

AN APPLICATION OF CONNECTICUT LIGHT AND POWER COMPANY FOR A CERTIFICATE OF ENVIRONMENTAL COMPATIBILITY AND PUBLIC NEED FOR A PROPOSED 115-kV UNDERGROUND TRANSMISSION LINE TO INTERCONNECT THE CAPITOL DISTRICT ENERGY CENTER COGENERATION PROJECT TO THE EXISTING 115-kV NORTHWEST HARTFORD - SOUTHWEST HARTFORD UNDERGROUND TRANSMISSION LINE IN HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT. : CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL : October 22, 1987

OPINION

The Connecticut Light and Power Company (CL&P) has applied to the Connecticut Siting Council for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need (Certificate) for the construction of a 115-kV underground electric transmission line to interconnect the existing Northwest Hartford-Southwest Hartford 115-kV transmission line to the Capitol District Energy Center (CDEC) Cogeneration Project, on Capitol Avenue, Hartford, Connecticut.

The proposed line is necessary to provide the CDEC Cogeneration Project with electricity and to enable the CDEC facility to transmit approximately 45 MW of electricity to the utility grid. The CDEC plant is under construction and is expected to commence testing in March 1988.

Under Section 16-50p of the General Statutes of Connecticut (CGS), the Council must consider the need for the transmission line and the extent of the probable environmental and economic impacts created by the construction of this underground electric line. The Council may not grant a Certificate unless it finds that conflicts with state policies or adverse effects are not sufficient to deny the application.

The findings of fact include the Council's determinations regarding the need for the facility, its adverse effects, and its concurrence with relevant state energy policies.

Connecting the CDEC Project to CL&P's electric transmission system, will implement the Council's decision to certificate the construction of the facility, thus contributing to state electric power supply, helping reduce dependence on imported energy resources, diversifying the state's energy supply mix, and enhancing supply system reliability. An additional advantage to the public is the fact that the cost for the construction and operation of the line will be borne by the investors of the CDEC project.

One of the Council's concerns focuses on the adequacy and reliability of the electrical transmission service. Several alternatives to the proposed line were examined and found to have a more substantial effect on the environment and the transmission system within Hartford. Additionally, these alternatives could introduce an unstable transmission condition which could only be alleviated by reinforcement of substations at additional cost to the project. The proposed route of the line offers the best choice for connecting the CDEC facility to CL&P's electrical grid.

The Council considered the potential environmental, historic, archeological, scenic, and recreational impacts of the construction and operation of this line. The Council found

that adverse effects on environmental resources would be minimal. In fact, portions of Capital Avenue will be improved by the restitution of deteriorated sidewalks and curbs.

The proposed construction is within an urban developed area, including residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational uses. The Council believes that the potential effects of construction-related impacts, including noise, erosion, traffic and pedestrian limitations, and greenery cutting, will be temporary and minimal. The Council will require CL&P to meet specifications addressed in the Decision and Order accompanying this Decision.

The Council finds that the public need for this line outweighs any potential environmental effects and concludes that a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need is warranted for the construction of this transmission line. The Council hereby directs that such Certificate be issued subject to the terms, limitations, and conditions of the Decision and Order which accompanies this Opinion.