



# TOWN OF OLD LYME

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## OFFICE OF THE SELECTMEN

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January 13, 2016

Re: Federal Rail Administration NEC Draft Plans

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Bonnie Reemsnyder, First Selectwoman of the Town of Old Lyme. I have come here today to express my concern with and opposition to the Alternative 1 of the draft EIS for the NEC plan to improve rail service.

First and foremost, this plan would decimate the heart of our community. The path of the railroad would completely change according to this plan, cutting through the heart of our community. We are a small town with very little "central community" area, and what we do have is extremely important to our history, economy, character and sense of community. This plan would impact our only commercial area, which houses our grocery store, pharmacy and many small businesses. Our village center, which is directly off of the commercial area, houses the Lyme Academy of Fine Arts, as well as the famous Florence Griswold Museum and the Lyme Art Association. All are sites of historic significance and the individual organizations have worked diligently to continue with their legacy and maintain the physical structures. It is beyond comprehension that these buildings would be considered of little importance as this project moves forward.

But the plan also impacts many properties along the way, as it is an entirely new track, cutting through several neighborhoods, not to mention wetlands, open space and areas of archaeological significance. Our community maintains our character through strict zoning regulations, considerate planning, and support of our historic treasures, including the museums, colleges, library and various art organizations.

I am equally concerned that the Federal Rail Administration did not contact the First Selectman's office personally to solicit feedback and comment. Hearing about plans that have a major impact on our community through the grapevine is unacceptable.

I am vehemently opposed to Alternative 1 of this plan and urge you to look at other, more reasonable solutions for reducing time travel between major cities. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Bonnie A. Reemsnyder  
First Selectwoman