



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

POWER FACILITY EVALUATION COUNCIL
STATE OFFICE BUILDING HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06115
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PETITION No. 27

Watertown, Ct. June 9, 1978

John Clapp, John Cox, and Duncan Reid met Gerry Thompson and George Benedetti of Northeast Utilities to review completed Petition No. 27.

Petition No. 27 involved the replacement of a double circuit 69 kV lattice line with a double circuit 115kV lattice line on an existing right-of-way between Frost Bridge substation in Watertown and Bunker Hill substation in Waterbury. This project involved 3.8 miles of existing right-of-way. No clearing was necessary.

The access road and general area south of Frost Bridge substation is used heavily by all terrain vehicles. Numerous attempts to prevent unauthorized access have failed. A gravel pit adjacent to the right-of-way increases the appeal of the area to users of all terrain vehicles. The soil is mostly sand and gravel with a very small organic content. Stabilization of this soil type is slow and difficult under good conditions.

The area north of Bunker Hill substation is also used by all terrain vehicles; however, the use in this area is restricted to the access road. The right-of-way is so accessible in this area that attempts to restrict access would most likely be fruitless.

Two major factors to be considered in the choice of towers are appearance and cost. Lattice structures may be used because they are compatible with an adjacent line or with the surrounding area. Cost considerations include the number of angles in the line, the number of old towers that can be reused, and the time that the line to be replaced can be taken out of service. In this case the lattice structures were selected because they were compatible with the adjacent line, the line had several angles, and the time constraints were not too severe.

The lattice structures on this line are taller than the adjacent double circuit 115kV lattice line because the new line is designed for "hot line" maintenance and high temperature operation which require greater conductor clearances.

The steep and irregular topography in the area south of Route 73 in Waterbury makes right-of-way location difficult. Peaks of hills and residential developments have been avoided as much as possible at the expense of several angles in the line. As a result the visual effect of this right-of-way is striking from selected spots in this area. Certain vistas show a mass of lattice structure tops weaving between hills.

Recent development has occurred immediately adjacent to the right-of-way. An apartment complex has built a parking lot, tennis court, and basketball court on the right-of-way. This may or may not be permitted depending on conductor clearances. The situation is being investigated by Northeast Utilities' Real Estate Department.

Areas of the right-of-way not developed and not abused by unauthorized vehicles support a stable growth of herbs and shrubs.

The existence of this right-of-way is well established; the 69kV line being replaced is 51 years old. Although land use pressures near the line are intensifying and the area's ability to absorb visual impacts appears to be strained, the significance of the change in visual and land use impacts resulting from the replacement of an existing line is negligible. Nevertheless, plans for upgrading any existing facilities on this right-of-way in the future should give consideration to alternate routings.

It is recommended that this petition be finally approved.

Duncan C. Reid
Environmentalist

June 27, 1978