

COALITION TO STOP THE TRAIN
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Press Release

The Board of Chosen Freeholders is moving ahead with the reactivation of freight service along the Rahway Valley and Staten Island Railroads. The municipalities of Springfield, Summit, Kenilworth, Roselle and Roselle Park have filed lawsuits but increased public pressure is needed to reinforce the effort to “stop the train”.

There are seven critical issues:

1. There is no economic justification for the service. The railroad cannot survive as the proposed “short line” operation, from businesses generated along the line. There is no business along the line and neither the Railroad nor the County has identified any potential users.
2. The Freeholders have promised there will be no through traffic, but they have misled us before and we have no reason to believe them now.
3. The environmental issues have been completely disregarded. No consideration has been given to the impact on the community, nor has there been any investigation of the possible pollution of the existing rail bed.
4. Taxpayers’ money bought the railroad and taxpayers will pay many millions more to rebuild it. The designated operator, Morristown & Erie Railway, gets the completed package at the cost of \$2.00 per year with no benefit to the County Treasury and they can walk away free if it can’t generate a profit.
5. There has been no consideration given to noise, vibration and diesel pollution or the likely depreciation of property value and shrinkage of tax base.
6. The safety of residents, including children playing in adjacent backyards and park areas has not been taken into account given the proximity of the tracks to homes, schools, businesses and places of worship.
7. Interference with delivery of emergency services in time of local need or national emergency has been discounted or ignored.

The Stop the Train Committee supports the passage of Assembly Bill #2916 introduced by State Senator Thomas Kean, Jr. that would require the lands adjacent to the railroad be set aside for recreation and conservation purposes and to interested municipalities for senior citizen housing and is working to see that Bill become reality.

Proponents of the railroad justify the reactivation by stating that it would result in fewer trucks on our already heavily traveled roads. However if this train is to service businesses in Union County, the products that are off-loaded and taken to their ultimate destination will likely be delivered by trucks. Therefore, trucks still would be required for transporting the cargo over roads within the county of Union and little to any benefit from reduced truck traffic will be obtained.

We need your help in preventing this reactivation from moving further.

What can you do?

- 1) Attend Union County Board of Freeholders Meetings – obtain information by visiting their website www.unioncountynj.org
- 2) Write letters to your local newspapers stating your opposition.

- 3) Tell your local officials that you are opposed to this reactivation and attend your local town council meetings to emphasize your opposition.
- 4) Write letters to your Congressman, Senators and our Governor
- 5) E-mail stopthetrain@comcast.net or information and for formatted letters to sign and mail to government officials
- 6) Sign the petition on line by visiting our website www.kenilworthnj.com where more information can be obtained.