



STATE OF MAINE
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04333-0001

Paul R. LePage
GOVERNOR

The Honorable Joseph C. Szabo
Administrator
Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Subject: Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority (NNEPRA) Proposed Amtrak Maintenance and Layover Facility (MLF) in Brunswick, Maine at Brunswick West Site

Dear Administrator Szabo:

I hereby respectfully request that the Federal Railroad Administration closely examine this above referenced project to ensure that all information was thoroughly considered in the approval process prior to a Finding Of No Significant Impact is made. This review should include an environmental impact statement. The overriding reason for my request is that significant changes to the scope of the MLF project were made after the NNEPRA-Consigli Design Build Contract was executed, and these changes were not incorporated into the September 2013 Environmental Assessment (EA).

Changes include a reduction in the size of the MLF Building; relocation of the Building and related tracks nearer to residential property to the south; and elimination of the outside holding track. The elimination of the holding track significantly changes overall operations and increases effects from project operations at the most sensitive time of day – the critical nighttime sleep period for residents. Appendix E, Noise & Vibration Technical Report, dated April 11, 2013, prior to the changes in scope, is part of the September 2013 EA. I am concerned that the September 2013 EA DOES NOT reflect current MLF design and its impacts on site abutters.

I have heard numerous other concerns from local citizens which include the following:

1. Possible significant environmental consequences stemming from non-mitigatable conditions.
2. Concerns about a lack of attention to public concerns through rigorous and objective due process.
3. Unreconciled differences between Brunswick West Neighborhood Coalition (BWNC) and NNEPRA's Noise Analysis, Socio-Economic Analysis, Vibration Analysis, Visual Impact Assessment, and related Zoning and quality of life impairments for adjacent residential neighborhoods.
4. Questionable validity of the preemption decision. NNEPRA's claim of preemption should be thoroughly vetted since the only case law cited is not applicable to the proposed location. Vetting is essential because absent preemption, NNEPRA would be required to follow Maine Department of Environmental Protection Site Law process, as well as local zoning regulations.



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(NNEPRA is apparently not preempted from Local Regulations in Portland, Maine and has processed a State of Maine Stormwater Discharge Permit.)

5. Concerns that NNEPRA has not adequately addressed all project impacts, asserting that the MLF building resolves all environmental issues. Numerous operational activities that adversely impact the adjacent neighborhoods will take place outside the MLF building.
6. Issues regarding ridership to and from Brunswick, Maine during the past year that question whether that MLF construction can be justified by a need for additional service.
7. Larger questions regarding the regional choice of location for any proposed MLF. Should the MLF be located at the hub of the Downeaster system, such as in the Greater Portland area? Or should it be located in Brunswick, Maine at one of three other sites in far more advantageous commercial areas, away from residential neighborhoods?
8. Concerns that the Brunswick West site has questionable economic benefit potential. Two of the three other locations in East Brunswick have positive economic potential by combining Passenger, Freight and Multi-Modal service to stimulate redevelopment of the former Brunswick Naval Air Station, without undue negative consequences for established residential neighborhoods.

As Governor, I have made Maine's economy a top priority of my administration. I am committed to supporting projects that will stimulate economic growth, including the redevelopment of the former Brunswick Naval Air Station, which would benefit directly from alternative MLF siting in East Brunswick.

In light of all these concerns I believe this process requires a significant and thorough review that ensures a rational, open, objective, and transparent process for MLF siting. This must include participation by all stake holders, and responsible resolution of current divergence on location alternatives and consequences.

Sincerely,



Paul R. LePage
Governor, State of Maine