

ORIGINAL

BEFORE THE RAILROAD COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the matter of application of)
 SOUTHERN PACIFIC COMPANY for an)
 order authorizing the construction)
 at grade of a spur track across San) Application No. 10917.
 Fernando Road, West Glendale Station,)
 in the City of Glendale, County of)
 Los Angeles, State of California.)

C. W. Cornell for Southern Pacific Company.
 Leslie R. Tarr, for City of Glendale.
 George A. Damon for Los Angeles County
 Regional Planning Committee.

SHORE, COMMISSIONER;

O P I N I O N

In this application Southern Pacific Company asks permission to construct a spur track at grade across San Fernando Road between California Avenue and Milford Street in the City of Glendale.

A public hearing was held in this matter in Los Angeles, April 16, 1925.

In the vicinity of the proposed grade crossing, San Fernando Road is adjacent to and on the northeasterly side of Southern Pacific Company's right-of-way. On January 12, 1922 the City of Glendale passed a zoning ordinance which classifies the district adjacent to the northeast side of San Fernando Road as industrial property. This area is occupied by industries, small business establishments and residences, and is only partially developed.

San Fernando Road is one of the most important through highway arteries in Southern California. Although there is a plan to construct a new highway along the east bank of the Los Angeles River, which is to the west of the railroad in the vicinity of the

proposed crossing, it is very evident that San Fernando Road will still be a very important through highway artery. The greater portion of the through traffic of the so-called "Valley Route", as well as a considerable portion of the "Coast Route" traffic to the north passes over this highway and probably will continue to do so. Its importance, therefore, as a traffic artery can scarcely be over-emphasized.

The spur track proposed herein is to serve a lumber yard located on the northeast side of San Fernando Road about 100 feet north of California Street. This lumber yard was established in 1921, and, up to the present time, has hauled its lumber in trucks from Southern Pacific Company's team track at West Glendale across San Fernando Road to its yard.

The question now under consideration should be considered from two points of view, namely the local effect and the general effect that would result from the granting of this application.

Considering first the local effect: During the year of 1923 this Company received about 200 cars of lumber, while in 1924 about 150 cars were received. It is estimated that on an average one carload of lumber is equivalent to ten truck loads. Applicant contends that the trucking of lumber across San Fernando Road creates more hazard and inconvenience to the traveling public than would be the case if this material were transported across the highway by means of railroad cars. I am not convinced, however, that this argument is valid. In measuring the relative public hazard of the two methods of conveying the lumber across the street, it is no doubt true that train movement across a street is more hazardous than the movement of a truck crossing the highway between intersections, but the ratio of hazard between two kinds of movement does not appear to have been conclusively determined.

Considering the public hazard that would be incident to the construction of the proposed spur track by itself, it does not present such seriously objectionable features as are evident when considering the general effect that would result therefrom. If the Commission is to grant this application, it could not, without discrimination, reasonably deny similar applications that will undoubtedly be filed in the future, as the industrial area to the northeast of San Fernando Road develops. Unquestionably a multiplicity of spur tracks across such an important highway presents a serious obstacle to the convenient use of this important highway artery by the public.

On the other hand, reasonable provision for the construction of railroad facilities which are essential to industrial development is also a consideration of prime importance, and when these two important public interests conflict, very careful study should be given to their relative weight or to the development of a plan of serving the needs of each without interfering with the other.

A city such as Glendale certainly has the right to encourage the establishment of important industries, and industrial areas can be most logically located adjacent to steam railroads. We therefore have the situation in Glendale where the logical location for heavy industrial development is separated from the railroad by one of the heaviest traveled vehicular highways, from a through traffic point of view, in the state. There is at present only one spur track across San Fernando Road in this general vicinity, it being a spur serving the Standard Oil Company and located north of Colorado Avenue. Permission for this crossing was granted by the Commission's decision No. 8522, dated November 8, 1920, and it may be that in the interest of the general public, the Commission in the future will deem it proper to

revoke authority for this crossing.

It is pointed out that an industrial district along the northeast side of the railroad in the vicinity of the proposed crossing could be developed without the construction of a series of spur tracks across a through highway artery, by either relocating San Fernando Road between Maple Street and Doran Street to a point approximately 600 feet northeast of its present location, or constructing a drill track to the northeast of San Fernando Road through the area designated as industrial property. Each of these methods would, however, be rather difficult to accomplish, due to the fact that the property is held by a large number of different owners, not all of whom would probably agree as to the advantages of such an arrangement to their own private interests.

If San Fernando Road were relocated as suggested, the replaced portion could either be abandoned or retained as a local industrial street, according to which plan appeared to give the greatest benefits to the district affected. This plan would clearly remove all objection to an intensive industrial development of the area adjacent to the railroad. Such a relocation of San Fernando Road would be a large undertaking and would involve a very large expense, but it would unquestionably result in large benefits to the property between the new location of San Fernando Road and the railroad. Another great advantage of removing San Fernando Road from the railroad would be that it would simplify the construction of any future grade separation of east and west major highways across the Southern Pacific Railroad.

With respect to constructing a drill track through the industrial property to the northeast of San Fernando Road, such an arrangement seems practical only if all the property owners

were agreeable to the project. While it is recognized that the proposed drill track would cross a number of east and west streets, two of which are important, namely Broadway and Colorado, it is considered that such an arrangement would not constitute a public hazard of as great a magnitude as would a series of spur tracks across San Fernando Road.

The district to the west of the railroad, in the vicinity of the proposed crossing, lies in the City of Los Angeles, as the southwest line of the railroad right-of-way marks the boundary between the cities of Los Angeles and Glendale. This district, although sparsely developed at this time, is now being opened for intense industrial development, as the Southern Pacific Company has recently constructed a system of spur tracks through this property to serve the prospective industries.

It thus appears that under the present conditions the district to the west of the railroad offers a favorable location for heavy industrial development. San Fernando Road is now being widened and paved to a minimum width of 40 feet. The property to the east thereof offers a favorable location for light industrial development without industrial track service.

After considering all the evidence in this proceeding, it appears that this application should be denied.

The following form of order is recommended:

O R D E R

Southern Pacific Company having made application to this Commission for permission to construct a spur track at grade across San Fernando Road between California Street and Milford Street, in the City of Glendale, Los Angeles County, California, a public hearing having been held, the matter having been duly submitted and now ready for decision, for the reasons stated in the foregoing opinion,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the above entitled applica-
tion be and the same is hereby denied.

The foregoing Opinion and Order are hereby approved
and ordered filed as the Opinion and Order of the Railroad
Commission of the State of California.

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 14th day of
May, 1925.

H. B. Brundage

C. Seavey

E. M. West

Commissioners.