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SURFAC	E TRANSPOF	RTATION BOARD	
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	ORAL ARC		
IN THE MATTER OF		:	
		:	
ALLEGHENY VALLEY	RAILROAD	:	
COMPANY PETITION	FOR	:	
DECLARATORY ORDER	R	:	
		:	
PETITIONER,		: Finance	
		: Docket	
		: 35239	
- V		:	
	A ATS /		
THE BUNCHER COMPA	ANY,		
RESPONDENT.		•	
RESPONDENT.		•	
		x	
	Tuesday,		
	January 2	26, 2010	
	_		
	Surface 1	Transportation Board	
	Hearing H	Room	
		reet, S.W.	
	Washingto	on, D.C.	
The a	above-enti	itled matter came on	
for hearing, pur:	suant to r	notice, at 9:30 a.m.	
BEFORE:			
DANIEL ELLI	-		
	LVEY FTINGHAM	Vice Chairman	

APPEARANCES:

On Behalf of Allegheny Valley Railroad Company, Petitioner:

> RICHARD R. WILSON, ESQ. 518 N. Center Street, Ste. 1

Ebensburg, PA 15931

(814) - 419 - 8152

On Behalf of the Buncher Company,

Respondent:

EDWARD J. FISHMAN, ESQ.

of: K&L Gates, LLP

1601 K Street, NW

Washington, DC 20006

(202)-778-9456

Page 3 I-N-D-E-X ORAL ARGUMENTS

		Page
1	P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S	
2	(10:22 a.m.)	
3	CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: We will now turn	
4	to the argument in Allegheny Valley. Counsel	
5	for AVR, you have oh, you have to get up	
6	here first. Oh, no problem.	
7	Counsel for AVR, you have 20	
8	minutes. Please state any time you are	
9	reserving for rebuttal. In addition, AVR has	
10	asked to present an easel-sized version of	
11	certain maps that were submitted as part of	
12	the record to aid in the discussion.	
13	We ask counsel that you refer	
14	as you refer to the maps in your presentation,	
15	you reference each by its respective	
16	designated exhibit number in the proceeding so	
17	that the reporter will have an accurate	
18	record. Thank you.	
19	MR. WILSON: I will do that, sir.	
20	Good morning. My name is Richard Wilson, and	
21	I represent the Petitioner in this proceeding,	
22	Allegheny Valley Railroad Company. With me	

		Page 5
1	this morning is Mr. Russell Peterson, who is	
2	the CEO and owner of the Allegheny Valley	
3	Railroad.	
4	In a 1983 and, oh, I have	
5	reserved five minutes for rebuttal.	
6	CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Sure.	
7	MR. WILSON: In a 1983 conveyance	
8	to the Buncher Company, Conrail retained a	
9	permanent rail easement over a 1,500-foot-by-	
10	90-foot parcel between 16th and 21st Streets in	
11	the Pittsburgh Strip District, and in 1995,	
12	Conrail conveyed that easement to the	
13	Allegheny Valley Railroad Company as part of	
14	AVRR's line of railroad pursuant to ICC	
15	acquisition authority in Finance Docket 32783.	
16	Allegheny Valley Exhibit D, on the	
17	lower right-hand corner of the first exhibit,	
18	is a copy of the track charts and valuation	
19	maps that were attached to the deed from	
20	Conrail to Allegheny Valley, and they	
21	explicitly describe and indicate the easement	
22	to be conveyed by Conrail to Allegheny Valley	

		Page 6
1	as part of that acquisition proceeding.	
2	Allegheny Valley Railroad Exhibit	
3	2, which is immediately to the left of Exhibit	
4	D, is an aerial photograph that is a little	
5	difficult to see, but it attempts to depict	
6	the location of the easement parcel and its	
7	relationship to adjacent buildings, primarily	
8	the Pittsburgh Produce Terminal and the 16th	
9	Street Bridge and 21st Street.	
10	As I've indicated, these exhibits	
11	are in the record, and they, I think, give an	
12	indication of the parcel that's in dispute in	
13	this proceeding. Buncher now contends that	
14	AVRR's right to reinstitute freight and	
15	passenger rail service over this easement	
16	between 16th and 21st Street is somehow in	
17	doubt.	
18	In the Board's December 1, 2009	
19	Order, you asked that we address whether the	
20	Board has jurisdiction to consider this	
21	dispute in light of the recent DC Circuit	
22	Court of Appeals decision in Harsimus, and we	

1	have submitted briefs indicating that Harsimus
2	is distinguishable both on the facts and the
3	law from the case that's before you today. In
4	Harsimus, that case involved a piece of
5	railroad called the embankment, which was six
6	separate blocks, elevated blocks of right-of-
7	way, as the Board is well aware.
8	In the Harsimus case, one of the
9	pertinent distinctions is that unlike the
10	situation in the Buncher proceeding, Conrail
11	retained no permanent rail easement over the
12	embankment line. It clearly indicates that
13	they did not see this as a line which they had
14	continuing expectations to provide rail
15	service over.
16	The issue in the Harsimus case
17	that was agreed to by both parties was whether
18	or not the embankment track segment was part
19	of a line of railroad which Conrail had
20	received under the final System Plan known as
21	the Harrison-Jersey City Line, which was
22	identified in the final System Plan as Line

