



Rail-truck terminal to be built on 200 acres in Antrim Township

By JIM HOOK Senior writer
A second rail-truck terminal is to open in Franklin County by late 2011.

Gov. Ed Rendell and Norfolk Southern CEO Wick Moorman Wednesday announced a \$95 million rail-truck terminal in Antrim Township.

The terminal will be built on 200 acres at Interstate 81 Exit 3 (U.S. 11) and will eliminate a dangerous rail crossing on Milnor Road. Initially, the facility is to employ 225 workers and another 375 to 400 indirectly, according to an economic development study of the project.

At 85,000 truck loads a year, the Franklin County Regional Intermodal Facility would be about the same size as the one CSX opened two years ago in Guilford Township.

Distribution warehousing has grown in Pennsylvania in the past decade because of the connection between highway and rail transportation, Rendell said. He said the rail freight industry is perhaps the state's greatest asset in economic development.

"Businesses want to be near that intermodal facility," Rendell said. "All of the sudden distribution centers pop up right near where the

investment was made in the intermodal facility."

The terminal in Antrim Township will be at the heart of planned industrial development on both sides of I- 81.

Atapco, Baltimore, Md., owns 200 acres adjacent to the terminal and has options for up to another 800 acres for the industrial/business park Antrim Commons. Norfolk Southern's conceptual drawings show room for massive distribution warehouses in the park.

"We're not going to do anything speculative," Development Manager Tim Hogan said. "We're reacting to what the market is asking for."

Negotiations with a manufacturer are in their early stages and confidential, Hogan said.

Paul Hoover pointed to a spot on the conceptual drawing.

"That's where I am," Hoover said. "I will be forced to move before long."

Hoover has rented the Mussleman farm for 18 years. He milks and grazes 70 Jersey cows on rick loam soil.

"I can't pay \$9 million for the farm," he said. "I'm getting less now for my milk than what it cost to produce. When it comes time to leave, I will build a house (in Virginia.) At my age, it takes more energy than I want to put into to starting over. This meal is all I want to get out of this."

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Hoover, Hogan and about 70 others gathered for lunch Wednesday in Norfolk Southern's air-conditioned white tent where the announcement was made. The site at the Mason Dixon Auto Auction is very near where the I-81 southbound exit ramp will be relocated.

Millions have been pledged to reconstruct Exit 3 for the project:

- The first phase is to be completed before the terminal opens. The southbound off-ramp will be moved north of the present ramp. A traffic signal will direct traffic at U.S. 11 where the ramp will cross U.S. 11 to the main entrance to the terminal.

- The second phase, dependent on financing, is to be completed within five or six years. The U.S. 11 bridge over I-81 will be widened and pattern of ramps changed to a modified cloverleaf, allowing northbound traffic on U.S. 11 to turn south onto I-81.

Milnor Road should be closed to through-traffic in spring, Hogan said.

The terminal will be built across the dog-leg section of Milnor Road at the railroad tracks, the scene of serious train-car crashes in recent years. Two people were killed there in 2006.

Nelson Diller, owner of the farm at the Milnor crossing, also attended the announcement. He's selling his 148-acre farm to the railroad company, and buying a farm near Fayetteville from a family who is leaving the business.

"It's an opportunity," he said.

Buying the farm in 1998 was a good move for the former Smithsburg, Md., man who wanted his sons to have the opportunity to get involved. They milk 130 cows and raise their own heifers.

"It wasn't in my thoughts to do anything like this," he said.

Diller figures he'll move out in 2010 and grow crops in 2011 before leaving for good.

Big money

Rendell said the original Senate version of the state budget zeroed out \$15 million proposed for the project. He worked with Sen. Rich Alloway, R-Chambersburg, to have the funding moved to the capital budget.

"It's a good example of what can happen when you move in a bipartisan fashion," Rendell said. "Whatever happens in the budget fight, this money will be there for the next three years."

The local terminal is part of an initiative to establish 2,500-mile high-speed intermodal freight service from New Jersey to the Gulf Coast. Pennsylvania is the leading player with investments of \$185 million. Tennessee has \$174, Alabama \$127 million, Virginia \$79 million and Mississippi \$44 million. Total investment: \$2.5 billion.

Rendell said the four states together have applied for \$300 million of \$1.5 billion in federal

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economic stimulus money set aside for projects of regional and national significance.

The project in Pennsylvania will create or preserve 26,000 jobs and pack a 10-year economic impact of \$2.7 billion.

The economic impact of the Norfolk Southern and CSX rail terminals in Franklin County is projected to top \$1 billion within a decade, according to L. Michel Ross, president of the Franklin County Area Development Corp.

The industry forecasts that U.S. freight volumes will nearly double by 2035.

Norfolk Southern estimates that by taking long-haul trucks off the highways the Corridor project will save more than 170 million gallons of fuel a year and reduce time lost in traffic congestion.

That won't be enough:

- "The notion that this is going to solve the I-81 problem is not factual," Ross said. "We need a third lane in Pennsylvania."

- The nation's infrastructure needs immediate repair and a long term plan, Rendell said.

Hoover spoke to a reporter about losing dairy infrastructure -- 7,000 farms a year in a nation that has just 58,000 dairies.

"Figure how many years is that going to last?" he said. "I don't know when the tipping point is. Sure, it's only a couple of farms here and there.

Time is coming when they'll be very little dairy left. When it's gone, it won't come back."

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The Crescent Corridor

The 2,500-mile rail route will link Northeast and Southeast markets.

The Franklin County Regional Intermodal Facility at Greencastle will be one of the anchors.

Norfolk Southern also is building intermodal terminals in Alabama and Tennessee.

Crescent Corridor in Pennsylvania:

-- 26,000 jobs will be created or preserved .

-- 10-year economic impact of \$2.7 billion.

-- Pennsylvania is investing \$45 million, Norfolk Southern \$79 million and the federal government up to \$61 million.

--Terminals in Harrisburg and Bethlehem will be improved.

Greencastle Terminal

The terminal is expected to open in 2011 with about 225 workers and another 375 to 400 employed indirectly as a result of the project.

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The Norfolk Southern terminal will grow from a size similar to the CSX terminal, nine miles away in Guilford Township.

About 325 trucks and four trains are expected daily.

The 48-foot tall cranes will move containers, the size of big-rig trailers, between rail cars and trucks.

Trucks will access the terminal from U.S. 11 and the Interstate 81 southbound off-ramp. Milnor Road will be closed to through traffic, but will be used by cars.

The parking lot will have space for 672 trailers (53 feet long). Two mile-long sidings will lead to two miles of storage track.

The site at Greencastle was the only site available in Franklin County and Washington County, Md., that met all criteria:

- On the main rail line.
- Flat land with minimal impact on wetlands and habitat.
- Little interference with traffic at railroad crossings.
- Convenient access to interstate highways.
- Potential for additional economic development.

Intermodal transportation

Rail replaces trucks over the long haul. Trucks are still used for local and regional deliveries.

A typical intermodal train of 280 containers consumes a gallon of fuel to move a ton of freight 436 miles.

Containers typically contain consumer goods.

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