

# Local Railway Items from Ottawa Papers - 2011

**Wednesday 05/01/2011 Kingston Daily British Whi Kingston (CN)**

Station lease deal derails

The roof on the old Montreal Street railway station is caved in -- and so has a deal to lease the crumbling heritage building for commercial use. CN Railway spokesman Jim Feeny confirmed yesterday there is "no prospect at the moment" for a deal it had hoped to sign for a commercial development. Instead, CN Railway, the prop-erty owner, and the City of Kingston will face off in court later this month.

The city is trying to uphold a work order that would force the railroad to stabilize the structure before it falls down completely.

Because this is a second possible offence -- the city successfully prosecuted CN about 10 years ago -- the company now faces a possible penalty of \$200,000.

"We generally would request a fine but also to have the property standards upheld, to have it fixed by a particular date," said city building department manager Steve Murphy.

"We've charged them for not bringing it back in compliance. The case has been postponed a couple of times. Our goal is not to get a fine but to have the building preserved."

Feeny said CN's focus now is on stabilizing the building.

"We had an engineering inspection done," he said.

"There's nothing been established about what its use might be. In the next few days we should be in a position to talk about what we will do."

Any work on the building must be approved by the federal Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada.

The station, built in 1856, is designated under the Heritage Railway Stations Protection Act.

But the board has no authority beyond approving or deny requests it would receive from CN.

"The involvement we have is limited by the provisions of the act," said board secretary Marie- Josee Lemieux.

"It really is up to CN to see what they want to do with it. We don't have any legal clout."

Murphy said the hiring of an engineer is "a sign of good faith" on the part of CN, but he's concerned about the integrity of the entire building if crews move in to fix the roof. "They've let it go too far," he said.

A middle floor holding up the roof has caved in, leaving unsupported pillars.

"This snowload on what's left isn't very good," Murphy said. "The sooner they stabilize the roof the better."

"That could have been done by now. We want this maintained and preserved."

**11/01/2011 Pembroke Observer Chalk River**

Time appears to be running out for Ottawa Valley's CP rail line. The deadline for Ottawa's OC Transpo to put in a bid for the tracks passed Wednesday with no offers being made, which puts the ball firmly in the court of local municipalities, who have until Feb. 5 to make an offer or an expression of interest. CP spokesman Kevin Hryszak said letters notifying the municipalities should have gone out Wednesday. "Should there be constructive talks on expression brought forth, this 30-day period may be extended," he said. "If nothing comes out of this offering to local governments by the Feb. 5 deadline or later, it would not be until late spring or potentially early summer before this salvage process will start."

Ottawa Valley municipalities have been struggling with the fate of the railway since January 2010, when stakeholders were notified about CP's intent to discontinue and sell the Ottawa Valley Railway between Smiths Falls and Sudbury. Negotiations with the private sector ended in October 2010, but no short-line operator was secured for the 104-mile segment of the line between Smiths Falls and CFB Petawawa. As part of the legislated process, the federal government had until November 5 to make an offer, followed by the Ontario government, which had until December 6, but both declined. In December, Renfrew County and Lanark County municipalities went to Ottawa to appeal to the federal government to put a moratorium on the process, arguing they needed at least a year in order to have the time to come up with a plan to save the rail lines. Both counties said the timing of last fall's election meant new councils had less than two months to get up to speed and make a decision, which they felt was not nearly enough time. All of the municipalities along the stretch of track have stated they cannot afford to purchase the rail line on their own, and need time to line up partners to secure financing. While sympathetic, Minister of State (Transport) Rob Merrifield, who met with a delegation from the counties, said the government wouldn't step in and force the issue as long as CP was following the decommissioning process and respecting the regulations. Both counties planned to hold a stakeholders meeting this month as part of the effort to try and save the line. Federal, provincial and municipal government representatives, as well as private-sector participants, will be invited.

**10/02/2011 Pembroke Observer Beachburg**

Laurentian Valley, ON, council is expected to be among the first municipalities to support a non-profit group's attempt to acquire a portion of CN track. Following a closed meeting between members of Laurentian Valley council, Transport Pontiac-Renfrew board member Terry Gibeau, former Ottawa Central Railway manager James Allen and Pontiac Community Futures economic development officer Brittany Morin recently, the Laurentian Valley committee recommended the township support Transport Pontiac-Renfrew's move to take over the Beachburg Subdivision railway, which is seen as a vital link to economic growth and commercial viability of both Pontiac and Renfrew Counties. Laurentian Valley Mayor Jack Wilson explained that the decision to pass this resolution has a lot to do with the benefits of rail to industry, including Laurentian Valley's fibreboard plant ATC Pembroke, which closed its doors in November 2008. Gibeau is happy Laurentian Valley is first off the mark and he hopes the others will follow suit. The TPR road show has already visited two municipalities in the Pontiac and they have indicated they will pass a similar resolution this week to Laurentian Valley. Gibeau has visits planned to Whitewater Region, Pembroke, Ottawa and a number of Quebec municipalities along the river. The goal is to run a short line. Laurentian Valley council is expected to vote on the resolution at its Feb. 15 meeting. (Branchline)

**Wednesday 11/02/2011 ctvottawa.ca Maniwaki**

The Hull-Chelsea-Wakefield steam train has been sold to a group of developers from outside the region, leaving its current owners with 30 days to match the offer or lose the popular tourist attraction.

A news release was issued Wednesday by the train's board of governors, saying the bid was the \$550,000 asked for by the board.

The board now has until Nov. 29 to exercise its right of first refusal and match the offer for the equipment, and said they voted unanimously to take all necessary steps to keep the train in the region.

Louise Boudrias, president of the board, said they can't raise this money alone - they need help from local, regional, provincial and federal partners to be able to respond.

The board said the train generates over \$8 million to the regional economy every year, but had to be shut down in late June after heavy rains washed out its tracks.

The train was put up for sale online in mid-July. It was built in Sweden in 1907 and brought across the Atlantic Ocean in 1992, according to its website.

Kingston, ON, city council is trying to stop CN from undertaking emergency action to stabilize the derelict 155 year old Montreal Street train station until it can provide heritage advice. CN recently advertised a 60 day public notice period to hear input on its plan to remove the Outer Station's caved in roof, shore up the stone walls and put a cap on the roof to prevent further water damage. However, before the public input phase lapses in mid March, CN got federal permission to do emergency repairs and crews could be on site any day now. "All we're asking is for CN to give us a chance to respond during the 60 day notice," explained Coun. Rick Downes. Councillors were alarmed by CN's abrupt decision to fast-track the repairs before they could provide comments about the station's heritage aspects that should be preserved, such as the chimneys. CN's on-site stabilization plan was triggered by municipal threats last year. Council passed a unanimous motion in June 2010 for its staff to enforce municipal property standards on the vacant site to the "fullest extent" possible to bring it to an "adequate and safe standard." The ultimatum worked, but now council is trying to slow CN down. The focus of the planned on-site work is building stabilization, not restoration.

11/02/2011 *Pembroke Observer**Beachburg*

The vision of commuter rail in Ontario's Ottawa Valley moved closer to being realized Wednesday night as Whitewater council agreed to a plan that will save the CN line. Whitewater Region joins Laurentian Valley, Litchfield and the City of Ottawa in endorsing a proposal by Transport Pontiac-Renfrew to accept ownership of the 70-mile Beachburg subdivision. In exchange for the donation of land and rail assets, CN is seeking a tax receipt from the eight municipalities through which the line runs. CN and the not-for-profit organization have already signed an agreement in principle. Deputy Mayor Izett McBride, who has represented Whitewater at the organization since its inception three years ago, said they have taken a giant step closer with this vote. CN is required to transfer rail assets to an operating railway. The group has insurance and assures municipalities they will have no liability, responsibility or financial commitment in connection with the service. The concept is to start with freight and then move into commuter rail within three years. Mayor Jim Labow foresees rail possibly reviving two critical industries - fibreboard and pulp and paper.

