

**Summary of Meeting  
Proposed CN Second Track  
Army Corps of Engineers Permit Review  
March 18, 2019**

Representatives of the Village of Hoffman Estates, CN, and CN's engineering consultants met on Monday, March 18, 2019. The discussion focused on the review and approval process for the permit application to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the design of the proposed second mainline track, and expected railroad operations.

The following questions were asked by Village staff. The answers were provided by representatives of CN and their consultants. Note that further review will occur once information requested by the Village is received.

**Review and Approval Process**

- Q: What is the status of the permit application LRC-2018-00651, prepared by CN and submitted to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers?
- A: The public notice for the application was only sent to residents that live immediately adjacent to the CN railroad right of way. The Army Corps permit application is intended to address the effects of the proposed construction on waterways and wetlands. These impacts are being reviewed by the Army Corps following the guidance in Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. The public comment period for the permit began on February 28, 2019, and ends on March 29, 2019.
- Q: How are the Village's and residents' concerns being addressed?
- A: Comments are due to Army Corps by March 29, 2019. All comments are compiled by Army Corps and forwarded to CN, the permit applicant. CN will review comments and reply to Army Corps. Depending on the comments and on CN's responses, Army Corps may require additional information from CN.
- Q: Will a public meeting or hearing be held so residents can get more information?
- A: CN stated that there is no direction from Army Corps to CN on a public hearing at this time.
- Q: When would the permit be approved?
- A: CN anticipates approval sometime this year, in the Fall or by the end of 2019, but this timeframe depends on the comments received and on the extent of CN's responses, and assumes that no significant comments are received from the Army Corps.
- Q: Are there any other reviews of the proposed work?
- A: Other reviews are currently being conducted by the following state and regional agencies:
- The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR);
  - the North Cook County Soil & Water Conservation District;
  - the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD), for wetland and floodplain impacts; and
  - the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA), considering water quality.

These reviews will be submitted to and considered by the Army Corps as they make the decision on CN's permit application.

Q: Are there any other reviews at the Federal level?

A: No other federal agency reviews or approvals are needed.

Q: What about the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)?

A: CN stated that FRA review is needed only when Federal money is used in the construction of additional track. The proposed work is being funded entirely by the railroad.

Q: What about the Surface Transportation Board (STB)?

A: CN stated that no STB review was needed. [The STB reviews railroad construction, and the STB's Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) reviews environmental impacts. OEA was contacted by Village staff but the extent of their involvement, if any, is unknown as of March 22, 2019.]

Q: What happens after the Army Corps issues the permit?

A: CN can begin construction.

Q: How soon after approval would the railroad begin constructing the second track?

A: The project is not currently funded, but it is in CN's 1 to 5 year capital plan. CN considers this project to be a high priority..

### **Design of the Second Mainline Track**

Q: Why was the proposed second track shown on the west side of the existing track, closer to residences in the Village?

A: CN stated that the location of the proposed second track was influenced by the wetland, natural and wildlife resources impacts along the Arthur L. Janura Forest Preserve and the Shoe Factory Road Prairie Nature Preserve on the east side of the existing track. While the proposed track location does impact the creek and some wetlands, the extent and quality of the wetlands impacted is lower.

Q: The Village has not seen the complete application to the Army Corps. Can CN provide a copy of the application, including all plans?

A: CN will provide the Village a copy of the Army Corps permit application package which includes design plans. The Village has not received the permit application as of Friday, March 22, 2019.

Q: How can the public see a copy of the complete application including the plans?

A: The application is a matter of public record. A FOIA (Freedom of Information Act) request can be submitted to Army Corps or to the Village. Note that the Village has not received the a copy of the permit application as of Friday, March 22, 2019.

Q: Village staff stated that there are issues with flooding in the back yards of some residences along the CN right of way south of Shoe Factory Road. Staff informed CN that, although

the effective FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) for the project area is dated August 2008, more recent detailed studies have been completed for the area and represent the best data available. These studies include a 2010 Detailed Watershed Plan developed by MWRD and an ongoing FEMA map revision for the Poplar Creek Watershed. Village staff stated that CN needs to consider this updated information when studying the impacts of the proposed construction for the second mainline track.

A: CN responded that the current FIRM dated August 2008 was being used in the review, and that CN would need to look at the new data.

Q: Village staff advised CN of residents' concerns regarding noise, vibration, and safety.

A: CN suggested that residents share all concerns with the Army Corps during the public comment period.

Q: Will CN be replacing any of the trees between the existing track and the west right of way that may be removed during construction?

A: CN indicated that there will be little room between the second track, the relocated creek, and the west right of way line.

Q: Village staff asked about the duration of the construction and the working hours.

A: Construction is expected to last one season, from April through the fall of the year when construction occurs. Work would typically be done during daylight hours, but some overnight work may be necessary depending on the scope of the work and on rail traffic.

Q: How will the second track be carried over Golf Road?

A: CN is coordinating with IDOT on a second bridge over Golf Road.

## **Train Operations**

Q: What is the goal of the second mainline track?

A: CN's intent is to remove the bottleneck caused by the section of single track south of Shoe Factory Road. CN has completed similar improvements on their system in Minnesota and Wisconsin, and are now doing these projects in Illinois. The goal of two tracks is to allow simultaneous northbound and southbound movement, rather than idling trains on sidings to allow other trains to pass that occurs now.

Q: How many trains per day are expected after the second mainline track is open?

A: CN expects an average of 25 trains per day, compared to an average of 20 trains per day now.

Q: Will train speeds be higher after the second mainline track opens?

A: Train speeds are expected to be similar to existing train speeds.

Q: How will the two tracks be used? Will there be any effort to keep trains on the eastern track, farther from residences?

A: The existing eastern track will generally be used by northbound trains. The proposed western track will generally be used by southbound trains.

REMINDER – be sure to submit comments in writing to ACOE per their instructions by the deadline of March 29, 2109 by 5:00 pm