



Milan Area Concerned Citizens

P. O. Box 22 Milan, MI 48160

Rezoning Decision in the Hands of the People

**Township Board voted 3 to 2 that the proposed railroad project will not change the essential character of the community.
The people disagree and will say NO to the rezoning request.**

A petition drive is underway to bring the rezoning decision to a township-wide vote.

Eight hundred townships in Michigan are under development pressures and our community is one of them. The people of Milan Township have a huge decision to make that will drastically change the nature of the rural living environment we enjoy today. The Sierra Club ranks Michigan 49th out of 50 states in its efforts to contain land use sprawl. That is why you don't have to drive very far to see incompatible and unplanned land use developments.

Rezoning not Supported

We in Milan Township find ourselves in a position where the residents must play a significant role in determining the outcome of a proposal from a developer who has turned the planning process upside down. The rezoning for this development is **1)** not supported by our local ordinances, **2)** not supported by the Township's Master Plan, **3)** not supported by the County Planning Commission, **4)** recommended on a slim 3-2 margin by the Township Planning Commission and **5)** not supported by the people of the Milan Area.

Fiscal Impact Study

No fiscal impact study has been done on this project. The Township needs this study to determine if the project will bring positive net revenues or if the additional costs of servicing this business could cause our Township to raise taxes for local residents to support the development. In July the County recommended such a study and in October, SEMCOG (South East Michigan Council on Governments) also urged a study be completed. Our Township board chose to ignore both recommendations.

Rezoning Precedent being Set

We are concerned that if this rezoning is done at the request and for the benefit of one business, other rezoning requests will be quick to follow. The precedent set in this case may pave the way for another railroad on the western side of Milan Township to easily expand their railyards and operations.

Train Rage in Fostoria

Fostoria, Ohio has recently had a new 250 acre vehicle redistribution center put in (the requested rezoning for Milan Township is almost 1,000 acres). It is interesting to see the circumstance Fostoria residents face today with the volume of truck and rail activity in their community. We have included a copy of an article published in The Monroe Evening News on Sunday October 17th, 1999. We are still in a position to prevent this from becoming our future.

Another Anonymous Letter

The most recent anonymous letter sells the notion that a "Special Use Permit" will have teeth and binding restrictions. The **Michigan Guide to Planning and Zoning** states "regardless of what the applicant may state as the 'intended' use for the property, a rezoning permits all of the uses allowed within that district. When evaluating a rezoning, the township must consider each and every use the new district might permit and be prepared to accept any of them for the property under consideration." Ask London Township how effective Special Use Permits have been and what control they have over the Special Use Permit of London Sand Aggregate. Be wise, be informed.

Register to Vote

If you would like to have your voice heard regarding the rezoning, please take the time to register to vote. You may do so at the following locations.

Emily Bowerman
Milan Township Clerk
16695 Sherman Road
Milan, MI 48160

Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Please contact Emily at 439-1139 if another time
would be more convenient for you.

Any Secretary of State's Office
In Milan @ 1158 Dexter Road
Milan, MI 48160

Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri. 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Wed. 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Petition Drive

A petition drive is underway to bring the rezoning decision to a township-wide vote. On October 21st, a letter of intent was filed with the Milan Township clerk to request to file a referendum petition regarding the rezoning ordinance. We have 30 days to collect signatures of Milan Township registered voters. When enough signatures are collected, an election date will be set for a vote. If the people vote to keep the land for agricultural use, the Ann Arbor Railroad rezoning request is denied.

Sign a Petition

We believe your opinion and your petition signature are an important part of the democratic process, a means for your voice to be heard. To ask questions and/or arrange a time for someone to bring a petition to your home for your signature, call Jim at 439-8414, Mary at 439-0713, or Aretta at 439-2573.

Thursday Open Houses

Milan Area Concerned Citizens (MACC) are welcoming the community to an informal informational open house on Thursday November 4th and 11th in the Meeting room at the Monroe Bank & Trust on Sanford Road from 5 to 8 p.m. This will give you an opportunity to ask questions and discuss issues affecting our community. MACC is looking for individuals, such as you, to become actively involved in protecting our quality of life and community. Petitions will be available to sign.

There are many ways you can get involved in this process. You can help petition, become a neighborhood contact, make phone calls, help with a mailing, etc. There are many small jobs that can be done with a limited time commitment. If you don't have time to volunteer, making a financial contribution is another way to help out.

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On the web at <http://users.dundee.net/railyard> or contact via e-mail to railyard@dundee.net
Jim 439-8414, Mary 439-0713, Aretta 439-2573

Slow trains in Ohio cause 'rail rage'

■ The rail jams are being blamed on one of the most massive rail acquisitions in U.S. history.

By JOHN SEWNER

Associated Press writer

FOSTORIA, Ohio — Children climb under boxcars to get home from school. Firefighters send two trucks on different routes to the same fire — just to be sure one gets through. One neighborhood can be entirely hemmed in by trains.

