



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL

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VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

May 10, 2023

Bruce McDermott, Esq.
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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.

Dear Attorney McDermott:

The Connecticut Siting Council (Council) requests your responses to the enclosed questions no later than May 31, 2023.

Please submit an original and 15 copies to the Council’s office and an electronic copy to siting.council@ct.gov. In accordance with the State Solid Waste Management Plan and in accordance with Section 16-50j-12 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, the Council requests all filings be submitted on recyclable paper, primarily regular weight white office paper. Please avoid using heavy stock paper, colored paper, and metal or plastic binders and separators. Fewer copies of bulk material may be provided as appropriate.

Please be advised that the original and 15 copies are required to be submitted to the Council’s office on or before the May 31, 2023 deadline.

Copies of your responses are required to be provided to all parties and intervenors listed in the service list, which can be found on the Council’s website under the “Pending Matters” link.

Any request for an extension of time to submit responses to interrogatories shall be submitted to the Council in writing pursuant to §16-50j-22a of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Melanie Bachman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Melanie Bachman
Executive Director

c: Service List dated March 17, 2023

**Docket No. 516
Pre-Hearing Interrogatories
Set One**

Notice and Community Outreach

1. Is the project, or any portion of the project, proposed to be undertaken by state departments, institutions or agencies, or to be funded in whole or in part by the state through any contract or grant?
2. Referencing Volume 1A of the Application, Appendix F, of the letters sent to abutting property owners, how many certified mail receipts were received? If any receipts were not returned, which owners did not receive their notice? Were any additional attempts made to contact those property owners?
3. Has The United Illuminating Company (UI) received any comments on the Project from abutting property owners and/or any of the municipalities since the application was submitted to the Council? If yes, please indicate what such comments were and how UI addressed such comments.

Public Need

4. Is the proposed project identified in any ISO-New England, Inc. (ISO-NE) needs and solutions analyses? Is the proposed project on the ISO-NE Regional System Plan (RSP), RSP Project List and/or Asset Condition List?
5. Referencing page 1-14 of Volume 1 of the Application, UI notes that, “[T]he transmission lines exhibit various physical limitations.” Identify such physical limitations/conditions. Please provide sample photos to depict such conditions.
6. Referencing page 1-14 of Volume 1 of the Application, UI notes that it conducted engineering analyses of the 115-kV lines between Catenary Structure No. B648S and Congress Street Substation in 2018. Please provide a copy of the engineering studies.
7. Please describe how the proposed project is consistent with the recommendations of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) Report on Transmission Facility Outages During the Northeast Snowstorm of October 29-30, 2011 – Causes and Recommendations.
8. Referencing page ES-1 of Volume 1 of the Application, UI notes that “The Project... is consistent with recent Federal commitments to modernize the nation’s power grid to facilitate the transmission and delivery of clean and resilient energy to consumers.” Identify which recent federal commitments are being referred to. How would the Project facilitate the transmission and delivery of clean and resilient energy to customers?
9. Referencing page ES-2 of Volume 1 of the Application, how is the project “targeted to meet the growing consumer demand for electricity, including clean energy generated by sources such as solar and wind power, in the Company’s service territory”? Explain.

Project Cost

10. Referencing page 2-17 of Volume 1 of the Application, what are the major components driving the total cost for the Project?
11. Referencing page 2-17, of the \$255M total cost, approximately how much is associated with transmission line upgrades, and how much is associated with the substation upgrades?
12. Of the approximately \$255M cost total, what costs would be regionalized, and what costs would be localized? Estimate the percentages of the total cost that would be borne by UI ratepayers, Connecticut ratepayers and the remainder of New England (excluding Connecticut) ratepayers, as applicable.
13. What methodology does UI use to determine an acceptable delta between estimated project costs and actual project costs? What is the acceptable delta?
14. Provide a matrix of all relocation project alternatives reviewed and cost data utilizing a similar matrix format to Docket 508, Findings of Fact, Figure 15 (page 54): https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/CSC/1_Dockets-medialibrary/1_MEDIA_DO500_600/DO508/Decision/D508-FOF-Final.pdf
15. Page 3-5 of Volume 1 of the Application references helicopters may be used to facilitate wire stringing or other activities. Where are the anticipated locations along the ROW that helicopters could be used and what is the approximate cost of using helicopters, including the cost delta over not using helicopters?

