

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

SITING COUNCIL

\* \* \* \* \*

CONNECTICUT LIGHT & POWER COMPANY \* JANUARY 21, 2004  
AND UNITED ILLUMINATING COMPANY \* (7:08 P.M.)  
\*  
APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF \*  
ENVIRONMENTAL COMPATIBILITY AND \*  
PUBLIC NEED FOR THE CONSTRUCTION \* DOCKET NO. 272  
OF A NEW 345-kV ELECTRIC \*  
TRANSMISSION LINE AND ASSOCIATED \*  
FACILITIES BETWEEN THE SCOVILL ROCK \*  
SWITCHING STATION IN MIDDLETOWN \*  
AND THE NORWALK SUBSTATION IN \*  
NORWALK, CONNECTICUT \*  
\* \* \* \* \*

BEFORE: PAMELA B. KATZ, CHAIRMAN

BOARD MEMBERS: Colin C. Tait, Vice Chairman  
Brian Emerick, DEP Designee  
Daniel P. Lynch, Jr.  
Edward S. Wilensky  
Brian O'Neill

STAFF MEMBERS: S. Derek Phelps, Executive Director  
Fred O. Cunliffe, Siting Analyst  
Robert L. Marconi, AAG

APPEARANCES:

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HEARING RE: CL&P and UI  
JANUARY 21, 2004 (7:08 PM)

1 . . .Verbatim proceedings of a hearing  
2 before the State of Connecticut Siting Council in the  
3 matter of an application by Connecticut Light & Power  
4 Company and United Illuminating Company, held at the  
5 Weston High School, School Road, Weston, Connecticut, on  
6 January 21, 2004, at 7:08 p.m., at which time the parties  
7 were represented as hereinbefore set forth . . .

8

9

10 CHAIRMAN PAMELA B. KATZ: My name is Pam  
11 Katz, Chairman of the Connecticut Siting Council. Before  
12 I read our opening statement, I'd just like to do a brief  
13 welcome on behalf of all the members of the Siting  
14 Council.

15 The mission of the Siting Council is to  
16 protect the environment while providing needed public  
17 utilities. You are the fourth stop on our seventh stop  
18 listening tour because it's important to us to hear how  
19 you think this application for the electric transmission  
20 line is going to affect your neighborhoods. We do not  
21 know your towns as well as you do and it's important that  
22 we get specific pertinent comments that will help us in  
23 our decision making.

24 As part of this process, we are going to

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1 be hiring our own expert on under-grounding because  
2 having done Phase 1, which is the line that went from  
3 Bethel to Norwalk --

4 A VOICE: (Indiscernible) --

5 CHAIRMAN KATZ: Remind me, I won't read  
6 his name later -- we understand how important under-  
7 grounding is. And the question that we get is how much  
8 of this can be underground. And that's why we are in the  
9 process right now of hiring our own expert who can  
10 provide us some answers on that, independent of the  
11 Applicant.

12 At this time, I'd like to read our opening  
13 statement. And then after that, NU does a short video  
14 where they summarize the application and then we will be  
15 taking comments from public officials and then members of  
16 the public.

17 Ladies and gentlemen this hearing is  
18 called to order this day at 7:00 p.m., January 21, 2004.

19 My name is Pamela B. Katz, Chairman of the Connecticut  
20 Siting Council.

21 Other members of the Council are Colin C.  
22 Tait, Vice Chairman; Brian Emerick, designee for  
23 Commissioner Rocque of DEP; Daniel P. Lynch, Jr.; Brian  
24 O'Neill; and Edward S. Wilensky.

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1                   Members of the staff are Derek Phelps,  
2                   Executive Director, and Fred O. Cunliffe, the Siting  
3                   Analyst.

4                   The court reporter is Tony Vanacore and  
5                   the audio technician is Ed Chamberlain. And the house  
6                   technician, who has been very helpful to us tonight, is  
7                   Shawn Campbell.

8                   This hearing tonight is held pursuant to  
9                   the provisions of the General Statutes 16-50g and 16-50aa  
10                  and Sections 16-50j-1 through 16-50j-34 of the  
11                  Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies on an  
12                  application of The Connecticut Light and Power Company  
13                  and the United Illuminating Company for a Certificate of  
14                  Environmental Compatibility and Public Need for the  
15                  construction of a new 345-kV electric transmission line  
16                  and associated facilities between the Scovill Rock  
17                  Switching Station in Middletown and the Norwalk  
18                  Substation in Norwalk, Connecticut. This includes  
19                  construction of the Beseck Switching Station in Norwalk,  
20                  the East Devon Substation in Milford, and the Singer  
21                  Substation in Bridgeport, and modifications to the  
22                  Scovill Rock Substation in Milford -- the Scovill Rock  
23                  Substation and Norwalk Substation and certain  
24                  interconnections. This application was received by the

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1 Council on October 9, 2003.

2 This proceeding is a contested case under  
3 the Uniform Administrative Procedure Act (UAPA) and will  
4 be conducted in accordance with the applicable provisions  
5 of the General Statutes of the State of Connecticut and  
6 the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

7 As required by law, ex parte or off-the-  
8 record communication with a Council member or a Council  
9 staff member on the merits of this application is  
10 prohibited.

11 The parties and the intervenors for this  
12 proceeding is a lengthy list and can be found on the  
13 Connecticut Siting Council website. And that website is  
14 shown on this easel up here if you'd like to check.

15 This hearing is held tonight solely for  
16 the public to make brief oral statements into the record.

17 Specifically, this is an opportunity for citizens, who  
18 are not formally participating in the process as a party  
19 or intervenor, to make their views known to the Council.

