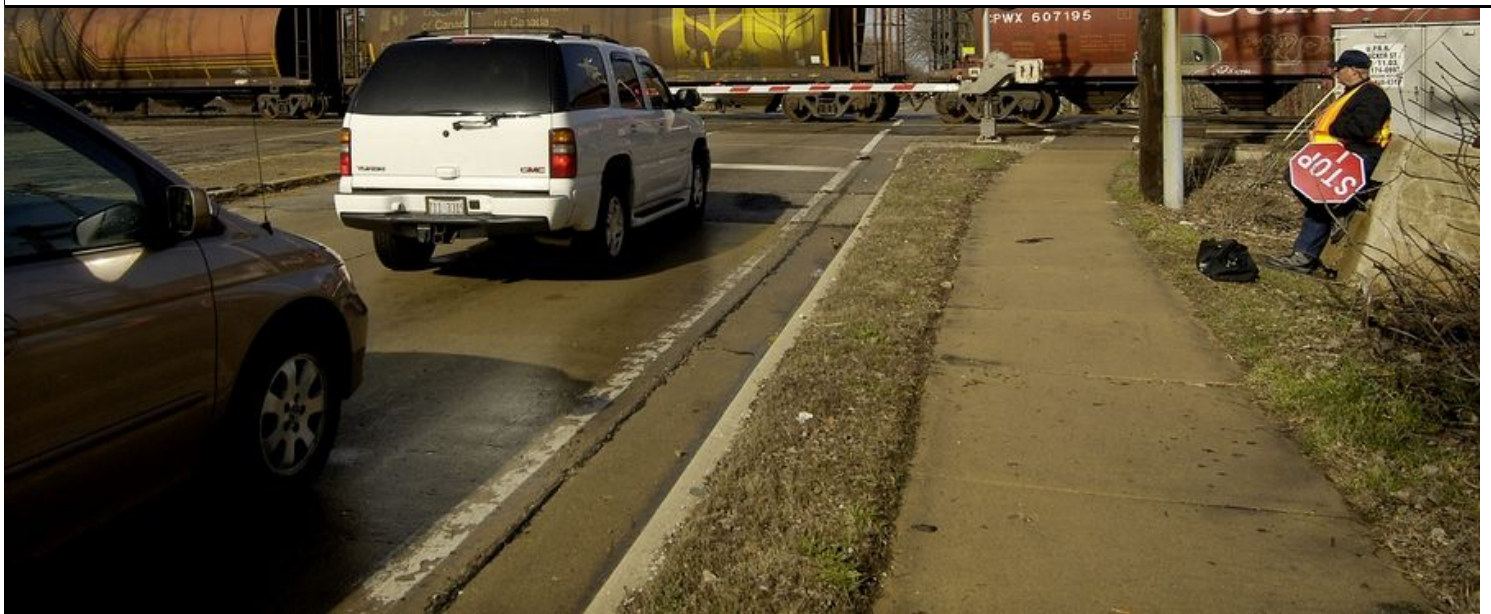


Suburbs appeal railway merger, ask for tougher conditions

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Suburbs opposing an approved merger between Canadian Pacific and Kansas City Southern railways have asked a U.S. appeals court to intervene. (*Daily Herald file photo*)



Marni Pyke

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A suburban coalition that fought a major railroad merger filed an appeal Thursday asking federal judges to review the U.S. Surface Transportation Board's approval and impose tougher conditions.

The decision allowing the Canadian Pacific Railway to acquire the Kansas City

Southern Railway became effective April 14.

The STB ruling "ignored our concerns for the quality of life in our communities, it ignored our concerns about the negative consequences on economic development in our communities, and most importantly, it ignored our concerns for safety," Itasca Village President Jeff Pruyn said.

The litigation was filed with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit in Chicago. It aims to have the STB conduct a second environmental review of the merger in the region with the goal of "more robust" mitigation to offset eight more freight trains daily.

Several suburbs had sought relief such as grade separations and pedestrian gates but were unsuccessful. The merger would create a railroad stretching from Mexico to Canada. CP spokesman Patrick Waldron said the STB "conducted a comprehensive, thorough and thoughtful review of the combination, and its environmental impacts, as part of a more than yearlong regulatory review and environmental impact study.

"We believe that unprecedented examination of the facts produced the right final decision, which clearly recognizes the many benefits of the CPKC combination."

The coalition that comprises Bartlett, Bensenville, DuPage County, Elgin, Itasca, Hanover Park, Roselle, Wood Dale and Schaumburg believes up to 18 trains a day could rumble through their communities, tying up crossings. The extra freight would snarl traffic and delay first-responders, local leaders said. "A high influx of additional rail traffic through the heart of Roselle will absolutely have a significant negative impact on our residents, businesses and emergency response that require adequate mitigation measures and cannot be

ignored," Roselle Mayor David Pileski said.

STB members contend the merger would benefit the U.S. economy, and Chairman Marty Oberman noted an unprecedented seven-year oversight period of CP was ordered in the metro area. The railroad "remains committed to being a good neighbor in the communities where we operate and to an open dialogue with communities across our network to address local concerns," Waldron said.

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