



Town Commissioners of Perryville

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Town Administrator
Denise Breder

October 10, 2012

Rebecca Reyes-Alicea
USDOT
Federal Railroad Administration
Office of Railroad Policy and Development
Mail Stop 20
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Re: NEC FUTURE Scoping Meetings Comments

Dear Ms. Reyes-Alicea:

In response to your request for comments regarding the future plans for high speed rail in the Northeast Corridor (NEC), there are concerns about how the needed improvements may impact the Town of Perryville. The potential impacts to Perryville fall into the categories of Cultural resources, Water and geologic resources, and Communities and socioeconomic conditions.

Cultural Resources

First, Rodgers Tavern sits just 35 yards north of the existing railroad tracks on the shore of the Susquehanna River just after the bridge over the river meets land on the Cecil County side of the bridge. Rodgers Tavern is a culturally significant building, constructed in the early eighteenth century and a known to be visited by George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and James Madison. It was also the early home of Commodore John Rodgers, known as Founder of the American Navy. Listed in the National Register of Historic Places, Rodgers Tavern is currently under restoration for eventual use as a museum.

Another culturally significant and potentially impacted building is the Perryville Train Station. The station is immediately adjacent to and just north of the existing railroad tracks in Perryville. Built in 1905 and restored in 1991, the station is still used today by the MARC train system, Amtrak and it is also the home of the Perryville Railway

Museum started and operated by the Perryville Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society.

The Methodist Church built in 1894 and Presbyterian Church, originally built in the late 1880's and relocated when the railroad station was built to its present location, are other culturally significant sites.

Careful consideration should be given to the placement of the proposed new high speed rail bridge over the Susquehanna River in order to save these culturally significant resources for generations to come.

Water and Geologic Resources

The Perryville Wastewater Treatment Plant, with an address of 72 Ikea Way, Perryville, MD 21903 (formerly 72 Firestone Road) is located approximately 70 yards south of the Amtrak railroad tracks in Perryville. The wastewater plant and the plant's discharge are located in the Mill Creek sub watershed. It is designed to treat 1.65 million gallons per day (MGD) of wastewater with a current flow of approximately 625,000 gallons. The plant underwent a full renovation, which was completed in 2010 and it is an Enhanced Nutrient Removal (ENR) facility returning clean water, from what was wastewater, to the environment that ultimately flows to the Chesapeake Bay. In addition to serving local businesses, and a population of approximately 4,350 residents, the plant also treats the wastewater from the adjacent Perry Point VA Maryland Health Care System with a contract to treat up to 300,000 gallons of wastewater per day for the VA facility. The Town of Perryville and the State of Maryland made a significant investment in this facility and it must be protected.

Communities and socioeconomic conditions

Again, the placement of a high speed rail bridge over the Susquehanna River needs to be given careful consideration because of the potential impacts to the Town of Perryville. Broad Street in Perryville is located immediately north of and adjacent to the existing Amtrak railroad track in Perryville. In addition to the Cultural Resources mentioned earlier, there are some businesses, government buildings and many homes with addresses on Broad Street (or feeder streets to Broad Street) in Perryville. Given the proximity of this road and these buildings to the tracks, placement of a new high speed rail bridge and tracks, if placed immediately north of the existing bridge and tracks, would have a detrimental impact on a significant portion of downtown Perryville. Improper placement could cause people to be displaced from their homes, businesses being forced to close, impact to government buildings and to the tax base and employment in the Town. Further, Broad Street is presently the main and only entrance to the VA Maryland Health Care System at Perry Point. Though a secondary entrance to Perry Point is currently under construction, it too could be impacted by the NEC Future plans.

In addition to the potential impacts to Broad Street, also in Perryville, and within 75 yards south of the Amtrak railroad tracks is an IKEA Distribution Center. One of the largest employers in Perryville and Cecil County, the IKEA warehouse is a 1,700,000 square foot building (making it one of the largest buildings under one roof in Maryland and the largest in Cecil County). The IKEA warehouse plays a significant role in the local economy and any impact by NEC Future to this business would have a significant impact on the local employment and tax base of the Town of Perryville.

In closing, due to the reasons stated above, please give careful consideration to the placement of the high speed rail bridge to be constructed over the Susquehanna River and the railroad tracks that lead through the Town north toward Wilmington. The stated concerns are very real, and if done in a way to minimize the negative impacts to Perryville, a new high speed rail line could also allow for increased MARC train service here in Perryville and it could ultimately support the Town's recently adopted Transit Oriented Development Plan (TOD). I respectfully request that Perryville be invited to participate in future meetings since the NEC Future plans have such a huge impact on this community. Attached to this letter is a map showing the places mentioned in this letter and their location in relation to the existing Amtrak facilities, which includes the existing Amtrak MOW base that is just outside of the Perryville Corporate limits, served by Perryville water and wastewater facilities and very near to the IKEA Distribution Center and the Perryville Wastewater Treatment Plant. Additionally, I will be glad to arrange a tour of the Town for you to see first-hand the potential impacts to Perryville. I appreciate your consideration of these comments and look forward to hearing from you. I can be reached by phone at 410-642-6066 or by email at dbreder@perryvillemd.org.

Sincerely,



Denise Breder
Town Administrator

Attachment

CC: Mayor and Commissioners of the Town of Perryville
Delegate David Rudolph
Mary Ann Skilling, Perryville Planning Director
Alan Amos, Perryville Water and Wastewater Superintendent
IKEA
Maryland Department of Planning
Maryland Historical Trust
Maryland Department of the Environment
Nicole Katsikides, Maryland Department of Transportation

TOWN OF PERRYVILLE