		Page 8
1	Code 1420, and the Board found that it was a	
2	line of railroad, and, accordingly, Conrail	
3	required abandonment jurisdiction or	
4	abandonment approval and authority before they	
5	could sell it to a private developer.	
6	In reviewing that decision, the DC	
7	Circuit Court of Appeals in Harsimus said,	
8	"Wait a minute. This requires an	
9	interpretation of the Final System Plan. Only	
10	the Special Court has jurisdiction to review	
11	those plans, and since we don't have a Special	
12	Court, that jurisdiction now falls to the DC	
13	District Court, and that was the decision	
14	which we face in Harsimus.	
15	We think, and we've explained in	
16	our brief, there are some legal analytical	
17	problems with the decision of the DC Circuit	
18	Court of Appeals in Harsimus, but for purposes	
19	of the Allegheny Valley petition for	
20	declaratory order, the Board doesn't need to	
21	address those.	
22	The Harsimus decision specifically	

		I
1	indicates that there are many occasions when	
2	the determination of the status of a rail line	
3	will not require reference to the Final System	
4	Plan or to a Conrail conveyance deed.	
5	CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Mr. Wilson, in	
6	this instance, wouldn't it be helpful to look	
7	at the FSP to determine when the actual	
8	transfer took place to Conrail, whether or not	
9	it was transferred as a main line of rail or	
10	a piece of yard track or interchange track?	
11	MR. WILSON: No, sir, we don't	
12	believe so, because if you look at the record	
13	that we have presented to the Board, there	
14	were significant changes in the way Conrail	
15	operated these lines between 1976 and 1983-84,	
16	when they created the interests which are in	
17	dispute at this point in time. You don't have	
18	to go back to the Final System Plan to	
19	evaluate those.	
20	CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: How was the line	
21	operated from `76 to `84?	
22	MR. WILSON: Yes, `76 to `84.	

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Page 10 CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: How was it 1 2 operated? Was it operated as a main line? Is 3 that your --MR. WILSON: No, it was not. 4 In 1976, the Penn Central trustees retained 5 6 property in the estate between 16th Street and 7 11th Street, never was transferred to Conrail. 8 That, in effect, truncated the Railroad Street 9 line that we have in dispute at 16th Street, 10 and it was never a through railroad route 11 after that. 12 It simply terminated the Conrail 13 branch line that provided services to shippers 14 at the Pittsburgh Product Terminal between 16th and 21st Street. This is -- this gets 15 16 extremely complicated. 17 CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: So what you're 18 saying is once the truncation occurred -- I 19 assume that was as a result of the abandonment 20 that occurred in the early seventies -- that 21 that piece of line -- the piece of line at 22 issue had become a piece of yard trackage. Is

that what you're saying? 1 2 MR. WILSON: It was the end of the Conrail branch line that came into the 3 4 Pittsburgh Produce Terminal yard, but that 5 terminal yard after 1976, when Conrail -- and 6 this is the piece north of 16th Street. That 7 yard was dismantled, leaving only track number 8 8, which was the Railroad Street track and the 9 track on which the easement was created, and Conrail --10 11 But Conrail continued to provide 12 origination and termination services into the Pittsburgh Produce Terminal between 16th and 13

14 21st Street up until 1993. That's what's 15 shown on Exhibit H, which is the Conrail zone 16 track service map that shows that Conrail 17 continued to provide service.

18 CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: I guess I'm a 19 little confused, because I think the argument 20 that you were making in your briefs was that 21 this piece of -- the subject line was main 22 line, and, as a result, it required some type

of formal abandonment, and maybe I'm 1 2 misunderstanding what you're saying here, that this track was yard track and then was pulled 3 4 up, and then it wouldn't seem subject to 5 authority. 6 MR. WILSON: The track, we 7 maintain, was main line or branch line track 8 that came into the yard, continued to be used 9 for that purposes, and was never removed from 10 the STB's jurisdiction. Now, Buncher argues that in 1984, in Abandonment Docket AB 11 12 167558N, that Conrail abandoned track that included this easement, and we argue -- and in 13 14 support of that, they go back and try to 15 invoke the Final System Plan as an indication 16 that there was only a single line of railroad, 17 and they argue that you can go back and look 18 at the Final System Plan or have to go back 19 and look at the Final System Plan in order to 20 identify what tracks Conrail had for 21 abandonment in 1984. There's at least five 22 separate reasons why that is not a correct

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1			
		Page	13
1	argument.		
2	CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: So from 1976 to		
3	`84, you're arguing that it is a main line		
4	piece of track		
5	MR. WILSON: Yes.		
6	CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: and that		
7	and do you have any and that means what		
8	you're saying is we don't have to look back at		
9	the FSP, because it was operated as a main		
10	line. Do you have any evidence that you can		
11	point to in the record that demonstrates that		
12	it was operated in such a manner?		
13	MR. WILSON: Well, for example,		
14	once Conrail abandoned the track under the		
15	Fort Wayne Bridge, the lower deck of the Fort		
16	Wayne Bridge, and the track connecting that		
17	Fort Wayne Bridge track up Smallman Street,		
18	which was the only track that Conrail		
19	abandoned in 1984, they changed their		
20	operations.		
21	And Exhibit F is the Conrail track		
22	chart from the 1984 Abandonment Docket, and it		
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		Page 14
1	shows that there are two pieces of track that	
2	Conrail abandoned. The first one is the lower	
3	deck of the Fort Wayne Bridge and then a	
4	connecting track from the Fort Wayne Bridge to	
5	21st Street, which, at that time, the only	
6	track that existed that went between those two	
7	points was the Smallman Street track, and what	
8	prompted that abandonment	
9	CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: How do you say	
10	that, that it was the only track that extended	
11	between those two points?	
12	MR. WILSON: Because that's the	
13	track that Conrail identified for abandonment,	
14	and Buncher has argued that, "Oh, also	
15	included within that Abandonment Docket is the	
16	easement on the opposite side of the Produce	
17	Terminal Building," which Conrail had reserved	
18	in 1983, just six months before.	
19	CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: That's	
20	MR. WILSON: Now, the change in	
21	operations is shown can be seen on AVRR	
22	Exhibit A6. What happened is that after	

