

Appendix M – Agency Scoping Comments



ILLINOIS ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

1021 North Grand Avenue East, P.O. Box 19276, Springfield, Illinois 62794-9276 • (217) 782-2829
James R. Thompson Center, 100 West Randolph, Suite 11-300, Chicago, IL 60601 • (312) 814-6026

PAT QUINN, GOVERNOR

DOUGLAS P. SCOTT, DIRECTOR

217-782-0547

September 28, 2009

Mr. John Paquet
Vice President
Planning and Development
Chicago Transit Authority
567 West Lake Street
Chicago, IL 60661-1498

Dear Mr. Paquet:

We have reviewed the information concerning an Environmental Impact Statement project for the proposed Yellow Line Extension to serve the Village of Skokie area from the existing Dempster Station to the new terminal station at Old Orchard Road.

The Agency has no objections to the project; however a construction site activity stormwater NPDES permit will be required from the Division of Water Pollution Control. Please contact The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers for any permit requirements if there are any stream crossings that require dredge and fill activities in the waterway.

If you have need for an Environmental Review in the future, please submit your information to:
Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, Deputy Director's Office/MC #1,
PO Box 19276, Springfield, Illinois 62794-9276, **ATTN: DiAnne Schuerman**

Sincerely,


Lisa Bonnett
Acting Deputy Director

Rockford • 4302 N. Main St., Rockford, IL 61103 • (815) 987-7760

Elgin • 595 S. State, Elgin, IL 60123 • (847) 608-3131

Bureau of Land – Peoria • 7620 N. University St., Peoria, IL 61614 • (309) 693-5462

Collinsville • 2009 Mall Street, Collinsville, IL 62234 • (618) 346-5120

Des Plaines • 9511 W. Harrison St., Des Plaines, IL 60016 • (847) 294-4000

Peoria • 5415 N. University St., Peoria, IL 61614 • (309) 693-5463

Champaign • 2125 S. First St., Champaign, IL 61820 • (217) 278-5800

Marion • 2309 W. Main St., Suite 116, Marion, IL 62959 • (618) 993-7200

YS-76

Cheever, Kim

From: Yellow Extension [YellowExtension@transitchicago.com]
Sent: Monday, October 12, 2009 4:36 PM
To: Peters, Melissa
Cc: Kornblatt, Helene B.
Subject: FW: Illinois State Police concerns

From: Anthony_Lupo@isp.state.il.us [Anthony_Lupo@isp.state.il.us]
Sent: Wednesday, October 07, 2009 11:14 AM
To: Red Extension; Yellow Extension; Orange Extension
Cc: mark.harmon@chicagopolice.org
Subject: Illinois State Police concerns

As we discussed in the Scoping meeting on September 23, 2009. Below is details a few concerns we had and would like them looked at during the preliminary phase:

FIRST RESPONDERS

Will the construction area be easily accessible for First Responders to respond to any type of emergency? With the tracks being elevated, will there be an easy on/off for personnel?

SECURITY

If the Contractor desires additional police officer services of Illinois State Police (ISP), District Chicago, for enforcement, traffic control, and/or security, ISP personnel will, as available, provide police services on a hireback basis. During this time, ISP officers will provide a visible State Police presence, provide general police services and take enforcement action as appropriate in and around the site of the program. We will govern all areas on the expressways or on state owned property. To secure the above, the Contractor would have to sign a binding contract detailing all the specifics with the State of Illinois.

If you should have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Respectfully,

Lieutenant Tony Lupo
District Chicago
Administrative Command
Office 847 294 4655
Fax 847 294 4440
Cell 708 932 9347

10/14/2009

October 26, 2009

Jeffrey Busby
General Manager, Strategic Planning
Chicago Transit Authority
P.O. Box 7602
Chicago, IL 60680-7602
YellowExtension@transitchicago.com

Dear Mr. Busby,

Niles Township High School District 219 (the District or District 219) has already submitted a written statement of intent to be a participating agency in the scoping process of the environmental studies related to the extension of the CTA Yellow line. In addition to reaffirming the District's intent to be part of the process, this letter is to highlight comments on the proposed project.

As the District has stated many times and in numerous documents, it is opposed to the current Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). The District's opposition relates most directly to the placement of the station terminus, a related parking facility and a portion of the track itself on Niles North property. As was stated at the agency scoping meeting on September 24, 2009, and on numerous other occasions, Niles North High School serves 2,200 students on 26 acres of land. (By contrast, Niles West High School serves only 400 more students but its campus is roughly three times larger, with 72 acres). District 219 will oppose the LPA or any Yellow line extension plan that fails to offer appropriate remedies to any negative impact to the Niles North campus.

The community meeting in Skokie on the evening of September 23, 2009, and the agency scoping meeting of September 24, 2009, were the first times the CTA had been willing to listen to the specific concerns of the District while entering into dialogue. The District recognizes and appreciates your willingness to listen and respond orally to District concerns. However, oral assurances of CTA responsiveness to concerns about the impact of the Yellow line extension are insufficient.

This letter has three goals.

