



VILLAGE OF
DEER PARK
EST. 1957

August 27, 2008

Phyllis Johnson-Ball
Surface Transportation Board
395 E. Street SW
Washington, DC 20423

Attn: Environmental Filing, STB Finance Docket No. 35087

Dear Ms. Johnson-Ball,

As the President of the Village of Deer Park, I represent Deer Park residents who have a vested interest in the Barrington and Lake Zurich communities as well as their own Village. I would like to state my strong opposition to Canadian National Railroad's acquisition of the EJ&E Railroad. My specific reasons are spelled out below:

- Disruptions to various businesses, negative impact on property values and hesitancy to build will impair realization of current and future plans within Deer Park.
- Additional delays from a 400% increase in train traffic will negatively impact public, vehicular and pedestrian safety.
- Average train lengths of 10,000 feet will block the Deer Park, Barrington, and Lake Zurich at-grade crossings and all major arterial roads bringing traffic through the Barrington and Lake Zurich downtowns to a standstill.
- The added delay will increase emergency response times resulting in the possibility of unnecessary loss of life.
- Community Unit School District 95 educates many Deer Park children; their buses cross Lake Zurich's at-grade crossings 233 times per day, which means an increase in train/school bus conflicts. Similar conflicts exist with regard to Deer Park children who attend Community Unit School District 220 in Barrington; their buses cross Barrington and Deer Park's at-grade crossings a total of 840 times per day.
- Lake Zurich High School and May Whitney Elementary School of Community Unit School District 95 directly abut the existing EJ&E tracks. Barrington High School is only 600-feet west of the existing EJ&E tracks. Freight traffic increased by 400% presents a hazard to students, teenagers in particular, who may hurry and behave impulsively while crossing the tracks traveling to and from school despite the danger and the warnings.

- This transaction will seriously jeopardize the proposed STAR Line's viability to relieve the region's traffic congestion and air quality.

The Surface Transportation Board must require Canadian National to be 100% financially accountable to mitigate all of the adverse public safety and environmental impacts imparted on the effected communities. The Surface Transportation Board should not ignore our pleas for full consideration of the mitigation measures stated below:

Environmental Impact - The impact of this transaction will dramatically increase noise, increase smog from standing cars waiting for the train to pass, and increase particulate matter from dust raised by the passing trains. The full extent of the environmental impact, especially to the number of sensitive forest preserves they will pass through, has not been adequately studied.

Land Use and Socioeconomics - It is estimated that home values near the rail line will decrease an average of 20% due to the 400% increase in freight trains. This will make areas planned or approved for residential and other uses no longer viable projects. Our current road infrastructure cannot handle the vehicular traffic congestion created by this large of an increase in rail traffic.

Safety – Greater train frequency through our village will increase the probability of rail related accidents. The installation of barrier walls along the rail adjacent to residential and school property, pedestrian crossing bridges and controlled access points should be provided at no cost to Deer Park.

Hazardous Materials Transportation – Local emergency service responders must receive a detailed manifest of all hazardous materials being transported through our community. Response training, evacuation planning, and response and recovery resources as it relates to the hazards being transported should be provided at no cost to Deer Park.

Noise and Vibration – The Quiet Zone currently in place through Deer Park, Barrington, and Lake Zurich should be maintained and honored by Canadian National. Additionally Canadian National should contact every property owner residing within 500 feet of the EJ&E tracks to discuss landscape buffers and/or fencing. Noise walls or other types of sound barriers should be built to mitigate sound and prevent egress and ingress onto the railroad right-of-way at no cost to Deer Park or its residents.

Transportation Systems – The EJ&E crossing at Cuba Road in Deer Park would experience westbound traffic backing up over Ela Road, especially during peak times. Canadian National should fully fund construction of a trench and/or underpasses at this crossing. We believe that mitigation for this at-grade crossing is appropriate and warranted.

Canadian National has expressed no sincere interest in the environmental and economic needs of the communities that will be impacted by their operations. They have, in fact, been less than cooperative with our local Deer Park, Barrington, and Lake Zurich officials.

This matter is of such importance that its approval should be delayed until after the upcoming Presidential Inauguration when new members of the Surface Transportation Board will be appointed. These newly appointed members should be involved in the Canadian National decision-making process as they are the officials who will be in office to face the consequences of the Board's decision.

In closing, I encourage the Surface Transportation Board to REJECT the Canadian National Rail Road acquisition of the EJ&E Rail Road given the catastrophic impact it will have in Deer Park, Barrington, Lake Zurich and all of the affected communities. Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "H. Scott Gifford". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

H. Scott Gifford
President – Village of Deer Park
23680 W. Cuba Road
Deer Park, IL 60010