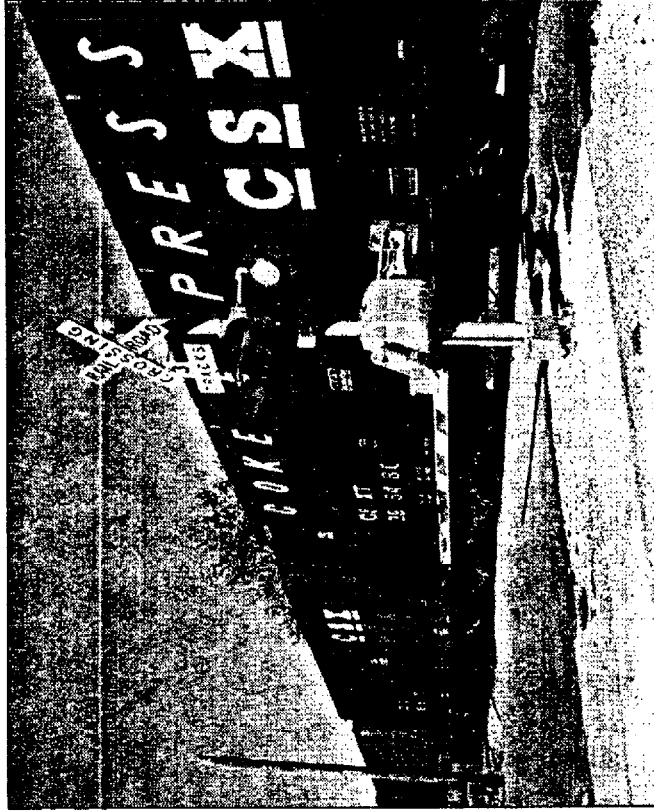
No wonder many people in northern Ohio are experiencing "rail rage," as a bottleneck of train traffic boils tempers and tests patience.

"I've threatened to do everything but blow the damn train," Huron County Sheriff Dick Sutherland said at a recent town meeting — where the only topic was train traffic.

The rail jams are being blamed on one of the most massive rail acquisitions in U.S. history. Traffic along some routes in the Midwest has tripled since CSX Corp. and Norfolk Southern Corp. started splitting up Conrail's routes in June.

There simply were too many trains and not enough tracks.

"We absorbed more cars than could be processed efficiently, and we found ourselves in a deep hole from which we're having a hard time recovering," Norfolk Southern Chairman David Goode said last month.



—AP photo by RON KUNTZ

A stopped CSX freight train blocks a rural crossing near Willard, Ohio, last week. Train traffic along some rail routes in the Midwest has tripled since CSX Corp. and Norfolk Southern Corp. started splitting up Conrail's routes in June. Many people in northern Ohio are experiencing "rail rage" as a bottleneck of train traffic boils tempers and tests patience.

CSX and Norfolk Southern spent two years planning the Conrail split, but have had problems with computerized routing systems and staffing.

"Our goal first and foremost is not blocking railroad crossings," said Norfolk Southern spokeswoman Susan Terpay. "It's impacting our customers and the communities we work in."

Both railroads have lost business to trucking companies

blocked two crossings for three hours and forced an ambulance to make a 21-mile detour while carrying a patient to a hospital.

In Fostoria, a town with three major rail lines and 100 trains a day, the traffic forces the fire department to alter its routes.

"Any time we go on a run, we'll send one truck one way and one the other way so that at least one truck will make it," said Fire Lt. Bob Young.

One section of town known as the "Iron Triangle" is completely enclosed by railroad tracks. Firefighters were once blocked from getting to a kitchen fire in the neighborhood and had to crawl under a train with extinguishers in tow.

Another time, three police officers who had responded to a traffic accident inside the triangle couldn't get out. And they were the only officers on duty.

In Sandusky, children have crawled under stopped trains that were blocking streets, said City Manager Gerald Lechner.

Authorities say there is little they can do to get the trains moving. Cities can fine railroads a maximum of \$1,000 for blocking a crossing, but townships and counties are limited to \$65 fines.

"The fines are a spit in the wind for the railroads," said Republican state Rep. Rex Damschroder.

He and other Ohio lawmakers are working on legislation to make the penalties a lot more costly.

This summer, a train crew

Copy of Most Recent "Anonymous" Letter rec'd ~ 10/23

"SPECIAL USE PERMIT"

We have listened to the term "Special Use Permit" at several recent meetings. We have been told that this special permit will only allow certain types of operations to be conducted within the automobile distribution center, proposed by Ann Arbor Properties.

The special use permit will not allow Ann Arbor Properties to put something other than what they have applied for in the proposed facility. To me that means an automobile distribution center will be built there and not a factory of any kind. This permit will also prevent Ann Arbor Properties from doing anything else on the property without due process and approval from the township. That means they (Ann Arbor Properties), have to apply for an ammendment to the special use permit for any changes, a process identical to what they are going through now. This puts our township officials in control.

Many of our neighbors feel, that, once the project is approved, Ann Arbor Properties has the right to change their mind and put something else in its place . This is not true. This is the reason for a special use permit.

We feel Ann Arbor Properties has been honest with us and is willing to live within a special use permit for an automobile distribution center. They would have objected to this type of permit if their intent was different.

Once more, we, the supporters of the Ann Arbor Properties Project feel we have a comfort level, built on trust in our officials, and encourage each and every one of you to stand with us in our support of this project. We need this project and the benefits it will bring to our community and our survivors for years to come.

Pick up the telephone and call our township officials and let them know that you are behind them in their decision to approve the project. While you're at it, call your friends and encourage them to do the same.

Supporters of The Ann Arbor Properties Project

**SPEAK OUT AND SUPPORT THE
ANN ARBOR PROPERTIES PROJECT!!!**