		Page	15
1	Conrail abandoned those pieces of track, it no		
2	longer had access into the Produce Terminal		
3	yard via the lower deck of the Fort Wayne		
4	Bridge. What it did, it transferred its		
5	traffic to the upper deck, ran it out along		
6	the Pittsburgh-Harrisburg main line.		
7	You can't		
8	CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Believe it or		
9	not, I understand what you just did. Thank		
10	you.		
11	MR. WILSON: The change in		
12	operations enabled Conrail to run the track		
13	its traffic up their main line to Harrisburg		
14	and Philadelphia and then switch off on the		
15	Brilliant Branch and come over and reconnect		
16	on the railroad, what I refer to as the		
17	Railroad Street track, bring it down along the		
18	river into the Pittsburgh Strip District and		
19	down to the track that ran between 16th and		
20	21st Street, track 8 for the as long as		
21	that track was in service and even until 1993		
22	to be able to serve the Pittsburgh Produce		

Page 16 Terminal building. 1 2 VICE CHAIRMAN MULVEY: So track 8 was operable then until 1993, and there was 3 traffic going over track --4 5 MR. WILSON: The record isn't There was track, obviously, in 1983, 6 clear. 7 when Conrail reserved the easement. When that 8 track actually was covered over by Buncher or 9 others is not clear on the record, but clearly it was operable, I think, by 1984, and in any 10 event, by 1983 Conrail was still operating, as 11 indicated by their track chart, over other 12 13 track in that area. 14 VICE CHAIRMAN MULVEY: What year, 15 again, did Conrail convey the Eastern to AVRR? 16 MR. WILSON: 1995. VICE CHAIRMAN MULVEY: 1995. 17 So 18 the presumption would be in 1995 that there 19 was an easement over an operating track. 20 MR. WILSON: In 1995, very clearly 21 this piece of track, which begins at -- I 22 should say this piece of railroad right-of-

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		Page	17
1	way, because I think it's conceded by		
2	MEMBER NOTTINGHAM: Mr. Chairman,		
3	could I just ask one follow-up question?		
4	CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Sure.		
5	MEMBER NOTTINGHAM: Mr. Wilson, if		
6	I could, just one question. What specific		
7	evidence in the record can you point to, to		
8	support your claim that there was actual rail		
9	service being provided in the early eighties,		
10	or another way to ask that question would be		
11	what's the most recent year that you can point		
12	to, sworn statements, visual sightings, or any		
13	other evidence in the record that would give		
14	us comfort in agreeing with you that there was		
15	actually rail service in that year?		
16	MR. WILSON: Well, for one, you		
17	have the Conrail tariffs and the Allegheny		
18	Valley tariffs, which contain the legal		
19	holding out of common carrier service to		
20	provide service to the Pittsburgh Produce		
21	Terminal. Those are in the record.		
22	There is also the verified		

Page 18 statement of James Street, which is the 1 2 current President for Allegheny Valley 3 Railroad, who was at that time a Conrail train master who describes the routes that were used 4 5 and the service that was provided from 43rd 6 Street yard into the Pittsburgh Produce 7 Terminal between 16th and 21st Street. 8 So, I think if you will look 9 through the record, there is lots of indication that service was provided and 10 11 continues to be provided to this day to shippers located between 16th and 21st Street. 12 CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Thank you, Mr. 13 14 Counsel for the Buncher Company will Wilson. now proceed. You've been allotted 20 minutes 15 16 for your presentation. Please step up to the 17 podium, introduce yourself for the record, and 18 begin. 19 MR. FISHMAN: Good morning, 20 Chairman Elliott, Vice Chairman Mulvey, 21 Commissioner Nottingham. Thank you for this 22 opportunity to present the position of the

		Page
1	Buncher Company. My name is Ed Fishman, and	5
2	I represent the Buncher Company in this	
3	matter.	
4	I think it's very important to	
5	focus on the property in dispute and the track	
6	in dispute that used to be on this property.	
7	That track, track number 8, was taken up 20,	
8	25 years ago.	
9	We submitted a verified statement	
10	to the effect that track number 8 was removed	
11	between 1984, shortly after the Conrail	
12	abandonment in 1988. That track has not	
13	existed for 20, 25 years. There's been no	
14	service between 16th and 21st Street for more	
15	than 25 years.	
16	With all due respect to Mr.	
17	Wilson, I think that both in his pleadings and	
18	here today before you in argument, there is a	
19	tendency to sort of mix and match between the	
20	specifics of what was happening on the Buncher	
21	property and the general activities that were	
22	going on in the Strip District.	