20 These statements are not subject to cross-examination  
21 and submission thereof does not entitle the submitter the  
22 right to cross-examine the applicant, the parties, or  
23 intervenors or the Council.

24 In fairness to everyone who wishes to

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1 speak, I will limit the statements to three minutes. We  
2 have a stoplight up here behind me, right behind me,  
3 which will indicate -- basically, it will be green. And  
4 then after two minutes, it goes to flashing green and  
5 then it goes to yellow, and then it goes to red to help  
6 you know when your three minutes are up. These  
7 statements will become part of the record for Council  
8 consideration.

9 In addition, written statements sent to  
10 the Council within 30 days after the last hearing in this  
11 proceeding will be given the same weight as spoken  
12 statements. So if you know of anyone who didn't want to  
13 come out on this cold night, please encourage them to do  
14 written statements. And the address for the Council is  
15 10 Franklin Square, New Britain 06051, and that address  
16 appears on the easel.

17 A verbatim transcript will be made of each  
18 hearing session. And all hearing transcripts will be  
19 deposited with the town and city clerks within the  
20 municipalities of Middletown, Middlefield, Haddam,  
21 Durham, Meriden, Wallingford, Cheshire, Haddam, Bethany,  
22 Woodbridge, Orange, West Haven, Milford, Stratford,  
23 Bridgeport, Fairfield, Westport, Norwalk, Easton,  
24 Trumbull, Weston, Wilton, North Haven and New Haven.

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1           After all the public hearings in the  
2 municipalities have concluded, the Council will continue  
3 with hearings for the purpose of cross-examination and  
4 receipt of direct evidence by the Council, its parties  
5 and intervenors. The date, time, and locations of these  
6 evidentiary hearings will be noticed to the parties and  
7 intervenors and posted on the Council's website, which is  
8 ct-gov/csc. And I can give you briefly that during the  
9 month of March, we will be doing evidentiary hearings on  
10 need, the Applicant has to prove need. And then in  
11 April, we will be looking at the routes in Segments 3 and  
12 4, those are the parts of the route which is west of the  
13 East Devon Substation in Milford. And then in May, we  
14 plan to take up Segments 1 and 2 of the application, and  
15 those are the areas north of the East Devon Substation in  
16 Milford.

17           At this time, I'd like to ask First  
18 Selectman Woody Bliss to make some brief remarks. Woody  
19 gave us some I love Weston pins today. Thank you, Woody.  
20 And after Woody speaks or makes some opening remarks,  
21 then I will introduce the video that the Applicant has  
22 prepared.

23           COURT REPORTER: Mr. Selectmen, could you  
24 spell your name for me please.

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1 MR. WOODY BLISS: Yes. For the record, my  
2 name is Woody Bliss. And it's spelled B-l-i-s-s. And  
3 I'm the First Selectman here in Weston.

4 Chairman Katz, thank you -- thank you very  
5 much. And I'd like to thank the other members of the  
6 Siting Council for coming to Weston tonight. We gathered  
7 together on Phase 1 I guess a little more than -- well  
8 almost two years ago now over in the Weston Middle School  
9 cafeteria. And for those that were here that night, you  
10 may remember there were about -- the cafeteria holds  
11 something like 317 people, and there were approximately  
12 250 people that the fire marshal denied access to the  
13 hall waiting outside. I think in principle that speaks  
14 to the difference between having a proposal for an  
15 underground and an aboveground line, because I dare say  
16 if this proposal that's before you were for an  
17 aboveground line, we probably would have had to turn  
18 people away from this hall tonight. But I would like to  
19 thank all the neighbors and friends and so forth who came  
20 to offer their suggestions and comments. And I thank you  
21 very much for listening to it because we understand that  
22 you've done this not only in Weston but in six other  
23 places, so you really must like meetings of this sort.

24 I had the pleasure this afternoon of

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1 taking the Siting Council on a tour of Weston, Easton,  
2 Wilton, and Norwalk to kind of look at the line so they  
3 could see the 115 power lines that are in place here in  
4 our community so that they could get a flavor for the  
5 residential nature of all of those communities and so  
6 they could see firsthand what it was like. And I thank  
7 them very very much for taking the time. We met at about  
8 3:00 o'clock and spent a couple of hours driving around  
9 in the Parks and Recreation Department bus looking at  
10 those features.

11 MR. S. DEREK PHELPS: We thank you for  
12 your hospitality.

13 MR. BLISS: You're very welcome, thank  
14 you. As we learned in Phase 1, nothing is final until the  
15 Siting Council makes a decision. So even though an  
16 application has been filed by Northeast Utilities and  
17 United Illuminating to put the lines in this whole  
18 section, actually Segment 4 all underground, where we  
19 started from in Phase 1 and where we wound up was quite  
20 different. We started out with a hundred percent  
21 aboveground and wound up with about 50 percent  
22 underground, and now we're starting at least in this  
23 segment of the line anyway with the whole thing  
24 underground.

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1 Phase 1 was only six-tenths of a mile  
2 through Weston, phase -- it was north to south, but just  
3 nipped the upper northwest corner of town. This -- Phase  
4 2 goes -- potentially could go right through the center  
5 of town because our existing 115 right-of-way goes right  
6 through the heart of Weston. And the Council today was  
7 kind enough to look at those many many houses along that  
8 route. And we took them up one street and down the next  
9 and so forth so they could have a complete view of that.

