashfield: Sure. When we purchase many, many properties, to serve the transportation interests that we have and to serve the customers that we have, we always find ourselves getting back into a corner with, with things going on in the area, whether another development might come in next door, after we've had a facility that's been serving shippers for a long time, another facility moves in and prevents our ability to expand and meet a future need. That is all the waterfront has been is to meet a potential future need that in the long run takes, takes trucks off the road, makes the economy more, makes the economy more efficient. As far as the deep-water port, it's not operable now. It's not part of our vision for this, but it is required for flexibility in the future.

{audience reaction}

But let me point out, if any, let me point out that any use of that facility, I can guarantee you no barges carrying Canadian garbage coming into, coming into our facility. But let me just tell you that, the future, as far, I'm losing my train of thought here with all my friends {audience noise continues}, it's not a significant, it's not going to be a, excuse me, it's not going to be a part of of the the development. For any ships were to land there, there would have to be a number of regulatory approvals that would have to be acquired in order to do that with public input along the way. And that's not, that's not what we've done in the past but it, you know, it's been used historically and it, it has to be an option.

{audience: Why no ships, why does it say no ships?}

Mr. Blashfield: Because the plan that is before the Surface Transportation Board, and the plan that we have communicated with the local officials, does not call for any ships arriving, departing, flying in, however, but it is, and it is part of the intermodal network we didn't want to cut ourselves off for, for the future, as customers may, as customers may require. Right now Ford, Chrysler and GM, any of those, any of those goods that come in, usually, a significant portion are by, by rail or by truck. And that's what we serve.

{audience: Then why are you buying land by I-75 off {unintelligible} hundreds of acres? Don't snow us, buddy. {applause} You want a port, you want to bring in trucks, you want to ruin our roads, my neighborhood. We don't need a committee. The committee's here. We don't want you.}

{cheers and applause}

Mr. Gilbert: Next question for Bob Ranka, 'has the railroad identified the routes that trucks will follow in and out of the facility? What assurances has the railroad provided, concerning the routes that trucks will take? And how do we know, for example, that trucks won't go through the middle of downtown Wyandotte?'

Mr. Ranka: To my knowledge, there's been no plans submitted to where the trucks will travel. Nor do I think there could be. Because who's to say where the drivers are going to go? I suspect they'll take the route of least resistance, and yes it could be downtown Wyandotte and yes it could be downtown Trenton, and yes it could be through Woodhaven, and Southgate and Brownstown and all the rest. So it's a wide-open field in that regard. And I don't think anybody could predict at this point. I'd also ask you to think about the trains, because as the trucks come and go the trains must come and go, too. And ask yourself where they're going to go and what intersections they're going to cross, and what confusion that might create as a part of the total package.

{applause}

Mr. Gilbert: Next question is directed to Mr. Priebe: 'Is it true that the railroad has now admitted that hazardous materials in containers might be handled at this facility, and should I be worried?'

Mr. Priebe: Yes and yes. Pretty good for a politician, being so brief. It's my understanding that they have indicated to the Surface Transportation Board they may be handling hazardous containers, or hazardous material. I was at a planning commission in which they talked about the fact that they may handled hazardous materials at the site, as well. Let me digress, though, if I might. First of all, thank Bob Ranka, for showing that one person can make a difference. If we pitch in we can make a big difference. {applause} What I really want to say, though, I wrote it down when Mr. Blashfield said, and I'm quoting: They - the group, the company, quote: 'got involved in this because of the threat of condemnation.' End quote. Let me set that record straight. The fact is,

they've never been threatened to be condemned. Wayne County sent them a letter, inquiring about negotiating to purchase. IN that letter, it cites, based upon attorneys' advice, 'in accordance with the Uniform Condemnation Act, we want to begin negotiations.' Something to that effect. In accordance to the Uniform Condemnation Act. Didn't way we were going to condemn 'em. At which point, the company circled the wagons, in my view in a very transparent effort, to stop us from potentially condemning this site or doing whatever it is that we needed to do. With regard to protecting the future of this area. We sent the letter to their lawyer. The lawyer then sent us back a letter saying, 'gees don't send it to me, send it to the company.' So, numerous days go by with the U.S. Mail and all, we get the response, we send a letter then to the company. Again several days go by, and the company responds, which piece of property in Riverview/Trenton are you talking about? Again, where time goes by, and during that interim, is when they filed with the Surface Transportation Act {sic}. That's why those of us involved in this case think that the company is making a relatively transparent attempt to circumvent any governmental action to look out for the welfare throughout the region.