		Page 20
1	The notion that Conrail was still	
2	serving customers between 16th and 21st Street	
3	up until 1995 is just not true. I mean, there	
4	is no evidence to support that. The track was	
5	removed.	
6	I was a little concerned when I	
7	got the letter from Mr. Wilson indicating that	
8	there would be exhibits presented today. I	
9	know the Board's notice actually said	
10	something about no further exhibits, but I	
11	actually think these help us.	
12	So while it's a little bit	
13	difficult to review these in any standard	
14	evidentiary matter, I think I'd like to focus	
15	on Exhibit H, which is this 1993 Conrail ZTS	
16	map, and it clearly shows that track 8 no	
17	longer exhibited. The track that's coming in,	
18	the one that they show coming in and adjacent	
19	to the fruit auction building is actually a	
20	completely different track. I think it's	
21	labeled here as the fruit auction track.	
22	Let me just get this right. It's	

		Page
1	track number 3, fruit auction. That's not our	
2	track. That's not the track that existed on	
3	the Buncher property. The track that existed	
4	on the Buncher property was removed shortly	
5	after Conrail filed for abandonment.	
б	Let's talk about the abandonment.	
7	Conrail filed for abandonment in 1984 on the	
8	Valley Industrial Track between mile post 0.0	
9	and mile post 0.6. That covered the exact	
10	parameters of the property we're talking about	
11	here. It covered the Buncher property between	
12	mile post 0.3, mile post 0.6, same mile post,	
13	same description, same name, Valley Industrial	
14	Track.	
15	It covered the same boundaries,	
16	16th Street and 21st Street. Our position is	
17	Conrail abandoned this line.	
18	CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Is that is	
19	that the piece of track that I know they're	
20	both supposedly called Valley Industrial	
21	Track. Is that the one that is also labeled	
22	as the Allegheny Branch?	

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1	MR. FISHMAN: The Conrail		
2	abandonment, if you look at the abandonment		
3	filing, it just describes the track as the		
4	Valley Industrial Track. It says nothing		
5	about Smallman Street or Railroad Street. It		
б	says nothing about there being two different		
7	lines of railroad in this area, so we don't		
8	subscribe to this theory that there were		
9	actually two different lines of railroad.		
10	CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: No, I understand		
11	that, believe me, but would you agree that		
12	this is the branch that has been described as		
13	the Allegheny Branch?		
14	MR. FISHMAN: Yes. I think		
15	generally, if you look at the Final System		
16	Plan, which is the starting point for		
17	understanding what Conrail got, Line Code 2229		
18	as defined in the Final System Plan is		
19	described as the portion of the Allegheny		
20	Branch starting at 11th Street, and that first		
21	segment, the segment that we're concerned		
22	about, extends to 57th Street, so this clearly		

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1 is the Allegheny Branch.

2	Now, I do think Conrail may have
3	redesignated this part of their system as the
4	Allegheny Secondary at some point, and the
5	track mats that we submitted into evidence
б	actually show that later on they started
7	calling this the Allegheny Secondary, but they
8	weren't calling anything else separately the
9	Allegheny Branch.
10	So, again, this theory that there
11	was an Allegheny Secondary and an Allegheny
12	Branch and that there were two separate lines
13	of railroad, there is no independent evidence
14	for that, and that's our position.
15	CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Okay. Here's
16	where I get a little confused. The way I see
17	this abandonment, as you describe it, is it
18	goes from the bridge all the way up through
19	that branch, up to, I guess, 21st Street.
20	MR. FISHMAN: That's correct.
21	CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: And I looked in
22	one of your briefs, and in 1972 you reference

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1	an abandonment, which apparently relates, I		
2	think, to the same piece of line on the		
3	where it was truncated back in the seventies.		
4	Would that be an accurate description of the		
5	1972 abandonment?		
6	MR. FISHMAN: I believe that's		
7	correct. I believe the 1972 abandonment,		
8	which was the Penn Central Transportation		
9	Company abandonment, applied to the line		
10	between mile post 0 and 0.2.		
11	CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: And that would		
12	have been between 12th and 14th Streets?		
13	MR. FISHMAN: Roughly, yes.		
14	CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Now, this is the		
15	part that gets me. Why, in 1984, would they		
16	go back and apparently abandon the same piece		
17	of track?		
18	MR. FISHMAN: Well, I think I		
19	think the answer lies in what Conrail got. I		
20	mean, basically, when the Final System Plan		
21	was developed and a conveyance to Conrail took		
22	place, it's almost like it was a reset. It		

1	was a gloop glota and Convoil would got to	Page
1	was a clean slate, and Conrail, you've got to	
2	look to what Conrail got. Line Code 2229	
3	started, basically, I think, from that end of	
4	that first abandonment.	
5	Now, there may be a discrepancy in	
6	the mile posts, and I can't completely	
7	reconcile it, either, but I think you have to	
8	start with what Conrail got. And Conrail	
9	basically got from 11th Street on, and I think	
10	that it's clear that the 1984 abandonment	
11	takes that entire part of their system out.	
12	It takes out from the Fort Wayne	
13	Street Bridge to 21st Street out of their	
14	system, and in subsequent maps you see a gap.	
15	Conrail is no longer operating in that part.	
16	That part of their network is	
17	gone, and I think the other important thing to	
18	realize, and you can see this on some of these	
19	maps, there are more than 30 tracks in this	
20	area. I mean, we're not just talking about,	
21	you know, one track.	
22	There are multiple tracks, and so	

		Page	26
1	we need to focus in on the track that existed		
2	on the Buncher property, and clearly it seems		
3	to have been abandoned as a result of the		
4	totality of the facts and circumstances here		
5	make it clear that that track was taken out of		
б	the Conrail network.		
7	VICE CHAIRMAN MULVEY: Mr. Fishman?		
8	MR. FISHMAN: Yes?		
9	VICE CHAIRMAN MULVEY: If I could,		
10	I want to make sure I understand your		
11	statement that there was only one track, the		
12	so-called Railroad Street track. Are you		
13	saying that the record does not demonstrate		
14	that at some point in time there was a track		
15	running along Smallwood Street that was also		
16	generally referred to as the Allegheny Valley		
17	Rail Track or part of the AVR?		
18	MR. FISHMAN: Let me clarify.		
19	There were multiple tracks in this area, and		
20	my statement was intended to describe the		
21	track that existed on the Buncher property in		
22	dispute, which is a rectangular strip of land		