10 I just wanted to make one other -- and I  
11 should recognize a couple of guests that we have here  
12 tonight. We have State Senator John McKinney in the  
13 audience. John, may you stand up and just wave if you  
14 would. (Applause). John -- maybe we can hold our  
15 applause until the end and we'll give them one big round  
16 of applause -- John Stripp, who's our 135<sup>th</sup> House  
17 Representative, also a Weston resident, Tony Boucher from  
18 our neighbor Wilton, Paul Hannah, First Selectman in  
19 Wilton, and Bill Kupinse from Easton. And many of you  
20 may remember Bill and Paul because they were also very  
21 active with us in the Kelda (phonetic) purchase.

22 My last comment of the night is just an  
23 appeal for civility. These folks are here on their own  
24 time listening to us and I hope we treat them with great

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1 kindness. I know some of them came here today, they were  
2 a little lost trying to find things, and several  
3 commented to me how kind everybody was in giving them  
4 direction and pointing the right direction. So it's okay  
5 to disagree, it's okay to disagree vigorously, it's just  
6 not okay to be disagreeable, so I'm sure we'll follow  
7 that civility. And I thank you very much, Madam Chairman,  
8 for the opportunity to address your commission.

9 (Applause).

10 CHAIRMAN KATZ: I can say truthfully it  
11 was a blissful tour today. (Laughter).

12 For the benefit of those in attendance  
13 tonight, the Council has asked the Applicant to explain  
14 the general nature of their application, its proposed  
15 benefits, its alleged need, and what alternatives were  
16 explored. In response to that request, the Applicant has  
17 compiled a short video that addresses these issues in  
18 summary form. I'll ask that the Applicant show that  
19 video now. Following that, we will take statements from  
20 public officials and members of the public. And during  
21 this video if you have not yet signed up to speak, the  
22 sign-up sheet is up here and please do so. Thank you.

23 COURT REPORTER: State your name.

24 MS. ANN BARTOSEWICZ: Sure. Thank you,

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1 Chairman Katz.

2 My name is Ann Bartosewicz. That's B-a-r-  
3 t-o-s-e-w-i-c-z. I'm the Project Director for Northeast  
4 Utilities on this project. And as the Chairman  
5 indicated, Northeast Utilities and the United Illuminated  
6 Company --we're a joint proposal, we have prepared a  
7 power point presentation, which we will now show you. It  
8 gives an overview of the application, it is fully  
9 narrated. And with that, please go ahead. Thank you.

10

11 (Whereupon, a video presentation prepared  
12 by the Applicant was played for the public.)

13

14 VIDEO PRESENTATION

15

16 The following is a brief summary of the  
17 Middletown/Norwalk Project Proposal prepared at the  
18 request of the Connecticut Siting Council for use during  
19 its public hearings.

20

21 Economic growth in Connecticut has brought  
22 with it an increasing demand for electricity. Between  
23 1990 and 2001, electric consumption grew by 27 percent  
24 statewide, significant growth despite Connecticut being  
among the best in the country at conserving power.

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1 During that same time period, electric consumption grew  
2 by 30 percent in the southwest quarter of the State and  
3 by 33 percent in the greater Norwalk/Stamford area.  
4 Today, Southwest Connecticut accounts for half the power  
5 consumption in the State.

6 Electrically, no state is an island.  
7 Every state relies on an interstate electric transmission  
8 grid to move power to where it is needed. Most of the  
9 time, Connecticut uses more power than it generates, and  
10 needs to import about 2,000 megawatts or nearly one-third  
11 of the power consumed in the State. Most of  
12 Connecticut's imported power enters and moves around the  
13 State on a 345 kilovolt or a 345-kV system. There are  
14 nearly 400 miles of 345-kV lines in Connecticut. It is  
15 the standard voltage for moving power throughout New  
16 England. But the 345-kV system stops at the threshold of  
17 Southwest Connecticut, which is served today by an  
18 increasingly inadequate 115-kV system. In fact, the 115-  
19 kV system in Southwest Connecticut no longer meets  
20 regional and national reliability standards.

21 The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission  
22 has designated Southwest Connecticut as one of the  
23 nation's most severe reliability risks. And the  
24 Independent System Operator of New England's transmission

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1 grid has repeatedly indicated that upgrading the system  
2 in Southwest Connecticut is the most urgent need in the  
3 region.

4 Regional planning led by ISO New England  
5 has determined that to meet reliability standards, the  
6 345-kV system should be extended into Southwest  
7 Connecticut by strengthening the power source to a point  
8 in Wallingford, and connecting that source to substations  
9 in Milford, Bridgeport, and Norwalk.

10 To strengthen this source and make these  
11 connections, CL&P and UI looked at a variety of overhead  
12 and under-street options for each section of the upgrade.  
13 After evaluating each option and each combination of  
14 options, according to its system and technical merits,  
15 its property and environmental impact, and its cost to  
16 consumers, the highest ranked solution was a combination  
17 of overhead and under-street segments.

18 East of Milford the width of the existing  
19 right-of-way ranges from 125 to 320 feet, a sufficient  
20 width to allow for an overhead solution, and all but a  
21 small area in Middletown and Haddam. However, west of  
22 Milford the right-of-way has long stretches that are only  
23 80 feet wide. If the existing right-of-way were to be  
24 used here, 45 or more feet would need to be added to the

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1 width of the right-of-way. This would require the  
2 purchase of more than 115 acres of land and the  
3 dislocation of an estimated 29 homes.

4 Although under-street solutions can run  
5 three to ten times the cost of overhead solutions, in  
6 this section of the project the shorter route of an  
7 under-street solution and the avoided cost of buying  
8 property to widen the existing overhead right-of-way,  
9 make an under-street solution comparable in cost to the  
10 overhead option.

