

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

10 THOMAS MICK

11 JANUARY 15, 2008
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14 HOLIDAY INN

15 500 HOLIDAY PLAZA DRIVE

16 MATTESON, ILLINOIS

Surface Transportation Board

CN-EJ&E EIS - FD-35087

Log and Distribution

Date Recd: _____

HDR File No. _____

Scanner (Initial) _____

STAECT# _____

Cc. Original - Job File

20 CHIMNIAK REPORTING & VIDEO

21 Telephone: 312-781-9111
22

FDR

23 REPORTED BY: Fran Okrei, 84-1074
24

1 MR. MICK: My name is Thomas Mick. My
2 address is 350 Victory Drive in Park Forest,
3 Illinois. That's the business address for
4 the village of Park Forest.

5 The title I hold is Village Manager
6 for the Village of Park Forest and I'd like
7 at least have in the record the issues as we
8 see them in the Village of Park Forest and
9 the concerns we have.

10 The village has had correspondence
11 from Canadian National seeking to meet with
12 the village in an outreach capacity regarding
13 the potential environmental impacts on our
14 community. The Village of Park Forest
15 believes there are at least four issues of
16 concern as far as we are concerned.

17 The first part, the first point is
18 congestion. We understand that there's going
19 to be approximately a four hundred to six
20 hundred percent increase in the number of
21 trains, the overall volume and/or tonnage
22 passing through or community.

23 We expect that this is going to add
24 to the adverse impacts of congestion in our

1 community, in particular, Western Avenue is
2 the main thoroughfare in town and it has an
3 at grade crossing.

4 We already experience traffic
5 congestion with train tracks being down, the
6 grades being down and people trying to find
7 different ways to get through the community.
8 It impacts the bedroom community
9 neighborhoods of our community.

10 We believe the solution to the
11 congestion is that they give consideration to
12 some kind of separated crossing as the tracks
13 intersect Western Avenue in Park Forest.

14 The second point is noise. The vast
15 majority of the space along the north and
16 south sides of the EJ&E current line is a
17 bedroom community in Park Forest residential
18 neighborhood. And currently with eight
19 trains going by a day is one thing. If they
20 are looking to go to 32, 34, 35 trains a day
21 and longer trains, what is the impact on our
22 community from a noise standpoint?

23 It's going to impact the quality of
24 life of those residents who when they moved

1 in and bought their house knew there was a
2 railroad there but there was an understanding
3 there was roughly six to ten trains that went
4 by a day.

5 The concept the Canadian National is
6 looking at would result in roughly one train
7 per hour going by instead of one train every
8 three hours.

9 The village believes there ought to
10 be some kind of noise mitigation solution
11 proposed, whether it be noise barriers, sound
12 barriers, walls, et cetera.

13 The third point of issue in the
14 village is the economic development impasse.
15 We are currently looking to redevelop our
16 business park and Norwood Square Shopping
17 Center. Both of these border the EJ&E tracks
18 in town on Western Avenue and if there's not
19 a separated crossing over Western Avenue, we
20 believe there will be adverse impact to the
21 redevelopment of our business park and our
22 shopping center called Norwood Shopping
23 Center, as there would be less traffic coming
24 by and people will want to find alternate

1 routes through the main part of our
2 community.

3 The final concern that the Village of
4 Park Forest has is public safety issues and
5 that's two-fold. First is we've got two main
6 arterial roads in town, Western Avenue and
7 Orchard Drive.

8 Western Avenue is going to be down
9 with at grade crossings and the gates being
10 down. That means we've got one way of in and
11 out of Park Forest as far as getting to
12 either emergency situations on the north end
13 of town or emergency transports to any of the
14 hospitals in Olympia Fields, Chicago Heights
15 or any other points north.

16 The other public safety concern we
17 have is just the sheer increase in the amount
18 of Hazmat materials, hazardous materials are
19 going to be a part of the railroad. We've
20 seen estimates that while the increase in
21 trains is going to be four hundred percent,
22 they believe that the increase in hazmat
23 materials being transferred on Canadian
24 National trains could be 700 percent.

1 And what's the exposure to our
2 community? Obviously, you hope you never
3 have a situation but increasing the tonnage,
4 increasing the number of cars only seems to
5 heighten the chances that you are going to
6 get a hazmat incident.

7 Those are the four points of concern
8 for the Village of Park Forest. We believe
9 at least three of those points could be
10 mitigated with a change in the at grade
11 crossing that's at Western Avenue currently,
12 whether it's above grade or below grade. It
13 would go a long way in mitigating our
14 concerns regarding congestion, economic
15 development and perhaps public safety.

16 We also believe that the noise
17 mitigation issue, the concern on the impact
18 of the quality of life in the community as
19 far as noise goes could be mitigated with
20 sound barriers, walls, etc.

21 We'd ask that Canadian National give
22 some consideration to those impacts in our
23 community. The village looks forward to
24 meeting with the people from Canadian

1 National. They've pledged to meet with our
2 residence, with our village board and our
3 village officials. Those are my comments.

4 Contact information for my office
5 number is 708-748-1129. The village mailing
6 address is 350 Victory Drive. That's in Park
7 Forest, Illinois 60466.

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