{applause}

Mr. Blashfield: Two things. Number one, regarding the hazardous materials. We have stated affirmic—affirmatively, there will be no hazardous materials involved on site. But the word {audience reaction} hazardous material, and I will clarify that. The word hazardous material certainly is a devil word. Hazardous material includes paint, solvent, engine grease, anything that might be, sodium azide {?} in a, in a airbag, all those sorts of things, that are components of auto parts. But that is not ah, that is not the same as having, that is not the same as having a tanker full of toxic substance, on site. We have already said most definitely that is, that is not the case. Secondly, regarding Mr. Priebe's characterization of the time frame, that was very differently decided by the court as the evidence was before them and as everyone was under oath. And that's an interesting characterization, but I take great exception to that. That is not the way, that is not the way that it happened and from day one, we indicated the interest in serving the intermodal needs of our shippers.

Mr. Gilbert: I've got one more question, Mr. Blashfield. I think this is an important question. Folks are worried that if {unintelligible} is a rail carrier, it will be in eminent domain under state law. Many people believe that Mr. Moroun's Ambassador Bridge company has abused this right of eminent domain. Can you guarantee us that you will use eminent domain or the threat of a fixed taking, forced taking, excuse me, to obtain additional property rights?

Mr. Blashfield: Regarding condemnation, when Mr. McGowan was presenting, while the TV camera was on, there has never been any indication that that is what we have planned to do or intended to or consider doing. That is, the condemnation, remember, is the way that we got into this, as far as having the conflict with the county. It was because of, it was because of the threat of their condemnation of what we had acquired and what

we sought to develop in a businesslike manner, that they brought us to the table so condemnation is a real lightning rod with us.

{audience: What does that mean? Please answer the question.}

Mr. Gilbert: I got two questions for Blair McGowan, and they're closely related so I'll ask them both at once. 'I understand that the Surface Transportation Board is reviewing environmental impacts to the proposed project. Will their review cover all the environmental and quality of life issues of concern to the community?' and then closely allied to that question: 'Do you expect people to use a park, such has been shown in the ad of the railroad, given the fact that it would be next to a noisy, dirty, dangerous, polluting intermodal terminal?' {laughter, applause}

Mr. McGowan: The environmental assessment that is in front of the Surface Transportation Board is an assessment that was created by consultants hired by Mr. Moroun's companies. We don't think that it is comprehensive enough, that it doesn't take into consideration the full scope of what their unannounced plans are. It doesn't take into consideration the shipping that they reserve the right to do but say they aren't going to do. It focuses on three hundred trucks. And we feel that the number of trucks has been vastly understated. We are making some applications to the Surface Transportation Board to reconsider broader environmental issues. As far as the park goes, we have Biddle Park, we have Elizabeth Park, and this {inaudible for several seconds} this development, we could simply make it a park. {applause} Simply as a park, we would create more property values and hence more taxes in Riverview and Trenton than this plant. Because all our property values would rise, because people would want to live in our communities. I think that answers the question.

Mr. Gilbert: One person in the audience apparently is not clear about the position of Senator Carl Levin. So I would ask Gale Govaere if she would kindly reiterate or clarify that for us, please.

