



TOWN OF EAST GRANBY

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EAST GRANBY, CONNECTICUT 06026

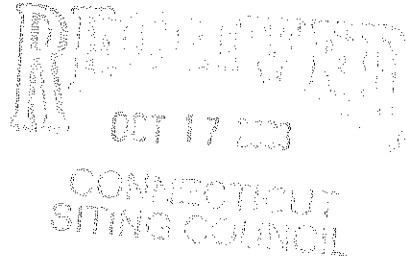
OFFICE OF FIRST SELECTMAN

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October 10, 2008

Mr. Jeffrey M. Towle
GSRP Project Manager
NUSCO
P.O. Box 270
Hartford CT 06141-0270



Re: Application of the Connecticut Light and Power Company (CL&P) to the Connecticut Siting Council ("Council") Concerning the Connecticut Portion of the Greater Springfield Reliability Project ("Project")

Dear Mr. Towle:

The East Granby Board of Selectman has spent much time reviewing the CL&P Greater Springfield Reliability Project. We have listened to and read the information provided by both CL&P and by concerned residents regarding the proposed 345-kilovolt electric transmission line between Bloomfield, CT and Ludlow, MA. This proposed line will run through approximately six miles of East Granby. The Board of Selectman (BOS) unanimously voted to recommend that the lines be placed underground as has our neighbor, the Town of Suffield. The Board would also encourage CL&P to bury the existing 115-kv lines along with the new 345-kv line. The underground options provided by CL&P are not without challenges such as wetlands concerns in the current ROW or the Route 20 / 187 approach. Sections of Newgate Road, some of which are two hundred years old, provides little shoulder and an underground line would end up being located in residents' front yards. Additionally, parts of the historical site, Newgate Prison, are within ten feet of the road.

CONCERNS

East Granby has several concerns regarding the Project. Primary concerns include public health & safety implications along with decreasing property values, corresponding decreases in tax revenue to the town, environmental and visual impact concerns. Additionally, the Metacomet Trail abuts and overlooks the area where the overhead lines are planned.

PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY

The Board of Selectman and those residents who live around or underneath the lines, have significant concerns regarding the effects of electromagnetic fields (EMF's) which

will be created by the new overhead lines. While CL&P and their experts maintain that there are no adverse health effects as a result of the proposed lines, there is significant literature that says the opposite. In the August 31, 2007 BioInitiative Report: *A Rationale for a Biologically Based Public Exposure Standard for Electromagnetic Fields*, table 1-1, section 11 states that "The balance of evidence suggests that childhood leukemia is associated with exposure to power frequency EMF's either during early life or pregnancy." Additionally, "...up to 80% of childhood leukemia may be caused by exposure to electromagnetic fields." In this same report, the BioInitiative Working Group documents serious scientific concerns about current limits regulating how much EMF is allowable from power lines, cell phones, and many other sources of EMF exposure in daily life. The BioInitiative Report concludes that the existing standards for public safety are inadequate to protect public health. When it comes to the health of our residents, we would like CL&P and the Siting Council to continue to conduct more research on EMF's and their potential health effects. We feel that risk can be reduced by burying the lines underground.

While it will continue to be argued by CL&P that there is no conclusive evidence to show that there is any increase in health problems by exposure to EMF's, we do not think it prudent or fair to let our residents become the "test case" for future studies looking at the effects of EMF's. In the World Health Organization's Report, "*What are electromagnetic fields?*" they acknowledged that "results to date contain many inconsistencies". Without conclusive results, one way or the other, the BOS does not see the need to "potentially" put our residents at risk.

DECREASING PROPERTY VALUES & PROPERTY TAX

Since the 1950's, East Granby has been evolving from a rural town into a "bedroom community". Residences have sprung up along the entirety of Hatchet Hill, Holcomb and Newgate Roads since the power lines were installed eighty years ago. Many of these homes have been built on parcels for which easements had been purchased as far back as the 1920's. The easements were granted in an age where either the existence of EMF was unknown or the danger of EMF was not suspected by the parties involved. The original easements were in heavily wooded areas, a dynamic that has changed significantly. We are concerned that the placement of the 345-kv lines and additional towers will have a significant negative impact on property values. CL&P has provided information stating that there is no decrease in property value as a result of 345-kv line and towers. Verbally at our town hearing, one of the CL&P representatives mentioned that there is a report that he was aware of that projected a 5-10% property value decrease in the first year and that by the third year when people were used to the towers, the impact was negligible. That may have been true in times when the lines were in wooded areas and the towers were not 40 feet higher than the current towers. Combine those two factors with a lack of definitive science on the effect of EMF's and there lies a significant stressor on property values. Reasonable people would agree that these three factors could have an effect longer than a three year period and a ten percent reduction in values.

A realtor came in to see me prior to the hearing and said that during that particular week; a house for sale in the affected area had two offers which were withdrawn without any

reason. She also stated that houses in the area were taking longer to sell than in other areas of town. Visible power lines do affect the owner's opportunity to sell the house both in timeliness and in value. The Town would disagree with CL&P's position that existing lines have already impacted real estate values since the current Project proposal changes the equation. For the most part, present lines are difficult to see and are covered by trees and plants. The new towers will be significantly taller and the construction process will remove a buffer layer of trees. Increased visibility does not let the towers melt into the landscape and will affect property values.

