From: Jonathan Wainscott <jonwainscott@gmail.com>
Sent: 10/25/2012 9:42:48 AM
To: Gordon Smith
Cc:
Subject: Follow-up

Thanks Gordon for your prompt attention to my email to you. I know you are very busy, so I really appreciate you time.

Just a quick follow-up to the Jake Braking, and Norfolk Southern issues. It seems that municipal ordinances would be most appropriate for the Jake Braking, and that would be supported by public awareness. Perhaps as we get more up to speed on how this issue has been addressed in the past, you will be able to bring that history and potential progress concerning noise pollution before the members of the community.

As for Norfolk Southern, they are a sticky widget. It is widely assumed that their cooperation will be the biggest obstacle to overcome regarding the viability of the Festus Bypass. I don't want to agitate them per se, however they do own a tremendous responsibility for quality of life issues. Riverside Drive is disabled as transportation thoroughfare for commercial truck traffic while existing as an industrial zone. While safety is of course the most important issue concerning the movement of train traffic though the community, noise could be reduced if NS were willing to upgrade crossing gates. Blasting a horn of course is free and upgrading gates and signals is expensive. At some point, I believe, the railroads need to participate in the process of sharing our space. Our land space, and our sound space. Railroads make money by using the land. They also receive huge government subsidies based on the notion that they provide a societal benefit of reducing truck traffic on highways. Norfolk Southern has a very slick 73 page sustainability report which includes its commitment to limiting the negative impact of its operations on the communities it passes through. Asheville is a very special place and it should be afforded some special attention by the railroads, especially considering the presence of the Biltmore Estate, the wealth of which was originally derived from the rail industry. I'm trying to bring these thoughts closer to the surface so that the public will focus its collective attention on all the players that have the power to make Asheville the best place it can be. By bringing other issues of Norfolk Southern's impact on our community to the attention of the public, I hope to add pressure to NS to up their game and paying their fair share of community involvement and improvement, be that through their Rails to Trails program, reducing noise, improving safety, and participating in forward thinking like the Festus Bypass project.

Thanks again for your time. Well be in touch.

Jonathan