21/02/2011 *YourOttawaRegion.com* *Chalk River*

LANARK, RENFREW COUNTIES MULL OVER BUYING OTTAWA VALLEY RAILWAY BED: Lanark and Renfrew counties are considering buying the rail bed underneath the Ottawa Valley Railway line. "Whether they are interested in buying the rail bed, that's up to council." in Lanark and Renfrew Counties, said former Mississippi Mills mayor Al Lunney, who is representing Lanark County, following a meeting with representatives from Canadian Pacific last week. "We have to accept (that), from my perspective, neither Lanark County or Renfrew County is in any position to be owning and operating the rail line." which is valued at \$50 million. "We will probably explain to council exactly what information we have and then it will be up to the councils themselves where they go with it," said Lunney. Lunney stated that the "big movers and shakers" at Canadian Pacific, from their Vancouver and Calgary offices, met with him and representatives from Renfrew County in Perth on Jan. 28. "They were very open and honest with us," said Lunney. "It was a great meeting. There was a lot of information exchanged. We now know more about how the process works." The final deadline for submissions for interested parties to buy the rail line is this Saturday, Feb. 5. CP told Lunney that they would still be open to meeting with a buyer for the line after that date, provided the rails are still intact. "I don't think they are going to start tearing lines up in this kind of weather," said Lunney. (Branchline)

23/02/2011 *Brockville Recorder**Kingston (CN)**Brockville*

New design to be unveiled for city train station

Via Rail plans to unveil a revised design for its proposed new Brockville train station, Leeds-Grenville MP Gord Brown told city council on Tuesday.

"We're looking forward to a new design in the very near future," the MP said during a Parliament Hill update at council's regular meeting.

The news comes as Via's initial design, unveiled at a media event at the Perth Street station in November, was widely panned in the local community, in particular by heritage advocates.

Brown said Tuesday he approached the Crown corporation about the local concerns, and the effort to get the design revised also included Mayor David Henderson and local historian and heritage advocate Doug Grant.

Brown later said Via Rail was responsive to concerns that the initial design was not in keeping with the "local flavour."

"Those concerns were taken into account," he said.

The MP said he has seen the proposed redesign, although he would not elaborate on its details.

"I believe the people of Brockville will be very pleased," said Brown.

He left all further details of the redesign to Via officials, adding they plan to make an announcement very soon.

"It's imminent," said Brown.

Henderson praised the Tory MP for his involvement in efforts to change the design, adding Brown carried a lot more weight with Via than a municipal council could.

In November, Brown, Henderson and Via officials unveiled the preliminary design for Brockville's new Via Rail station, a \$4.5-million structure originally intended to be built starting early this year.

The reaction from some quarters was very negative, with Grant opining at the time that the proposed station "simply looks like a greenhouse with two garages added on each end."

At the time, Via officials defended their plans as necessary to be environmentally friendly and to satisfy customers.

Grant said after Tuesday's council meeting he also saw a preliminary drawing of the proposed redesign two weeks ago when a Via Rail official came here from Montreal.

"I saw it coming. They've opened up their ears to what we had to say," said Grant.

He added the proposed new design has "sloping roofs" or "gable roofs" and also has brick on the exterior at the ends.

"It's definitely improved," said Grant, adding the new design is respectful of local heritage.

Grant said he has heard from Via officials that construction of the new station now has to be delayed, although he does not know for how long.

Via still definitely intends to proceed with the project, said Grant.

Officials at Via Rail could not be reached for comment.

24/02/2011 *Pembroke Observer**Beachburg*

CITY VOTES TO DONATE RAIL: The town of Pembroke, Ontario, has climbed on board with Transport Pontiac-Renfrew, after council voted unanimously to donate CN land and assets to the not-for-profit company. They join Laurentian Valley Township, Litchfield and Whitewater Region, in which the municipalities agree to accept the rail lands and transfer them over to the TP-R, in exchange for a tax receipt to CN. In turn, there is no cost incurred by the communities, and they are freed from all liability to whatever happens on those railway lands. The two kilometre stretch of rail running through the city is the municipality's contribution to transfer ownership of the rails to the TP-R, which intends to run a freight service soon along the rails, with a passenger service to Ottawa to follow three years afterwards. (Pembroke Daily Observer' Feb. 24, Mar. 4 Branchline)

SMITHS FALLS VIA STATION TO OPEN IN MAY: Installation of washrooms in the new VIA station on Union street in Smiths Falls, Ontario, will mean a summer opening for the new transportation hub. CAO Wayne Brown confirmed the town was successful in negotiating the inclusion of washrooms into the new train station. The verbal agreement struck between the two parties will see VIA pay to install services at the station provided that the Town of Smiths Falls covers plowing and cleaning of the facility for the next 20 years. This is similar to the agreement the town held with VIA for the former train station with the exception of having to open and close the station each night. The new station will be opened and closed electronically. Brown said the town is pleased to have come to an agreement with VIA that is beneficial for both sides and will result in providing excellent service for train travellers coming to Smiths Falls. "Not a lot of towns our size have the train still stopping," Brown said. Malcolm Andrews, spokesperson for VIA Rail, said the construction project is on track and that the addition of washrooms did not cause significant delays. "There was sufficient space in terms of the floor plan," Andrews added. "We don't anticipate having all the work completed and ready until mid-May." The new station was announced last year at this time. The former train station will be entirely turned over to the theatre group. (Branchline)

KINGSTON'S FAMOUS TRAIN IS ABOUT TO TEAVE THE DOWNTOWN STATION: The Spirit of Sir John A. is about to have a major facelift. Kingston city council has signed a deal with the Pipefitters Union (Local 221), to manage the restoration of The Spirit of Sir John A. The work is expected to begin in April and should be finished by December of 2011. "We build houses. We build nuclear plants. This is just another challenge," said Brian Maloney, who represents plumbers, pipefitters, welders and apprentices from Prescott to Napanee. He says it's a great opportunity for unionized trades people to give something back to the community and promote their skilled trades work. Impressed with the group's enthusiasm and expertise, councilors agreed to sign a Stewardship Agreement with the local trades union to oversee the six to eight month restoration work. "It's a project near and dear to us. Some of our former members have actually worked on steam locomotives' Maloney explained. The city will spend about one million dollars to put the big black engine on the rails to restoration. Council invested an initial amount of \$340,000 for exploratory work, plus another \$642,000 to carry out the work in two stages this year, relocate the locomotive to a new foundation within Confederation Park, and restore the rusty engine to its historic appearance. The Spirit, also known as Engine 1095, was built by the Canadian Locomotive Company in Kingston in 1913. The locomotive was rescued from the scrap yard by the Kingston Jaycees in 1966 and presented to the city as a gift for Canada's Centennial in 1967. It was placed on the original K&P rail bed that used to run in front of city hall. Sometime in March, the tender and cab are to be moved off-site to an enclosed shop for restoration. In April, a new foundation for the engine will be laid about ten metres south of its current location - to maintain its high profile spot in the park. In June, crews will begin the delicate job of lifting and moving the locomotive to its new foundation. Heritage buffs note the timing of repairs to the locomotive will coincide with the 100th anniversary of its assembly in 2013 and the bicentennial of Sir John A. Macdonald's birth in 2018. (Branchline)

The town of Pembroke, ON, has climbed on board with Transport Pontiac-Renfrew, after council voted unanimously to donate CN land and assets to the not-for-profit company. They join Laurentian Valley Township and Whitewater Region, in which the municipalities agree to accept the rail lands and transfer them over to the TP-R, in exchange for a tax receipt to CN. In turn, there is no cost incurred by the communities, and they are freed from all liability to whatever happens on those railway lands. The two kilometres stretch of rail running through the city is the municipality's contribution to transfer ownership of the rails to the TP-R, which intends to run a freight service soon along the rails, with a passenger service to Ottawa to follow three years afterwards. Coun. Les Scott, who introduced the resolution authorizing the land transfer, said this is pending the blessing of the Canada Revenue Agency, but no one is expecting any problems from that end.