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1	90 feet in width, and there actually were	
2	three tracks on that parcel, so let me just	
3	first clarify that.	
4	There were tracks 6, 7, and 8 on	
5	that parcel that was sold to the Buncher	
6	Company. Track 6 and 7 were actually sold	
7	outright to Buncher, full title to those	
8	tracks sold.	
9	Conrail did reserve what I call a	
10	track easement, not a railroad right-of-way,	
11	but a track easement on track number 8, so the	
12	relevant track for purposes of this dispute is	
13	described in the reservation that Conrail made	
14	in the 1983 transaction with Buncher as the	
15	Valley Industrial Track, part of Line Code	
16	2229.	
17	Now, your question goes to whether	
18	there is a separate track emanating from	
19	Smallman Street that is also called the Valley	
20	Industrial Track. I have not seen that	
21	anywhere in the record.	
22	VICE CHAIRMAN MULVEY: You have not	

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1	seen the Smallman track the maps that show		
2	track along Smallman Street?		
3	MR. FISHMAN: Clearly, there's		
4	track along Smallman Street, but I have not		
5	see anything which says that was the Valley		
6	Industrial Track. The only thing that we have		
7	in the record that describes the track as the		
8	Valley Industrial Track is the reservation		
9	that Conrail made in the 1983 transaction with		
10	Buncher and describes that piece of track as		
11	the Valley Industrial Track.		
12	So I can't say that the track that		
13	was along Smallman Street was also referred to		
14	as the Valley Industrial Track. I mean, it's		
15	all very confusing, but I think we need to		
16	focus on what the evidence shows, what the		
17	independent evidence shows, and there is		
18	nothing in the record that says there were two		
19	separate Valley Industrial tracks, one on		
20	Railroad Street, one on Smallman Street, both		
21	lines of railroad, and that's our position.		
22	VICE CHAIRMAN MULVEY: The 1983		

		Page
1	sale to Buncher by Conrail, and, as you say,	
2	Conrail had a reservation reserving an	
3	easement over that line.	
4	MR. FISHMAN: Right.	
5	VICE CHAIRMAN MULVEY: Was that an	
б	indicator that they eventually intended to	
7	restore service and that the line, therefore,	
8	should not be paved over because the line	
9	was paved over at some point.	
10	MR. FISHMAN: We believe that that	
11	reservation and we submitted a verified	
12	statement to this effect. We believe the	
13	reservation was made because Conrail thought	
14	Buncher might be interested in receiving rail	
15	service, and Buncher is a company, a real	
16	estate development company, that actually had	
17	some other operations outside of the downtown	
18	area that receive rail service, so I think	
19	that's one reason why Conrail may have	
20	reserved this easement.	
21	The second reason is they hadn't	
22	abandoned the track yet, and so it makes sense	

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1	to me that they would reserve an easement, and	
2	it's important to recognize the narrow scope	
3	of the easement. It's not a railroad right-	
4	of-way easement. It's an easement to use and	
5	continue to operate on the existing Valley	
6	Industrial Track.	
7	In my mind, that's very different	
8	from reserving an easement for perpetual	
9	common carrier operations, but back to your	
10	point, we think that was reserved because they	
11	thought Buncher might be interested in rail	
12	service and also because they conveyed the	
13	property before eliminating the common carrier	
14	obligation.	
15	Now, two months after conveying	
16	the property to Buncher and reserving the	
17	easement, they filed a Notice of Insufficient	
18	Revenues under NERSA to initiate the	
19	abandonment process that they used and then	
20	shortly after that filed their abandonment	
21	application, which was granted in May, 1984.	
22	MEMBER NOTTINGHAM: And at that	

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1	point, you could then pave over it?
2	MR. FISHMAN: At that point, the
3	track was removed, and let's remember that
4	this track had always been surrounded by
5	concrete pads, which I think is another
6	indication of the way that service was
7	provided in that area, but the track was
8	removed. The area was paved, and since 1984,
9	maybe the time period between `84 and `88, $$
10	that track that property has been paved
11	over, and Conrail has never objected.
12	MEMBER NOTTINGHAM: That track was
13	removed by Conrail or by Buncher?
14	MR. FISHMAN: We don't actually
15	know. I mean, this goes back more than 20
16	years, and, unfortunately, the institutional
17	knowledge, the people who were around in the
18	Buncher Company at that point, actually don't
19	know whether Buncher physically removed it.
20	I mean, certainly it would have
21	someone would have hired a contractor, we
22	think, to take that track out. We don't know

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1	if it was Buncher, if it was Conrail, if it		
2	was both of them. We don't know who got the		
3	scrap value. We just couldn't find any		
4	records.		
5	MEMBER NOTTINGHAM: That was my		
6	next question. Who got the scrap value of the		
7	rail?		
8	MR. FISHMAN: We don't know. We		
9	don't know. Unfortunately, we did not find		
10	the documentation which explained who got it.		
11	What we do know is the track was removed.		
12	Let's remember, Conrail, you know,		
13	kept track in that area. It's not like		
14	Conrail completely disappeared from the area		
15	between 16th and 21st Street, but their track		
16	starts at 21st Street, and that's the track		
17	they conveyed to AVRR, so they're still in the		
18	area.		
19	They made they never made any		
20	attempt to attract rail service to that		
21	region, to indicate to Buncher that they were		
22	continuing to use this property for rail, to		

