

This study will also address the greater travel shed in which this corridor will operate. Issues regarding schedule, operational and capacity constraints, and ridership will be examined.

The environmental process will have four basic goals: (1) Establish the purpose and need; (2) develop alternatives within the study corridor; (3) conduct a detailed evaluation of environmental impacts for the alternatives; and (4) select a locally preferred alternative (LPA).

The EIS will evaluate the following passenger rail alternatives: A no-build alternative, consisting of already planned improvements to the corridor, and build alternatives, consisting of a full range of passenger rail alternatives. The type, location, and need for ancillary facilities (e.g. railroad switching, signaling and maintenance buildings, etc.) will also be considered for each alternative. Scoping will be accomplished through correspondence with interested persons, organizations, and Federal, State and local agencies, and through public meetings.

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), a public scoping process will be initiated to identify corridor needs and alternatives. The scoping process will provide the basis for the evaluation of alternatives as part of the planning study, and the selection of a LPA and implementation program. The planning study will consider a variety of passenger rail options in the corridor based on input received during the scoping process. In addition to prudent alternatives developed as part of this study and those identified in previous planning exercises, feasible alternatives suggested during the scoping process will be considered.

Scoping and Comments: Scoping activities are being initiated at the outset of the planning studies, in advance of the EIS, to maximize the opportunity for public involvement in the consideration of alternatives and in reaching decisions about the transportation investments that will be advanced into the EIS phase of project development.

FRA and VDRPT encourage broad participation in the planning studies and EIS process during scoping and subsequent review of the resulting environmental documents. Comments and suggestions are invited from all interested agencies and the public at large to insure the full range of issues related to the proposed action and all reasonable alternatives are addressed and all significant issues are identified. Public agencies with jurisdiction are requested to advise the FRA and VDRPT of the applicable environmental review

requirements of each agency, and the scope and content of the environmental information that is germane to the agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed improvements. An agency scoping meeting has been scheduled for March 9, 2004, 1 p.m., at the following location: VDRPT, Central Conference Room, 1313 East Main Street, Suite 300, Richmond, Virginia.

Letters describing the proposed action and soliciting comments will be sent to appropriate Federal, State, and local agencies in Virginia. An interactive public involvement/information program will support the process. The program will involve newsletters, a telephone hotline and Web site, informational workshops, small group meetings, and other methods to solicit and incorporate public input throughout the planning process. The public scoping process runs concurrent with agency scoping and will commence with a public meeting in Richmond on March 9, 2004. Additional public scoping meetings will be held in Petersburg on March 10, Chesapeake on March 11, and Williamsburg on March 24. Notices for the public scoping meetings will be sent to individuals in the planning and EIS study areas and will be posted on official Web sites, and advertised in local communities.

Comments and questions concerning the proposed action should be directed to VDRPT or to the FRA at the addresses provided above. Additional information can be obtained by visiting the project Web site at www.rich2hrrail.info or calling the project hotline 1-877-RICH2HR (742-4247).

Issued in Washington, DC on February 17, 2004.

Mark E. Yachmetz,

Associate Administrator for Railroad Development.

[FR Doc. 04-3757 Filed 2-20-04; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Maritime Administration

[Docket No. MARAD 2004 17127]

Information Collection Available for Public Comments and Recommendations

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces the Maritime Administration's (MARAD's) intentions

to request approval for three years of a new information collection.

DATES: Comments should be submitted on or before April 23, 2004.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kelly Farrell, Maritime Administration, 400 Seventh St., SW., Washington, DC 20590. Telephone: 202-366-9041, FAX: 202-366-7485; or E-Mail: kelly.farrell@marad.dot.gov. Copies of this collection also can be obtained from that office.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title of Collection: Elements of Request for Course Approval.

Type of Request: New collection.

OMB Control Number: 2133-New.

Form Numbers: None.

Expiration Date of Approval: Three years from date of approval by the Office of Management and Budget.

Summary of Collection of Information: Under this proposed voluntary collection, public and private maritime security training course providers may choose to provide the Maritime Administration (MARAD) with information concerning the content and operation of their courses. MARAD will use this information to evaluate whether the course meets the training standards and curriculum promulgated under Section 109 of the Maritime Transportation Security Act of 2002 (MTSA) (Pub. L. 107-295). Courses found to meet these standards will receive a course approval.

Need and Use of the Information: This information collection is needed to facilitate the approval of maritime security training courses that meet the standards and curriculum developed under the MTSA.

Description of Respondents: Respondents are public and private maritime security course training providers.

Annual Responses: 300.

Annual Burden: 3,000 hours.

Comments: Comments should refer to the docket number that appears at the top of this document. Written comments may be submitted to the Docket Clerk, U.S. DOT Dockets, Room PL-401, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590. Comments also may be submitted by electronic means via the Internet at <http://dms.dot.gov/submit>. Specifically address whether this information collection is necessary for proper performance of the functions of the agency and will have practical utility, accuracy of the burden estimates, ways to minimize this burden, and ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected. All comments received will be available for

examination at the above address between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. EDT (or EST), Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. An electronic version of this document is available on the World Wide Web at <http://dms.dot.gov>.

Dated: February 17, 2004.

