

DECISIONS OF

Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission

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A review of the record in this proceeding indicates to us that there is a probable need for a traffic artery across the tracks of the railroad company to be located between the Seventh Street and Ninth Street crossings. Accordingly, we shall concurrently institute on our own motion an investigation for the purpose of determining the public necessity for the construction of a new grade crossing at such location, for the determination of the protection to be afforded at such grade crossing if its construction be ordered, and for the purpose of allocating between the parties at interest in this proceeding the cost of construction and protection and the cost of maintenance of the crossing area and of the protection ordered to be installed.

After full investigation of the matters and things involved, we are of the opinion and find that approval of the substitution of standard flashing-light signal protection for 24-hour protection by watchmen at the Seventh Street crossing and for 24-hour protection by gates at the Ninth Street crossing, and for our approval of the construction of a new public crossing at grade across tracks of The Pennsylvania Railroad Company at Eighth Street and the protection of the aforesaid grade crossing by standard flashing-light signals, all located in the City of New Kensington, Westmoreland County, will not effectuate the prevention of accidents or the promotion of the safety of the public; **THEREFORE,**

NOW, to wit, November 19, 1941, **IT IS ORDERED:** That the application be and is hereby disapproved.

APPLICATION OF THE DELAWARE, LACKAWANNA AND
WESTERN RAILROAD COMPANY

APPLICATION DOCKET No. 60269

Crossings (automatic protection)—Public Safety.

The Commission approved the installation of automatic flashing-light protection supplemented by automatic short-arm crossing gates, automatic warning bell signals and manual control protective devices at a railroad crossing in lieu of 24-hour protection by crossing gates and watchmen.

G. W. Morgan for Applicant.

L. B. Maxwell for the Supervisors of Lehigh Twp.

BY THE COMMISSION, *November 24, 1941:*

This matter comes before us upon application of The Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad Company for our approval of the installation of flashing-light signals at the crossing at grade of tracks of the railroad company across State Highway Route No. 507 in the village of Gouldsboro, Lehigh Township, Wayne County, in lieu of the present 24-hour protection by gates and watchmen at the said crossing.

The tracks at this location extend in a general north-south direction and form a portion of the main line of the railroad company between Buffalo, New York and Hoboken, New Jersey. The highway is crossed by four main line tracks protected by the aforesaid gates, which are controlled by a watchman located in an elevated tower, and is also crossed by a siding track located 40 feet from the main line tracks over which train or engine movements are protected by a trainman.

The Village of Gouldsboro is located in the Pocono Mountain district and the highway is consequently used by persons unfamiliar with the crossing traveling from and to vacation resorts in this vicinity, as well as by local residents. According to a count of traffic submitted as applicant's Exhibit No. 5, the crossing was used on May 28, 1941, by 703 motor vehicles, 50 other vehicles and 211 pedestrians. During the same period there were 12 passenger trains, 30 freight trains and 15 switching movements operated over the crossing. At the hearing a witness testified that the maximum speed of trains operated over this crossing is 70 miles an hour.

Clear views of approaching trains are restricted at this location by a hotel located in the southwest quadrant of the crossing, by the station building in the northwest quadrant and by a private dwelling in the northeast quadrant of the crossing. Applicant's Exhibit No. 1 indicates that at a point 20 feet from a near rail of the crossing on the east side thereof, clear views of approaching trains can be seen for a distance of 520 feet to the north and 1,000 feet to the south. At a similar location on the west side of the tracks, the exhibit indicates that clear views of 560 feet to the north and 1,000 feet to the south may be obtained. This exhibit also indicates that in approaching the crossing from the east a clear view of the proposed flashing-light signals may be obtained for a distance of 350 feet from the crossing. In approaching the crossing from the west, the exhibit shows that a clear view of the proposed flashing-light signals may be obtained for a distance of 400 feet from the crossing. No accident has occurred at this crossing in the past five years.

The Supervisors of Lehigh Township protested the approval of this application and witnesses testified concerning the restriction to clear views of approaching trains in all quadrants of the crossing. They also testified concerning the use made of the crossing by numerous school children. One protestant objected only to the installation of bells in connection with the flashing-light signals.

The applicant's proposal with respect to the protection at this crossing provides only for the installation of standard automatically operated flashing-light signals. In view of the number of switching movements made over the crossing, we are of the opinion that the installation of such signals without manual control in addition to the automatic control will result in frequent false indications of the warning lights. Also the addition of bells to function in connection with the flashing-light signals as a warning to pedestrians of the approach of trains appears to be required at this location. The volume of sound produced by the newer-type bell will not exceed that caused either by the actual passage of trains, the ringing of the engine bell or the blowing of the engine whistle and it appears, therefore, that such a bell should not prove to be a source of annoyance. We are further of the opinion that, because of the location in the village and of the record which indicates that no accident has occurred at this location for a considerable period while the crossing has been protected by gates, the barrier presented by crossing gates is necessary at this location. We shall therefore require that the flashing-light signal protection shall be supplemented by automatically operated short-arm crossing gates operated in conjunction with the flashing-light signals. This modern protection has been used at numerous locations and provides an effective additional automatic protection.

Upon full investigation of the matters and things involved, we are of the opinion and find that the installation of standard flashing-light signal protection at the crossing at grade of the tracks of The Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad Company across State Highway Route No. 507 in the Village of Gouldsboro, Lehigh Township, Wayne County, in lieu of the existing protection by manually operated crossing gates, subject to the conditions hereinafter set forth, will not adversely affect the safety of the public using the aforesaid grade crossing; **THEREFORE,**

NOW, to wit, November 24, 1941, IT IS ORDERED:

1. That the application be and is hereby approved and the applicant may, at its sole cost and expense, install and maintain standard flashing-light signal protection at its public crossing at grade across

State Highway Route No. 507 in the Village of Gouldsboro, Lehigh Township, Wayne County, in lieu of existing manually operated gate protection, subject to the following five conditions:

- (a) That applicant install and operate short-arm gates in connection with the operation of the proposed flashing-light signals.
- (b) That applicant install pedestrian electric bell warnings to operate in connection with the visible warning afforded by the flashing-light signals and supplemental short-arm gates.
- (c) That applicant provide manual control of the protective devices, with the control apparatus located on the station side of the crossing.
- (d) That all switching movements over the crossing be protected by a member of the train crew, who shall remain at the crossing and control the operation of the automatic warning devices as well as furnish flag protection, when necessary, to adequately protect the crossing.
- (e) That all work be performed in a manner satisfactory to to this Commission.

2. That, unless such automatic protection be installed and in operation on or before August 1, 1942, the permission herein granted to install substitute protection at this grade crossing will then be terminated and withdrawn.

APPLICATION OF THE PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD
COMPANY

APPLICATION DOCKET No. 60651

Railroads—Service.

Where alternate bus transportation service was available to the public the Commission authorized a railroad to discontinue passenger service between certain termini during the period of the National Emergency.

S. P. Delisi for Applicant.

BY THE COMMISSION, *November 24, 1941:*