		Page	33
1	preserve it in any way. At a certain point,		
2	the fruit auction building, which used to be		
3	served by rail many years ago for produce, now		
4	it's all truck service.		
5	At a certain point in time, the		
6	trucks were continually driving over the		
7	Buncher property, and that forced the Buncher		
8	Company to basically put up Jersey barriers,		
9	again, demarcating this was this property. No		
10	one ever objected to that, either.		
11	So, I mean, I think the totality		
12	of the facts and circumstances here clearly		
13	demonstrate that Conrail's intent clearly		
14	manifested that it abandoned this property.		
15	There was no intention to preserve its ability		
16	to provide rail service at any point in time.		
17	CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Another question		
18	regarding the abandonment. In your final		
19	brief regarding Harsimus, you make a very		
20	strong argument why Harsimus would apply here		
21	and why we don't have jurisdiction and that it		
22	is subject to the Special Court's		

1 jurisdiction.

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2	If that, in fact, is the case, how
3	would that argument apply to the 1984
4	abandonment in this instance when that
5	wouldn't we, if your argument goes, wouldn't
6	we be without jurisdiction have made that
7	decision in `84?
8	MR. FISHMAN: I'm not sure how to
9	address the point of looking back at the `84
10	abandonment. What I do think is important, I
11	think it's important to recognize that to the
12	extent Harsimus is clear that to the extent
13	the Board relies substantially on Final System
14	Plan evidence, then, in order to make a
15	determination in this case, then that's an
16	issue that's within the exclusive jurisdiction
17	of the Special Court.
18	But I actually think that the
19	Board can reach a resolution in this case and
20	determine that the property was abandoned
21	without actually relying on Final System Plan
22	evidence. I think there is enough here if you

		Page
1	look at the `84 abandonment on its face, if	
2	you look at the Conrail track charts, if you	
3	look at what happened in the area.	
4	The track was removed. The	
5	admission seems to be it was never a line of	
6	railroad, which is a little bit different from	
7	the position AVRR, I thought, took in the	
8	briefs, but I think the totality again is that	
9	this track was taken out of the rail network.	
10	There was never any common carrier	
11	obligation that was preserved, and so I think	
12	there is a way the Board can actually resolve	
13	this case in our favor without getting into	
14	the Harsimus issues by not necessarily relying	
15	just on the Final System Plan evidence. I	
16	think there is additional evidence.	
17	CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Would that run	
18	counter to your argument that you made?	
19	MR. FISHMAN: I think it's a little	
20	bit of a clarification. We indicated in the	
21	pleadings that we thought there was sufficient	
22	evidence before the Board to rule on this	

		Page
1	case. The reason why we thought Harsimus	
2	would control is because of the argument that	
3	AVRR is making that there are two lines of	
4	railroad.	
5	I think, if you believe that's	
6	credible and you have to rebut that argument,	
7	you look to the Final System Plan, but I	
8	actually think there is enough evidence in the	
9	record outside of the Final System Plan, which	
10	would allow the Board to make the	
11	determination here without getting into that	
12	issue.	
13	VICE CHAIRMAN MULVEY: Mr.	
14	Fishman, if we	
15	MR. FISHMAN: Yes, sir.	
16	VICE CHAIRMAN MULVEY: If we were	
17	to decide that there is a rail easement still	
18	in existence, what happens then? Where do you	
19	where do you locate that? How do you find	
20	out where the location, that easement, might	
21	be on the Buncher property?	
22	The property, as I understand it,	

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1	has been described as somewhat like a parking		
2	lot right now, kind of a paved open space. Is		
3	that a fair description?		
4	MR. FISHMAN: That is correct. I		
5	believe that currently the entire rectangular		
6	strip of parcel at issue is paved over and is		
7	being used for parking.		
8	MEMBER NOTTINGHAM: There is no		
9	evidence or markings or anything that would		
10	tell us where the actual track, if there was		
11	a rail easement still in existence, where that		
12	would actually be located.		
13	MR. FISHMAN: I believe that's		
14	correct. I think you would have to actually		
15	get a surveyor out onto the property to figure		
16	out where the track formerly existed, and		
17	then, again, we dispute that there is an		
18	easement.		
19	We also dispute the scope of the		
20	easement. I mean, the easement clearly, when		
21	it was reserved, only applied to the existing		
22	track and has created what looked like a 36		

		Page	38
1	foot in width envelope, basically.		
2	AVRR's position is it covers the		
3	entire 90 feet, and we vehemently dispute		
4	that. We vehemently dispute that they have		
5	the ability to construct passenger rail		
6	platforms and tunnels and other things for the		
7	service. But, to your point, we don't know		
8	where the I mean, you have to figure out		
9	where the track is.		
10	MEMBER NOTTINGHAM: That dispute,		
11	if there is if it is in dispute, would be		
12	taken up, I assume, in state or local court,		
13	be a property type dispute.		
14	MR. FISHMAN: Certainly, a state		
15	court would have jurisdiction to interpret the		
16	scope of the easement.		
17	MEMBER NOTTINGHAM: How narrowly do		
18	you define this easement? I mean, if Buncher		
19	or some unknown third party in the middle of		
20	the night had just, back in the seventies or		
21	eighties, had just gone up and torn up the		
22	track, and, all of a sudden, the next day		

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1	there was no track, would you be saying that	
2	with the track went the easement?	
3	MR. FISHMAN: No, we're not saying	
4	that, and I don't think that's our case. I	
5	mean, clearly this was not a track that was	
6	removed by vandals. I mean, this was track	
7	that was removed by design. I just,	
8	unfortunately, cannot tell you who.	
9	We cannot submit evidence that	
10	says the Buncher Company pulled it up or	
11	Conrail pulled it up, because we just don't	
12	we don't have the records, and we don't have	
13	the people around anymore to who actually	
14	have actual knowledge, but we do know that the	
15	track was pulled up with everyone's consent	
16	and authorization, and so I think that's not	
17	our case.	
18	I think this was, you know,	
19	understood, and look at the context. Again,	
20	Buncher owns a lot of property. We're focused	
21	on this one strip, but Buncher owns much of	
22	the property in that Strip District area	

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1 between 16th and 21st Street.

