

EI-2247

02 May 2006

Phillis Johnson-Ball
Surface Transportation Board
1925 K Street NW
Washington, DC 20423

Re: Finance Docket No. 34747, Olin Property

Ms. Johnson-Ball:

My wife and I are residents of Wilmington, MA. An initial, knee-jerk reaction to the proposed waste reload facility on the Olin Chemical site in our Town might be concern over property values. While that is certainly of importance to all affected by this proposal, it is certainly not the "big picture."

Woburn lies just ¼ mile from the site and is a town with a well-documented history of water and land contamination issues. And, as you are likely aware, Olin Chemical's missteps have left 55% of our (Wilmington's) water supply undrinkable. It remains a disastrous event to the Town and to the ability of its people to enjoy life here. We do not drink the water from our tap out of fear.

The big picture cited above is one of common sense and justice. The extent of the contamination caused by Olin Chemical is not fully known and is by no means cleaned up yet. Allowing ANY development on that site is analogous to covering termite-infested wood in a home with new wood, without taking any remedial action. It may hide the problem, but it will be back tenfold in the years to come. Further, allowing that development to be ANOTHER facility that processes waste, chemicals and other hazardous materials is one misstep away from covering that old termite-infested wood with new termite-infested wood. It simply does not make sense.

I have no doubt that New England Transrail (NET) proposes a facility that promises to be safe for the community. So did Olin Chemical. In an area that is already ravaged by environmental and health problems, one more may well cause catastrophic damage to the area, our water, and our people. Water is quickly become the "next oil", and must be protected at all costs. In 25 years, water wars may not be science fiction.

Which leads to the justice part of the big picture. Is the reward worthy of putting us at such a risk? Our Town is damaged goods. It is down. Why kick it? Surely there must be alternative sites that could withstand an environmental accident far better than we could. No town would want this facility. But our Town can ill-afford it. Accidents happen, and one more may decimate us and our water supply.

I urge you to reject this proposal. In the name of progress, it may be the right thing to do. In every other light, it is dead wrong.

Sincerely,


John DerBoghosian
114 Marion Street Ext.
Wilmington, MA 01887
978-447-1586