11 In Weston the proposed underground route  
12 would not affect the town. However, Alternatives A and  
13 B, detailed in the application, are overhead solutions  
14 that would consist of widening the current 80-foot right-  
15 of-way by 45 feet and replacing the existing row of  
16 structures along the right-of-way with a row of monopoles  
17 with a typical height of 105 feet.

18 In Wilton the proposed underground route  
19 would also not affect the town. Alternatives A and B,  
20 detailed in the application, are overhead solutions in  
21 which the existing row of structures on the east/west  
22 right-of-way that runs between Weston and Norwalk  
23 Junction on Route 7 would be replaced with monopoles with  
24 a typical height of 105 feet. These alternatives would



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1 also require the expansion of the existing 80-foot right-  
2 of-way by about 45 feet. On the north/south right-of-  
3 way, which runs from Norwalk Junction to the Norwalk City  
4 line, a row of monopoles with a typical height of 108  
5 feet would be installed, while the existing row of  
6 lattice structures would be removed and one of the 115-kV  
7 circuits would be relocated under city streets.

8 In Easton the proposed route would not  
9 affect the town. Alternatives A and B, detailed in the  
10 application, would expand the width of the existing mile-  
11 long right-of-way from 80 feet to 125 feet, and the  
12 existing row of lattice structures would be replaced with  
13 a row of monopoles with a typical height of 105 feet.

14 As the blackout on August 14<sup>th</sup> showed us, a  
15 weakness anywhere on the grid can affect an area much  
16 larger than where the weakness is. Because the  
17 Middletown/Norwalk Project will provide significant  
18 reliability and economic benefits to customers anywhere  
19 on the New England regional grid, the companies  
20 anticipate that the \$604 million dollar cost of the  
21 proposed solution will be shared by customers throughout  
22 New England. And according to a December 2002 ruling by  
23 the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, completion of  
24 the project by 2007 at reasonable costs will greatly

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1 assist in obtaining this regionalized rate treatment.

2 The Connecticut Light & Power Company and  
3 the United Illuminating Company thank the Connecticut  
4 Siting Council for the opportunity to present this  
5 information. Additional project information is available  
6 on our websites, [www.transmission-nu.com](http://www.transmission-nu.com) or  
7 [www.uinet.com](http://www.uinet.com).

8 END PRESENTATION

9

10 CHAIRMAN KATZ: At this time, we are going  
11 to call up public officials first and then members of the  
12 public who signed up to speak. It's our tradition not to  
13 put the timer on public officials, but I'm going to ask  
14 you to try to keep it to three minutes.

15 If -- when you come up to the podium to  
16 speak, please give your name, your address, and spell  
17 your name for the court reporter. And if I massacre the  
18 pronunciation of your name, please correct me when you  
19 get up to the podium, I'd appreciate it. The first  
20 person -- the first public official to sign up is Bill  
21 Kupinse, First Selectman the Town of Easton.

22 MR. WILLIAM KUPINSE: Thank you, Miss  
23 Katz. And you came very good on my name, so I appreciate  
24 that.

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1           Members of the Council, thank you for  
2           affording me this opportunity to speak. I'll make my  
3           remarks brief. I have given you a written statement too,  
4           which can be made part of the record. My name is Bill  
5           Kupinse, K-u-p-i-n-s-e, 5 Stone's Throw Road, Easton, and  
6           I am the First Selectman of Easton.

7           As you might imagine, since the primary  
8           route does not come through the Town of Easton, we  
9           support the primary route. And of course, I support my  
10          fellow selectmen and mayors in Fairfield County who also  
11          support the primary route. I think it's obvious why the  
12          route should be there, as was just pointed out in the  
13          little introductory remark.

14          I might speak just a bit about why it  
15          should not be in Easton. It should also not be in the  
16          other Fairfield County towns because of the impact on  
17          residences and residential areas. With respect to  
18          Easton, as you may have noticed on the map, it cuts the  
19          very corner of Easton. That corner happens to be right  
20          across the street from the Hemlock Reservoir, which is a  
21          major source of water supply for towns in Fairfield  
22          County. Also, Route 58, which it would cross over, is a  
23          state scenic road in that area. And Burr Street, which  
24          would be the Easton street which it crosses, is a town

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1 scenic road.

2 In addition, I think one thing that I  
3 would emphasize is that much of the area in there is the  
4 Kelda land purchase, which was bought by the State some  
5 years ago for 90 million dollars and which is subject to  
6 conservation easements and restrictions. So, I'm not  
7 sure how much UI and Northeast would be able to even  
8 expand their right-of-way in there. It would have to  
9 also be an overhead route which would impact severely on  
10 land that we spent a lot of money protecting.

11 I urge the Siting Council to approve the  
12 primary route and not to consider the alternate route and  
13 I thank you for your attention.

14 CHAIRMAN KATZ: Thank you. I understand  
15 that State Senator Judith Freedman could not be with us  
16 tonight but wanted to have a statement read.

17 MR. BLISS: For the record, again my name  
18 is Woody Bliss. Senator Freedman sent me a brief  
19 statement which she asked me to read into the record and  
20 so I will do this.

21 This is testimony to the Connecticut  
22 Siting Council Public Hearing, January 21, 2004, Weston,  
23 Connecticut, Docket 272, Subject, Construction of a New  
24 345-kV Electric Transmission Line Facility and Associated

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1 Facilities.

