

Hoosick Falls & Surrounding Areas News

HOOSICK FALLS

Railroad Says Tracks Are Just Fine Removes 10 mph Speed Limit

The Eastwick Press has been reporting on a problem with the Pan Am Railroad tracks near Railroad Avenue, where County Legislator Bruce Patire, town of Hoosick officials and area residents have expressed a deep concern about an undersized culvert under the rail bed. They have pointed out the tracks move when heavy freights pass over them, fearing there is a distinct possibility of a derailment that might include both oil and propane cars. The NYS Department of Transportation Rail Division issued a report that the movement was within limitations, as long as trains are kept to 10 miles per hour.

Mr. Patire and fellow legislator Jeff Wysocki penned a letter of appeal to federal and state authorities, as well as the railway. They were joined at that time in their appeal by State Senator Daphne Jordan and Assemblyman Jake Ashby. The result was a meeting a short time ago between Mr. Patire, Hoosick Supervisor Mark Surdam and Councilman Jerry McAuliffe and Pan Am Engineer Ted Krug. At Pan Am's request the meeting was private, without the public or the media invited. Legislator Patire said he agreed to the condition, hopeful it would spur some fruitful discussion. Instead, he tells *The Eastwick Press*, Mr. Krug simply showed them reports of inspections, done twice weekly on the



Assemblyman Jake Ashby and Senator Daphne Jordan meet with officials at the site of the culvert under the rail tracks on March 11 to discuss their concerns and the best way to address them. Eastwick Press file photo.

track, as well as ultrasonic and geometric testing, then concluded the railway is safe. He also told the three officials, that having replaced some ties in the area, they have also lifted the 10 mph speed limit.

In a letter to all officials involved in the issue, Pan Am Executive Vice President Cynthia Scarano said Mr. Krug indicated he believed the culvert to be large enough to handle typical runoff, and asked if there were any engineering reports that indicate what magnitude storm would be needed to create an undersize situation. Supervisor Surdam indicated the Village of Hoosick Falls would like to upsize drainage pipes

upstream from the rail line (the Woods Brook Project), and is concerned what impact that would have on the culvert in question. Mr. Krug is reported to have said Pan Am would be open to working with the village on the project.

Legislator Patire is not satisfied with the Railway's response, feeling they "poo-pooed" all his concerns. He is still hopeful the appeal to the federal railway agencies will meet with a more favorable response. He said he went into the meeting hoping to say "thank you" but now fears the worst, and that he will have to say "I told you so."

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