2	All the trackage is gone. If you
3	look back at the old maps which have been
4	submitted into the evidence, there are
5	hundreds of tracks there. They're all gone.
6	VICE CHAIRMAN MULVEY: So the issue
7	of abandonment centers on the railroad's
8	intent, and sometimes we get a letter saying
9	that we're formally abandoning it. Without a
10	letter, there has to be certain actions, so
11	what actions do you proffer are determinative
12	of Conrail's intent to abandon: the 1984
13	letter? That seems to be unclear as to
14	exactly what was included in that. Is there
15	any ambiguity there that you see?
16	MR. FISHMAN: I don't think so. I
17	think that it's important to focus on the fact
18	this was a NERSA abandonment, and under the
19	Township of Bethel decision in the Third
20	Circuit, NERSA abandonments effectively become
21	become effective when the IC issued the
22	certificate. There was no further need to

		Page
1	file a Notice of Consummation.	
2	I mean, the law is clear on that,	
3	and let's also remember why NERSA was enacted,	
4	to expedite Conrail's abandonment process. I	
5	think that the subsequent actions that were	
6	taken clearly show an intent to abandon common	
7	carrier service in this part of its system.	
8	There was no holding out. There	
9	was no attempt by Conrail to ever provide	
10	service in this area, to ever indicate that it	
11	still was interested in retaining this track	
12	or this property as part of its system.	
13	MEMBER NOTTINGHAM: Mr. Chairman,	
14	if I if you have a question, by all means.	
15	CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: I have one quick	
16	question, and you can follow up.	
17	MEMBER NOTTINGHAM: Just quickly,	
18	and I will give Mr. Wilson notice. I'm going	
19	to ask both counsel the same question: is	
20	there any evidence in the property records, in	
21	the deeds or recordation books of this	
22	easement being recorded so that Buncher	

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Page 42 Ideally, in property law, when you 1 2 go to look at buying a property, we hope that the records are clear. You go down to the 3 4 county courthouse or City Hall, and you pull 5 up the land record, and you say, "Wow, it's 6 burdened by an easement. Okay." Maybe we pay 7 a different price for that property than if 8 it's not. Any evidence in the record of any 9 such documentation? MR. FISHMAN: Well, I believe that 10 11 the real property records were recorded, and 12 I think the important point is -- you're 13 getting to expectation. The important point 14 is that the Buncher Company acquired other properties in this area, and Conrail actually 15 16 reserved some track easements in those other 17 properties, too, and there is correspondence. 18 The very interesting thing is 19 there is correspondence where we didn't submit 20 it into the record, because it really wasn't 21 germane to this property, but there's 22 correspondence where Buncher was notified that

		Page
1	once Conrail pulls up the track, the easement	
2	rights expire. That was the expectation that	
3	the Buncher Company was under, and I think	
4	that's very normal.	
5	I mean, this is 20, 25 years ago.	
6	There was a reservation of a specific to	
7	continue the use of a specific track. That	
8	track was removed. There was never any	
9	attempt until recently, when AVRR came out	
10	with its plans to provide passenger rail	
11	service. There was never any indication that	
12	anyone was reserving any further rights to	
13	that property.	
14	CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: One last	
15	question. In 1995, when, I guess, this	
16	transaction took place, were you aware that	
17	Allegheny Valley was seeking these rights to	
18	operate over this line?	
19	MR. FISHMAN: No. Speaking on	
20	behalf of the Buncher Company, I wasn't	
21	representing them in 1995.	
22	CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Right.	

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1	MR. FISHMAN: But I don't I		
2	don't believe they were aware of the fact		
3	that, a seven-day wonder in those days, if a		
4	Notice of Exemption was filed in 1995 with the		
5	ICC. Remember, also, that the map attached to		
6	that notice clearly shows the line dead ends		
7	at 21st Street, no indication in that notice		
8	that there was any attempt to obtain authority		
9	to operate on track between 16th Street and		
10	21st Street.		
11	CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: So you, as the		
12	owner of the land, weren't aware that this, to		
13	the best of your knowledge, that this was		
14	going on at the Board?		
15	MR. FISHMAN: That's correct.		
16	CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Okay.		
17	MR. FISHMAN: Thank you.		
18	CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Mr. Wilson, you		
19	have five minutes, I believe, for rebuttal.		
20	MR. WILSON: Thank you, Your Honor.		
21	Let me respond to the questions that		
22	Commissioner Nottingham posed. Yes, there is		

