

ORIGINAL

Decision No. 994.

BEFORE THE RAILROAD COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA.

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In the matter of the application	}	Application No. 7151.
of the City of San Fernando for		
permission to construct Jessie Street		
at grade across the tracks of Sou-		
thern Pacific Company in San Fer-		
nando, Los Angeles County, California.)		

H. A. Decker, for Applicant.

J. E. Lyons, for Southern Pacific Company.

By The Commission:

O P I N I O N

In this application the City of San Fernando asks permission to extend Jessie Street at grade across the tracks of Southern Pacific Company to connect with Wolfskill Street.

A public hearing was held on this application in the City of San Fernando before Examiner Williams on December 7, 1921.

This matter was before the Commission in 1915 in Application No. 1975, and in Decision No. 3012 in that proceeding the relation of Jessie Street to the other crossings in the City was described. This decision indicates that many of the residents of San Fernando believed, at that time, that a crossing at Brand Boulevard, located approximately 840 feet northwesterly from the proposed Jessie Street crossing, would better serve the public than would a public crossing at Jessie Street, but since there was no application before the Commission for the opening of Brand Boulevard across the tracks the decision, above referred to, authorized the opening of Jessie Street for the reason that it appeared reasonable.

that one street should be open in that vicinity.

As an outgrowth of the hearing and decision in Application 1975 the City, on January 19, 1916, filed Application No. 2051 for permission to construct Brand Boulevard across the tracks of Southern Pacific Company. After a public hearing, Decision No. 3186 was rendered in this application, in which the opinion was again expressed that Brand Boulevard crossing would best serve the public interest and that this would be particularly true if a street were constructed parallel and adjacent to the Southern Pacific right of way along its northeasterly side across the High School property between Jessie Street and Brand Boulevard and Decision No. 3186 therefore granted the application to construct the Brand Boulevard crossing and at about the same time, in Decision 3184, the Commission revoked its permission to construct the Jessie Street crossing.

At the hearing in the present application the testimony indicates that the city graded and gravelled a roadway parallel to the railroad across the High School property on the northeasterly side of the railroad right of way between Jessie Street and Brand Boulevard; and this road was publicly used for about a year, after which the High School authorities refused further use of this road by the public and placed barricades at each end and that as a result the residents in the vicinity of Jessie Street are required to use a more circuitous route as an outlet. The only public route open to them is by way of Fourth Street which lies parallel to the railroad and approximately 1000 feet to the northeast. It is possible, however, for them to use a roadway through the High School property, which latter road forms two sides of a triangle, the third side of which is the roadway, adjacent to the railroad, that has been closed by the High School authorities.

The testimony indicates that the principal advantage of opening Jessie Street crossing would be to provide a more direct outlet for the residents along Jessie Street (about 25 families) desiring to go either to the business section of San Fernando or to Los Angeles and to provide a more direct access to the High School from the territory to the south.

The testimony also shows that conditions have not materially changed since 1916 except that the population of San Fernando, as well as the number of residents along Jessie Street, has nearly doubled. The population as now estimated is about 4000 and was given in the Federal census of 1920 as 3234.

The Southern Pacific Company opposes the construction of this crossing on the ground that it would interfere to a considerable extent with their operations. It was pointed out that considerable switching was done over the tracks where this crossing would be located and that westbound freight trains are almost invariably required to stop for water at San Fernando. This is now usually done by stopping the train east of the Brand Boulevard crossing, while the engine is cut off and taken to the water tank, and the ordinary train under these circumstances stands across the proposed location of the Jessie Street crossing, and, were it opened, it would be necessary for the railroad to cut their trains at this crossing with the attendant additional delay, expense and hazard.

There are four tracks at the location of the proposed crossing. One of these, an industrial spur track, could be shortened and thus removed from the crossing. Another, the passing track, could also be removed from the crossing, but this would reduce its effective length by one car length and the Southern Pacific therefore claimed that the switch for this track should be moved southeasterly. The crossing therefore would probably be constructed across these tracks one of which is the main line.

Witness for the Southern Pacific testified that the cost of installing the Jessie Street crossing would be approximately \$3850. The engineering department of the Commission, however, was unable to agree with this figure, contending that all of the necessary work in connection with this crossing, including the construction of a permanent culvert over the ditch on the northeasterly side of the tracks should be done at a cost not to exceed \$2800, and expressed the opinion that it might be possible to make a satisfactory installation at this location at a figure materially lower than that.

Witness for the railroad testified that there is an average of approximately eight freight trains in each direction nearly all of which stop at San Fernando and that there are six passenger trains in each direction most of which do not stop.

There is a private crossing publicly used approximately 90 feet southeasterly from the proposed crossing and the proposed crossing would be somewhat less hazardous than this existing private crossing particularly if the new crossing were protected by an automatic flagman.

Since the occupants of the 25 residences along Jessie Street actually have an outlet, although by a somewhat longer route, and since the traffic between Jessie Street and that portion of the business section of San Fernando located on the northeasterly side of the railroad, would, by use of the Jessie Street crossing, be required to cross the railroad twice instead of not at all if the present outlet by Fourth Street is made use of, it appears that there does not exist sufficient public convenience and necessity to justify the installation of a grade crossing at Jessie Street and the public safety would be further promoted if the private crossing located about 90 feet southeasterly from Jessie Street were closed.

O R D E R

The City of San Fernando having filed an application for permission to construct a street at grade across the tracks of Southern Pacific Company, a public hearing having been held, the Commission being apprised of the facts and the matter being under submission and ready for decision,

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

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 29th day of December, 1921.

H. B. Benedict
A. W. Loveland
Charles R. Koenig
J. J. Pennington
Commissioners.