Project Development

16. Under Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies (RCSA) §16-50j-2a(29), “**Site**” means a contiguous parcel of property with specified boundaries, including, but not limited to, the leased area, right-of-way, access and easements on which a facility and associated equipment is located, shall be located or is proposed to be located. Throughout the Application generally, there is reference to other terms that may or may not be synonymous with the definition of “**Site**.” Please define the “**Site**” consistent with RCSA §16-50j-2a(29) and more specifically define the following terms from the Application in relation to the “**Site**”:
 - a) Project Area;
 - b) Project Location;
 - c) CDOT Corridor;
 - d) Existing Site; and
 - e) Limits of Disturbance.

If none of these terms is coextensive with the definition of “**Site**,” provide maps clearing depicting the boundaries of the “**Site**.”

17. Pursuant to CGS §16-50o, please submit any agreements entered into with any third party in connection with the construction or operation of the proposed Project.

18. Pages 1-4 and 3-1 of Volume 1 of the Application refer to a lease agreement with Connecticut Department of Transportation (CDOT). Is the CDOT lease agreement that was submitted into the Council Docket 272 record at the following link the most current? <https://portal.ct.gov/lib/csc/NH1-462721-v1-CDOT-Agreement1.pdf> If no, please provide a link to the most up to date lease agreement between UI and CDOT.
19. Pages 1-4 and 3-1 of Volume 1 of the Application refer to a maintenance agreement with Metro North Railroad (MNR). Please provide a link to the most up to date maintenance agreement between UI and MNR.
20. Will the Project support MNR rail lines operations? Explain.
21. Do any of the four substations (i.e. Ash Creek, Resco, Pequonnock, and Congress Street) supply power to the MNR rail line? Explain.
22. Referencing the July 5, 2017 correspondence from the CDOT Rail Administrator to Kenneth Bowes of Eversource from Council Docket No. 461A available at this link: https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/CSC/1_Dockets-medialibrary/Docket_461A/Pre-Filed_Exhibits/Eversource/461A20170710SupplementalTestimonyBowespdf.pdf
Please explain how the proposed Project would not impact the New Haven Line service as described in each numbered paragraph of the CDOT Rail Administrator correspondence.
23. Referencing page 5-43 of Volume 1 of the Application, there is reference to CTDOT and MNR performing corridor and track improvements along the New Haven Line. Where would potential CDOT/MNR projects include station improvements?
24. What other existing collocated uses (ex. wireless telecommunications equipment, water and sewer lines, etc.) are within the project area? Would any have to be removed, relocated or modified, either temporarily or permanently, for construction of the proposed project?
25. Are the proposed monopoles capable of hosting telecommunications equipment collocations?
26. Referencing page ES-5 of Volume 1 of the Application, has UI notified the property owners of its intent to obtain the 19.25 acres of permanent easements?

Project Construction

27. Referencing page ES-6 of Volume 1 of the Application, please describe any limitations related to working in or adjacent to MNR.
28. Referencing page ES-6 of Volume 1 of the Application, explain why the construction time period spans roughly five calendar years. Could any of the segments be constructed in parallel to expedite the schedule?
29. Referencing page 1-14 of Volume 1 of the Application, would the Project comply with the 2023 National Electrical Safety Code (NESC), effective February 1, 2023? What are the NESC and UI standards?

