

Decision No. 7600

BEFORE THE RAILROAD COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA.

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ORIGINAL

In the matter of the application
of the City of South Pasadena, a
Municipal Corporation of the State
of California, for permission to
install a grade crossing over the
tracks of Southern Pacific Company
at Spruce Street.

Application 7174.

R. V. Orbison, for Applicant.

E. W. Hobbs, for Southern Pacific Company.

By The Commission:

O P I N I O N

This is an application by the City of South Pasadena for permission to construct Spruce Street at grade across the tracks of Southern Pacific Company.

A public hearing on the application was held by Examiner Williams at South Pasadena.

Spruce Street is now open on each side of the Southern Pacific tracks and extends from the Southern Pacific right of way to Milan Avenue, approximately 1000 feet to the east and from the Southern Pacific right of way to Fremont Avenue, approximately 1500 feet to the west. It parallels Huntington Drive, a main east and west Boulevard located approximately 400 feet to the south.

The Southern Pacific runs through South Pasadena in a northerly and southerly direction, and at its intersection with Spruce Street is approximately 800 feet east of Fair Oaks Avenue,

the principal north and south thoroughfare of the city, and is approximately 250 feet west of Marango Avenue, an important North and South residential street. East and West streets are approximately 400 feet apart in the vicinity of the proposed crossing and, with the exception of Spruce Street, are all open across the Southern Pacific. Spruce Street itself, is a residential street and normally would be expected to carry only traffic incident to any of the residential streets. The intersection of the two main thoroughfares, Fair Oaks Avenue and Huntington Drive, is complicated by the fact that it is an important junction of the Pacific Electric Railway which operates a four-track railroad on private right of way along the center of Huntington Drive and a two-track railroad on private right of way along the center of Fair Oaks Avenue, with double track Wye connections at this junction, known as Oneonta Junction.

Because the north side of Huntington Drive does not continue across this Wye connection, traffic on this important artery to and from Los Angeles is required to turn north on Fair Oaks Avenue and proceed as far as Spruce Street in order to cross the Pasadena line of the Pacific Electric. After crossing at this point, the traffic from Los Angeles bound for Pasadena turns to the north, and the traffic desiring to continue on Huntington Drive must turn back to the south to again reach Huntington Drive, resulting in making traffic conditions at the intersection of Spruce Street and Fair Oaks Avenue complicated and congested.

The Southern Pacific through South Pasadena is a branch line with very little traffic. There is operated at present only one train a day in each direction in addition to occasional special movements. These trains are operated at a speed of less than fifteen miles per hour. The railroad does not oppose this application.

The present grade of Spruce Street to the west of the railroad is some eight feet above the grade of the Southern Pacific and the city proposes to make a cut on a grade of six per cent in order to reach the grade of the railroad, with the result, that the street would have, in addition to an obstructed view, a sharp grade of approach, and were the traffic on the railroad of any real importance, a hazardous condition would result. However, inasmuch as the operation of trains on this railroad is so infrequent, the actual hazard of the crossing will be relatively slight, particularly if the grade of approach were reduced to four per cent. Although the present local necessity by the residents of Spruce Street for the opening of this crossing, even when considering the use which would be given it by children attending the Marengo School, located to the northeast of the crossing might not be sufficient justification for creating such hazard as will be incident to its installation, it appears that by having Spruce Street extend through from Fair Oaks Avenue to Milan Avenue the congestion and resulting hazardous condition at the Spruce Street crossing over the Pacific Electric tracks at Fair Oaks Avenue will be materially reduced.

It should be clearly understood that the advantage to be obtained by the re-routing of a portion of the through east bound traffic on Spruce Street is really dependent upon the condition of the infrequent train operations on the Southern Pacific and should the Southern Pacific at some future time materially increase the trains on this line, say to as many as ten a day, the conditions would probably be so altered as to justify the discontinuance of the Spruce Street crossing.

Inasmuch as the justification for this crossing is to relieve through-traffic conditions, route signs should be established at the intersection of Fair Oaks Avenue and Spruce Street directing eastward traffic along Spruce Street to Milan Avenue and

with this amount of highway traffic over a crossing with an obstructed view, an automatic flagman should be installed.

O R D E R

The City of South Pasadena having applied for permission to construct Spruce Street at grade across the tracks of Southern Pacific Company, a public hearing having been held and the matter being under submission and ready for decision,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, that permission be and it is hereby granted the City of South Pasadena to construct Spruce Street at grade across the tracks of Southern Pacific Company at the location described as follows:

Beginning at the intersection of the southwesterly right of way line of the Southern Pacific Railroad with the south line of Spruce Street, thence northwesterly along said right of line to a point in the north line of said street; thence east along said north line of street to a point in the northeasterly right of way line of Southern Pacific Railroad; thence southeasterly along said right of way line to a point in said south line of Spruce Street; thence west along said south line of street to the point of beginning,

all of which is shown on the print attached to the application, said crossing to be constructed subject to the following conditions, viz:

(1) The entire expense of constructing the crossing shall be borne by the applicant. The cost of its maintenance up to a line two (2) feet outside the rails shall be borne by the applicant. The maintenance of that portion of the crossing between the rails and two (2) feet outside thereof shall be borne by Southern Pacific Company.

(2) The crossing shall conform in width to the roadway adjacent thereto, shall be constructed at an angle of fifty-eight (58) degrees to the railroad and with grade of approach not greater than four (4) per cent; shall be protected by a suitable crossing sign and shall

in every way be made safe for the passage thereon of vehicles and other road traffic.

(3) The crossing shall be protected by an automatic flagman of type approved by the Commission. The cost of installation of the automatic flagman shall be borne by the applicant. The cost of maintaining the automatic flagman shall be borne by Southern Pacific Company.

(4) Route signs shall be installed at the intersection of Fair Oaks Avenue and Spruce Street directing eastward traffic along Spruce Street and route signs shall be installed on Milan Avenue at Huntington Drive and Spruce Street directing westward traffic to Spruce Street.

(5) Applicant shall, within thirty (30) days thereafter, notify this Commission, in writing, of the completion of the installation of said crossing.

(6) The authorization herein granted for the installation of said crossing shall lapse and become void one year from the date of this order unless further time is granted by subsequent order.

(7) The Commission reserves the right to make such further orders relative to the location, construction, operation, maintenance and protection of said crossing as it may seem right and proper and to revoke its permission if, in its judgment, the public convenience and necessity demand such action.

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 14th day of October, 1921.

H. D. Leonard
Charles H. Brown
J. J. [unclear]
Commissioners.