

Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington DC 20423
Attn: Phillis Johnson-Ball
Environmental Filing
STB Finance Docket No. 35087

It seems as though every article that I read in the Daily Herald about the proposed purchase of the Elgin, Joliet & Eastern Railway (EJ&E) by the Canadian National Railway (CN) contains the phrase "34 towns would see more freight trains and 80 would see fewer" implying that if you live in one of the "few" towns to see an increase, how can you be so selfish as to deny peace for the "many". With this logic, all 114 towns should be lobbying for the trains to run through Chicago because then only one town "would see more freight trains and" 114 "towns would see fewer".

Rather than taking the journalistic route of regurgitating supposed facts from the fanciest, most expensive press release, I would expect the Board to replace impressions with well researched facts and to analyze and compare:

- The number of "at grade" crossings and what can be done about them.
- The number of residential neighborhoods (houses not towns) impacted as well as the number of parks, schools and office parks versus industrial parks and to what degree.
- The placement of hospitals, schools and fire stations and the neighborhoods they serve. (When locating a new facility and fire and school districts, consideration is given to traffic patterns as they exist and may reasonably be expected to change, which would not be a quadrupling of the size and number of trains).
- Are there reasonable alternative routes for traffic of all kinds including if the existing infrastructure can stand up?

We live next to the EJ&E and have for the most part have found them to be good neighbors. There have been times when a heavy hopper car goes by with an out of balance wheel that shakes the foundation, an uncovered coal car spreads coal dust throughout or a whistle happy engineer starts tooting his horn way more than required; but with traffic as it is, it's not an issue. With the projected quadrupling in traffic such minor annoyances could become significant with increased noise and extreme vibration.

A second concern is that many times the southbound EJ&E "parks" between Ela and Cuba Roads or between Cuba and Lake Zurich Roads; apparently to let the Metra commuter trains clear the crossing. Currently the trains will wait with the engine near Lake Zurich Road and the other end of the train near Ela Road blocking Cuba Road for 15 or more minutes during rush hour. With the increase in the number of trains as well as projected size of the CN trains, they would almost have to block one or several roads while they wait for Metra to clear the crossing. Traffic would travel roads through neighborhoods not designed to handle that number of vehicles. Alternatively if CN "controls" the crossing, the Metra commuter schedule would be torn asunder and much more suburban traffic generated as commuters would not take trains operating under a suspect schedule.

At the meeting in Barrington, January 9th afternoon, a lady asked about getting to Good Shephard if a train was blocking the road. The CN's response was "there is always Hoffman Estates" several miles further and a significantly longer trip. When she pressed the issue, the response was "learn to live with it". In fact, this was this CN representative's response to several citizens' concerns. This does not bode well for working with CN. We would suggest that, if this sale were to go through, that a significant security deposit be considered, administered by an independent board and drawn against should CN not fulfill their responsibilities to the communities affected by their trains.

Surface Transportation Board

CN-EJ&E-114-1-ED-35087

Log and Distribution

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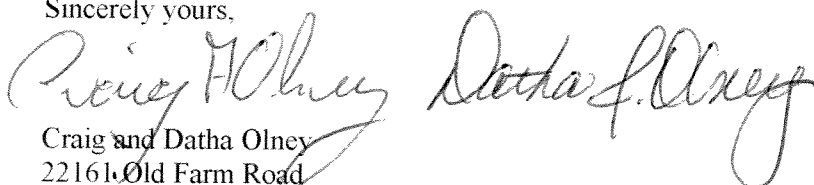
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STB: 1/10/08

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We look forward to your findings of facts.

Sincerely yours,



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