

NORTON

Rail plans up for debate

■ Comments from the public are encouraged at forums this week as the state decides which route the South Coast Rail will take.

By Kevin Tocci
ENTERPRISE CORRESPONDENT

NORTON — Residents tonight and on Tuesday will be asked again their opinions on possible routes for the extension of commuter rail service from Boston to New Bedford and Fall River after thinking the issue had been settled.

The public can comment Tuesday at 7 p.m. in the J.C. Solomonese School, 315 West Main St., Norton, or tonight from 6:30 to 8:30 at Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical School, 250 Foundry St., Easton.

In April, Gov. Deval Patrick developed a "Plan For Action" to resurrect and implement the

OPINIONS

Which rail line do you think should be extended?

WRITE: The Enterprise, P.O. Box 1450, Brockton, MA 02303

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Plans to implement South Coast Rail up for debate

South Coast Rail project. A study will review alternatives that could extend three existing lines from Middleboro, Stoughton and Attleboro.

Citizens Concerned About Tracks, a regional coalition that represents Taunton, Norton, Mansfield and Attleboro residents, welcomes the revival of the previously proposed rail line with one exception, according to CCATS Coordinator Heather Graf.

"We are in favor of the re-establishment of commuter rail service to Taunton and the cities of New Bedford and Fall River, but adamantly opposed to the so-called Attleboro alter-

Norton selectmen voted in September to support a resolution endorsing the Stoughton Alternative.

native for the South Coast Rail project," Graf said.

CCATS previously fought the New Bedford-Fall River line going through the area in the mid-1990s.

The MBTA in 1999 selected the Stoughton Alternative as

the preferred route.

Graf, who also coordinated the earlier campaign against the rail project, said she is frustrated by the current revival of the Attleboro Alternative.

"We've been there and done that and really didn't need to go back and start all over again," Graf said.

Selectmen Chairman Robert Kimball Jr., who was also involved with the last rail attempt, said he is upset with the state's decision to spend millions of dollars on another impact statement for the same project.

"Based on the fact that we have so many problems at the

FORUMS

Rail expansion forums

■ **Tonight 6:30 p.m.** Jan. 14 at Southeastern Vocational Technical School, 250 Foundry St., Easton.

■ **Tuesday 7 p.m.** at Solomonese School, 315 W. Main St., Norton.

■ **Wednesday 4 p.m.** at AMTC, 151 Martine St., Fall River.

state or the town and city level, I think the money could be better suited for other purposes," Kimball said. "We could sure as hell use that money for other things today."

Kimball said it has been

proven that Attleboro Alternative is not cost effective and lacks the necessary ridership.

Norton selectmen voted in September to support a resolution endorsing the Stoughton Alternative.

Graf said there are numerous issues with the proposed Attleboro line, including building and running a double track over Chartley Pond in Norton and several areas designated as wetlands.

"Is the Attleboro Alternative viable? We don't think so," Graf said.

For more information on the project, visit www.ccats.org or www.southcoastrail.com.