A local non-profit group is trying to raise \$500,000 to buy the Wakefield Steam Train and keep it in the region. Louise Boudrias, president of Compagnie de Chemin de Fer de l'Outaouais, said the group is in talks with the federal and provincial governments to find the money and buy the train that generates \$8 million annually in economic benefits for the region. Boudrias said the group has some money stashed away and with government help, the CCFO believes it can raise enough to buy the train and keep it from leaving the national capital region. She said there are several grants that the group could tap into and those avenues are being explored. "There is some money that we already have and we're already talking to the federal and provincial governments to see what will be the possibility," she said. "There are some grants that probably could help us out and we're looking to see if we are eligible for those grants." The CCFO has 30 days to match the offer from a group of developers from another part of the province who want to move the train out of the capital region. A matching offer has to be made by Nov. 29 but Boudrias is confident the money to keep the train in the region would be found. The owner of the troubled train put it up for sale in the summer following its indefinite closure after severe flooding washed away some of the publicly owned tracks it operates on. Martin Potvin, a spokesman for Gatineau Mayor Marc Bureau said the mayor is keen to help keep the train in the Outaouais is waiting to hear from the CCFO. "He is waiting to hear from the CCFO what the city can do to keep the train here. We will wait and see and talk," Potvin said.

OTTAWA VALLEY - Transport Pontiac-Renfrew is one step closer to eventually creating a commuter rail link between Pembroke and the Ottawa VIA Rail station.

On Oct. 26, city council gave its consent for TPR to acquire and operate the 32 kilometres of the rail line known as the Beachburg Subdivision that lay within the city's boundaries. It runs through West Carleton and Kanata and ends in Nepean, but TPR would look at acquiring running rights to use other tracks to get people to the VIA station on Tremblay Road in the city's east end.

It was the final approval out of nine municipalities the group needed to move forward with a plan to buy the line and use it to run more freight routes - and eventually, a commuter rail service.

"It is essential," TPR's Terry Gibeau, former mayor of Amprior, said of the city's approval.

Kanata North Coun. Marianne Wilkinson said a survey taken in the Ottawa Valley indicated a commuter line would attract several hundred riders.

"Kanata people would be able to get on there if they wanted to - it would be in the business park," she said. "I think it could be very useful in Kanata, especially the Kanata Business Park."

Ottawa doesn't want to have any liability for the project, according to the motion passed by city council.

But it's an idea that has some support around the council horseshoe, including from deputy mayor and West Carleton Coun. Eli El-Chantiry.

El-Chantiry, who sits on TPR's board of directors, said the initiative is a "very credible" one.

"Those tracks are very important to us " We don't want to make the same mistakes our predecessors made by pulling them," he said.

More than 10,000 people commute to Ottawa from the Valley, and a TPR study found that 25 per cent of those commuters would use the rail system instead, El-Chantiry said.

Gibeau said CN Rail is set to sell the line to TPR. That could happen as early as January of 2012.

In the short term, that will mean more freight shipping and therefore, more jobs in the Ottawa Valley, Gibeau said.

CN is only running the line one day per week for freight, and TPR would have it run seven days a week, Gibeau said.

A short line owned by a smaller, local group would also provide better service and hopefully attract more companies who would want to use the line to ship their goods, Gibeau added.

"But we haven't lost sight of the fact that we want to get into a commuter service," he said.

Gibeau is setting his sights a year and a half into the future. That's when he says TPR could be ready to run a commuter rail service through the valley, starting in Pembroke and ending in Nepean.

The line runs from Pembroke through Beachburg to Renfrew County before skirting into the Pontiac in Quebec. It crosses back into Ontario at Fitzroy Harbour before heading to Nepean, so there would be a number of commuter stops in Ottawa, Gibeau said.

TPR will also resume talks with OC Transpo about offering bus passes along with the commuter rail fare, so travelers can reach their final destination.

Those talks were going well a couple of years ago, Gibeau said.

"It will probably add to OC Transpo's business," he mused, and it could take pressure off OC's park-and-ride lots.

James Allen, a former rail manager and consultant for TPR, said the commuter line could have a "very dramatic impact" on OC Transpo and how the transit authority distributes its service in areas where TPR and OC Transpo could overlap. The heavy commuter rail line and the proposed path of Ottawa's planned light-rail system don't intersect.

Looking even further into the future, Gibeau said TPR could look at signing agreements with the owners of other rail lines, including ones that run to other commuting origins such as Smiths Falls.

TPR was created in 2009 after CN put the Beachburg Sub on the list for abandonment.

Thomas Geiger

**26/03/2011 .VIA Rail Canada Kingston (CN) Brockville**

VIA Releases New Brockville Station Design

Brockville Ontario - VIA Rail Canada today released the revised design for its new Brockville passenger rail station. The revised design incorporates several suggestions made by Brockville citizens and local representatives following VIA's original announcement in November 2010.

Over the past months, VIA has consulted with Brockville residents and local representatives and went back to the drawing board to develop a revised design more reflective of a traditional railway station and more attuned to the historic character of the city. "The communities we serve matter to us," explained Yves Desjardins-Siciliano, VIA's General Counsel and Secretary. "The input we received from the people of Brockville, its community leaders, and some of our 65,000 passengers who use the station annually, has allowed us to enhance the station's design, and move forward with this important capital investment in this historic city."

"VIA Rail was responsive to concerns that the initial design was not in keeping with the local flavour, and those concerns were taken into account," declared Leeds-Grenville MP Gord Brown. "I believe the people of Brockville will be very pleased," he added.

Station Design Highlights

The revised design contains elements consistent with other public buildings in eastern Ontario, while also incorporating more modern elements such as large track-facing windows to allow for optimal natural light and a broad view of the platform and arriving and departing trains.

VIA will now move forward with the development of formal plans and design specifications, with a view to proceeding with construction in 2012. VIA will publicize more precise dates as soon as they are known.

CPR line's status remains uncertain

Renfrew County positioning itself to use abandoned line

Going, going ..... Will the abandoned CP railway bed, seen here in the Town of Renfrew, remain abandoned forever across Renfrew County and neighbouring municipalities? Steve Newman

Last-minute business interest in the abandoned Canadian Pacific Railway in Renfrew County has surfaced. But it remains to be seen if anything will come of it. Now that Canadian Pacific has issued notices of sale or discontinuance of the railway line running between Smiths Falls and Mattawa, Renfrew County council voted last week to submit a letter of intent for the right of first refusal with CPR to acquire the rail bed for future use.

This letter is for the northern section of line, between Petawawa and Mattawa, which had been kept open for use by Canadian Forces Base Petawawa.

Earlier this year, Lanark and Renfrew counties asked CPR for first-rights-of-refusal for purchasing the property - if the line is derailed - for the section of line from Smiths Falls to Petawawa.

The abandonment process, under the Canadian Transportation Act, ended for the section of CP line running from Petawawa to Mattawa on March 16, 2011.

That same day, Mattawa Mayor Dean Backer, Township of Papineau-Cameron Mayor Robert Corriveau, and Renfrew County Warden Bob Sweet discussed the abandonment process in a brief teleconference call.

During the call, the three parties agreed to proceed with discussions with CPR, starting with a joint letter requesting first rights of refusal to purchase the abandoned line.

Renfrew County's resolution, which was passed March 30, says development and property committee documentation, is "consistent with the County of Renfrew Abandoned Railway Rights-of-Way Policy upon completion of the abandonment process."

Renfrew County chief administrative officer Jim Hutton acknowledges that an anonymous private sector company has hired consultants to investigate the possibility of using the Canadian Pacific line between Smiths Falls and Mattawa.

March 17, Lanark County officials met with consultants who outlined plans to complete a market research study. The study would determine if the rail line purchase would be a practical financial move for the private company the consultants represent.

