

PMT Meeting #4 Questions
Submitted by Safety in the Park
12/14/10

Q: Heading west through this set of curves what is the likelihood of trains derailing since they will be traveling fast through a series of curves?

A: **The track would be designed to accommodate train speeds up to 25 mph. The actual speeds could vary, depending on a number of variables, but would not exceed 25 mph. The track is designed and maintained on both straight and curved sections to operate a train safely (ie without derailing) at the designed speed.**

Q: Is the likelihood great enough to encourage the railroads to institute a slow order?

A: **The design criteria reflected in the preliminary design concepts is based on FRA Class 2 track, which reflects a design speed of 25 mph. The maximum curves are also reflective of a design speed of 25 mph. The federal and railway design standards are set forth to develop track design that prevent derailments. Slow orders would not be designed into the system.**

Q: What will the speed be if/when a slow order is instituted?

A: **If the owner railway (CP) was required to establish a temporary or permanent lower train speed for any reason, the railway would determine the maximum operating speed limit for the slow order based on their own criteria/regulations and any applicable other regulations.**

Q: Will a derailment study be done to help determine the slow order?

A: **Railway Track engineering and design standards that will be used to design the rebuilding of the MN&S are developed to reduce the potential occurrence of a derailment relating to track engineering defects.**

Q: Heading east will a fully loaded 100 car train be able to go 25mph up the interconnect and through the curves?

A: **The track would be designed to accommodate train speeds up to 25 mph. The actual speeds could vary, depending on a number of variables and is a railroad owner decision, but would not exceed 25 mph.**

Q: If it won't go 25mph, how fast will it be going?

A: **See response note above.**

Q: If it is going 25mph, what will be the decibels produced by the locomotives? In other words, how noisy will it be? A noise study will be completed as part of the EAW process.

A: **The potential impact associated with the noise generated by the locomotive will be included in the EAW.**

Q: Will the noise be more or less if the train has a DP?(pusher locomotive).

A: **To be addressed in the EAW.**

Q: What is the likelihood of a train jack knifing, as the train in Wayzata , if there is a derailment with a DP?

A: **The railway engineering standards used for the design and reconstruction of the MN&S will accommodate the use of distributed power (DP) on trains being operated over the MN&S.**

Q: Will a study be done to help determine the effects and likelihood of a derailment as a train struggles up the interconnect and through a number of curves?

A: **The design criteria reflected in the preliminary design concepts is based on FRA Class 2 track, which reflects a design speed of 25 mph. The maximum curves are also reflective of a design speed of 25 mph. The federal and railway design standards are set forth to develop track design that prevent derailments. No additional studies are needed.**

Q: After the general question about quiet zones the comment about them being not as safe as some think and that people should not regard them as the solution to our problems was left out of the notes.

A: **So noted.**

Q: General comment about the time to look and consider the plan/information on the initial engineering concept plans. It was left out that part of the concern stemmed from the fact that the railroads had access to the plans a full week before the meeting. Neighborhood PMT members had requested the information ahead of time and were told it was not available until the meeting.

A: **As stated at the PMT meeting, the proposed study is within the CP and BNSF privately owned right of way. Because of this, it is important in the baseline design process to present preliminary concepts that at a minimum reflect the requirements set forth by the respective railways.**

Q: There was a question about the siding on the Bass Lake spur. When will we be told the answer to the question?

A: This is a decision that the CP needs to make regarding the current business operations/service. As noted at the meeting, CP is currently reviewing the preliminary design concepts along with other PMT members.

Q: There was a question about the new BNSF siding. We were told blocking is not anticipated. Can we get a guarantee that blocking will not occur on the new siding?

A: The BNSF controls the operations within their right of way, while blocking operations are currently not proposed as part of this study and improvements, we can not guarantee that BNSF would not require blocking operations on the proposed siding.

Q: When trains are sitting on the new BNSF siding, will the locomotives be idling? How long will the trains sit?

A: Locomotives on trains on the proposed siding could be idling as they are waiting in the siding to meet another train coming usually in the opposite direction. Railways require these sidings so that their trains can be efficiently operated in two directions with one main track. It is in the railway's best interest to minimize the time a train is standing on a siding waiting for another train. The railroads have the right to shut down or idle a locomotive.

I also have comments about questions listed in the Open Forum section of the PMT#4 notes.

Q: Is a derailment study planned ? It was a Yes, No question and the answer given was evasive. If the answer is yes, when will we see the results. If the answer is no, why not?

A: A derailment study is not planned. See response to question #1 on first page.

Q: The question at the 7th bullet was incorrectly written. The question was, "Will a train traveling 20mph from Library Lane to Dakota be able to see an obstruction in the intersection at Dakota in time for the locomotive to stop?" The initial answer from Bob Suko was left out of the minutes. His response was, "No." He then back peddled and said more study needed to be done.

A: Correction has been noted.

Q: A question by Sue Sanger was left completely out of the notes. Her question was, "when will we get answers to the question not answered during the meeting." I would like to ask this question, "When will we get answers to the questions not answered during this meeting.?"

A: Action items are included in the meeting notes from each PMT meeting. The specific question raised by Councilmember Sue Sanger regarding Excelsior Boulevard is included as a defined action item. Other questions which are raised at the PMT meeting, which can not be completely answered at the meeting, either because of time constraints, and/or requirement to further evaluate, will be responded to accordingly by the study team.

Comments about the Summary/Status section:

From PMT#1

Q: We were asked about ways to help with outreach to our neighbors. That item is listed as “on-going.” At PMT#1 Karen Hroma asked about the budget for neighborhood meetings. She was not given an answer. If the county will not give us money for postage, what is the plan to help us?

A: As requested by the PMT, the PMT meetings are videotaped, and broadcast through the city. An open house is planned for December 16 in effort to provide technical expertise to the community. PMT meetings are open to the public, and an open forum agenda item is included at each meeting. The city of St. Louis Park has printed and distributed roughly 7,000 postcards regarding the upcoming December open house.

From PMT#2

Q: The request from PMT members to widen the scope of the MN&S study is listed as complete. How can it be complete when the PMT members have not received a response to their request?

A: As noted at PMT #4 meeting, the response to the letter submitted by Safety in the Park, and other local neighborhood representatives was addressed through an individual meeting with the City, Mn/DOT, Hennepin County and Safety in the Park representatives.

Q: When can we anticipate an answer to our request?

A: See response to #1 above.