

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

Ref: STB Finance Docket # 35087

Dear Ms. Johnson-Ball,

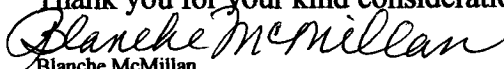
In 2003 I moved to this community to escape the noise, the dangers and the pollution of the city. I am an African American woman. I am a single parent. I wanted a better quality of life for my child, and for myself. I worked hard, sacrificed, and saved for years to be able to move into this quiet, peaceful, beautiful neighborhood. It was not easy. I am the only single person living in this sub division. I feel it is a great accomplishment and I am proud of myself.

Based upon the EIS (see enclosed), it is certain that the home I worked so hard for is doomed because the railroad tracks behind me will soon yield more traffic, which will bring more noise pollution, more air pollution, more danger of hazardous materials spills, more vibrations to my home's foundation, more congestion because railroad crossings are at grade, and a higher risk of being cut off from emergency services due to long trains and more traffic. Many of my neighbors have small children and the trains pose a considerable danger to them. It is my understanding that "CN remains under fire in Canada. In 2005, its government found 54% of locomotives, 50% of train brakes, and 26% of crossings defective. A 2007 report by the Canadian government found a 'disconnect on safety issues between management and front-line workers'." This is of extreme concern. The blaring horns and vibrations from passing trains that we already experience, interrupts our quality of life more than enough. To add to that will be a nightmare. I did not envision the deterioration of my quality of life when I bought my home. I thought I was improving my family's life.

Our goal as a global community is to make the world a better place to live. Increasing noise pollution and air pollution is not conducive to that end.

We are in a bad situation. No one can sell his home now because of the housing slump. Our property values will further decrease because of the undesirable and injurious assault on the peace with the frequent passing of the loud trains, and the possible damage to our foundations. On behalf of myself and my neighbors, I ask that you vigorously oppose this purchase which will bring so much grief to so many families who have worked hard to achieve the American Dream. We need your help.

Thank you for your kind consideration.


Blanche McMillan
21931 Emily Lane
Frankfort, IL 60423

EIS

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Environmental Consequences

East Joliet to Frankfort. On segment EJE-7, the Applicants propose to construct approximately 9.8 miles of second main track between I-80 near Joliet, Illinois and South Owens Road (116th Street), connecting with an existing three-mile long siding near Frankfort, Illinois) to create a section of double track between East Joliet Yard and Sauk Trail Road, milepost 14.85. This added capacity afforded by the double tracking would accommodate CN's proposed traffic volume increase of approximately 22 through-trains per day. However, near the east end of the double track segment, there are only two locations where trains over 5,100 feet in length could be held between East Joliet and Frankfort without blocking one or more at-grade crossings. A train 7,800 feet in length could be held between Schoolhouse Road and South Owens Road (116th Street) and a train over 10,000 feet (to a maximum of 10,800 feet) in length could be held between South Owens Road and Center Road. As listed in Table 4.1-1, above, the Applicants' anticipated train length of 7,667 feet could be held near the east end of the East Joliet to Frankfort double-track segment. According to the Applicants' conceptual-level design plans of the proposed double tracking for this 12-mile segment, no crossovers are planned. Consequently, if a train longer than 5,100 feet is moved west towards Joliet from the Frankfort area, it would be necessary to keep this train moving without stopping, due to the fact there is no location outside of East Joliet Yard that can hold a train without temporarily blocking an at grade crossing. East Joliet Yard can hold a train with a maximum length of 8,200 feet that extends north from the Rock Island Junction interlocking to just south of Woodruff Road on the single main track within the yard. The additional traffic could also be placed in the numerous tracks within the yard.

Comment:

I live at Owens Rd. The railroad track is directly behind my home. It is a single track now. Doubling the track, thereby increasing the traffic capacity is outrageous. 22 trains roaring through this neighborhood a day is unthinkable. That's the equivalent to a train an hour! The length of the trains mean that for 10 to 20 minutes (or more!) every hour our houses will be shaken, daily. This means that the at-grade crossings will be blocked a minimum of 4 hours a day (10 to 20 minutes X 22 trains)! When the trains pass you can not hear conversations or the television or the radio, everything stops until the train is gone. The loud whistles interrupt sleep and are often startling. Many times the whistle blows for long periods of time as the trains roar by. The increased traffic issues as well as train volume will create a deleterious impact on our community. Private citizens' health and well being must be taken into consideration here. Property values and quality of life are sure to decline. This is an affront to all whom this assault will affect.

Thank you for your kind consideration,

Blanche Mcmillan