

ORIGINAL

Decision No. 39123

BEFORE THE RAILROAD COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the matter of the Application)	
of the City of Hermosa Beach,)	
California, to construct a per-)	Application No. 27388
manent grade crossing over the)	
right of way of the Atchison,)	
Topeka and the Santa Fe Railway)	
Company at the intersection of)	
Eighth Street and Railroad Drive)	
in said City.)	

M. Tellefson, City Attorney, City of Hermosa Beach, for applicant; H. K. Lockwood and C. L. Connolly, for The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Company, interested party.

O P I N I O N

The above-numbered application, filed by the City of Hermosa Beach, seeks authority to construct Eighth Street at grade across the single track Redondo Branch line of The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Company.

Formal hearing in the matter was held at Los Angeles before Examiner Ager on May 23, 1946, at which time it was duly submitted and is now ready for decision.

The record shows that Eighth Street has been designated by the State Highway Department as a street of major importance, and that it extends from Hermosa Avenue on the west, to Camino Real on the east, a distance of approximately 2,000 feet. It is presently improved with a twenty-five foot macadam roadway, with no curbs or walks. The Regional Planning Commission has indicated that none of its plans propose a widening of this street, nor does it appear that there would be any local need therefor.

At one time a grade separation of timber construction was in place over the Santa Fe tracks at this location, which provided a means

of travel through the area. This structure was allowed to deteriorate, however, and has recently been condemned and removed by the City of Hermose Beach. Applicant's contention is that a grade crossing should now be constructed to replace the structure formerly in existence.

The evidence shows that the cost of an overhead structure would be a substantial sum,⁽¹⁾ and that the City is in no position financially to defray such cost. It is proposed, if permitted by the Commission, to construct the grade crossing with grades of approach of 12% descending to the tracks from the east and 10% descending to the tracks from the west. Applicant contends that this crossing is necessitated so as to permit the free flow of traffic to and from the business section of the city, which is located on the west side of the railroad, and adjacent to Hermose Avenue. The nearest crossings over these tracks are at present located at Pier Avenue, 0.3 mile to the north and at Second Street, 0.5 mile to the south.

Two roadways of Railroad Drive are in existence parallel and immediately adjacent to the railroad tracks. Eighth Street, if constructed at grade, would also cross these two roadways. While the volume of traffic on the railroad consists of approximately three trains per week in each direction, the service is not performed at any scheduled time, and there is, therefore, no way by which motorists could become familiar with the probable time the trains might pass through the area:

Experience at many locations similar to that involved herein has indicated that the accident hazard, because of the grades of approach and the infrequency of the rail movements, is particularly acute, and that if an accident were to take place at this location, it would, by the very nature of the crossing, almost certainly involve

(1) No definite figures as to the probable cost were offered.

residents of the City of Hermosa Beach.

The record shows that view conditions at this location would be seriously impaired; and even though train speeds are restricted to fifteen miles per hour, it would be difficult to install any type of protection which would insure the safety of persons desiring to travel through the area.

The topography is such as to lend itself naturally to the construction of a grade separation at this location; but if, as the testimony shows, the City is without funds to erect such a structure, the Commission would be remiss in its responsibility if it were to permit the construction and use of a grade crossing with grades of approach such as are proposed. Further than this, we are not convinced that the use of the existing crossings over these tracks requires excessive travel distance, and a thorough review of the record leads to the conclusion that the application should be denied. The following order will so provide.

O R D E R

The City of Hermosa Beach having made application for permission to construct Eighth Street at grade across the track of The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Company; a public hearing having been held, and the matter being under submission and ready for decision,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the above-entitled application be, and it is hereby denied:

The effective date of this order shall be twenty (20) days from the date hereof.

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 15th day of June, 1946.

David Anderson
Justus F. Casper
Francis E. ...
Joseph ...
Harold ...
Commissioners