



News Release

Harbor Commission Backs City's Appeal of Rail Project Board calls for changes to proposal approved by Port of L.A.

Apr. 3, 2013

The Long Beach Board of Harbor Commissioners voted unanimously Monday to support the city's appeal of the Southern California International Gateway rail yard project approved recently by the Port of Los Angeles.

The 153-acre facility proposed by BNSF Railway Co. sits just outside West Long Beach, alongside the Terminal Island Freeway on land owned by the Port of Los Angeles. Much of its impact would be felt by nearby Long Beach residents, businesses and schools. The project, if built, would serve on-dock rail facilities at both the Port of Long Beach and the Port of Los Angeles.

"Improvement of rail facilities is critical to the economic development of this port, and improved rail facilities are what we need in order to reduce emissions," said Harbor Commission President Susan E. Anderson Wise. However, "everyone can do better on this project than has been done so far."



Wise, along with commissioners Rich Dines, Nick Sramek and Doug Drummond, voted to direct Port staff to work with the City of Long Beach to help find solutions on the issues the city raised against the project. Commissioner Thomas Fields recused himself because of a possible conflict of interest related to his investments.

The City of Long Beach has appealed the Port of Los Angeles' approval of the project to the Los Angeles City Council, which will vote on the project in the coming weeks. Long Beach officials

have opposed the project as it stands, saying it does not sufficiently reduce the impact on West Long Beach.

"L.A. needs to treat Long Beach like a neighbor, not just dump the project over here without mitigation and changes," Sramek said.

Long Beach's appeal of the project is on behalf of the entire city, including its Harbor Department, which is the Port of Long Beach. Harbor commissioners said it was important to go on the record with their support of the appeal and to call for solutions.

"I really want to talk about solutions," Dines said. "I am hopeful we can find common ground."

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