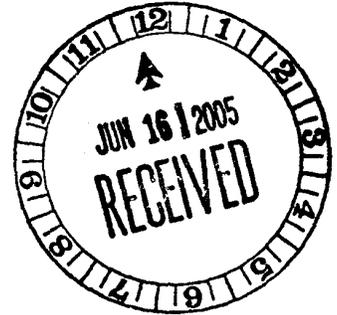




TOWN OF WATERTOWN

ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
WATERTOWN, MASSACHUSETTS 02172



9 June, 2005

The Honorable Vernon A. Williams
Secretary
Surface Transportation Board
1925 K Street, N.W.
Washington D. C. 20423-0001

RE: AB 32 (Sub No. 98X) and AB 355 (Sub No. 32X)
Boston and Maine Corporation and Springfield Terminal Railway Company
Abandonment and Discontinuance of Service – Watertown Branch,
Middlesex County, Massachusetts
Community Opposition

ENTERED
Office of Proceedings

JUN 16 2005

Part of
Public Record

Dear Secretary Williams:

I am the Chairman of the Watertown Bicycle Committee, and am writing to oppose the proposed abandonment and discontinuance of service of this railroad. The Historical and Environmental Report dated May 10, 2005 has left out several important issues pertaining to the abandonment.

Currently this railroad does provide sporadic service to a branch of NewlyWeds Foods which employs approximately 100 people and consumes 100 million pounds of flour per year. That amount of flour represents 2000 bulk hauler truck loads or 500 train car loads of flour per year. Currently the tracks, crews and equipment provided by the railroad do not provide the level of service that they did in the past. The applicants wish to avoid their obligation to up keep the track and provide the service.

Other adjacent former railroad property has been purchased by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for the purpose of constructing a multi-use recreational path. Any change in the status of the active rail segment is of great interest to the City of Cambridge, the Town of Watertown and the Commonwealth.

An aqueduct, which supplies water to the City of Cambridge, Fresh Pond Reservoir is located by easement, within this right of way.

Item iii, under (4) Energy, states “ the proposed action will increase the overall energy efficiency in that it will allow the Applicants to eliminate their potential responsibility for costly and energy consuming maintenance operations for an unused section of the line.” The line is not unused, there is a customer on the line requesting rail service.



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Item 10. Proposed Mitigation. The Environmental Report states that no mitigation is needed due to the fact that there is no adverse environmental impact. As previously discussed, the abandonment will cause an increase in the local truck traffic, which will decrease safety and increase energy use and air pollution.

We oppose the abandonment of the rail service on the Watertown Branch as described above. We believe that the public, and the rail customer, would be better served by a different service provider.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter. Please keep us informed of any status changes in the service being provided on the Watertown Branch Line.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Brooks".

Peter Brooks, Chair
Watertown Bicycle Committee

CC: Senator Steve Tolman
Representative Rachel Kapreilian
Representative Anne Poulsen
Alice Wolf
Warren Tolman
Michael Driscoll, Town Manager, Watertown
Gregory Watson, Director, Watertown Planning
Pam Piantedosi, Town Council President
John Lincoln, NewlyWeds Foods

File: STB / GRS / NewlyWeds abandonment 9.09.05