

Historic
Preservation
Trust
of Lancaster County

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E1-790
CD

April 22, 2004

Mr. Troy Brady
Surface Transportation Board - Section of Environmental Analysis
1925 K Street, NW, Suite 500
Washington, DC 20423-0001

Re: Your Request for Review and Sign-off of the Final Memorandum of Agreement (Section 106 Process) for the Enola Low Grade Rail Line - Ref. Docket No. AB-167(1095X), Consolidated Rail Corporation - Abandonment Exemption - In Lancaster and Chester Counties, Pennsylvania

Dear Mr. Brady,

Thank you for your letter of April 12, 2004 to interested parties to the above, in which you asked signatory and concurring parties to review and sign-off on the the Section 106 consultation process.

The Historic Preservation Trust of Lancaster County, as a concurring party, has elected not to sign the Memorandum of Agreement for the following reasons:

1. We believe that the best use of the rail line would be for a contiguous recreation trail for the public and that abandonment by Norfolk Southern Railway to the involved townships could jeopardize that goal.
2. The Lancaster County Commissioners have offered to accept responsibility for the development, maintenance, safety, and policing of the trail and we believe that their offer is the best solution to making the trail a success.
3. Abandonment to the townships, who are currently and may always be split in their acceptance of the trail concept, may result in a less attractive alternative to the proposal (ie a split trail at best).
4. The townships most likely cannot afford the resources it would take to create and maintain not only the trail but also the various historic features along the pathway (ie overpasses and bridges in particular).
5. The Trust believes that the trail is a potentially great community resource that should be made available and accessible to all Lancaster citizens and it needs to operate under one entity rather than several.
6. Norfolk Southern has initially rejected the proposal put forth by the Lancaster County Commissioners and we believe that NS should give this plan more consideration. Near term abandonment to the townships would adversely affect the trail concept and certainly its many historic features.

By signing the Memorandum of Agreement, the Trust believes that this action would hasten the abandonment of the line to the townships, which, for the reasons stated above, would not be in the best interests of Lancaster County nor historic preservation.

The Trust's mission is to combine preservation of our architectural heritage but only where it contributes to the community's well-being and quality of life. Clearly, the county commissioner's approach would help achieve that goal. Near term abandonment to the townships would not.

Sincerely,



Timothy A. Smedick
Executive Director

CC: Lancaster County Commissioners: Molly Henderson, Howard "Pete" Shaub, Richard Shellenberger
HPT Executive Committee: John Blowers, Margot Brubaker, Rita Byrne, Beth Herr, Carol Hickey, Andy
Kmiec, Patricia Levin, William Musante, Shirlie O'Leary
PHMC: Kurt Carr, Susan Zacher
PA - DCNR: Richard Sprenkle, Larry Williamson
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (Washington, DC): Don Klima, Karen Theimer