



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL

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VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

November 20, 2023

TO: Service List, dated November 16, 2023

FROM: Melanie Bachman, Executive Director *MB*

RE: **DOCKET NO. 516** – The United Illuminating Company (UI) application for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need for the Fairfield to Congress Railroad Transmission Line 115-kV Rebuild Project that consists of the relocation and rebuild of its existing 115- kilovolt (kV) electric transmission lines from the railroad catenary structures to new steel monopole structures and related modifications along approximately 7.3 miles of the Connecticut Department of Transportation’s Metro-North Railroad corridor between Structure B648S located east of Sasco Creek in Fairfield and UI’s Congress Street Substation in Bridgeport, and the rebuild of two existing 115-kV transmission lines along 0.23 mile of existing UI right-of-way to facilitate interconnection of the rebuilt 115-kV electric transmission lines at UI’s existing Ash Creek, Resco, Pequonnock and Congress Street Substations traversing the municipalities of Bridgeport and Fairfield, Connecticut.

Comments have been received from the State Historic Preservation Office on November 17, 2023. A copy of the comments is attached for your review.

MB/MP/laf

c: Council Members

November 17, 2023

Melanie A. Bachman, Esq.
Executive Director/Staff Attorney
Connecticut Siting Council
10 Franklin Square
New Britain, CT 06051

Subject: DOCKET NO. 516 – The United Illuminating Company (UI) application for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need for the Fairfield to Congress Railroad Transmission Line 115-kV Rebuild Project that consists of the relocation and rebuild of its existing 115- kilovolt (kV) electric transmission lines from the railroad catenary structures to new steel monopole structures and related modifications along approximately 7.3 miles of the Connecticut Department of Transportation’s Metro-North Railroad corridor between Structure B648S located east of Sasco Creek in Fairfield and UI’s Congress Street Substation in Bridgeport, and the rebuild of two existing 115-kV transmission lines along 0.23 mile of existing UI right-of-way to facilitate interconnection of the rebuilt 115- kV electric transmission lines at UI’s existing Ash Creek, Resco, Pequonnock and Congress Street Substations traversing the municipalities of Bridgeport and Fairfield, Connecticut.

Dear Attorney Bachman:

The State Historic Preservation Office offers the following comments regarding the above-named project. It is our understanding that the proposed project includes the rebuilding of two single-circuit 115-kilovolt (kV) overhead lines along the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CT DOT) corridor from existing Catenary Structure B648S in Fairfield to the Congress Street substation (approximately 7.6 miles), which includes the removal of United Illuminating (UI) infrastructure from 157 existing railroad catenaries, as well as on lattice towers along a UI right of way from the railroad corridor to the Ash Creek Substation in Bridgeport.

Our office has previously corresponded with the consultant for the Applicant, expressing concerns for cultural resources that have the potential to be impacted by the project, and summarized in letters dated October 31, 2022, April 24, 2023, and July 24, 2023. Of particular concern is the potential visual impacts of the proposed new structures. It is the opinion of this office that the scope of work as proposed will have an adverse effect to historic resources, and requested that the Applicant further consult with our office to resolve the effect.

Since our last letter, SHPO has been contacted by several groups and individual members of the public, expressing concern that the material regarding cultural resources submitted to the Connecticut Siting Council (CSC) for review was incomplete, and did not account for potential future impacts of the project. It is our understanding this material was also submitted to the Council.

We would therefore recommend that a decision of approval be postponed until additional information can be provided, to better make informed/additional recommendations.

The State Historic Preservation Office appreciates the opportunity to review and comment upon this project. These comments are provided in accordance with the Connecticut Environmental Policy Act and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. For further information please contact Marena Wisniewski, Environmental Reviewer, at (860) 500-2357 or marena.wisniewski@ct.gov.

Sincerely,



Jonathan Kinney
State Historic Preservation Officer