Ms. Gale Govaere: The Senator sent me here today number one, to impress upon you the fact that your input is necessary on this issue. Senator Levin has, he has contacted the Surface Transportation Board. He has expressed his sincere hope that they will make an equitable decision that is far to the citizens of this region. No matter what, the other representatives up here, they encouraged you to contact the Surface Transportation Board. And you need to do that. I can't impress upon you more. Senator Levin has, he has sent his letters, he has sent them again. But more importantly, they need to hear your thoughts. They need to hear the thoughts of the people who actually live in this region, and who will be affected by whatever decision you make.

{audience: Are his letters for or against?}

Ms. Govaere: His position is that, {long pause}

{audience: For or against?} {audience laughter and comment: It's a good question}

Ms. Govaere: The Senator is definitely supportive of the citizens of this county.

{audience laughter} {audience: Is he for or against? Yes or no?}

Mr. Gilbert: Okay I've got one last question. So if you would be quiet for one last question. I know you're all getting hungry and we gotta go. So this, these last two questions are for Micky Blashfield. First, there's two of them, I'll ask them both one after the other: 'Is all the roadwork at the north end of Trenton to prepare the way for West Jefferson to be re-routed?' And then secondly: 'Is your vision for us down the road the same as the vision you had for southwest Detroit, and Burbridge {?} station in Detroit?' {audience reaction}

Mr. Blashfield: As a matter of fact there's some great analogies between the Michigan Central Depot, a magnificent structure from 1911 built by railroad engineers. There's some magnificent analogies to that and the, and the steel plant property that is in place. Regarding southwest Detroit, the accommodation of the international traffic that's grown beyond anyone's wildest imagination, continues to, continues to prosper and it does because we work with the community groups that promote housing; the commercial strip along Bagley where a million visitors a year come in to eat Mexican food every year; and and the planned improvements with highway access to accommodate the train and transportation. Regarding Michigan Central Depot, our plans have been underway with that to restore, restore that to an occupied structure of an international trade processing center. I made a presentation of that recently this week, earlier this week, with City Council, and we're at the state where, as soon as we have an anchor tenant signed, the eighteen-month time frame of redevelopment of that magnificent structure will begin without, without delay.

Regarding the roadwork at the north end of Trenton, I'm not sure specifically what the question is referring to. But I can say that the traffic studies that have been done, regarding the access of the trucks from, to and from the highway and the rail facility, the generation of traffic was deemed to be non-significant, a non-significant impact—in other words, a three percent increase in trucks out of the twelve thousand trucks that are, that are already there. So these are trucks that are already in the, already in the area, and right now, I mean, we, we have the ability to, to, help direct the trucks which, which route to go, based on work with the community leaders.

I want to just finally conclude by saying again, thank you very much for, for your attention. I understand the passionate views that are held. I want to respect those and I thank you for your respect of us tonight, and I look forward to continuing the dialogue where we can address these issues, in a, in a more specific way, too, as we move forward.

Mr. Gilbert: Ladies and gentlemen, I must apologize. We have many more questions. I'm afraid are going to go unanswered because of the clock ticking here. What I would propose to do is, we will accumulate all these questions and try to get responses published in the paper, if we can pull that off. I don't know any other way to do it; I

don't have names and addresses on these questions necessarily. Does anybody have any thought on how to handle it? I see Kirk McGuire had a hand up over there.

Mr. McGuire: I hope you can hear me. I'm a retired international representative for the UAW. I have lived in the Downriver area all of my life. And I know what's happened to Trenton and Riverview with the McLouth Steel operation: one buyer after another coming in and raping the profits and then deserting it. There was a Chinaman, no, nothing against Chinamen, that came from Chicago, bled it dry, and then dumped it and left. Now, I could tell the gentleman that's representing the company that wants to do this, that the railroad that you have only goes from McLouth Steel in Riverview to McLouth Steel annex in Trenton. Am I correct? That's all it was for. It was never a railroad. It was a way of taking molten steel to be processed at the other one. And you're not going to be able to convince anybody here, that your railroad status is, that is horrible. I've other words I'm trying to keep it clean. All right.

