



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL

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Petition No. 185
AES Thames Interconnection
Staff Report
May 13, 1987

On May 7, 1987, William Smith and Commissioner Boucher of the Council and Joel Rinebold of the Council's staff met Michael Carlson and Lucien Gehami of Northeast Utilities (NU) at the site of a proposed single-circuit, 115-kV underground line in Montville.

NU is requesting a ruling from the Council that the proposed project would not have a substantial adverse environmental effect and that no Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need is required.

CGS Sec. 16-50k(a) states:

Except as provided in subsection (b) of Section 16-50z, no person shall exercise any right of eminent domain in contemplation of, commence the preparation of the site for, or commence the construction or supplying of a facility, or any modification of a facility, that may, as determined by the council, have a substantial adverse environmental effect, in the state without having first obtained a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need, hereinafter referred to as a "certificate," issued with respect to such facility or modification by the council. Any facility with respect to which a certificate is required shall thereafter be built, maintained and operated in conformity with such certificate and any terms, limitations or conditions contained therein. (emphasis added)

The proposed project would be a new facility as defined under CGS Sec. 16-50i(a)(1), i.e., not a facility modification.

The proposed project consists of the construction of a single-circuit, 115-kV underground line, approximately 4,000 feet in length, starting at the AES Thames terminal structure and ending at the Montville 4J substation; acquisition of a 40-foot wide right-of-way consisting of four parcels totalling approximately 1.3 acres; relocation of two 69-kV lines at the Montville 4J substation from two single circuit wood poles to one double circuit steel pole; and road and right-of-way rehabilitation as required.

According to NU, the project is required to transmit electrical power from the AES Thames cogeneration facility into CL&P's electrical grid. NU would construct the project, but AES Thames would reimburse NU the estimated cost of approximately \$3.2 million.

The construction of the line would be scheduled for the second and third quarters of 1988. NU would dig a trench approximately two to three feet wide by five feet deep, line it with heat-dissipating sand, and install an eight and 5/8th-inch diameter, high pressure (200-250 PSI) oil-filled pipe containing three 2,000-kcmil copper cables, each 2.84 inches in diameter.

The line would be installed in 200-foot sections. Trenching, backfilling, and other construction activities would be restricted to the 200-foot section under construction. Each section would take from one to five days to complete.

The proposed route starts within property owned by the Stone Container Corporation, heads west through properties owned by the Central Vermont Railway, Inc., and Albert C. and Phyllis J. Eicheberg, intersects Dock Road, and finally turns south and heads to the Montville 4J substation on a CL&P right-of-way for existing overhead lines.

Construction and maintenance access for the line exists along the entire route. However, road and right-of-way improvement and rehabilitation would be required.

NU would acquire easements, except in the case of Central Vermont Railway, Inc., from which it would acquire a license. Affected property-owners were apprised of the project and have expressed no objections to the routing or acquisition.

NU would implement erosion and sedimentation measures, including the construction of a hay bale or silt fence sediment barrier between the proposed line and the Thames River, if it is determined to be necessary at the time of construction. NU would inspect and monitor the site on a daily basis during construction for erosion, sedimentation, and other impacts.

While constructing the proposed line, NU would also construct a 150-PSI natural gas pipeline along Dock Road. The gas pipeline would be placed to tie in with an existing gas pipeline near the CL&P right-of-way/Dock Road intersection and routed east under the Thames River.

Construction on Dock Road would not be performed until access to Stone Container Corporation was available by way of Depot Road. In addition, construction would be performed on a Saturday and/or Sunday to reduce interference with access to Stone Container Corporation. According to NU, Montville's First Selectman and Traffic Administrator have been apprised of the proposed construction and have expressed no objections. NU does not expect any traffic-related problems.

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NU cites operating experience with approximately 137 miles of this type of line. The projected reliability for the proposed line would be 99.9 percent. However, while the reliability of the proposed line would be higher than an above-ground line of similar capacity, outage repairs could take several weeks.

Oil in the line used to cool the circuit cables would be non-PCB. Pressure detectors would monitor for leakage. If a leak were detected, the line would be deactivated and repaired.

The proposed project also includes relocation of 69-kV lines tentatively scheduled during the fourth quarter of 1987 and the first quarter of 1988. Two existing single circuit wooden poles located within the Montville 4J substation would be changed and relocated on a double circuit steel pole located approximately 25 feet outside the substation fence. The 90 to 95 foot height of the proposed steel pole would be approximately 10 feet higher than the existing wooden poles, which would be removed. According to NU, the change and relocation is necessary to accommodate the expansion of the Montville 4J substation requested under Petition 182.

NU contends that the proposed project would not result in a substantial adverse effect on the environment or ecology, nor would it damage existing scenic, historical or recreational values.

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