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SERVICE DATE - AUGUST 4, 2004

SEA

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

Finance Docket No. 34391

New England Transrail, LLC, d/b/a Wilmington and Woburn Terminal Railroad Co. -
Construction, Acquisition, and Operation Exemption - in Wilmington and Woburn,
Massachusetts

ACTION: Notice of Availability of Environmental Assessment and Request for Comments.

SUMMARY: On December 3, 2003, New England Transrail, LLC d/b/a the Wilmington and Woburn Terminal Railroad Company (Applicant or W&WTR) filed a petition with the Surface Transportation Board (Board) pursuant to 49 United States Code (U.S.C.) 10502 seeking exemption from the formal application procedures of 49 U.S.C. 10901 for authority to acquire 1,300 feet of existing track, construct 2,700 feet of new line, and to operate the entire approximately 4,000 feet of track located on and adjacent to a parcel of land owned by Olin Corporation (Olin) in Wilmington, Massachusetts, upon which Olin had in the past operated a chemical plant. The Olin-owned parcel is located in Wilmington, Massachusetts, but a portion of the line to be constructed and operated by W&WTR also would be located in Woburn, Massachusetts. The Board's Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA) has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) for this proposed project. Based on the information provided from all sources to date and its independent analysis, SEA preliminarily concludes that the Proposed Action would have no significant environmental impacts if the Board imposes and the Applicant implements the environmental mitigation conditions recommended in the EA. Accordingly, SEA, recommends that if the Board approves the project, Applicant be required to implement the mitigation set forth in the EA. Copies of the EA have been served on all interested parties and will be made available to additional parties upon request. SEA will consider comments received when making its final environmental recommendation to the Board. The Board will consider SEA's final recommendations and the complete environmental record in making its final decision in this proceeding.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION: Applicant has entered into an option agreement to purchase a parcel of industrial land in Wilmington, known as 51 Eames Street, which is currently owned by Olin. The property consists of approximately 53 acres of land. According to the Applicant, the Olin's property includes certain industrial tracks (about 1,300 feet of which are still in place). The ongoing environmental remediation activity on the subject parcel would remain Olin's obligation, and that Applicant would be bound by contract not to impede that work in any way.

Applicant proposes to acquire the subject property, restore to operating condition the 1,300 feet of extant trackage located on the property, construct approximately 2,700 feet of new trackage, and, once construction is completed, provide rail common carrier service over both the newly-built and rebuilt trackage. The trackage to be restored and constructed would be approximately 4,000 feet in total length. As part of the proposed project, W&WTR plans to construct on-site improvements to facilitate the transload of various commodities between truck trailers and rail cars.

Applicant states that the line would connect to a Boston and Maine Corporation (B&M) line that it describes as the Wilmington-Woburn-West Medford Branch at approximately milepost 14. The line would extend from a connection with the branch in an easterly and southeasterly direction across the 51 Eames Street property.

Applicant proposes to handle a variety of commodities, including aggregates, sand, gravel, stone, construction debris, non-hazardous solid wastes, liquids and dry chemicals, lumber, plastics, steel, scrap steel, recycled paper and plastic, newsprint, paper products, clay, and brick. Applicant anticipates that initially it would handle about 20 cars daily over the line. Applicant asserts that, by constructing the subject trackage and providing the proposed transload services, it would afford to shippers new and efficient transportation options, including rail transportation currently unavailable to certain area shippers because of an alleged lack of local system capacity in the region or because the shippers in question lack rail sidings.

DATES: The EA is available for public review and comment for 30 days. Parties should provide written comments to the Board no later than September 3, 2004.

ADDRESS: Comments (an original and one copy) should be sent to: Case Control Unit, Surface Transportation Board, 1925 K Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20423. The lower left-hand corner of the envelope should be marked: Attention: Ms. Phillis Johnson-Ball, Environmental Comments, Finance Docket No. 34391. Environmental comments may also be filed electronically on the Board's web site, www.stb.dot.gov by clicking on the "E-FILING" link.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: Questions may be directed to Ms. Phillis Johnson-Ball, Environmental Project Manager, at (202) 565-1530. The EA is available on the Board's website at www.stb.dot.gov.

By the Board, Victoria J. Rutson, Chief, Section of Environmental Analysis.

Vernon A. Williams

Secretary