

Mayor and Village Council
Village Hall
801 Burlington Avenue
Downers Grove, Illinois 60515

Re: July 5, 2011
Council Meeting

Dear Mayor and Village Council:

6. Consent Agenda F: Authorize a Pedestrian Underpass Agreement with BNSF Railway Company and the Commuter Rail Division of the Regional Transportation Authority

I am considering moving this from the Consent Agenda and delaying this for a week (12th).

Please explain the pump station and the county's role?

The purpose of the pump station is to drain the runoff from the low point of the underpass into a nearby and higher storm sewer. The pump station was installed as part of this project on the property as part of the stormwater facilities for the project. The County is solely responsible for the operation and maintenance of the pump station.

P 11 says the municipality (us) is responsible for "the Structure" and I feel this may be too vague. What does this entail and what are the future projected costs of "the structure"? ie: it includes things like "track work" which leads me to believe that there is more than pedestrian responsibilities – track surface

The Structure in this agreement is defined as the Pedestrian Underpass. Paragraph (b) states that the Village "will own and maintain, at its sole cost and expense, the Structure, the approach sidewalks, railings, stairs and ramps, and appurtenances thereto, including but not limited to lighting, drainage and any access installed pursuant to this Agreement." We are also required to maintain the structure free of graffiti and free from birds, pigeons, scavengers, vermin, creatures and other animals, pursuant to paragraphs (c) and (h). Paragraph (a) provides that "BNSF will, at its sole cost and expense, accept, own, and maintain its roadbed, track, any access gates installed pursuant to the Project, railroad drainage, and all other railroad facilities including without limitation, the ballast and items above the ballast at the pedestrian bridge, signals and warning devices." This paragraph makes it clear that the Village is not responsible for any "track work". Future projected costs include items such as caulking joints and painting, graffiti removal, surveillance camera maintenance and periodic drain cleaning.

Who has reviewed this contract on our behalf? This seems very one-sided.

The Village Attorney and the Public Works Director have reviewed these on the Village's behalf.

"Little things" like ANNUAL traffic control with 7 days notice barely allows us to get the message out for closures, detours etc. Why not longer for routine matters? Seems one-sided.

These contracts have been negotiated over for several years. Some language was standard BNSF language that could not be altered. Staff is accustomed to working within BNSF parameters.

10. Manager's Report: Siren Policy Review

If the revised language were in the policy on June 21, would the sirens have been activated?

Yes.

Will there be multiple types of sirens sounded?

No. The outdoor warning system will be activated for a period of three minutes. The warning system will be reactivated for any new qualifying event. This is consistent with the recommendations of the DuPage County Department of Emergency Management.

Based on our tornado, it traveled at 60 mph (1 mile per minute) which means that in severe storms or traveling tornadoes, we are giving only 5 min. notice based on 5 mile radius?

How many "types" of tornado warnings are there – it appears it is based on "trained spotting".

The National Weather Service has one formal type of tornado warning. However, the warning contains two different types of events. One type of event is a confirmed tornado sighting by Skywarn spotters. The second type of event is strong rotation in a thunderstorm as indicated by Doppler weather radar.

The first sentence in the guidelines appears that it would be acceptable (a tornado warning issues) but the following paragraph says "imminent threat" – see item 2 in the existing policy.

Criteria seems to assume neighbors are going to be hit first, but what happens, as in this case, that WE are hit first?

The current policy does not assume that another area will experience a siren activation qualifying event prior to the Village of Downers Grove. If a qualifying event happens first in Downers Grove, it would trigger the activation of the warning sirens.

Activation is more for people outside rather than in their homes – the documents indicate ineffectiveness caused by air conditioning etc. The short-long blasts operation need to be simplified (attack? Tornado? An all clear if there was a previous warning etc.

Revised policy should be reviewed again after July regional meeting.

What do our residents want? Basically avoid numerous soundings – but to take cover if outside.

Role of fire houses in emergencies.

Sincerely,



David Fieldman
Village Manager

Cc: Department Directors