Although the Town objection focuses primarily on potential health effects to our residents, the fact of the matter is that reduced property values equal reduced tax revenues as the Grand List decreases. This corresponding reduction of the Grand List translates to increased taxation for other residents. Underground lines including both the 345-kv & 115-kv lines, will ultimately protect the landowners and their property values.

ENVIRONMENTAL & VISUAL IMPACT

The proposed Project impacts over six miles of land in East Granby including over fifty residences, Old Newgate Prison and the Metacomet Trail. It should be noted that increased water run-off from the Project will directly impact Newgate Road neighbors. The run off from areas cleared of vegetation conceivably will follow the path of least resistance and could cross over Newgate Road impacting homes on both sides of the street. Current run off is substantial let alone after the proposed Project is completed. While the Town understands that CL&P will mitigate erosion issues, the topography encourages runoff and we have a serious concern for our property owners.

One only needs to look at the Wintonbury Golf Course in Bloomfield to look at the potential visual impact of the Project. There for all to see is a double tower and single tower above ground options which are side by side. The impact on the environs is significant since the above ground lines are substantial transmission lines that impact the quality of life aspect of town residents, deter the rural ambiance and potentially may injure the environment of our beautiful town.

METACOMET TRAIL

Wikipedia has the following description regarding the Metacomet Trail which will be impacted by the Project (bold sections indicate direct impact on East Granby and are adjacent to the Project):

*The Metacomet Trail traverses the trap rock Metacomet Ridge which extends from Long Island Sound to the Massachusetts/ Vermont border. This ridge, rising hundreds of feet above the Connecticut River, Farmington River, and Quinnipiac River valleys, is a prominent landscape feature of central Connecticut. From south to north, the trail uses the ridges of the Hanging Hills, Short Mountain, Ragged Mountain, Bradley Mountain, Pinnacle Rock, Rattlesnake Mountain, Farmington Mountain, Talcott Mountain, **Hatchet Hill, Peak Mountain, and West Suffield Mountain.** Abrupt vertical cliffs with visible talus slopes and frequent viewpoints are common throughout. Views are generally to the west from West Suffield Mountain south through Ragged Mountain; west and south in the*

Hanging Hills. The Farmington River cuts through the ridgeline between Hatchet Hill and Talcott Mountain in the Tariffville Gorge (east of Simsbury). Historic features along the trail include Old Newgate Prison museum and copper mine in East Granby

The Metacomet Trail is part of the recently designated New England National Scenic Trail and it abuts and overlooks the land where CL&P intends to construct their power towers and high voltage lines. This important piece of our natural resources can be preserved for future generations through constructing underground lines.

RECOMMENDATION

The Town of East Granby strongly recommends that the proposed Project including the current 115-kv line be run underground through our Town and Suffield.

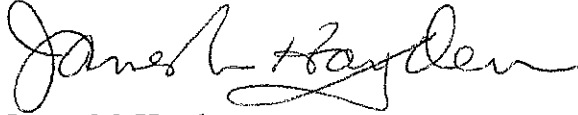
If the Siting Council decides against this Town recommendation and in favor of CL&P's current proposal, the Town would want the Siting Council and CL&P to seriously consider the following:

1. CL&P should disclose their internal distance guidelines for siting a 345-kv overhead power lines from a residential neighborhood and see how that compares to the East Granby segment of the Project and the "prudent avoidance requirement" in Connecticut and how / why that differs from the established Scandinavian / European best practice guidelines.
2. Absent an underground route, CL&P should build a single tower project through East Granby which will carry 115-kv and 345kv lines. Additionally, using existing technology the 345-kv line should be mitigated to emit the same amount of EMF's as the 115-kv line. The current towers would be demolished.
3. The Town's Wetlands and Conservation Commission has concerns about wetlands disruption on all of the options, but together with the East Granby Land Trust will work with CL&P for wetland mitigation consideration.
4. A project of this magnitude disrupts a lot of open space and has an impact on the Metacomet Trail. The Town would ask for CL&P to consider offsetting the loss of open space by transferring the following properties to the Town:
 - a.) Assessor Map #2, Lot 15 – A seventeen acre parcel off of Newgate Road. The Town would acquire this as open space for trail access to Metacomet Trail and to East Granby Farms.
 - b.) Assessor Map #7, Lot 5A and /or 27 – This is property off of Route 20 and would be used as a trail heading for Greenway Parking
 - c.) Assessor Map #22, Lot 62 – This 120 acre parcel is adjacent to Route 187 and Cowles Park and provides great views of sections of the Metacomet Trail.
5. Any above ground approach must re-route current towers away from residents. Some residents' property lines in the Newgate Road area are within 75 feet of existing lines.
6. Residents should be eligible for compensation from CL&P based on an independent valuation of the Project impact on property values. Additionally, the Town should be reimbursed for its tax revenue loss on a reduced Grand List.

CONCLUSION

The Town of East Granby strongly recommends that the Siting Council require CL&P to utilize an underground approach for the high voltage lines.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James M. Hayden". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

James M. Hayden
First Selectman

Cc: Senator Joseph Lieberman
Senator Christopher Dodd
Congressman John Larson
Connecticut Siting Council Chair Daniel Caruso
State Senator John Kissel
State Representative Richard Ferrari
State Representative Ruth Fahrbach
Attorney Don Holtman
First Selectman Scott Lingenfelter