30. Referencing page 2-7 of Volume 1 of the Application, what is the source of the 25-foot minimum clearance requirement? For example, is it due to the MNR requirements, the NESC, or vegetation management?
31. Referencing Drawing Cross Section 1 of Volume 2 of the Application, would the existing MNR signal and feeder wires remain on the catenary structures? If the catenaries were rebuilt and the 115-kV transmission lines were re-installed on the catenaries, what height would be required to meet clearance requirements?
32. Referencing page 2-7, Section 2.1.2 of Volume 1 of the Application, please explain in further detail what is meant by “[J]umper connections at the riser structures for the 1130 and 8909B lines will be modified to correctly align the phases of the re-built circuits to the existing line terminal structures in the Pequonnock Substation yard.”
33. Referencing page 2-13 of Volume 1 of the Application, aside from the span between Pequonnock Substation and Congress Street Substation, when does UI anticipate a future conductor upgrade to 2156 aluminum conductor steel supported (ACSS) conductors for the portions of the Project with 1590 ACSS?
34. Referencing page 2-13 of Volume 1 of the Application, what are the benefits of the “Bluebird” conductors over the existing “Lapwing” conductors?
35. Referencing page 2-13 of Volume 1 of the Application, explain why galvanized steel finish was selected for the proposed monopoles versus, for example, weathering steel? What is the cost difference among these two structure types?
36. Referencing Page 2-14 of Volume 1 of the Application, would the existing catenary support columns from which MNR electrical facilities would be transferred remain in place or would they be removed? If they remain in place, which entity would own the columns? If removed, which entity would be responsible for decommissioning the columns and how would the columns be decommissioned?
37. Page 2-14 of Volume 1 of the Application states there are some locations where MNR electrical facilities will be transferred from the existing catenary support columns and underbuilt on the new UI-owned monopoles. Please respond to the following:
 - a) What type of MNR electrical facilities would be transferred?
 - b) At what height would the MNR electrical facilities be underbuilt on the monopoles?
 - c) Which entity is responsible for the costs associated with the transfer of the MNR electrical facilities?
 - d) If UI is responsible for the costs, what are the costs, are the costs included in the total project cost and would the costs be recovered from UI ratepayers?
38. Are there any clearance issues associated with the existing #1130 Line structures that would remain? Explain why the height would not be increased to the same as the #1430 and #91001-12 Lines.
39. Could any construction areas (ex. staging areas, access roads or traffic routes) be collocated with construction areas of any potential future CDOT and/or MNR projects, if CDOT and/or MNR were amenable to negotiating arrangements? In what areas of the Project would this be most feasible?

Public Safety

40. Referencing page ES-2, what are the designed Category 3 wind loads? What is the minimum wind speed of a Category 3 hurricane?
41. Referencing Volume 1A of the Application, Appendix A.4, Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) consultation, prior to commencement of construction, would UI file with the FAA for review of its temporary structures (e.g. cranes)?
42. Referencing pages 2-12, 3-5 and 3-17 of Volume 1 of the Application and Sheet 28 of 29 of Volume 2 of the Application, there is reference to possible construction staging from a barge anchored near the west bank of the Pequonnock River. How could staging from a barge at that location potentially impact the following:
 - a) recreational uses;
 - b) river navigation and commerce;
 - c) national historic and archeological resources;
 - d) scenic views; and
 - e) wildlife habitat?
43. What type of equipment would be delivered by barge?
44. Referencing page 3-21 of Volume 1 of the Application, identify the FERC physical security standards that apply to the electric transmission lines and substations.
45. Please describe how the proposed Project is consistent with the NERC Evaluation of the Physical Security Reliability Standard and Physical Security Attacks to the Bulk-Power System, dated April 14, 2023 and available at:
<https://www.nerc.com/FilingsOrders/us/NERC%20Filings%20to%20FERC%20DL/NERC%20Report%20on%20CIP-014-3.pdf>
46. Referencing page 5-12 of Volume 1 of the Application, what were the results of the 2017 Fairfield resiliency study relative to Ash Creek?
47. Referencing page 5-12 of Volume 1 of the Application, have any flood mitigation measures been installed, or are any flood mitigation measures proposed, at Congress Street, Resco or Ash Creek Substations as part of the Project?