Lanark and Renfrew counties have a meeting this week to discuss the rail line.

"I was kind of surprised," said Hutton of the company's recently-expressed interest in the line. We have to wait and see. I don't think anyone would be disappointed if they bought the line, but that's being pretty optimistic.

If Renfrew County purchased the rail bed, this could lead to the development of a recreational corridor for hikers, snowmobilers and other users. Other possible uses could be transportation and a corridor for fibre-optics communication, said Hutton.

**19/04/2011 Kingston Daily British Whi Kingston (CN) Kingston**

The city may be negotiating to purchase the old train station on Montreal Street from CN Railway.

The Outer Station, as well as the former Davis Tannery property on Kingston's inner harbour, are listed on the agenda for tonight's city council meeting as the subjects of a "proposed or pending acquisition or disposition of land."

Councillors will discuss the properties in a closed committee-of-the-whole meeting just prior to tonight's open council session.

Yesterday, a CN representative confirmed that the city and the rail company are talking about the Montreal Street property.

"We're in discussions with them," CN's Lindsay Fedchyshyn said.

The city, meantime, has put a gag order on any information concerning the two properties, including updates on the ongoing property standards court case involving the train station.

"City policy does not allow staff to speak to matters that are in camera," said communications officer Cindie Ashton.

Municipal bureaucrats have previously spoken freely about the status of the work order against the derelict station.

CN owns the heritage railway property and has been in a running feud with the city over what to do with the crumbling structure for about two decades.

The vacant station was severely damaged in a 1996 fire, then covered with a blue tarpaulin that disintegrated over time as snow, ice and rain caused further damage.

The city has demanded that CN replace the roof.

"We're discussing all possible options for the building's future. We're going to talk and see what other options are out there," said Fedchyshyn.

She would not confirm whether selling the property to the city was in the cards.

"I don't know right now if it is for sale," said Fedchyshyn. "Our main objective is just to stabilize it."

In 2004, city council turned down an offer to buy the station from CN for one dollar.

A staff report suggested at the time it would cost nearly \$4 million to repair the building and clean up the toxic contamination believed to be in the ground.

CN announced late last year that it would construct a steel bracing structure around the limestone building to prevent it from falling down, and put metal flashing on top of the walls to halt further erosion.

The city has insisted that the company put a new roof on the station and filed a property standards order against CN in court to force compliance.

Council last dealt with the railway station issue at its March 22 meeting.

A motion was passed asking the federal government to prevent CN from proceeding with its stabilization plan.

Approval for the work was granted by federal environment minister Peter Kent through the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada.

The station was designated under the Heritage Railway Stations Protection Act in 1994.

Fedchyshyn said that, weather permitting, workers would be going ahead with the stabilization work this week.

Local heritage officials and city politicians argue that the railway is creating a "ruins" by merely bracing it and leaving it exposed to the elements.

They contend that the building will not attract a buyer unless it has a roof on it.

CN officials said last year they were in talks with a private business interest to lease the property. That deal fell through and the potential client was never identified.

The former tannery property is privately owned and considered brownfield land, heavily polluted by years of industrialization on the site.

City councillor Rick Downes has stated his intention to persuade council to reclaim a number of brownfield properties in Cataraqui district, the ward he represents, as well as save the train station.

Downes refused comment yesterday, also citing in camera restrictions.

**10/05/2011 Ottawa Citizen Beachburg**

Two men escaped with only minor injuries after a railway maintenance car or hi-rail travelling along the train tracks crashed into their pickup truck on Riddell Drive between Dunrobin and March Valley roads on Tuesday morning, police said.

The call came in at about 8:10 a.m., said fire department spokesman Marc Messier. Both men in the pickup truck managed to get out by themselves after the crash. No specific information on the driver of the hi-rail was available, though their injuries were also reported to be minor.

Messier said the intersection bells and lights were working when the crash occurred, and added that the intersection isn't equipped with gates.

Riddell Drive is closed between March Valley and Dunrobin roads, causing traffic delays in the area. Police said the closure could be in effect for some time while police and other agencies investigate.

A 36-year-old man was taken to hospital with a serious head injury Wednesday morning after his vehicle struck a VIA Rail passenger train near St. Laurent Boulevard and Tremblay Road in an apparent suicide attempt.

Rescue crews were called to the scene near Triole Street, just east of St. Laurent, at about 8:30 a.m.

VIA Rail spokeswoman Elizabeth Huart said 78 people were on board the passenger train when the crash occurred, and that no one was hurt. It had been heading to Ottawa from Montreal and was due to continue on to Toronto. All passengers were bused from the accident site to the Ottawa station, and VIA hired one coach bus for everyone making their way on to Toronto.

Huart said train operations were back to normal by 10:40 a.m. Train 32 from Ottawa to Montreal and Train 55 from Montreal to Ottawa were both delayed by about 30 minutes, she said.

In the Snelling Paper & Sanitation Ltd. parking lot off Triole, quite close to the tracks, police strung yellow tape across the Toyota Pathfinder SUV's access route, a small set of tire tracks worn into the earth past the curb.

One worker at Snelling said he saw a man sitting in the parked SUV, facing the tracks, when he arrived at about 5:30 a.m. People often congregate in the area near the St. Laurent overpass, he and other workers said.

"Basically I saw the (SUV) just parked in the corner," said Tony Diotte, 28. "I saw his arm out the window, I saw a cigarette, that's it."

Tony said he parked the company van quite close to the SUV at one point in the morning, but didn't speak to the driver.

I don't know why the three of us didn't go out and say something, Tony said of himself and two other staffers who saw him parked there. That's the worst part; we stood around here saying, 'We should go say something,' but we never did. And now that I found out what happened, I feel a little guilty. We could have prevented it.

Generally we kick them out, or when they see us coming in, they leave. This guy was determined, I guess.

The driver's-side door hit the train and the force of the impact pushed the SUV about 100 metres down the tracks.

Firefighters had to remove the driver's-side door to get to the victim, who was unconscious when paramedics first reached him. About 15 minutes after the ambulance reached The Ottawa Hospital's Civic campus trauma unit, the man regained consciousness. He was listed in serious condition.

Wednesday's crash is the second train-vehicle collision in as many days. On Tuesday, two men escaped with minor injuries when their pickup truck was struck by a railway maintenance car on Riddell Drive.

Engine 1095, known as The Spirit of Sir John A. has been a favourite photo back-drop for tourists visiting Confederation Park for more than 40 years.

It is a reminder that the Tourist Offices' was the K&P Railway station [Learn About the K&P Trail] for more than 75 years — and that Kingston was home for 114 years to the Canadian Locomotive Company. That company built more than 3000 steam, electric and diesel engines. The Spirit of Sir John A. was one of 25 such models built for the Canadian Pacific.

The locomotive was in active service until 1960. In 1966 it was saved by the Kingston Jaycees and given to the City in recognition and celebration of Canada's Centennial in 1967. Though not a railroad custom, the 1095 was renamed 'The Spirit of Sir John A.' and Bob Fray who was Mayor of Kingston at that time, and a sign-writer by trade, painted the name on the side of the coal tender in gold heraldic script.  
Restoration work with local partners

Work to prepare the new foundation for The Spirit of Sir John A. begins mid-June in Confederation Park. The work on the new home for this icon of Kingston's industrial past is scheduled to be completed over the course of the summer with the move the engine itself expected to take place in mid-August.

Pipefitters Local 221 will soon be removing the Engine's tender box and cab for off-site restoration.

Next, the City will be shutting off service and relocating the Pay and Display machine ahead of excavation of the foundation site for the proposed new permanent home for Engine 1095, about eight metres from where it now stands.

Then, near the end of June, caissons (a watertight structure used to work on foundations) will be installed to support a concrete grade beam foundation. Following the caisson installation, the rest of the site will be excavated and the foundation will be constructed using precast railway ties and steel rail.