2 I want to thank you, the Siting Council,  
3 for traveling to Weston and allowing the public the  
4 opportunity to speak regarding this issue. I address you  
5 tonight as one of the two State Senators that are  
6 fortunate to represent this great town. Those are her  
7 words, not mine.

8 You have my testimony from the January 5<sup>th</sup>  
9 hearing in Westport and those remarks remain valid. The  
10 current proposed route following U.S. 1 for obvious  
11 reasons makes more sense, not only from a distance point  
12 of view but also to the cost of the final project. You  
13 already know my concerns about going through residential  
14 neighborhoods in Westport. I request that you make such  
15 changes to any of the proposed routes to ensure that all  
16 the lines will be buried. Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN KATZ: Thank you. Next is State  
18 Representative John Stripp of the 135<sup>th</sup> District. Is  
19 there any other public official who just came in who  
20 would like to sign up and speak, please come and sign up  
21 on the public officials list down by the easel.

22 REPRESENTATIVE JOHN STRIPP: Thank you,  
23 Madam Chairperson. Thank you, Siting Council, I  
24 appreciate the opportunity to talk to you tonight.

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1 Madam Chairperson, if I can ask one  
2 question? At one time I believe I was an intervenor and  
3 I was asked to be removed from that. Has that officially  
4 been done tonight?

5 CHAIRMAN KATZ: We will check into that --

6 REPRESENTATIVE STRIPP: Okay --

7 CHAIRMAN KATZ: -- but that does not  
8 affect your ability to speak.

9 REPRESENTATIVE STRIPP: Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN KATZ: My theory is the people  
11 who elected you want to hear from you. And whether  
12 you're a party or an intervenor, you're on.

13 REPRESENTATIVE STRIPP: Thank you. I -- I  
14 was quite involved in the last project, which was from  
15 Bethel down to Norwalk --

16 COURT REPORTER: Representative --

17 REPRESENTATIVE STRIPP: I'm sorry?

18 COURT REPORTER: Could you spell your last  
19 name?

20 REPRESENTATIVE STRIPP: Oh, yes. S-t-r-i-  
21 p-p. I live at 4 Scatacook Trail, Weston. That's S-c-a-  
22 t-a-c-o-o-k.

23 I was involved in the last project, which  
24 was from Bethel to Norwalk. It was quite contentious. I

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1 think both sides learned a great deal from that process  
2 and I'm very pleased to see that there's a great deal  
3 more cooperation from NU this time in working with  
4 various interested parties and I very much appreciate  
5 their attitude in going forward in this. And quite  
6 frankly, I think the initial proposal that they have at  
7 this point would have less environmental damage than  
8 option A and B. And also from a homeland security point  
9 of view, I think it makes a lot more sense for the  
10 underground lines. And I will support that approach. If  
11 they continue to move forward with the underground  
12 proposal, I will continue to support them in this  
13 application. Thank you very much.

14 CHAIRMAN KATZ: Thank you. And  
15 Representative, the staff has just informed me your  
16 request concerning intervenor status has been taken care  
17 of.

18 REPRESENTATIVE STRIPP: Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN KATZ: Next on the list is State  
20 Senator John McKinney. And again, for everybody who  
21 comes up to the podium, I ask that you give your name,  
22 spell your name for the court reporter and give your  
23 address.

24 SENATOR JOHN MCKINNEY: For the record,

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1 John McKinney, M-c-K-i-n-n-e-y, 300 South Gate Lane,  
2 Southport, Connecticut, State Senator from the 28<sup>th</sup>  
3 District.

4 Chairman Katz and members of the Siting  
5 Council, thank you very much for coming to Weston  
6 tonight. My purpose for standing up tonight is not to  
7 repeat my support for the primary route, my position is  
8 on the record at the Bridgeport meeting, and please don't  
9 read into it that I didn't think you weren't listening  
10 that time, but I'm here just something to reflect the  
11 enormous impact that this proposal has on all of the  
12 towns and all of the people I represent. That's why I'm  
13 at all of the meetings because Alternatives A and B run  
14 through all of the towns.

15 I just wanted to comment perhaps on what -  
16 - picking up on what First Selectman Woody Bliss said,  
17 several years ago you were here in the Town of Weston,  
18 the room was overflowing, the mood was much more  
19 contentious. The people of Weston and Easton are still  
20 unanimously opposed to the overhead steel monopoles. I  
21 think the lack of numbers here tonight is in part  
22 attributable to the weather, but more attributable to the  
23 fact that people understand that the power companies have  
24 recognized a better way to upgrade our grid, and that is

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1 with the under-grounding or under-street proposal, they  
2 are supportive of that proposal, and I want to just echo  
3 again their support for the under-grounding and  
4 opposition to Alternatives A and B. And thank you for  
5 all of your time and efforts in visiting all our  
6 communities.

7 CHAIRMAN KATZ: Thank you, Senator. Next  
8 is Paul Hannah, the First Selectman of Wilton. This is  
9 like old home week for Phase 1.

10 MR. PAUL HANNAH: Yes -- yes, it is. Paul  
11 Hannah, H-a-n-n-a-h, the same backwards and forwards. 11  
12 Shagbark Place, S-h-a-g-b-a-r-k, in Wilton.

13 It is somewhat familiar, although the  
14 distance is greater than your hearing room between the  
15 audience, you have a pit or something here to keep us --  
16 a moot I suppose to keep us apart, although I don't  
17 really think that's necessary tonight. I did bring 20  
18 more copies. Is that the right count, Derek?