{applause}

Mr. Gilbert: I'd like to close with what you all can do. You can get in touch with the Surface Transportation Board. And you can get the information by calling your Downriver Board of Realtors, or you can send yourself the information printed out here. I will call your attention to the letter saying we handed out, the docket number is wrong at the bottom of the letter; it should be 33980. It says 33908. Please correct that if you get a chance. Thank you very much. Good night, everybody.

###

JOHN D. DINGELL
16TH DISTRICT, MICHIGAN

RANKING MEMBER
COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE
CO-CHAIR
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Statement of Congressman John D. Dingell
read before the January 24, 2002 Town Hall Meeting in Southgate Michigan
regarding the proposed Riverview-Trenton Railroad

I am pleased you are all gathered here today to address this important community issue. Unfortunately, I am unable to be here in person due to congressional hearings on the activities of Enron and Arthur Andersen, which caused thousands of Americans to lose much of their retirement savings. Rest assured, I am working to enact changes so this never happens again.

As you know, I have been and continue to be a strong supporter of the local communities with regard to the Surface Transportation Board proceedings for the proposed railroad project on the old McLouth Steel property. I have met with local officials, and have called and written the chairman of Surface Transportation Board on our behalf. I must stress that it is important that the Surface Transportation Board hear from you, the residents, who will be impacted as well.

Local leaders have made a compelling case that placing an intermodal facility on the McLouth Steel property will have a devastating impact the quality of life in the region. If the developer is successful in its bid to become a railroad, it would effectively have a shield from local regulation. Additionally, such a ruling would curtail the ability of Riverview and Trenton to have meaningful input on land use and matters of public safety. It is contrary to the public interest for the Surface Transportation Board to grant the developer authority to operate as a railroad absent public scrutiny.

Accordingly, I continue to fully support your efforts.

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Downriver group to oppose transit facility

January 24, 2002

BY DAN SHINE

FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

Downriver group to oppose transit facility

A group of Downriver residents will gather tonight to rally opposition to a plan to use the former McLouth Steel property as a rail-and-truck transportation facility.

The proposed development by Grosse Pointe businessman Manuel Moroun would use tracks on the 76-acre site along the Detroit River in Trenton and Riverview to bring in materials, such as auto parts, and then truck them to nearby factories and plants.

A maximum of 300 trucks would come and go from the facility daily, a Moroun spokesman said. Such use would help ensure that the Downriver area remains competitive.

But some Downriver residents -- as well as Wayne County officials -- want to see the site redeveloped as a riverfront park. They say Downriver's reputation as a industrial wasteland needs to change and that the site would be the perfect addition to its linked greenways plan of parks and hiking trails along the riverfront.

"This is a pivotal moment in the history of the river," said Grosse Ile resident and environmental activist Blair McGowan. "People are terrified of the consequences."

Among those fears is that Moroun plans to use an adjacent port to accept barges of Canadian trash that would then be trucked to nearby landfills. Mickey Blashfield, director of governmental relations for the Riverview Trenton Railroad -- as the project is known -- said that won't happen.

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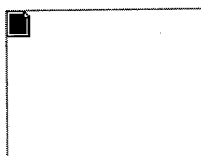
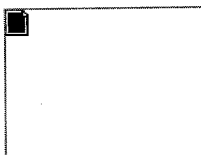
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"We don't deal in garbage, and we don't deal in hazardous waste," Blashfield said.

Nonetheless, residents have tried to derail Moroun's contention that his transportation facility is a railroad operation by writing letters to the U.S. Surface Transportation Board. Board staff members are writing a recommendation on whether the facility should be considered a rail operation, which will then be voted on by the board's commissioners. A decision is expected in mid-February.

If granted, the facility would be immune from local zoning laws or eminent domain -- the taking of land by the government for public use.

The county tried to take the land after Moroun purchased it, but the businessman was able to get a court injunction to stop the action. Blashfield said the county had plenty of opportunity to purchase the parcel of riverfront land before Moroun bought it last spring. He also said the county didn't have any money allocated or firm plans for use of the land as a park.