All work involving digging will be attended by an environmental team and an archeologist.  
Restoration Project: Background

In 2007, an initial Survey of Findings and Recommendations was submitted to Council by a volunteer-led group known as the 'Engine 1095 Restorers' who made an expert case for its restoration along with a proposed course of action and budget for the necessary work. This initial request was followed by a further Report to Council in May 2010 prepared by City staff requesting full budget and approvals for restoration and relocation of the 1095.

Based on a thorough assessment of the locomotive, it has been identified that it must be relocated and restored due to the deteriorating conditions of both the supporting track structure and the locomotive itself.

The City of Kingston will be working with Local 221, the Pipefitters Union and a number of other local trade unions and industry partners to restore 'The Spirit of Sir John A.' so that it can continue to be one of Kingston's most popular and photographed landmarks. The \$812,000 project is expected to be completed by the end of 2011.

The Historical Significance of Engine 1095

The presence of Engine 1095 in Kingston provides a crucial link to the City's industrial past having been built by the Canadian Locomotive Company Ltd. (CLC), formerly located on the Kingston waterfront. For over a century the CLC was a major supplier of locomotives to the CPR, delivering nearly one-third of its fleet over a number of decades and making it Canada's second largest commercial builder at the time.

Engine 1095 first made its debut in 1913 and was put into service out of Winnipeg and then Southern Ontario before completing its service life in Montreal in 1960. As a symbol of 19th century technology and industry, the continuing existence of Engine 1095 points to a significant period in Kingston and Canada's history that demands to be preserved and maintained. It also helps to illustrate a significant aspect of Kingston's history by positioning it as an important industrial and political hub.

About the "Ten Wheeler" Class Locomotive

The 1095 was one of the last batch of 25 units of "Ten Wheeler" Class D10h 4-6-0, built by the Canadian Locomotive Company Ltd. in October, 1913, builder's serial No 1131. There were some 500 built by CPR at its own Angus Shops in Montreal and by other locomotive builders such as the Montreal Locomotive Works over the previous decade.

Between 1905 and 1913 the D10 became the single largest class of engine to be used by Canadian Pacific. An extremely versatile design, these locomotives were used in passenger, freight, and yard service across Canada right up until the end of the steam era in the early 1960s.

These engines were a transitional design that reflected changes in locomotive engineering while also retaining some features typical of nineteenth-century engines. For example, the engine cabs were of a simple open design. This provided some respite from the high heat generated by the firebox, but in inclement weather, the open design meant that the locomotive crew was protected only by a simple canvas curtain drawn across the back of the cab—even in winter. The engines also continued to be hand fired, except for a few that were converted to oil fuel.

Work Begins on Spirit of Sir John A. Train Foundation

Kingston Ontario - Work to prepare the new foundation for "The Spirit of Sir John A." begins this week in Confederation Park. The work on the new home for this icon of Kingston's industrial past is scheduled to be completed over the course of the summer with the move the engine itself expected to take place in mid-August.

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Then, near the end of the month, caissons (a watertight structure used to work on foundations) will be installed to support a concrete grade beam foundation. Following the caisson installation, the rest of the site will be excavated and the foundation will be constructed using precast railway ties and steel rail.

All work involving digging will be attended by an environmental team and an archeologist.

Engine 1095 provides a crucial link to the City's industrial past having been built by the Canadian Locomotive Company Ltd. (CLC).

Formerly located on the Kingston waterfront, CLC was a major supplier of locomotives to the CPR, delivering nearly one-third of its fleet over a number of decades and making it Canada's second largest commercial builder at the time. Engine 1095 was one of the last batch of Ten Wheeler 4-6-0 class D10h to be built by CLC.

This project helps tell the story of Kingston's living history, one of the objectives of the Kingston Culture Plan available at [www.cityOfKingston.ca/kcp](http://www.cityOfKingston.ca/kcp).

Stay up-to-date on the restoration and move of The Spirit of Sir John A. at [www.cityOfKingston.ca/1095](http://www.cityOfKingston.ca/1095).

**Wednesday 30/06/2011 BNTVNews Brockville Brockville**

Brockville - The re-activated tunnel committee is hoping this time around something can be done with the city's historic railway tunnel after touring the landmark Tuesday afternoon.

After decades of in-activity and delays, the newest edition of the tunnel committee said they want to see Canada's first railway tunnel finally developed as a tourist attraction with ideas as simple as a bike/walking path.

The committee toured the 151 year-old tunnel on Tuesday afternoon along with local media walking the entire 527m (1,730 ft) length of the historic landmark.

City councillor David LeSueur and tunnel committee chair said one of the first things that needs to be done is to make sure the tunnel is safe for public use.

There are many ideas that have been suggested including a bike/walking path, a train ride and the use of dining cars as a restaurant.

The idea of developing the tunnel as a tourist attraction is not a new idea. As far back as 1974, the city was talking about the tunnel being developed, issuing its first report saying the tunnel should be developed and used as a tourist attraction.

Since then not much has been done, aside from opening the first 85 feet of the southern portion of the tunnel to visitors. LeSueur says the drainage and geological studies should be underway in about a month.

Another issue that something can be done rather quickly is cleaning up the northern end of the tunnel. Right now it is overgrown and a depository of garbage. Committee members would like to see it clean up and possibly with lights being installed to keep people from dumping there.

Once the surveys and drainage are completed and any work completed to deem the tunnel safe, LeSueur said the committee is ready to consider every option for what to do with the tunnel, from walking or biking paths, to having small trains carry people through as a tourist ride.

The tunnel was designed to permit access to the riverfront by the Brockville and Ottawa Railway. Construction of the tunnel began in September 1854 but was not opened for rail traffic until December 31, 1860. The tunnel was built to facilitate the Brockville and Ottawa Railway linking the port facilities on the St. Lawrence River ship route with the timber trade of the Ottawa Valley.

The tunnel was used until the mid 1970's. It was turned over to the City of Brockville by Marathon Realty, the real estate wing of the Canadian Pacific Railway in the 1980's.

Contains video with footage of a steam locomotive and train entering and leaving the tunnel in the winter.

The Wakefield steam train will not be running again in 2011 and the company that owns the train said it wouldn't know when it could resume operation until August.

Last month the century-old Hull-Chelsea-Wakefield steam train was forced to suspend operations after heavy rains damaged the rail bed under the tracks.

Steam train general manager André Groulx said the company would have to wait until the damage is assessed to determine what can be done to get the train back online.

"We had to let go of eighty people this year and that's quite sad, but fortunately it's early enough in the season for most of the students to get summer work for the balance of this year," said Groulx.

The same rains that undermined the train tracks also weakened the ground under Highway 105 in Chelsea, causing it to be closed until further notice. Tracks have been repaired before

The company has used a century-old steam-powered locomotive for tourist trips between Gatineau and Wakefield since 1994.

The tracks, owned jointly by three municipalities, were repaired in 2008 and 2009 at a cost of over \$3 million after a landslide in May 2008.

The line has been closed a number of times over the past four years after erosion and slides.

The Outaouais Tourism Board has said the train brings in 50,000 to 60,000 tourists into Wakefield each year, generating close to \$10 million in revenues.

Sunday 10/07/2011 Ottawa Citizen Maniwaki

Wakefield tourism is taking a hit after the closure of the Wakefield Steam Train following severe floods in late June that washed out some of the tracks.

The train's annual economic impact is about \$10 million for the region, said Gilles Picard, director general of Outaouais Tourism.

He said he estimates that the train contributes to 40 per cent of the Wakefield business during summer months. But he said the tourism department won't know until the end of the season how much impact the train's closure actually had.

"They bring up 55,000 people a year, I mean you got to get some business off of that," said Lesley Farrell, owner of the End of the Line Boutique, which caters to passengers getting off the train.

She said losing the tourists coming in on the train during its peak season is concerning.

"Before they said it's just closed for the month of July and that was 10,000 potential customers I was going to lose then," Farrell said.