19 MR. PHELPS: Yes, sir.

20 MR. HANNAH: Of the comments and  
21 recommendations. Way back in August when we were in the  
22 municipal consultation phase, the seven towns and cities,  
23 the towns of Easton, Fairfield, Weston, Westport and  
24 Wilton, and the cities of Bridgeport and Norwalk all got

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1 together and looked over the proposal and endorsed what  
2 was then called the primary route under consideration. I  
3 see it has now been upgraded to the proposed route. And  
4 so I think that's progress. We strongly endorse Segment  
5 4 of that route.

6 This was signed by the first selectmen and  
7 mayors of the seven towns, all of whom survived the  
8 election, one of whom didn't have to run, but the rest of  
9 us did, and -- Bill Kupinse, Woody Bliss, myself, Alex  
10 Knopp, Ken Flatto, Diane Farrell and John Fabrezzi. And  
11 I'd just like to enter that into the record. I hope that  
12 Segment 4 will be -- of this phase will indeed be  
13 approved. And I hope ultimately, despite the lawsuits,  
14 Phase 1 will go ahead. I'll just leave this here.

15 CHAIRMAN KATZ: Great.

16 MR. HANNAH: Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN KATZ: Thank you, Mr. First  
18 Selectman. Next is State Representative Toni Boucher.

19 REPRESENTATIVE TONI BOUCHER: Thank you,  
20 Madam Chairwoman.

21 My name is Toni Boucher. The last name is  
22 spelled B-o-u-c-h-e-r, a French Canadian last name from  
23 my husband.

24 COURT REPORTER: Spell your first name

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1 please.

2 REPRESENTATIVE BOUCHER: T-o-n-i, Toni.  
3 The address is 5 Wicks End Lane, W-i-c-k-s, E-n-d, L-a-n-  
4 e, Wilton, Connecticut. I'm State Representative for the  
5 City of Norwalk and for the Town of Wilton.

6 I also would like to commend this Siting  
7 Council and its very thoughtful and wise leadership, as  
8 well as the executive director for what I have seen as a  
9 marked growth in its relationship with the State's towns  
10 in a cooperative and working together attitude. It  
11 really makes me proud of the work that you all have been  
12 doing.

13 I also am here, not surprisingly,  
14 supporting the endorsed primary route under consideration  
15 as it follows an underground route beneath public roads,  
16 including U.S. Route 1, a state highway, and as it  
17 traverses more industrialized and commercial areas, and  
18 also helps us to prevent significant adverse impacts upon  
19 our important ecological, regional, historic, and scenic  
20 recourses that are not just a part of these towns, but  
21 really an attractive part of the whole State of  
22 Connecticut and often seen as the entrance to New England  
23 for many in parts west that come through our area and is  
24 a significant add to our state revenues as well. And in

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1 doing so, I'm sure you're not surprised.

2 But I also wanted to ask you to consider,  
3 as I've been educated lately by new companies that are  
4 starting to spring up that are hoping to take advantage  
5 of our new deregulated environment as it's in its infancy  
6 stage, and these are companies that are looking at  
7 electric distribution and distributed generation. Some  
8 companies are hoping to install small turbine engines,  
9 maybe gas-powered in different office buildings that may  
10 take off some of the peak load and hopefully help with  
11 some of our problems that might help to reduce the stress  
12 on our infrastructure. I know some of these may be  
13 controversial, but they're worth looking at and  
14 considering when you do look at applications that come  
15 through as far as their scope. So, I'm happy to see that  
16 some of this is starting to happen. We know that things  
17 such as fuel cells and other alternatives will be further  
18 down the road. It will take a great deal more time and  
19 exploration to reduce the cost to make it sufficient, but  
20 there are now currently, hopefully new younger companies  
21 springing up that might help us in this regard.

22 So again, I thank you for all the good  
23 work that you're doing and for the time that you've given  
24 us to present our testimony.

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1 CHAIRMAN KATZ: Thank you, Representative.

2 I think we have one more public official who signed up.

3 MR. PHELPS: Representative Hetherington.

4 CHAIRMAN KATZ: Representative

5 Hetherington, we recognize you at this time.

6 REPRESENTATIVE JOHN HETHERINGTON: Thank  
7 you, Madam Chair and members of the Council.

8 I -- my name is, for the record, John  
9 Hetherington, H-e-t-h-e-r-i-n-g-t-o-n. I live at 697  
10 Valley Road in New Canaan, and I represent the 125<sup>th</sup>  
11 District.

12 I too appreciate the extent to which you  
13 have devoted your time to hearings in the various  
14 communities and I appreciate it very much.

15 I will not belabor the subject and take  
16 your time unnecessarily, but I would like to add my  
17 endorsement to the proposed route. I am convinced that  
18 the primary proposal is both aesthetically and  
19 environmentally responsible. And in particular, I focus  
20 on the area around Norwalk Junction, which is in my  
21 district, the southern part of Wilton. And I believe  
22 either of the two alternatives, A and B, would  
23 disproportionately burden that particular area with  
24 overhead wires. So, I would urge you to proceed with the

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1 initial proposal. Thank you.

2 CHAIRMAN KATZ: Thank you, Representative.  
3 Is there any other public official here who wishes to  
4 speak before I go to members of the public? Seeing none,  
5 we will go to the public list. When I call your name,  
6 please come up to the podium. You will have three  
7 minutes. Please give your name, spell your last name for  
8 the court reporter, and give your address. And first on  
9 the list is Gerri Hirshey.

