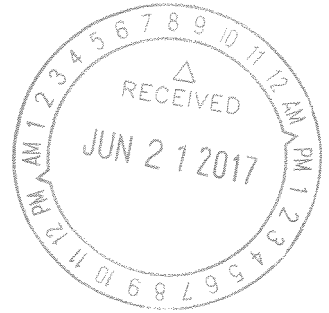


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Cynthia T. Brown
Chief, Section of Administration
Office of Proceedings
Surface Transportation Board
295 E Street, SW
Washington, DC. 20024

ENTERED
Office of Proceedings
June 21, 2017
Part of
Public Record



RE: Hartwell First United Methodist Church – Adverse Abandonment and Discontinuance
Docket No. AB 1242
Comments of Wilbur K. Chapman

I file this letter to support the request of Hartwell First United Methodist Church for adverse abandonment and discontinuance of the rail line in Hartwell, Georgia between Athens Street and the end of the line at South Forest Avenue.

I own a residential property located at 56 East Howell Street in Hartwell. It is situated between Athens Street and Bank Avenue on the north side of the railroad right-of-way. At present my granddaughter is living in the home as her personal residence. I have lived in Hartwell most of my entire life and know firsthand there has been no rail service in the downtown area for many years. There is no need for rail service because the character of the city has changed. Industries and even businesses that years ago utilized this rail service no longer exist between Athens Street and the end of the line at South Forest Avenue. The Church has expanded their facilities to improve the area. The old train depot and Railroad Street between Webb Street and South Forest Avenue is being developed for a public park and farmers market.

I have heard the railroad may use this section of rail line for long term storage of old or unused rail cars. As a matter of fact an old dilapidated caboose and old passenger car are presently stored on this rail line within view of my property. This condition negatively influences my property value as well as adjoining property owners like me whose property fronts the railroad and is within view of the old rail cars.

If rail cars are to be stored along this section of rail line it would be incompatible with the nature and character of the city and would undoubtedly hinder downtown development. It will also be an eye sore to the city and permanently have a negative effect on property values that have frontage along this portion of the rail line. Further, rail car storage in this area is not even necessary since miles of track is available West of Athens Street where cars are presently being stored between Hartwell and Bowersville, Georgia.

I am in support of the Church request to require the railroad permanently abandon the rail line between Athens Street and South Forest Avenue in the City of Hartwell, Georgia.

I have requested your contact information from the Church.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wilbur K. Chapman".

Wilbur K. Chapman
25 C and C Circle
Hartwell, Georgia 30643
Phone # 706-376-5620

cc: Eric M Hocky
One Commerce Square
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cc: Richard H. Streeter
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