In addition to the train riders, business owners in Wakefield say they are worried about losing business from those who come just to see the train. "There's as many people that come to the village to see the train as there are on the train itself," said Marc Fournier, owner of La Confiserie Wakefield. "So it's a double impact."

Fournier said the train brings in about 40 per cent of his confectionary business during its May-October season.

Che Chartrand owns Café Chez Eric and says he doesn't get a lot of train passengers because his café isn't one of the closest to the tracks. However, he said he thinks the train's stoppage will indirectly affect the whole town.

"Wakefield is obviously a very touristy town, one of the reasons, a huge part of it, is because of the train. ... I mean it's a big money generator for this town." Chartrand said.

Farrell also said she gets a big chunk of her business from train oglers since her shop is across from a turntable where people come to see the train turn around.

Both Farrell and Fournier said they hope the railway company gets disaster relief money so that the train is back up and running for next season.

"We're hoping that the government does step in and that something happens so that the tracks get repaired," Fournier said.

The train's manager André Groulx said the non-profit railway company that leases the tracks has applied for funding but doesn't know if it could qualify.

"It's a very young company, so in and of its own it can't assume the repairs. That's for sure," Groulx said.

"So they'll have to go to different levels government."

He said getting the train back on the tracks for next season is a "bestcase scenario."

Although he would not release the private company's annual revenue or profit, he said losing most of the season is a huge loss.

"Loss of profit is unquestionable. There's no business," Groulx said.

Despite the closure, Picard said tourists are still coming.

"Most of the people are still coming to the region to do something else. But for the impact itself, it's a big impact for the tourist economy," he said.

Picard said more than 700 package deals for attractions in the Outaouais region, that included tickets for the steam train, had been sold for the rest of the season and most of the people still plan to come.

"We called everybody, either for a refund or another offer ... and 60 per cent of the people said we are going to come to the region and either the activity was replaced or they're coming without doing the train," Picard said.

Picard also pointed out that while more than 50,000 people ride the train each year, the region attracts 1.2 million tourists annually.

"It's a part of the industry but it's not the only attraction we have," Picard said.

The business owners were also hopeful that Wakefield can still attract visitors.

"Mother Nature played us a card and we're kind of stuck with it," Chartrand said.

"We just hope that people still come to the village because we find that the actual attraction to the village is the people that live here."

Kingston Ontario - Kingston continues its efforts to have CN repair the roof of the old Montreal Street rail station.

The case is expected to come before a justice of the peace next week, said the city's chief building official.

"We're simply taking the same approach we take with all property owners," said Terry Willing, the city's director of building and licensing.

Willing said he considers the old train station a building like any other and as such it is governed by the city's property standards bylaw.

The city issued the repair order last summer.

If successful at the 3 Aug 2011 trial, the city could fine the property owner \$100,000 for a first offence and \$200,000 for each subsequent offence.

"Ultimately our biggest interest here is not a fine," Willing said. "Our biggest interest is to fix the thing."

Willing said he did not know when a final decision would be made.

The building, built in 1855 with additions in 1895 and 1937, is considered an important part of the city's railway history by heritage supporters.

Its roof was badly damaged by fire in 1996.

Since then building officials have been trying to get CN to repair it, citing the city's property standards bylaw which states "The roof of every building shall be structurally sound, weatherproof, and free of loose or unsecured objects and materials."

Without a roof, the interior and the remaining limestone walls of the structure have been exposed to the elements.

Willing said the cost of repairing the roof now will likely be significantly more than it would have been shortly after the fire.

The building has a heritage designation but Willing said that should not affect efforts to have the company repair the roof.

Heritage designation limits the amount of changes that can be made to the exterior of buildings deemed historically important.

Earlier this year CN added steel supports around the walls.

The city is pushing for CN to restore the building to heritage condition.

CN has asked the federal government for permission to tear down about two-thirds of the building, arguing the additions are not subject to the heritage designation.

The company and city stated their cases at a meeting of Canada's Historic Sites and Monuments Board last week in Kingston.

End of An Era CP Rails Being Pulled Up

Renfrew Ontario - It's the end of an era. Railway travel has been part of Renfrew and surrounding communities since 1872, but that chapter ends this year.

Ed Greenberg, a Calgary-based spokesman with Canadian Pacific Railway, says the process to salvage its railway ties, rails, and related equipment will start this month.

He wouldn't disclose the name of the companies that are responsible for overseeing the salvage process, but workers accompanying salvage rail cars through the Town of Renfrew Tuesday indicated the salvage company is from Kansas.

When Renfrew resident Wayne Nute heard the train whistle about 3 p.m. Tuesday, he dashed out of his house and drove down the road to see the rail cars.

Nute's grandfather (Robert Burton) was a railway worker out of Sand Point, in southeastern Renfrew County, about 1895, and later a station agent in Renfrew.

Seeing the salvage cars, Nute calls the demise of the line the "end of an era. No doubt, the railway (locally) is essentially done."

He calls the death of the local railway sad.

Greenberg said Canadian Pacific will pull up about 25 miles of track, between Renfrew and Pembroke, starting this month and finishing later this year.

"That's all that's planned for 2011," he said.

The remaining 160 of the 185 miles of CP track between Smiths Falls and Mattawa will be salvaged in subsequent years, he added.

"Track materials will be utilized in other key areas of the CP network," added Greenberg.

Railway travel has been a fixture in Renfrew County for more than a century. The Canadian Central line arrived in the Town of Renfrew in 1872, while the final route of the Old K&P Rail (Kingston & Pembroke) was opened in Renfrew County, between Ottawa, Arnprior, and Parry Sound, in 1893, as a pivotal part of a booming timber industry.

"I'm not in position to provide statements on the (railway's) state of the nation," said Greenberg politely, before emphasizing that CP's focus remains on freight operations in Canada and the United States.

The confirmed salvage of the railway's equipment could lead to interesting conversation in the 9 Aug 2011 meeting of Renfrew County's property and development committee.

Paul Moreau, the county's property and development director, had heard that track might be pulled up between Pembroke and Cobden.

"I think it will be an interesting debate in terms of where the county goes from here," said Moreau.

CP's decision to salvage the tracks doesn't help the county's economic future.

"It closes the doors to a mode of transportation that may have helped our local economy, and to attract new industries. Now the transportation corridor (of rail) can't be offered."

CP spokesman Greenberg suggested the end of railway service in the county began when Rail America ended its lease agreement with CP over a year ago.

CP has long been sensitive to the importance of the railway to communities in the area, said Greenberg. In fact, CP had committed to entertaining business discussions after filing its notice of discontinuance with the Canadian Transport Agency on 30 May 2011. Moreau says CP made that commitment to local MP Cheryl Gallant.

The notice of discontinuance covered the CP railway between Smiths Falls and Mattawa.

The decision to salvage the railway tracks, and related equipment, is strictly a business decision, said Greenberg.

"It's well documented Rail America terminated its lease agreement on these rail lines in 2009 and 2010, and then combined with the fact our company is efficiently using our core network, these lines are no longer required for operations."

As part of the salvage process, Greenberg says contractors "will be responsible to leave the right-of-way in a clean orderly fashion, free from railway debris. Road crossings will be restored to their (original) condition."

Meanwhile, Greenberg indicated Canadian Pacific is "continuously responding to the increasing needs of our customers and ensuring our operations are prepared for any shifts in shipping patterns. We had to make a decision that is strictly a business decision," said Greenberg.

With the salvage process starting this month, Moreau says it's the county's time to "make the best of what's left. The question is, where to from here, with respect to the county's possible role of purchasing the abandoned line."

Renfrew County, Lanark County, and the Township of Papineau-Cameron have each claimed first right of refusal for the abandoned rail beds for their respective section of the line between Smiths Falls and Mattawa.