Blashfield said the site has been cleaned up and 80 trees have been planted. Other landscaping and decorative fencing is planned. Blashfield also said offers have been made to dedicate the riverfront portion of the property to use as parkland, but nothing has been finalized.

McGowan said he wonders what family would "want to picnic downwind of diesel emissions?"

He said the river is making a comeback with its American Heritage River designation, International Wildlife Refuge status and the greenways plans. McGowan also talked about a mile of riverfront property in Wyandotte that used to be the site of a chemical plant and now features a golf course, park and boat club.

"Now we have a man who is trying to thwart the will of an entire community," he said. "It is inappropriate to put this on the river." *The meeting is at 6 tonight at the Holiday Inn at Northline and I-75 in Southgate.*

Contact DAN SHINE at 313-223-4554 or dshine@freepress.com.

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Livonia

Law requires residents to shovel walks

Under city law, property owners must shovel all ice and snow from public side adjacent to their land. The city reminds residents that the ordinance requires all snow cleared by noon the day after a snowfall. Residents who do not clear sidewalks can be ordered to court and fined \$500.

Inkster

Commissioners host neighborhood talk

The Wayne County Commissioners have set a 12th District Town Hall meeting p.m. Thursday, Jan. 31. Chairman Ricardo A. Solomon and Vice-Chair Kay Bear will discuss neighborhood revitalization and low-to-moderate housing opportunities, health care programs for seniors and juvenile justice system improvements among other topics. The meeting will be at Booker Dozier Recreation Center, 2025 Middle Belt in Inkster. For more information, call Traci Odom at (313) 224-0900.

Trenton

Downriver leaders protest Moroun plan

Downriver community leaders gathered Thursday to oppose Ambassador Bridge owner Manuel "Matty" Moroun's plans to convert the McLouth Steel foundry into a state transfer cargo from ships to railroads. Leaders of southern Wayne County had warned that the plan would take land for parks and are dubious about Moroun's intentions. The state House of Representatives on Wednesday passed a resolution opposing the project; the U.S. Transportation Board will meet Feb. 15 to determine whether Moroun can declare the property a railroad, which would make it exempt from the county's efforts to seize the land through condemnation.

Romulus

Metro Airport temporarily loses power

Detroit Metropolitan Airport lost power for about seven minutes late Wednesday night, shutting down parts of the Smith and International terminals. A longer outage from 8 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. darkened 4,100 households in Romulus and Inkster. Detroit Edison blamed the problem on a nearby substation.

Allen Park

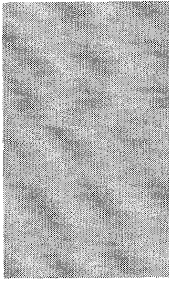
Library forum focuses on artist

The Friends of the Allen Park Library will host a slide show featuring the art of Jacob Lawrence presented by Linda Wells of the Detroit Institute of the Arts at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 20. Jacob combined abstract and figurative forms to address social and philosophical themes concerning 20th century African Americans. The library is at 1000 Allen Rd. For information, call (313) 381-2425.

Garden City

Training held for income tax volunteers

The Maplewood Senior Center is offering its last free training session from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. today for volunteers who will help assist senior citizens with their income tax preparations. The center is at 31735 Maplewood in Garden City. For more information, call (734) 525-8848.



Taylor

Flu shots offered to uninsured seniors

Local doctor Manzoor Haroon will give flu shots to elderly residents and those without insurance from 9 a.m. to noon Jan. 31-Feb. 7. His practice is at 24887 Goddard, near the Taylor Post Office. The cost of the immunization is \$1. For more information, call (734) 946-7200.

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More Papers

News**Forum draws large crowd***By Scott Held, Heritage Newspapers*

SOUTHGATE — About 500 people crowded into a ballroom at the Holiday Inn Southgate-Heritage Center Thursday to hear a discussion of the potential benefits and drawbacks of the Riverview Trenton Railroad Co.