Environmental Resources

Scenic, Historic and Recreational Resources

48. Referencing page 9-22 of Volume 1 of the Application, please describe how the proposed Project is consistent with the “Selection and Clearing of Rights-of-Way Routes” recommendations in the FERC Guidelines for the Protection of Natural, Historic, Scenic and Recreational Values in the Design and Location of Rights-of-Way and Transmission Facilities.
49. Please describe how the proposed Project is consistent with the DEEP Long Island Sound Blue Plan.
50. Referencing page 8-3 of Volume 1 of the Application, in the CT SHPO row of the chart, it states, “Cultural Resource Consultation under C.G.S. §16-50l(e).” That provision relates to municipal consultation. Should this row state, “... under C.G.S. §16-50l(b)” that relates to proof of service of a copy of the application on state agencies, including, but not limited to SHPO?
51. Referencing pages 5-37 and 5-38 of Volume 1 of the Application, what is the basis for the distance of 500 feet on either side of the Project for historic and archaeological resources review?
52. Referencing the Project map sheets, what are the distances of the existing structures and the replacement structures from the identified historic and archaeological resources? How many existing structures would be eliminated from the area of potential effect identified by SHPO?
53. Referencing Appendix A of Volume 1A of the Application, Letter from SHPO, dated October 31, 2022, and page 5-40 of Volume 1 of the Application, how does the 0.5 mile study area for visual impacts (APE-VE) under the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) *Nationwide Programmatic Agreement (NPA) Regarding the Section 106 National Historic Preservation Act Review Process* for new cellular tower installations under 200 feet in height apply to the Project? The NPA is available at: <https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/FCC-04-222A1.pdf>
54. Referencing page 5-40 of Volume 1 and Appendix A of Volume 1A of the Application, if replacement cell towers are exempt under section III. C. 1. a. ii. of the NPA, and new cell towers located within 50 feet of a ROW designated for above-ground utility transmission are exempt under section III. C. 1. a. iv of the NPA, how could the FCC APE-VE apply to replacement transmission lines and new transmission lines within a designated transmission line ROW?
55. Referencing page 4-1 of Volume 1 of the Application, when would UI perform the deep archaeological testing recommended by SHPO? How could this impact UI’s proposed Project and schedule? For example, if a Certificate is issued for the Project, would a Partial Development and Management Plan be submitted for the monopole foundation installations? Explain.
56. Referencing Volume 2 of the Application, Sheet 13 of 29 (1” = 100’ scale), please describe the potential impact of the proposed Project on properties SAS-1786 through SAS-1790. Were any design alternatives explored at these locations?
57. Referencing page 5-37 of Volume 1 of the Application, under the heading, “Historic Resources,” a portion of the sentence appears to be missing. Please complete the sentence.

58. Referencing Volume 2 of the Application, Sheet 7 of 7 (1" = 400' scale) and Sheet 26 of 29 (1" = 100' scale), what are the heights of the exhaust stacks for former Bridgeport Harbor Unit No. 3 and new Bridgeport Harbor Unit No. 5 at PSEG Power Connecticut, LLC's electric generating facility?

Vegetation Management

59. Please identify the types of acceptable low growth vegetative species referenced on page 6-15 of Volume I of the Application.
60. Referencing the footnote on page 2-9 of Volume I of the Application, what are UI's standards relative to the width of the permanent easement for transmission vegetation management? What are the mandated electric transmission line standards?
61. Page 3-6 of Volume 1 of the Application mentions hazard trees outside easement areas would be removed in coordination with the landowner. Is landowner permission required? What if the landowner denies the request?
62. Referencing the February 21, 2023 correspondence from the Town of Fairfield Conservation Commission, would UI be amenable to a restoration plan in the vicinity of Structure Nos. P708S, P713WS, P714ES, P714ES-1, and P713WS-1 to replace lost vegetation during construction with native plant species consistent with safety and height requirements for UI and meeting ecological and habitat functionality needs of the impacted parcel(s)? Explain.

Water Quality

63. Referring to the Wetland Report Volume 1A, Appendix B, in the Application, what precautions would be taken in the area identified as "prohibited" on wetland maps?
64. Referencing pages 3-8 and 3-17 of Volume 1 of the Application, how would UI protect the perennial freshwater stream and tidal wetland when installing the temporary timber mat access road and removing the existing structure from the island in Ash Creek?
65. In addition to UI's Best Management Practices, what other specific environmental mitigation measures and/or monitoring would be conducted for construction within environmentally sensitive areas?
66. Describe site construction inspections that are required for this Project under the DEEP General Permit.

Wildlife

67. Referencing pages 5-15 and 6-16 of Volume 1 of the Application regarding osprey nest management, what methods could UI proactively employ at what cost to manage and/or deter nesting that poses a risk for outages and reliability on any Project replacement structures? For example, could UI recycle, reuse or redesign the existing lattice structures for osprey?

Agriculture

68. Referencing page 5-5 of Volume 1 of the Application, provide the total number of acres of prime farmland soils within the project area, and indicate how many acres of prime farmland soils within the project area would be impacted by the Project.

EMF

69. Referencing pages 9-19 and 9-20 of Volume 1 of the Application, has UI performed the EMF alternatives analysis for the apartment buildings in Fairfield and Bridgeport? If yes, what are the results?
70. Referencing page 9-19 of Volume 1 of the Application and Volume 2 of the Application, Sheet 9 of 29 (1" = 100' scale), please describe the potential impact of the proposed Project on property SAS-1746. Were any design alternatives considered at this location, such as increasing the height of Structure No. B689S?