10 MS. GERRI HIRSHEY: Gerri Hirshey. It's  
11 spelled G-e-r-r-i, H-i-r-s-h-e-y. And I live at 13  
12 Hidden Hill Road in Weston, which I guarantee you was not  
13 on Woody's magical mystery tour today because I know his  
14 bus couldn't have gotten up there, so I would like to  
15 tell you about our neighborhood.

16 My family has lived at 13 Hidden Hill Road  
17 for over seven years on a property directly below the  
18 existing Northeast Utility right-of-way. Seven homes lie  
19 beneath the power lines which cross the rocky ridge and  
20 directly abut or bisect the property on four of those  
21 homes. All of the homes are downhill from that ridge,  
22 which according to the utilities alternative plan would  
23 require extensive clear-cutting to widen the right-of-way  
24 for the overhead lines.

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1 To avoid burdening the Council with  
2 repetitious testimony, I speak for my neighbors as well.

3 One of them, Mr. Frank Vitale of No. 5 Hidden Hill, has  
4 maintained the drainage system beneath our road for over  
5 40 years. Hidden Hill is a steep one-lane owner-  
6 maintained road that was formerly land farmed by the  
7 Coley family as documented by the Weston Historical  
8 Society. The bottom-most home, Mr. Vitale's, is a Coley  
9 barn built in 1836. That property, including its meadow  
10 fronting River Road, still contains 19<sup>th</sup> century clay  
11 drainage pipes trenched in to channel off runoff from the  
12 ridge and are evidence of a century old drainage problem.

13 In addition to water flowing downhill from  
14 the ledge above, a stream partly aboveground on our  
15 property also runs underground beneath the road, then  
16 resurfaces on the property of No. 5. Heavy rains and  
17 spring runoffs have frequently brought floods to that  
18 property and others, requiring a system of drainage pipes  
19 and a regular maintenance program. Despite the addition  
20 of dry wells, repaving, curb installations and the  
21 construction of earthen berms, all at residents' expense,  
22 recent heavy rains have necessitated more road repair at  
23 a point directly below the utility right-of-way.

24 The extensive deforestation, heavy

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1 equipment, excavation, and blasting required for a  
2 project the size of NU's proposal would be disastrous for  
3 the families and the land directly beneath it. River  
4 Road itself, a much used conduit between Route 57 and  
5 main thoroughfares like Good Hill and Lyons Plain, could  
6 be severely impacted if the drains at the bottom of  
7 Hidden Hill fail. Overflow could affect the river itself  
8 which runs along and beneath the bottom of Hidden Hill.  
9 The Weston farmers who dug in those clay pipes over a  
10 century ago knew too well the devastating power of rocky  
11 conduits, gravity, and heavy rains. It is doubtful any  
12 environmental study done thus far by the Utility could  
13 even know of the pipe's existence or the hill's long  
14 history of drainage problems. The addition of several  
15 very large new homes on top of the ridge on Timber Mill  
16 Lane and their additions to the down-flow need to be  
17 considered as well.

18 My neighbors and I inform you of this now  
19 because we believe that siting such a massive  
20 construction project above seven vulnerable homes on a  
21 fragile wetland would have devastating effect. We urge  
22 the Council to site these transmission lines along the  
23 preferred U.S. 1 route and more safely underground.  
24 Thanks for listening.

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1 CHAIRMAN KATZ: Thank you. (Applause).

2 Next is Lea Sylvestro.

3 MS. LEA SYLVESTRO: It's Lea Sylvestro, L-  
4 e-a, S-y-l-v-e-s-t-r-o. I live at 224 Beers Road in  
5 Easton.

6 I don't want to repeat what our First  
7 Selectman said, but basically some of those same issues.  
8 I'm so glad that you had a chance, that you spent your  
9 time to drive up through the town to see the area where  
10 the power lines would go, next to the reservoir, along  
11 the Kelda property that's been preserved as open space.

12 One point I did want to make that he did  
13 not, so I'm not repeating him, is that Black Rock  
14 Turnpike it is a state scenic road, it's also very  
15 historic in nature in addition to its aesthetic beauty.  
16 One of our local historian, Dan Cruson (phonetic), who  
17 teaches up at the high school, he's also written a book,  
18 "Images of America, Redding and Easton", has commented  
19 that that is an exceedingly rare corridor because from  
20 any number of spots where the historic homes lie, you  
21 look out and what you see is essentially unchanged in 200  
22 years, and it's very rare to find that combination of  
23 history and aesthetics that is, in essence, unchanged.  
24 So, I do ask you to take that into account, as I

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1 certainly again am here to voice my support of the  
2 proposal before you that puts these lines underground.

3 I did also want to thank the power company  
4 officials, our legislators, the Woodlands Coalition,  
5 yourselves who have spent so much time in coming to this  
6 proposal, it is so much more palatable, so much better  
7 for our environment and the aesthetic beauty, the New  
8 England character of this region. Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN KATZ: Thank you. (Applause).  
10 Next is Jon Levenson. And what I'm going to do is -- I  
11 think to help also I'm going to say who's on deck, so if  
12 that person can come down to the front row. So next is  
13 Jon Levenson and on deck is Lynne Langlois -- whatever --  
14 please correct me, Lynne, when you come to the  
15 microphone.

16 MR. JON LEVENSON: Hi there. Madam  
17 Chairman and members of the Council. For the record, my  
18 name is Jon Levenson, J-o-n, L-e-v-e-n-s-on. I live at  
19 35 Tall Pines, T-a-l-l, Pines Drive in Weston,  
20 Connecticut.