And, for the first time, the public got an opportunity to hear from a representative of the controversial company.

Mickey Blashfield, the company's director of governmental affairs, assured the assembly — occasionally over catcalls — that the transportation terminal in southeast Riverview would not accept or transport trash from Canada to nearby Countywide Landfill in Gibraltar.

But he would not, however, rule out the possibility of a deep-water port on the property, a fear of many opponents.

After Blashfield spoke, Trenton Mayor Gerald Brown and Riverview Mayor Tim Durand both indicated their cities' opposition to the project, but also indicated that a loss of a federal appeal could mean a different course.

The railroad company, which currently is operating on 76 acres that once housed the McLouth Steel complex, has been a source of deep concern for officials in both cities and Wayne County since the land was purchased in 2000.

While the county fears increased road upgrade costs and noise pollution, those who live closer to the development, including many from Grosse Ile, fear that the company might open a water-based port to move cargo.

On Thursday, Blashfield said that while such a port is not part of the company's current plans, he wouldn't say such a thing might never happen.

"When we purchase properties, we always find ourselves backed into corners by another landowner," he said. "Another facility moves in and impedes our ability to expand.

"(But a portion of the property) has been used historically

as a deep-water port ... that has to be an option."

The company purchased a full-page advertisement in Wednesday's edition of The News-Herald Newspapers briefly outlining a plan to divert West Jefferson Avenue near its operation and denying that it intends to start a water-based operation ("Rail service – NOT ships.") or take in and transport trash from Canada.

It also alluded to investments the company would make to upgrade land near the terminal, including mixed-use developments along the waterfront.

The transport facility, according to Blashfield, will primarily move auto parts and other components by truck to the terminal, at which point they will be transferred to rail cars.

Blashfield also proposed the formation of a small group of residents and/or community leaders to share their concerns with the company. That was rejected by Blair McGowan, an environmental activist from Grosse Ile.

"We negotiate these kinds of things Downriver," he said. "We're not going to be beholden to Mr. (Manuel) Moroun."

Moroun, a Grosse Pointe businessman with holdings in trucking operations and the Ambassador Bridge, owns the company that purchased the land before the railroad company was created.

McGowan added that if the county and/or cities can secure the land, it could mean an unprecedented chance to redevelop property that had long been lost to industry.

"We're at a point where we can position ourselves so that citizens can decide what will happen," he said.

Opponents and the company are waiting for a decision from the U.S. Department of Transportation's Surface Transportation Board.

The county, along with the cities of Riverview and Trenton, appealed to the STB last year to review the way the company sought and secured its status as a railroad.

Railroad companies are subject to federal regulations, not local or state laws. The DOT board's ruling is expected to come before Feb. 15.

During the past several weeks, McGowan and others have circulated e-mails and fliers encouraging others to write to directors of the STB. Before and after Thursday's meeting, attendees were encouraged to sign letters to members of the STB and the DOT.

Friends of the Detroit River, perhaps Downriver's most

active environmental group, phoned members and friends before the meeting, encouraging them to come. One of them was Marge Conley of Grosse Ile.

"I think this will diminish the quality of life Downriver," she said.

Crown Enterprises purchased the land from the Detroit Steel Co. in 2000 and formed the railroad company later that year. In March, the county sought to condemn the land, but the company secured a temporary injunction in federal court.

On Jan. 15, a federal judge refused to make the injunction permanent, saying he would wait until the STB ruled.

The Wayne County Commission, the state House of Representatives and the Downriver Community Conference all have adopted resolutions calling for an alternate use of the property.

Bob Ranka, the Grosse Ile resident who has been organizing meetings of opponents of the terminal since last fall, said he thought Thursday's program went well.

"I feel really positive," he said. "I think the people here tonight got a good summary of what's been going on.

"I hope we stimulated some interest in the community."

Ranka said Blashfield confirmed that he would attend the meeting Thursday afternoon. Though he was clearly the most unpopular speaker, he said he was glad he went.