6 Jan 2010 at the Petawawa Civic Centre, during a major meeting of county politicians and railway officials, efforts were made to avoid a possible closing of the rail line. At the time, Renfrew County Warden Don Rathwell said the county had "to look at every avenue we can" to keep the line open.

Sides Fail to Show

Kingston Ontario - The city's property standards case against CN Railway at the old Outer station on Montreal Street remains stalled.

A date to go to trial was supposed to be set Wednesday in provincial offences court in Kingston but no representative showed up for either side to proceed with the matter.

Thursday 04/08/2011 Daily Observer (Pembroke) Chalk River

Sad Day for the County

Petawawa Ontario - Mayor Bob Sweet is calling the impending dismantling of the Canadian Pacific Railway a tragedy, warning that once the line is gone it can never come back.

With CP officially terminating operations between North Bay to Smiths Falls, the corporation has confirmed it will begin tearing up the Chalk River Subdivision shortly.

The first phase will see 25 miles taken out between Renfrew and Pembroke. However, Mayor Sweet told councillors he expects the process to move briskly from there.

In total, 170 miles of abandoned rail bed will be removed in the next two years, he added, marking the end of an era not only for the town, which had the railway as far back as the 1880s, but for the nation.

"It's a sad day for Renfrew County and for Petawawa," said Mayor Sweet. "This is the thing that united Canada. Our forefathers fought for this at a huge expense of putting the line in."

The fate of the 104-mile segment of the line between Smiths Falls and CFB Petawawa appeared sealed in January 2010 when stakeholders were notified about Canadian Pacific's intent to discontinue and sell the Ottawa Valley Railway. After CP diverted traffic off the line, shortline operator RailAmerica terminated its lease with CP.

This launched a process under the Canada Transportation Act that laid out specific time periods for various stakeholders to express interest in purchasing the track. Since then, however, no interested parties came forward with a business plan to purchase and run the line.

Both Renfrew and Lanark counties had agreed they had common interest in keeping the CP line intact and appealed to the federal government to impose a moratorium. Ottawa refused to step in, stating that CP was following the decommissioning process and respecting the regulations.

Mayor Sweet, who is also county warden, fears the loss of the CPR will degrade the county's ability to attract businesses, entrepreneurs, and corporations.

"We don't have a railroad and we don't have an airline. The only way we can get our merchandise and our products to market is currently on two lanes of asphalt," explained Mayor Sweet. "Down the road we could be missing out on a huge opportunity because we don't have that mode of transportation. From an economic development point of view it puts us in an extremely weak position."

While the mayor acknowledged federal and provincial intentions to expand Highway 17 to four lanes from Arnprior to the upper Ottawa Valley, that project could take another 30 years to complete.

"We already have a mode of transportation in place," he remarked. "It's tragic and it's sad that a process that brought us together being systematically removed. Once it's gone, it's gone. That's a tragedy, it really is."

Renfrew County has passed a resolution to initiate the process of acquiring the rail bed with a letter of intent for the right of first refusal with CP. Such a move could open up opportunities for economic development, tourism, and a trail system.

The Beachburg Subdivision of CN Rail was recently saved from a similar fate, thanks to an agreement signed with Transport Pontiac-Renfrew. The group hopes to start with freight and then move into commuter rail within three years.

Tuesday 11/08/2011 CBC.ca Maniwaki

The municipal owners of the railroad tracks from Hull to Wakefield say they will match an offer from an outside bidder for the Wakefield steam train and keep it in the region.

The CCFO, the company managed by the municipalities of Gatineau, Chelsea and La Pêche, had confirmed steam train owner André Groulx received an offer to buy the train.

But the representatives from the municipalities exercised the right Monday to first refusal for the acquisition of the steam engine, the diesel locomotive and passenger cars.

They also said they would match the \$550,000 offer made last week by a group from Sept-Îles, Que., which hoped to purchase the train operation. The deadline to match the offer was Nov. 29.

CCFO President Louise Boudrias told Radio-Canada she has always maintained she would do everything in her power to keep the "little train" in the region.

The CCFO has estimated the cost to repair the tracks would be about \$7 million, and said the earliest the train would resume operations is in 2013.

The Outaouais Tourism Board has said the train brings 50,000 to 60,000 tourists into Wakefield each year, generating close to \$10 million in revenues.

11/08/2011 Low Down to Hull and Bac Maniwaki

Wakefield Quebec Steam Train Not Sold Despite Rumours

Gatineau Quebec - The rumour rumbling around Wakefield, that the Hull-Chelsea-Wakefield steam train had been sold, might have made some business owners nervous.

News that no sales switch has been thrown will offer some relief.

"It's status quo from A to Z," said HCW Steam Train owner Andre Groulx, dismissing the rumour.

"Nothing has changed."

The train is up for sale, with a \$550,000 price tag, and Groulx would consider letting the 18-year family business go if a serious buyer were on track.

Dismantling of CP Line in Full Swing

Renfrew Ontario - The Manitoba company, Cando Ltd., will be working in the Renfrew area into late October to help salvage equipment from Canadian Pacific's abandoned rail bed.

A&K Railroad Materials, through its Canadian subsidiary Canadian Rail Track Material, won the salvage contract for the rail line that runs from Smiths Falls to Mattawa.

A&K, which is based out of Kansas City, has subcontracted out the dismantling and salvage of railway equipment, including the ties, anchors, spikes, and other steel components, to Cando Contracting.

A&K is noted for its rail train that transports continuous-welded rail, which is located along many sections of the line between Smiths Falls and Mattawa.

Cando Ltd., which is located in Brandon, Manitoba, is involved in a variety of railway-related activities.

These include the operation of the Barrie-Collingwood Railway in Ontario, industrial switching, and the dismantlement of rail lines in Alberta.

SOME OTTAWA VALLEY WORKERS

More than a dozen Manitoba-based workers with Cando are on the job, between Cobden and Renfrew, to help with the dismantling process. The company has also hired another 10 or so workers from the Ottawa Valley.

The goal for 2011 is to collect 25 miles (or 40 kilometres) of the rail line.

"The pickup of the rail may be done by the end of September," said Anne Cornay, the Calgary-based manager of inventory control and track rationalization for Canadian Pacific.

"We want two trains of material collected by 1 Sep 2011, with more to come (in the fall)."

Cando's specific work for this contract involves three major types of equipment, wedging and lifting of the actual rails, prying out of the railway spikes, and collection of the spikes, plates, and anchors. The latter is commonly referred to as ATM, or Other Track Material.

The ATM is being transported by rail car to the Town of Renfrew where it is dropped at the end of Railway Avenue. At that location, an excavator operates a large magnet to pick up the ATM and drop it in a bin beside a crew of five workers. That material runs along a conveyor belt, from which the workers hastily collect and drop the reusable steel into nearby containers. The uncollected material fills a container at the end of the conveyor built.

"We've been recycling for over 30 years, even before it was popular," says Ann Lintott, an administrative assistant with Cando. The firm's on-site supervisor is Alex Burr.

Cornay, of Canadian Pacific, suggested much of the salvaged rail will find a home on other rail lines across North America, and not have to be melted down, because it's in such good condition.

Many plates and anchors will be relocated, while many of the spikes and rail ties will likely be sold. The track itself is in very good shape, said Cornay, indicating some of it was only laid in 2006

21/10/2011 VIA Rail Canada Smiths Falls Smiths Falls

Smiths Falls and VIA Rail officially open new station built through Government of Canada funding

Smiths Falls, ON Today, His Worship Dennis Staples, Mayor of Smiths Falls and VIA Rail Canada's Senior Director, Real Estate, Magdy Fahmy officially opened Smiths Falls' new train station. Funding for this \$750,000 project came from the Government of Canada's \$923 million investment in VIA Rail for improvements to its facilities, equipment and infrastructure, including \$407 million through Canada's Economic Action Plan.