- First, I want to reiterate that District 219 is opposed to the LPA. The LPA does not take into consideration the safety, security and other needs of Niles North High School. The District is also opposed to any alternative which would take any part of the Niles North High School campus or otherwise materially interfere with the high school's operations or plans for improvements or would endanger the safety or security of its staff and students.
- Second, I want to memorialize several comments made at the September 24, 2009 agency meeting and highlight several comments that were not mentioned.
- Third, I need a written agreement from the CTA that provides sufficient guarantees of District participation in decision-making for any plan involving District property.

Comments

First, in addition to concerns noted in other communications, the District's top priority is the safety and security of members of the Niles North community, including the effective operation of the school and its functions. Parking at Niles North is already extremely tight. The District currently uses parking from the west lot of Westfield Old Orchard Shopping Mall for school community members. Westfield Old Orchard is accommodating Niles North, as a good neighbor, given the school's limited physical space. Designs to accommodate school growth have often involved ideas for using the same real property the CTA plans to convert to a parking structure. In the past, ideas such as placing tennis courts or soccer fields on top of a parking garage were considered by District administration long before the CTA identified Niles North real property as an expansion site. The CTA's additional targeting of a line of real property along the western side of Niles North will hinder further the ability of District 219 to effectively operate its facility in relative equity with its sister school. Among the most important guarantees the District requires is an assurance that Yellow line extension plans are temporally tied to alleviating the real property constraints on Niles North.

Second, although the placement of a Yellow line terminus station on the west side of the Edens Expressway and approaching tracks would immediately alleviate the threat to Niles North real property posed by the LPA, the District recognizes the desire of the CTA to place parking on the east side of the Edens Expressway given that the east side of the expressway has four times the travel activity as the west side of the bridge. As the Illinois Department of Transportation has expressed a willingness to work with the CTA and District 219 in its inchoate plans to improve the Old Orchard interchange and although the District is opposed to plans for use of Niles North property, if Niles North property must be used, the east parking structure is certainly the better option.

Third, District 219 has retained the services of an urban planning architect familiar with athletic facilities, parking garages, roads and public transportation. We would be pleased to offer the CTA his services to ensure that all stakeholders are represented at the drafting stage.

Fourth, the District is concerned about the impact of the construction phase of any CTA expansion plan involving District real property. Although the proposed track will extend a relatively short distance onto District 219 property, given the presence of the Edens to the immediate west of the proposed tracks, construction will surely disrupt Niles North operations significantly during the construction phase of the line. Though the District prefers tracks away from District property entirely, this is an important concern specifically impacting the school in the short term.

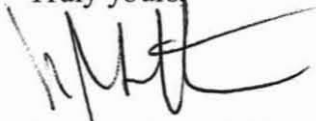
Letter

Finally, I am asking for a written commitment that the CTA will not make any final decisions on the route, the property it needs from the District, or the location and operation of the parking facility without providing the District with detailed plans and otherwise involving us in the

decision-making process. I make this request as not just an interested neighbor, but the landowner with the most at stake and a sister governmental agency trying to serve our own constituency.

I look forward to further consideration by the CTA.

Truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nanciann Gatta', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr. Nanciann Gatta
Superintendent

cc: Board of Education
Mr. Paul O'Malley, Assistant Superintendent for Business Services
Mr. John Heintz, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources and Chief Legal Officer
Mr. Robert Freeman, Principal, Niles North High School
Mr. Jim Szczepaniak, Community Relations Director
Mr. Ed Uhler, F.A.I.A. Millennium Park, Inc.
Mr. John Izzo, Esq., Sraga Hauser, LLC
Mayor George Van Dusen, Village of Skokie
Mr. Gene Mark, Illinois Department of Transportation

Cheever, Kim

From: Yellow Extension [YellowExtension@transitchicago.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 8:41 AM
To: Peters, Melissa
Cc: Kornblatt, Helene B.
Subject: FW: Yellow Line EIS scoping comments

From: David Tomzik [David.Tomzik@Pacebus.com]
Sent: Tuesday, October 27, 2009 9:17 AM
To: Yellow Extension
Subject: Yellow Line EIS scoping comments

Pace scoping comments regarding CTA Yellow Line Extension Environmental Impact Statement

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the scoping of the Environmental Impact Statement for the Yellow Line extension. Below are comments regarding the proposed project alternatives and potential environmental impacts relating to the proposed extension between Dempster Station and Old Orchard Road.

- Review proposed alternatives, cost and ridership projections.
- Based on results of alternative review and proposed station locations, current Pace operations will be reviewed and restructured to provide the most cost effective and efficient operations, routing and layover locations in support of agency's strategic Vision 2020 planning initiative. This initiative supports main line arterial development and is coordinated with local distribution services.
- Pace requests participation in the planning development and design of proposed stations facilities. Design should include sufficient bays to accommodate as appropriate both Pace fixed/express routes, Regional ADA Paratransit services and CTA bus routes. In addition, operator facilities, passenger information as well as bus priority access such as Transit Signal Priority or bus activated signals to allow buses to enter/exit the terminal with minimal congestion.

We look forward to participating in this regional planning process.

David Tomzik
Manager, Long Range Planning
Pace Suburban Bus Service
550 W. Algonquin Road
Arlington Heights, IL 60005
847 228-2463
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