By Order of the Maritime Administrator,
Joel C. Richard,
Secretary, Maritime Administrator.
 [FR Doc. 04-3782 Filed 2-20-04; 8:45 am]
 BILLING CODE 4910-81-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Finance Docket No. 34395]

City of Peoria, IL, d/b/a Peoria, Peoria Heights & Western Railroad—Construction of Connecting Track Exemption—in Peoria County, IL

The City of Peoria, IL, d/b/a Peoria, Peoria Heights & Western Railroad (PPHW), has filed a verified notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1150.36 to construct approximately 1,800 feet of track in Peoria, Peoria County, IL, over land that it owns or over which it has an easement for railroad purposes. The track to be constructed will connect a 1.9-mile segment of track that the City of Peoria (the City) purchased from Union Pacific Railroad Company (UP) with an 8.29-mile segment of track known as the Keller Branch that the City acquired from the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad Company (Rock Island).

The former UP segment connects at its west end with a UP main line that extends in a generally north-south direction between Nelson, IL, and St. Louis, MO. It was acquired by the City in 2001 and there are no active shippers currently located on that segment.

The former Rock Island segment was acquired by the City in 1984 from the Rock Island Trustee. It connects at its east end with a rail line of the Peoria & Pekin Union Railway Company (P&PU). P&PU initially operated the segment pursuant to a lease from the City. Thereafter, the Village of Peoria Heights, IL, acquired a 25-percent interest in the segment, which was referred to under the doing-business designation of PPHW. In 1998, Pioneer Industrial Railway Co., the current operator, began operations over the segment pursuant to an assignment of P&PU's lease from the City (consented to by the Village of Peoria Heights). There are three active shippers located on the segment, two of which are located near its northwestern

end and one of which is located near its southeastern end.

After the proposed construction of connecting trackage is completed, the two shippers located near the northwestern end of the segment will be served from the west by DOT Rail Service, Inc., or its designee under an operating agreement with the City¹ and the shipper located near the southeastern end of the segment will be served from the southeast by the same or a different rail operator. Service over the approximately 7.5 miles of the segment that is no longer required to serve shippers will be discontinued and the right-of-way used for a recreational trail.² The trail would be supervised by the Peoria Park District, and would connect the Pimetoui Trail at the Peoria riverfront with the Rock Island Trail near Alta, IL.

Construction is proposed to begin no earlier than 90 days after the filing of this notice of exemption.

PPHW has certified that it has complied with the Board's environmental rules at 49 CFR Part 1105, and with the pre-filing notice requirements of 49 CFR 1150.36(c)(1).

The Board's Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA) has approved PPHW's request to submit a Preliminary Draft Environmental Assessment in lieu of the environmental and historic reports required under 49 CFR 1105.7 and 1105.8. SEA has also granted a waiver of the 6-month pre-filing notice generally required for construction projects under 49 CFR 1105.10(a)(1). Under 49 CFR 1150.36(c)(3), SEA will generally issue an environmental assessment (EA) 15 days after the **Federal Register** notice, here by March 9, 2004. However, under 49 CFR 1150.36(c)(10), a stay of the effective date may be issued if an informed decision on environmental issues cannot be made prior to March 9, 2004. Interested persons may obtain a copy of the EA by writing to SEA (Room 500, Surface Transportation Board, Washington, DC 20423-0001) or by calling SEA, at (202) 565-1539. [Assistance for the hearing impaired is available through the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339.] Comments on environmental and historic preservation matters must be filed within 30 days after the EA becomes available to the public.

On completion of the environmental review, the Board will issue a decision

¹ No part of the line that would continue to be operated would be located in the Village of Peoria Heights.

² The City recognizes that Board authority or an exemption must be obtained for discontinuance of rail service over the line.

addressing those matters and making the exemption effective at that time, if appropriate, subject to any necessary conditions, thereby allowing construction to begin.

This exemption will be effective on May 3, 2004, unless stayed. Petitions to stay that do not involve environmental issues must be filed by March 4, 2004.³ Petitions for reconsideration must be filed by March 15, 2004, with the Surface Transportation Board, 1925 K Street, NW., Washington, DC 20423-00001.

If the verified notice contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void *ab initio*. Petitions to revoke the exemption under 49 U.S.C. 10502(d) may be filed at any time. The filing of a petition to revoke will not automatically stay the transaction.

An original and 10 copies of all pleadings, referring to STB Finance Docket No. 34395, must be filed with the Surface Transportation Board, 1925 K St., NW., Washington, DC 20423-0001. In addition, a copy of each pleading must be served on Thomas F. McFarland, 208 South LaSalle St., Suite 1890, Chicago, IL 60604-1112.

Board decisions and notices are available on our Web site at <http://www.stb.dot.gov>.

Decided: February 13, 2004.

By the Board, David M. Konschnik,
 Director, Office of Proceedings.

Vernon A. Williams,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 04-3747 Filed 2-20-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Office of Thrift Supervision

Dollar Savings Bank, Newark, New Jersey; Notice of Appointment of Receiver

Notice is hereby given that, pursuant to the authority contained in section 5(d)(2) of the Home Owners' Loan Act, the Office of Thrift Supervision has duly appointed the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation as receiver for Dollar Savings Bank, Newark, New Jersey (OTS No. 06755), on February 13, 2004.

Dated: February 18, 2004.

³ The Board will grant a stay if an informed decision on environmental issues (whether raised by a party or by SEA in its independent investigation) cannot be made before the exemption's effective date. See *Exemption of Out-of-Service Rail Lines*, 5 I.C.C.2d 377 (1989). Any request for a stay should be filed as soon as possible so that the Board may take appropriate action before the exemption's effective date.