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SUBJECT: Norfolk Southern Railway Company Connection Track Project

August 17, 2023

Mr. Richard Straut, Mayor:
Village of Voorheesville, NY

I am writing to recap the basic details of the planned Norfolk Southern Railway Company (NSR) sponsored construction project that will be occurring in your community over the next few months, and to provide you and the community an initial work schedule. In the spirit of transparency with the community, we ask that you share this letter with the residents of the Village. Attached you will find an exhibit plan that can be shared with the community on the Village's website.

General Project Overview

In cooperation with CSXT Transportation (CSXT), NSR will be modifying/reconstructing the existing railroad connection track between lines of the two carriers in Voorheesville. This connection track has existed since the late-1800's and crosses Main Street at-grade just north/west of the intersection of Main and Prospect Streets. While it has not been actively used in several years, the connection track has been purposefully retained by the railroads so that it could be utilized if a business need developed.

As a result of CSXT's 2021 application to the STB to acquire Pan Am Railways (a regional rail carrier serving New England), NSR obtained trackage rights from CSXT allowing NSR to use CSXT's line east of Voorheesville to access New England. This planned operation necessitates the reactivation of the Voorheesville connection track, and the carriers have mutually agreed that upgrades are required for it to be safely and efficiently utilized for that business purpose. The traffic to be operated by NSR is anticipated to be one (1) train in each direction daily, handling Intermodal Equipment (hauling containers) and Multi-level Automotive Carriers (hauling new vehicles). The public often has questions about intermodal rail freight, and good factual information can be found at the Association of American Railroads' webpage under [Freight Rail & Intermodal](#).

For NSR the junction with CSXT in Voorheesville is the eastern end point of a branch line (the former Delaware & Hudson Railway's Albany Branch) that runs between the NSR Binghamton to Schenectady mainline in Delanson and Voorheesville. NSR has been undertaking a comprehensive rehabilitation of this branch line during 2023, and it has now been significantly rebuilt. Work has included the full replacement of the line's older jointed rail with new continuously welded rail, along with a variety of other basic infrastructure improvements. Tie replacement work just west of Voorheesville is scheduled for this fall. The goal of the work is to provide a mainline-quality line segment capable of safely and efficiently supporting the planned 25mph train operation.

At this time NSR anticipates that revenue train operations using the rehabilitated branch and the rebuilt Voorheesville connection would begin in the 2nd Quarter of 2024.

Project Specifics

At Voorheesville, the existing connection track will be fully removed and the roadbed and track section fully rebuilt using all new material. This will include treated wood cross-ties and continuous welded rail laid on granite ballast. This full reconstruction will extend from a point approximately 1,100 feet south/east of the School Road at-grade highway crossing to the current point of connection with CSXT between Main Street and Voorheesville Avenue. At Main Street the alignment of the connection track will be shifted to the north/west by 15+ feet to create a gentler approach curve to the tie-in with the CSXT mainline. The existing manual-turnout in the CSXT mainline will be replaced with a new dispatcher-controlled power turnout, which will allow seamless train operation off-of/onto the CSXT mainline from NSR line at speeds up to 25 mph. The grade profile of the connection track will need to be slightly raised from its current condition to accommodate a roadbed, ballast, and track section constructed to current industry standards. To accommodate this necessary track profile adjustment, the roadway profile of Main Street will also need to be adjusted between the Prospect Street intersection and the southern approach to the CSXT mainline at-grade highway crossing.

NSR feels this roadway work will benefit the community by reconfiguring the intersection of Main Street and Foundry Road and by providing a smoother overall grade profile for Main Street. Currently, the alignment and profile of Main Street, and the layout of the intersection with Foundry Road, are both imperfect historical carryovers from when the former Delaware & Hudson Railway crossed the current CSXT mainline at-grade. At that time an additional at-grade highway crossing existed in this location, and roadway adjustments were not made when the track and crossing were removed. The current project will improve the geometry of the Foundry Road intersection by creating a "T" configuration with uniform lane widths, a more level stop zone, and greater separation between the intersection and the CSXT at-grade highway crossing. These changes will enhance safety by improving driver sightlines. These modifications will require a portion of Main Street and a portion of Foundry Road to be fully rebuilt. The Village has requested, and NSR has included in its plans, the extension of the sidewalk along Main Street in the zone where the street is being rebuilt. Unused aerial utility poles, a legacy out-of-service track stub, and vegetation that is detrimental to train-crew sight clearance will also be removed from the NSR property, improving the general appearance of the area.

NSR intends to install new Flasher and Gate grade-crossing protection devices at the connection track's at-grade crossing with Main Street. This new protection equipment will be in addition to the existing grade crossing protection devices at the adjacent CSXT grade-crossing. The protection devices at both crossings will be electronically interconnected with the railway signal system and will operate in coordination with one another.

All connection track project work is being fully funded by NSR. No Village of Voorheesville or Albany County funds are being used for any project work, including the roadway/sidewalk improvements or the drainage/utility modifications.

Anticipated Project Schedule

NSR has completed design and permitting for the project and has recently engaged the local Albany-area firm of James H. Maloy, Inc., to serve as the general contractor for the work. They will be responsible

for performing the civil site work, roadway work, and the majority of the trackwork construction. CSXT forces will install the new powered turnout in the CSXT mainline, and both NSR and CSXT signal departments will be engaged in railway signal installation work at the rebuilt crossing and junction point.

Civil site work is anticipated to begin the week of August 28th. Early action tasks by the James H. Maloy crews will include completion of the site clearing work and the salvage of the existing connection track. This phase will be followed by roadbed preparation, drainage facility installation, and preliminary grading for a portion of the new Foundry Road intersection approach. Needed road closures / detour routes, and traffic control signage plans have been fully reviewed by Albany County DPW, and the contractor will secure appropriate closure permits from the County prior to the work occurring. The contractor will discuss road closure implementation plans with the Village as they firm up, to ensure that appropriate notice is made to first responders and members of the community. At this time, the exact schedule for the needed temporary roadway closure(s) has not been finalized, but none are anticipated to occur before mid to late September. While there will have to be a lengthier closure of Main Street during October to complete raising of the Main Street grade, the project roadwork will be performed in a phased manner to ensure that local access to Foundry Road is maintained throughout the project.

NSR and our contractor are committed to maintaining a clean, safe, clearly marked and well-barricaded work site. When appropriate, traffic control flaggers will be used to protect vehicle traffic at the construction site. As with any construction project, it is respectfully requested that drivers and pedestrians follow the directions of flaggers, the comply with road detours and sidewalk closures when they occur. We also request that the members of the community do not disregard construction barriers, enter the active NSR railway / roadway work zone areas, or attempt to bypass the worksite by trespassing on the adjacent CSXT property which is an active high-speed railroad.

NSR recognizes that construction, particularly in a setting such as the Village of Voorheesville, is never easy, nor without temporary inconvenience. We ask in advance for your cooperation and patience. Be assured that I am personal committed to having NSR undertake the project in a timely and professional manner, with the safety of rail operations and the citizens of Voorheesville being our primary focus.

Sincerely,

David A. Becker, PE

Chief Engineer - Design & Construction

Attachment – Exhibit Plan dated 08/17/23 (TD-2022-55-R2)