"We wanted to do the right thing," Blashfield said. "There has been a lot of misinformation out there and we wanted to try to show what's really going on.

"We believe we're compatible with the Heritage River Initiative and the Greenways plan and all the improvements that everyone wants in the area."

Staff Writer Scott Held can be reached by phone at 1-734-246-0835 or by e-mail at scott@heritage.com.

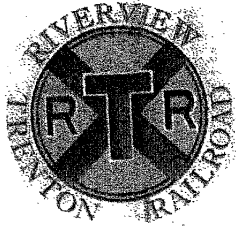
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An Open Letter from Riverview Trenton Railroad Company ...

It has been nearly 2 years since Riverview Trenton Railroad (RTRR) purchased a portion of the former McClouth Steel property. We have been working on a state-of-the-art transportation facility to meet the needs of our region's largest job providers. Our well-settled immediate plans have been before public agencies for quite some time and Phase I of the project has been operating for several months.

RTRR would like to set the record straight, because negative voices have distorted the true picture. While RTRR has worked with responsible local officials, incorporating their suggestions for future development, negative voices have spread LIES and FALSE RUMORS. Unsigned flyers have circulated these falsehoods and attempted to tarnish the reputation of our companies.

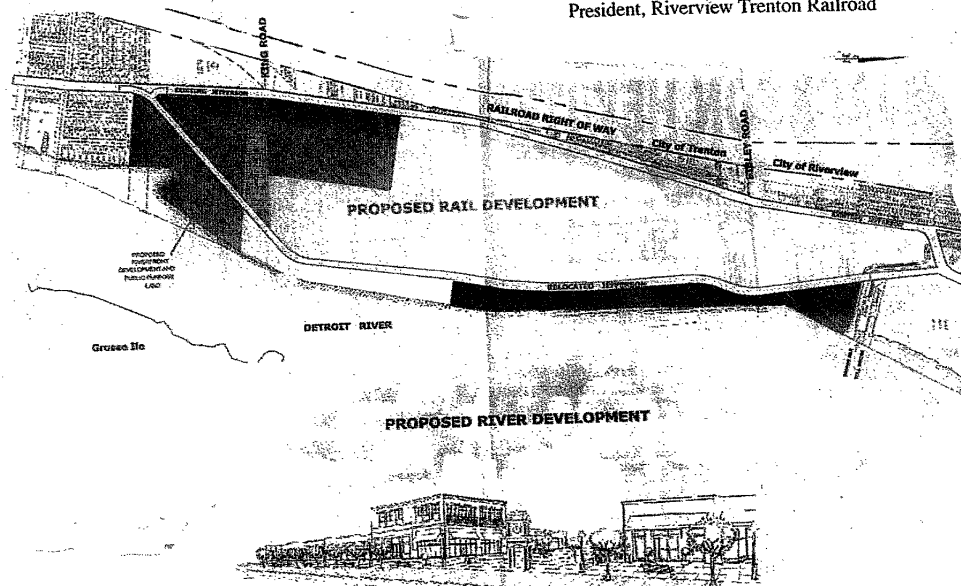
Here are the facts about the future of RTRR's development:

- Absolutely NO TRASH - none!
- Relocated Jefferson Avenue, next to parkland along the Detroit River.
- Rail service - NOT ships.
- Jobs and vital services, NOT old, idle buildings.
- \$100 Million investment, including attention to landscaping.
- Continued clean up of contaminated riverfront land.
- A practical, real business plan that is viable and timely.

Below is a conceptual rendering for the future of the RTRR initiative. It is a work in progress, incorporating the suggestions of stakeholders and we welcome continued input from citizens seeking a win-win result.

Don't be misled by "pie in the sky" trial balloons from nameless negative voices intent on distorting the truth about our proposal. RTRR's credible development offers the opportunity to get involved with a positive, attainable future. That is something our transportation company can deliver.

Sincerely,
Arnold M. Mistura
President, Riverview Trenton Railroad



RIVerview TRENTON REDEVELOPMENT