The completion of projects like Smiths Falls' new station shows the positive results being achieved for both rail passengers and the community of Smiths Falls through Government of Canada funding to VIA", said the Honourable Steven Fletcher, Minister of State for Transport. "It also underlines this Government's commitment to revitalize passenger rail service and support economic development in the region.

VIA Rail's new Smiths Falls station, which began serving passengers in early August, is fully accessible and located just north of downtown. With its distinctive tower, the new station has been designed to blend in with the historic character of Smiths Falls. Its new location will also lead to smoother and improved rail service at this important stop on VIA's busy Ottawa to Toronto route.

"Trains in Smiths Falls have a long and proud history, connecting people and businesses here with the rest of Canada since the first train arrived in 1859", said Mayor Staples. "On behalf of all the citizens of this great town, I am proud to be able to play a part in this new station's official inauguration, and want to thank the government and VIA Rail for this important contribution to our town's continuing prosperity."

Senior Director Fahmy added, "These investments are helping to ensure that Canadians have a passenger rail service that is safe, fast and more reliable. VIA is very pleased that the citizens of Smiths Falls are going to be a part of this new era in rail travel."

The Wakefield steam train has been saved by \$500,000 from a series of west Quebec municipalities, the provincial government and Outaouais tourism.

The municipal owners of the railroad tracks from Hull to Wakefield matched an offer from an outside bidder for the steam train and kept it in the region. They said they hope to have the train up and running again in 2013.

The CCFO, the company managed by the municipalities of Gatineau, Chelsea and La Pêche, had confirmed steam train owner André Groulx received an offer to buy the train.

But the representatives from the municipalities exercised the right to first refusal for the acquisition of the steam engine, the diesel locomotive and passenger cars.

A group from Sept-Îles, Que., which hoped to purchase the train operation, made the original offer to purchase the train. The deadline to match the offer was Nov. 29.

"We were able to mobilize quickly and provide funds to raise the \$500,000 and thus allow the CCFO to make a promise to purchase within the time limit," CCFO President Louise Boudrias said in a released statement.

Boudrias had told Radio-Canada she always maintained she would do everything in her power to keep the "little train" in the region.

The CCFO has estimated the cost to repair the tracks would be about \$7 million and said the earliest the train would resume operations is in 2013.

The Outaouais Tourism Board has said the train brings 50,000 to 60,000 tourists into Wakefield each year, generating close to \$10 million in revenues.

**Thursday 01/12/2011 Cornwall Freeholder Cornwall**

Lucky to be alive in wake of train accident

From the Vault

By Claude McIntosh news@standard-freeholder.com

Mr. and Mrs. Albert Lalonde couldn't believe what they were seeing as they waited on the verandah of their home at 524 Pitt St. for a street car late in the afternoon on Thursday, July 8, 1948.

The fact that they lived to tell their story was nothing short of a miracle.

It was the same for Garnet Pitt who was sitting in the back seat of his son's car parked in front of the Lalonde home.

The elder Pitt was waiting for his son, Arnold, to return from an errand.

The Lalondes caught the first glimpse of the approaching danger as a 90-ton Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) engine came barrelling onto Pitt Street from Sixth Street East.

In tow were several box cars and a tank car.

The ordeal started minutes earlier at the Sydney Street No. 2 siding just east of Sydney Street when, without warning, several freight cars that had been shunted on No. 1 siding rolled down the grade and rammed the cab of the engine.

The top of the cab was ripped off by the impact.

The engine was now being pushed by the momentum of the box cars and a tank car.

Engineer William Nicholson, of Montreal, fought desperately to control the lunging, runaway engine as it rolled east on Sixth Street and across Sydney, but debris had jammed the reverse gear and throttle.

With the runaway locomotive and cars picking up speed, Nicholson and his fireman Gerald Suffel of Ottawa jumped to safety.

Incredibly, the train negotiated the sharp curve onto Pitt Street at Sixth.

This was when the Lalondes froze in disbelief.

As they scrambled for the front door of their home the locomotive jumped the tracks, literally landing at their feet.

Mrs. Lalonde collapse on the porch in an hysterical heap.

They had come within inches of being crushed by the lumbering locomotive.

Garnet Pitt had a closer call.

When he spotted the runaway train, he jumped out of the car, but was buried to his waist in coal that spilled out of the rear of the locomotive.

The car was crushed, as was an unoccupied Edwards Electrical Co. panel truck.

Several pedestrians narrowly missed being crushed.

With the engine off the tracks and on its side, the unattached box cars and tank car continued on their merry way until they reached a slight grade on Pitt Street a couple of blocks away.

That's when they gently started to roll back, coming to a halt alongside the disabled engine after a man managed to engage the manual brake on the lead box car.

The engineer figured the locomotive was travelling at about 15 miles per hour when he and the fireman jumped.

However, Albert "Bert" Lalonde said it was going much faster when it made the turn from Sixth to Pitt "on two wheels."

"I'll stake my life that it was going at least 50 miles per hour," Lalonde told the Standard-Freeholder.

Mrs. Lalonde truly believed that they were about to meet their Maker.

The fact that there were no serious injuries in the episode was indeed miraculous.

The engineer suffered a gash on his head, his fireman had minor burns to his hands from the steam that poured into the engine from a broken steam pipe. Albert Lalonde was shaken up and his wife was treated for shock. Garnet Pitt suffered an injured ankle. All were treated and released at the General Hospital.

Mayor Lloyd Gallinger was among the hundreds of citizens who swarmed to the scene.

He immediately called for a full investigation.

A CPR crew arrived from Montreal and after a three-hour tussle managed to upright the engine. It was shipped to the CPR shops for repairs.

The return of freight trains to an unused railway line might be the key to bringing commuter rail to Kanata and other west-end communities.

A non-profit organization called Transport Pontiac-Renfrew (TPR) could finalize a deal to take over an out-of-service Canadian National railway line in the spring, says James Allen, who has advised the group, formed in 2009 by business and political interests in Renfrew County and the Pontiac region.

"I'm optimistic that we're close enough that TPR and CN can complete their deal in the first quarter of 2012 and then roll out a freight operation," says Allen.

Once freight trains start rolling between Ottawa and Pembroke, Ont., via Portage-du-Fort, Que., the revenue generated will help finance a planned commuter service 18 months later. That means a commuter rail service between Pembroke and Ottawa's central railway station could start as soon as 2013, four years before the first phase of the city's LRT project is slated to begin operations.

Officials from both Pontiac and Renfrew have pursued a commuter rail option over the out-of-service CN Beachburg rail subdivision since 2008, when the line was owned by the Ottawa Central Railway. Shortly after a special passenger train completed a test run between Ottawa and Beachburg in 2008, CN purchased the Ottawa Central and quickly abandoned a section of railway line, which passes by or near a number of communities in the city including Bells Corners, north Kanata, Dunrobin and Fitzroy Harbour.

Allen, former chief executive of the Ottawa Central, says the railway line's prospects have improved since 2008, especially after a developer purchased a shuttered Smurfit Stone plant in Portage-du-Fort and redeveloped the property into a rail-friendly industrial park. A wood-pellet plant on the site is expected to be a major customer for a new rail operator.

The return of freight traffic on the line after five years of inactivity will help subsidize a commuter rail service, Allen says, since he expects employees of a future railway would be involved in both freight and passenger services. Allen expects to be involved in the operations of the new railway line.

In addition to freight service, the non-profit group also hopes to operate occasional special passenger services over the line before commuter service is established. This could include tourist trains that would serve whitewater rafting attractions and other tourism operators in the Upper Ottawa Valley.

This fits with the plans of Mobility Ottawa-Outaouais: Systems and Enterprises Inc., a consortium looking to bring partners together to establish a privately run passenger rail network through the capital region on existing rail lines, extending as far as Smiths Falls and La Pêche, Que.

Joseph Potvin, chief executive of the consortium, says his group doesn't want to limit itself to pursuing strictly commuter rail options, since there are other potential markets for rail in the region, such as bringing day-trippers from nearby communities into the city to shop.