

1 SCOPING MEETING FOR THE PROPOSED CANADIAN
2 NATIONAL RAILWAY COMPANY ACQUISITION OF THE
3 ELGIN, JOLIET AND EASTERN RAILWAY COMPANY
4

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9 STATEMENT OF:

10 PATRICK GERICKE

11 JANUARY 15, 2008

Surface Transportation Board

CN-EJ&E EIS - FD-35087

Log and Distribution

Date Recd: _____

HDR File No: ☒ _____

14 HOLIDAY INN

Scanner (Initial): _____

STACCP# _____

15 500 HOLIDAY PLAZA DRIVE Original - Job File

16 MATTESON, ILLINOIS

17 HDR

18
19 CHIMNIAK REPORTING & VIDEO

20 Telephone: 312-781-9111
21
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23 REPORTED BY: Fran Okrei, 84-1074
24

1 MR. GERICKE: My name is Patrick
2 Gericke and I'm the Deputy Fire Chief for the
3 Village of Matteson. Our address is 3445
4 211th in Matteson.

5 A number of concerns I have specific
6 to the community and most of those concerns
7 are in the area of Main Street and -- Main
8 Street and the grade crossing at the EJ&E
9 Railroad tracks. That's an at-grade crossing
10 now.

11 There's a proposed transfer or
12 switching, I don't know what the terminology
13 is, to -- where Canadian National north-south
14 tracks intersect with the east-west tracks of
15 the EJ&E. They are preparing to add new
16 tracking there to -- so trains can go from one
17 set of railroad tracks to another.

18 Our concern is that's in an area of an
19 at-grade crossing. Trains will have to slow
20 to go from one to the other because the
21 Canadian National lines are elevated and the
22 EJ&E lines are at grade.

23 So as these trains -- as they are
24 supposedly increasing in numbers, drastically

1 increasing in numbers and slowing to make this
2 transfer, how is that going to impact that
3 at-grade crossing.

4 Because as a fire department, our fire
5 station is north of this area and our -- part
6 of our community is south of this area and
7 that's the only thing within a mile either
8 direction of getting to that area of our
9 community.

10 So that impacts us greatly because it
11 would be less of an impact if we were talking
12 about six trains a day but if we were -- if we
13 are talking about 28 trains a day, that's a
14 significant impact to us.

15 I had other questions about the length
16 of trains. Are they in excess of a mile, for
17 example. Because there's potential, as you go
18 west in our community and you have an at-grade
19 crossing at Cicero Avenue, you have an
20 at-grade crossing at Central and an at-grade
21 at Ridgeland, at-grade at Harlem Avenue, those
22 are roughly a mile apart.

23 As the grade crossing needs to get
24 closed before and after the train passes, how

1 those will be impacted at that same time.
2 I've not been able to get answers to that
3 question.

4 If they've transferred that point, the
5 speed of those trains will probably be slow.
6 Of course, they are all slow when you are
7 waiting but if they are truly -- and I don't
8 know what the industry would define as slow --
9 but if they are traveling at slower speeds
10 then you are looking at longer times to close
11 those crossings.

12 It impacts us as a fire department to
13 get help from Richton Park or Park Forest Fire
14 Department in case we had a fire or a bad
15 accident and needed an ambulance or a fire
16 engine for those communities. It impacts them
17 in the same way for us to respond to their
18 calls.

19 It also impacts those departments
20 south of us including Richton Park, University
21 Park, Monee, Peotone and that's probably as
22 far south as Peotone because the hospitals
23 which primarily transport critically injured
24 people is in Olympia Fields and it's north of

1 all these at-grade crossings. Those are
2 primarily my concerns. And I have not been
3 able to necessarily get a lot of answers to
4 those.

5 The gentlemen have been nice enough to
6 jot down the comments that I've made but I
7 wanted to make sure that you have my concerns.

8 Also, I don't know if I mentioned it,
9 but this transfer between the two rail lines,
10 we are concerned about the numbers of trains
11 that will actually use this transfer.

12 The map shows existing numbers and
13 proposed numbers for the EJ&E line but it does
14 not address the numbers that would potentially
15 use this transfer and I think that's important
16 because it's all in an area of residential
17 housing.

18 It's also in the area of the Metra
19 Train Station, commuter train station and has
20 a lot of concern for us on those issues.
21 That's all I've got.

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