



The Village of Glenview

NEWS RELEASE FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Lynne Stiefel
Communications Manager
Village of Glenview
(847) 904-4371
lstiefel@glenview.il.us

PUBLIC FORUM: SAY NO TO PARKING FREIGHT TRAINS IN GLENVIEW

February 28, 2018 – The Village of Glenview is hosting a public forum, “Say No to Parking Freight Trains in our Neighborhoods,” at 7 p.m. Monday, March 12, 2018, in the Glenbrook South High School auditorium, 4000 West Lake Avenue.

Village staff will provide an update about the project, including summarizing concerns related to the impacts of the proposal to increase Amtrak’s Hiawatha service from seven to 10 round trips daily between Chicago and Milwaukee, and particularly the accompanying plans to build a 2-mile freight train holding track in west Glenview and a new switching mechanism at Dewes Street. Federal and state legislators have been working in close coordination with the potentially impacted communities, and have been invited to hear local community concerns.

The U.S., Illinois and Wisconsin departments of transportation (USDOT, IDOT, and WISDOT) and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) informed the Village of Glenview about the proposal in early 2015, and drafted an Environmental Assessment for the proposed \$195 million rail infrastructure project (available here: <http://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/projects/multimodal/rail-chi-mil/documents.aspx>).

Specific concerns about the proposal include:

- To accommodate additional Amtrak trains, Canadian Pacific freight trains would be held on a new, 2-mile-long holding track along the Union Pacific tracks through west Glenview. The new holding track would allow a Canadian Pacific freight train to be parked until it is assured clear track through the Union Pacific tracks to the Canadian Pacific’s Bensenville freight yard located on the southwest side of O’Hare Airport.
- A new switch and universal crossover would be installed near Dewes Street for Metra’s Milwaukee District North tracks.
- The three additional daily Hiawatha runs would impact downtown Glenview, causing traffic blockage an additional six times.

The Village of Glenview and many concerned residents believe they did not receive appropriate levels of information regarding potential impacts of the proposed project

during a first and only public meeting regarding the Environmental Assessment held November 2, 2016. There are concerns that the requirements for public input pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act have not been met due to the presentation of a flawed, incomplete Environmental Assessment at that meeting.

Therefore, on behalf of constituents, the Village of Glenview is convening the March 12 meeting to achieve these objectives:

- Increase awareness about the proposal and components that will impact Glenview and other Illinois communities;
- Highlight the need for a public meeting and input sessions after the revised Environmental Assessment is released, anticipated in late March or early April;
- Explain why the lack of freight information within the Environmental Assessment relating to the proposed freight holding track is a major issue for residents;
- Challenge the assumption that Amtrak needs a 43-percent increase in service when current ridership is less than 40 percent; and question whether other operational solutions – such as additional rail cars on existing trains or newer locomotives and rail cars – provide more capacity on the existing seven routes; and
- Listen to a small, key group of citizens representing impacted neighborhoods or large groups of residents
- Receive written comments from any interested party, which will be provided to the legislators, the U.S., Illinois and Wisconsin departments of transportation and the Federal Railroad Administration.

At this time, the agencies developing the proposal (WISDOT and IDOT) have not committed to performing a Freight Impact Study as part of their analysis, which would highlight various human health and environmental impacts relating to the freight holding track, such as traffic delays, noise, vibration, air quality, wetlands, water resources, biological resources and cultural resources.

Further, WISDOT and IDOT have stated that the results of the completed analyses would not be presented to the public, and would only be briefed to the agencies, municipal leaders and state legislators, according to an updated schedule provided earlier this month by the Illinois Department of Transportation. The final documents would then be sent to the FRA review, which would include an opportunity for residents to submit additional public comments, followed by a decision document perhaps by summer.

A detailed history of the proposal and related documentation can be found on this website: <https://www.Glenview.il.us/Pages/Hiawatha.aspx>.

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