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1	a survey. We can identify the precise	
2	location of the easement tract. It can be	
3	identified through surveying marks out. There	
4	is a metes and bounds description that is	
5	available.	
6	Second, when you look at what	
7	Conrail describes as the Valley Industrial	
8	Track in its 1984 abandonment application, you	
9	can look in that abandonment application, and	
10	it indicates quite clearly that the easement	
11	property between 16th and 21st Street was not	
12	included in that abandonment application.	
13	In the first place, there is a	
14	description of the track to be abandoned that	
15	describes it as overhead track with no	
16	originating or terminating traffic. That	
17	describes only the track that ran up Smallman	
18	Street and was used by Conrail to get to the	
19	53rd Street yard to bring traffic back down	
20	into the Strip District. The track that we	
21	are talking about, the track 8 on the	
22	easement, that was a track that was used to	

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originate or terminate traffic. 1 2 Finally, Conrail states in its 3 abandonment application that it has no 4 property interest in the connecting track, and 5 that's because that track lay in a public right-of-way, or portions of it had been sold 6 7 to the Pittsburgh Urban Redevelopment 8 Authority when they acquired the produce 9 terminal. Conrail would not have represented 10 to the Board that it had no property interest in the track it was seeking abandonment for 11 when six months before it had retained a 12 13 permanent rail easement. 14 Next, we would contest strongly that this was --15 16 CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Mr. Wilson, is 17 that -- is the survey that you mention in the 18 record? 19 MR. WILSON: It's -- I don't know 20 whether we submitted it in the record or not, 21 but it can be identified. 22 CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: If you did not,

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1	can you please submit it for the record?	Page	4 /
2	MR. WILSON: Yes, I will provide a		
3	copy for the Board. The other so we		
4	believe that the abandonment application on		
5	its face, read in its totality, describes only		
6	what we call the Smallman Street track between		
7			
	mile post 0.0 and the north side of 21st		
8	Street.		
9	We would also argue that the		
10	easement, which Conrail retained in 1983 and		
11	then transferred to Allegheny Valley Railroad		
12	in 1995, is not just a track easement. We		
13	note in our pleadings and as pointed out by		
14	opposing counsel, there are other indications		
15	where Conrail retained an easement and		
16	specifically stated in the easement that upon		
17	cessation of use of that line, the easement		
18	would terminate.		
19	That is not the language contained		
20	in the easement retained by Conrail over the		
21	Buncher parcel, so Conrail and Buncher clearly		
22	could specify when they created a so-called		

		Page	48
1	track easement, as distinguished from what we		
2	believe is shown in the 1983 deed as a		
3	permanent rail easement.		
4	There is no language in that deed		
5	that indicates there was any intent of the		
6	parties to terminate the easement when that		
7	track was removed. Finally, that easement was		
8	recorded.		
9	CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: With respect to		
10	that deed, the same question I was asking Mr.		
11	Fishman. Did you provide Buncher notice of		
12	this proceeding, that traveling over the		
13	getting the right to operate over this line?		
14	MR. WILSON: I don't know whether		
15	explicit notice was provided to the Buncher		
16	Company by Conrail or AVRR when they filed		
17	their Notice of Exemption, because I didn't		
18	represent them at that time.		
19	The Notice of Exemption itself		
20	identifies the mile post numbers for the track		
21	in question, and the mile post numbers for the		
22	line of railroad which was approved for		

		Page	49
1	acquisition by the ICC in `95 start with mile		
2	post 0.3, which is identified as the north		
3	side of 16th Street. That's in the original		
4	document.		
5	CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: I understand you		
б	abided by what was required to put it and mark		
7	the mile posts down, but don't you think it's		
8	strange that Buncher wouldn't be provided		
9	notice as the landowner?		
10	MR. WILSON: I don't I don't		
11	know whether that was done, and I don't know		
12	whether that was explicitly required at the		
13	time.		
14	VICE CHAIRMAN MULVEY: Does the		
15	sale in 1995 of the easement to AVRR by		
16	Conrail somewhat imply that Conrail did not		
17	intend to abandon that in 1984? Otherwise,		
18	Conrail is selling something it no longer had		
19	the right to sell, correct?		
20	MR. WILSON: We certainly think		
21	that indicates that Conrail believed they had		
22	a permanent rail easement for future railroad		

		Page	50
1	use, and they conveyed it to AVRR at that		
2	time. I think that's very strong indication		
3	of Conrail's intent not to abandon that.		
4	VICE CHAIRMAN MULVEY: So at least		
5	what you're saying is at least for the last 15		
6	years, Conrail had sold something, or 15 years		
7	ago Conrail sold something it believed it		
8	still had it still had the authority to do.		
9	MR. WILSON: Yes, I believe so,		
10	sir.		
11	VICE CHAIRMAN MULVEY: And your		
12	position is that they sold something that they		
13	did not have the authority to sell, because		
14	they had abandoned it effectively in 1984.		
15	MR. WILSON: Yes.		
16	MR. FISHMAN: May I address that?		
17	VICE CHAIRMAN MULVEY: Yes.		
18	MR. FISHMAN: Certainly, that is		
19	their position. I also think that what		
20	happened is the Conrail Real Estate Department		
21	looked back and said, "What do we have? Let's		
22	give whatever we have," but it was a quit		

		Page
1	claim, so they could only quit claim what they	
2	had, and our position is legally they had no	
3	easement. Thank you.	
4	VICE CHAIRMAN MULVEY: And you were	
5	not aware of that at the time?	
6	MR. FISHMAN: That's correct.	
7	VICE CHAIRMAN MULVEY: Okay. Thank	
8	you.	
9	CHAIRMAN ELLIOTT: Thank you very	
10	much for your excellent arguments, and the	
11	meeting is now adjourned.	
12	(Whereupon, the foregoing matter	
13	was adjourned at 11:09 a.m.)	
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