

DOCKET NO. 83

APPLICATION OF THE CONNECTICUT LIGHT AND POWER COMPANY FOR A CERTIFICATE OF ENVIRONMENTAL COMPATIBILITY AND PUBLIC NEED FOR A 115-KV UNDERGROUND TRANSMISSION LINE TO INTERCONNECT THE AES THAMES COGENERATION PROJECT TO THE MONTVILLE SUBSTATION IN MONTVILLE, CONN. : CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL
: COUNCIL
: January 28, 1988

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 Applied Energy Service (AES) Thames Cogeneration Project, Montville, Connecticut, to the existing CL&P Montville Substation.

The proposed line is needed to provide the AES Thames Cogeneration Project with electricity and to enable the facility to transmit approximately 180 MW of electricity to the utility's transmission grid. The AES Thames Cogeneration Facility is under construction and is expected to commence operation in November, 1989.

Under Section 16-50p of the General Statutes of Connecticut (CGS), the Council must deliberate on the public need for the proposed underground transmission line and the nature of any probable environmental impacts created by the construction or operation of this line. The Council may not grant a Certificate unless it finds that conflicts with

state environmental policies or adverse environmental effects are not sufficient to deny the application.

Connecting the AES Thames Cogeneration Facility to CL&P's electric transmission system will implement the Council's decision to certificate the construction of the cogeneration 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. The construction and line operation costs will be paid by the investors of the AES Thames Cogeneration Facility

A Council concern centers on the adequacy and reliability of the proposed line and its effect on CL&P's electrical transmission service. Several alternatives to the proposed line were evaluated and found to have more substantial effects on the environment and economics of the transmission system in the Montville area. These alternatives would introduce a greater visual impact and necessitate additional right-of-way acquisitions at extra costs to the proposed line. The proposed route of the line offers the best choice for connecting the AES Cogenerator Facility to CL&P's electrical grid.

The Council weighed the potential environmental, historic, archaeological, scenic, and recreational impacts of the construction and operation of this line. The Council found that adverse effects on environmental resources would be minimal and greatly mitigated by the restoration of the line right-of-way following completion of construction.

The proposed construction is within a suburban area, including residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational uses. The Council believes that the potential construction-related effects, including noise, dust, erosion, traffic 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 Opinion.

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 the proposed 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.

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