

Letter RE: New Canadian Pacific Railway IMS Terminal Issues: New CPR yard should be built in Mirabel
The West Island Gazette - April 10, 2008.

Dear Editor,

It is very telling that Highway 30 will not relieve road congestion and will do just the opposite. Indeed, it has not been shown beyond a reasonable doubt that truck traffic will decrease on Montreal Island itself. Many of the shipments destined for the current CPR yard in Lachine serve Montreal area businesses.

It is unfortunate that CPR and all levels of government are working hand in glove to encourage sprawl and destroy valuable farmland and marshland. On Wednesday, March 26, 2008 the MRC de Vaudreuil-Soulanges passed a bylaw by a vote of 167-6 to effectively authorize the construction of the new Les Cèdres Canadian Pacific Railway yard by rezoning derogated lot #15 and replacing it with an industrial park catering to intermodal freight transportation: 'aire industrielle du complexe intermodal'. This is not surprising given Quebec's disdain for agricultural zoning. The Commission de protection du territoire agricole du Québec has so many holes that you can drive 100 double stack trains through it and still have enough room for 10 football fields.

Although more noise, vibration, and toxic Diesel emissions will be created by this project, the 40 metre buffer as proposed by CP does not even follow the minimum 300 metre setback guidelines for freight yards and new residential developments as endorsed by the Railway Association Of Canada and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

(See: "Les mémoires oubliés", par Mélanie Meloche Holubowski , <http://www.journalpremiereedition.com/article-175898-Les-memoires-oublies.html>).

Setbacks rules are put into daily practice in Ontario and Edmonton, Alberta and similar norms will be used in Vancouver's Pacific Gateway Project. (See: www.proximityissues.ca, Proximity Guidelines and Best Practices, "Recommendations for Moving Forward", RAC/FCM, Chapter 2, and Pages 8-9.) Transport Canada's Railway Safety Panel has also proposed new land use regulations. (See, http://www.tc.gc.ca/tcss/RSA_Review-Examen_LSF/toc_e.htm.) Canadian National and Canadian Pacific have strongly suggested that these proximity measures be made the law of the land. One has to wonder what CPR's policy precisely is: Is it doing as I say and not as I do?

Our transportation system can truly be environmentally friendly. CP's new facility can be located in Mirabel Airport. It has functional buffer zones and only a short spur would have to be built to connect it with the North American railway grid. Ross Perot Jr. has set the standard for the integration of intermodal rail and airports outside Dallas-Fort Worth Airport. J.C. Penney Co., Bridgestone Corp. and other blue chip companies make use of the 17,000 acre rail hub in Alliance, Texas. (See, New Era Dawns for Rail Building; Lines Add Tracks, Upgrade Tunnels To Take On Trucks, Wall Street Journal, By DANIEL MACHALABA, February 13, 2008; Page A1,

Rolling highways of trailers, containers and trucks can be efficiently shipped on an electric ring railway from Coteau Station and the South Shore via Valleyfield. Switzerland is doing just that for the handling of transalpine freight. But the willingness to do it here is sorely lacking.

Yours Sincerely,
Avrom David Shtern,

Green Coalition, Transportation Issues,
Les Amis de Meadowbrook, Spokesperson.

Cote Saint Luc, QC,