

244192

Bill and Karen Huff
1254 Logan Street
Noblesville, IN.
46060
lagbolt1254@sbcglobal.net

ENTERED
Office of Proceedings
August 28, 2017
Part of
Public Record

Ms. Cynthia T. Brown
Chief, Section of Administration
Office of Proceedings Surface Transportation Board
395 E. Street, S.W., Room 1034
Washington, D.C. 20024

Re: Docket No. FD 36137
City of Fishers, City of Noblesville and Hamilton County, Indiana
Petition for Partial Revocation of Exemption

Dear Ms. Brown:

Enclosed for filing to the above-captioned proceeding are an original and 10 copies of written comment regarding the "Petition for Partial Revocation of Exemption" filed on August 1, 2017 with the Surface Transportation Board (the Board). A copy of this comment has also been served on the attorney, Robert A. Wimbish, who is representing the collective owners, City of Fishers, City of Noblesville, and Hamilton County (the "Owners"), of a railroad line in Indiana.

It seems to us that this is a case of taking an entity (Indiana Transportation Museum) that is zero cost to taxpayers and converting it into a liability funded totally by the taxpayers! The ITM has historically proven to be a successful self funding operation. This proposed change of use is simply a bureaucratic use of smoke and mirrors. Once the rails are removed, the "railroad right of way" will, in reality cease to exist! The delusion that some day, if the need arises, the rails will be reinstalled, is ridiculous to everyone.

Should the rails be removed, the right away should revert to the original ownership. In this situation, the concept of "rail banking" is being used to hide the fact that the real purpose of this exercise is to build a permanent trail on this rail bed.

Railroads petition the Board for an abandonment exemption when service on their line proves to be financially unsustainable. However, in this unique situation, the railroad is owned by the municipal bodies and was operated by a third party, non profit operator as a heritage railway. The railroad was sustained and maintained almost exclusively by ticket and revenue donations. While there is not presently a physical connection to the national railroad network, it is believed that the necessary Right -of-Way still exists to easily reconnect the Line with Norfolk Southern to the North or CSX to the South.
Sincerely,

Bill and Karen Huff

