

Decision No. 21714 .

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RAILROAD COMMISSION

BEFORE THE RAILROAD COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA.

In the Matter of the Application of  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF KERN COUNTY  
for an order authorizing the con-  
struction of a crossing by the County  
of Kern over the tracks of the South-  
ern Pacific Company at the point of  
intersection at Quantico Avenue in  
Section 27, T. 29 S., R.28 E., M.D.M.,  
and the right of way of the Southern  
Pacific Company.

Application No. 15845.

W. A. McGinn, Deputy District Attorney,  
for Applicant.

H. W. Hobbs, for Southern Pacific Com-  
pany, Protestant.

BY THE COMMISSION:

O P I N I O N

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF KERN in the above  
numbered application requests authority to establish a crossing  
at grade over the tracks of the Southern Pacific Company at a  
point known as Quantico Avenue.

A public hearing herein was conducted by Examiner  
Williams at Bakersfield, October 4, 1929, the matter was duly  
submitted, and is now ready for decision.

The proposed grade crossing is about two miles south  
of Bakersfield and midway between the existing Mt. Vernon Avenue  
crossing, which is paved and protected with a part-time flagman,  
and the Fairfax Avenue crossing, which is unprotected. The

distance between the two crossings is about a mile. The crossing as proposed would cross the two main tracks of the Southern Pacific, and also a switching lead which takes off the main tracks about 700 feet east of the proposed crossing. The angle of the crossing would be approximately about 74 degrees with the grade of approach on the north side of approximately two per cent, and on the south side approximately six per cent. The crossing is intended to accommodate persons living in the Virginia Colony south of the tracks, and particularly to enable children in this district to attend school on the north side of the tracks. The persons living in the Virginia Colony are now required to go to the Mt. Vernon crossing to gain access to the north side of the tracks, as it is more convenient and safer than the Fairfax Avenue crossing.

Supervisor J.O. Hart, testifying on behalf of applicant, stated that the crossing would accommodate approximately twenty families in Virginia Colony, and further that funds are available for the construction of the crossing, if authorized. Mr. Hart testified that he had opposed on the former occasion the establishment of a pedestrian crossing at this point, but that he was now convinced that a pedestrian and vehicular crossing was needed because of the inconvenience of the Mt. Vernon crossing and the frequent delays due to train operations at that point.

D. J. Friesen, a resident of the Virginia Colony district, testified that the children attend the Horace Mann School north of the tracks, and that the school bus was frequently jammed and some children were required to walk over the tracks.

E. T. Langdale, Assistant Division Engineer of the Southern Pacific, presented traffic counts made at the Mt. Vernon and Fairfax crossings August 15th, between the hours of 6:00 A.M. and 3:00 P.M., showing a movement at Mt. Vernon Avenue of 239 automobiles, in both directions; 48 trucks and 26 pedestrians. The count at Fairfax Avenue showed 112 automobiles, 26 trucks and 18 pedestrians. The train movements at Mt. Vernon aggregate 50 switching movements and 12 train movements. A similar count at Fairfax Avenue showed four switching movements and 15 train movements.

George Morrill, General Yard Master of the Southern Pacific at Bakersfield, testified that 12 passenger trains at high speed and 16 freight trains daily pass over the proposed crossing. He further pointed out that trains of from 100 to 135 cars each came from the north and are switched across the proposed crossing where they are made up into trains of 68 to 72 cars each and dispatched over Tehachapi Pass. He further stated that these switching movements would be continuous over the proposed crossing from 8 to 11 in the morning and from 3 to 9 at night. The proposed crossing is at a point at the south end of freight and passenger yards of the Southern Pacific Company and appears to be in one of the most hazardous locations possible for a grade crossing, and particularly one intended for the use of school children.

The testimony further discloses that the region is rather sparsely settled, that many of the streets of the north side, while open, are not paved, though Supervisor Hart testified that if the crossing were opened the continuous street on the north side would be oiled.

Careful consideration of all the facts presented by applicant and protestant does not justify in our opinion that the crossing should be established for the reason that it is not only hazardous, but serves only a very limited local use. While there are fewer tracks to cross at the proposed crossing at Quantico Avenue than at Mt. Vernon Avenue, the Mt. Vernon Avenue crossing is paved, is in charge of the switch-tender who acts as flagman, and when he is not on duty all the switching movements and other movements across the street are flagged by the train crews. The character of the Mt. Vernon crossing and the protection afforded thereat mean that it is preferable even though a short distance has to be traveled to reach the north side of the tracks, or Bakersfield.

For these reasons we believe the application should be denied.

O R D E R

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF KERN having made application to the Railroad Commission to install a crossing at grade at Quantico Avenue across the tracks of the Southern Pacific Company, a public hearing having been held, the matter having been duly submitted and now being ready for decision,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the application be and the same hereby is denied.

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 28th day of October, 1929.

Thos. S. Lovell  
Chas. J. Leary  
James L. Carr  
Leon A. White  
Commissioners.