21 I'm here to vote my endorsement for the  
22 primary proposed route, which is the underground route.  
23 I'm also here to thank the members of the Siting Council  
24 for the work that you've done in the past to come up with

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1 this primary proposed route. It's taken a lot of time,  
2 effort, and work on your part and members of the  
3 community here who participated, and I believe it's the  
4 right way to progress.

5 There have been a number of reasons given  
6 tonight by citizens and public officials as to why the  
7 proposed route should remain in force. From my  
8 standpoint, the most important reason is really to  
9 preserve the rural character of Weston and the other  
10 towns, although I'm most familiar with Weston, which is  
11 where I live. I'm sure on your tour today you noticed  
12 the number of historic buildings, the large lots, the  
13 very rural character that exists here. And it's so rare  
14 to have that within essentially an hour of New York City.

15 We are New England. And to have that so close to such a  
16 major urban area is very important and needs to be  
17 preserved.

18 I'll just leave you with one anecdote that  
19 sort of emphasizes this. I was at a business meeting a  
20 few weeks ago in Providence, Rhode Island and some of us  
21 were from -- I was from Connecticut, there were people  
22 from New York, people from Boston, and people from  
23 Providence. And we were all talking about who qualifies  
24 as a New Englander and who doesn't. And one of the

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1 comments was made that well, John, you live in Fairfield  
2 County, you know, at the very best New England starts  
3 somewhere north of New London, and I -- my response,  
4 based on where I live, is that that really isn't true.  
5 We have a unique series of towns here, a unique  
6 character, rural character. The proposed siting plan  
7 helps to preserve that. And I encourage you to continue  
8 on that course. Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN KATZ: Thank you. (Applause).  
10 Next is Lynne Langlois, on deck is Jacqui Bidgood. Okay,  
11 tell me how I mispronounced your name.

12 MS. LYNNE LANGLOIS: Langlois. Completely  
13 Anglicized.

14 CHAIRMAN KATZ: Okay.

15 MS. LANGLOIS: L-y-n-n-e, L-a-n-g-l-o-i-s,  
16 9 Tower Drive, Weston.

17 Thank you for coming to Weston again to  
18 listen to our concerns. The Historic District Commission  
19 is relieved and pleased that the route now proposed for  
20 the new power lines will not cut through the Kettle Creek  
21 Historic District nor cast their shadows on the central  
22 Lyons Plain and Bradley Edge Historic Districts. Some of  
23 the properties which would have been affected are nearly  
24 300 years old, and most are more than 150 years old.

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1 Once destroyed, these historic areas would be gone  
2 forever.

3 Thank you for your continued commitment to  
4 the least intrusive transmission route underground.  
5 Thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN KATZ: Thank you. (Applause).  
7 Next is Jacqui Bidgood, on deck is Kevin Bidgood.

8 MS. JACQUI BIDGOOD: My name is Jacqui  
9 Bidgood, B-i-d-g-o-o-d, and I live at 14 Bittersweet Road  
10 in Weston.

11 COURT REPORTER: Spell your first name  
12 please.

13 MS. BIDGOOD: J-a-c-q-u-i. Thank you for  
14 coming to Weston tonight as part of your listening tour.

15 I urge the Siting Council to go to every  
16 length necessary to gather the information it needs to  
17 approve the Applicant's preferred underground route thus  
18 bypassing Weston. I hope very much that the Council will  
19 take serious note of the support for the underground  
20 route expressed by the residents of Westport at their  
21 hearing who were accepting of the temporary inconvenience  
22 of the tunneling operations for the greater good of the  
23 wider area.

24 I live on the existing right-of-way in

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1 Weston and want you all to know that I am vehemently  
2 opposed to it being increased to a 345 line. The right-  
3 of-way at the back of my property is extremely narrow and  
4 is bordered on one side by the Tall Pines residential  
5 street. The land between the right-of-way and my house  
6 is heavily wooded wetland that slopes down towards the  
7 house and is also home to a brook and two ponds.  
8 Widening the right-of-way to 50 feet will have a  
9 disastrous impact on the natural habitat and especially  
10 to the water table and therefore to the viability of my  
11 home. The loss of a large number of trees will cause a  
12 higher water table, soil erosion, sediment runoff, and  
13 the increased natural light will change the growing  
14 habitat of the existing vegetation. In short, the  
15 natural balance of the whole area will be completely  
16 thrown off.

17 I have a huge concern regarding the water  
18 table. Having recently undertaken some work on my home,  
19 I can tell you at firsthand that the land surrounding my  
20 home is already heavily water laden and the water table  
21 is currently around six inches from the level of my  
22 basement. We currently have a drainage system around the  
23 house that is just about keeping up. At a public meeting  
24 in Fairfield, I asked Connecticut Light & Power what are

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1 their plans for drainage in these wetland areas should  
2 the over-ground route be adopted. And frankly, there is  
3 no plan.

4 I ask you to consider that widening the  
5 right-of-way is not just about taking properties and  
6 parts of people's land, but what we are left to live  
7 with. Should this awful situation ever come to pass, I  
8 trust that the Siting Council will work hard with the  
9 utility companies to make them understand what their  
10 environmental and physical responsibilities are to the  
11 people being affected. After all, the Council has the  
12 decision.

13 I feel I must point out the gross inequity  
14 between residents governed by conservation regulations  
15 that limit them to maintain and protect their wetland  
16 properties compared with the rights of the utility  
17 company who may, if needed, simply raze to the ground the  
18 same pieces of land. If the power of eminent domain  
19 exists to protect progress, then please let it be  
20 progress that is applied. Can you really say that  
21 allowing 345 over-ground transmission lines to pass  
22 through environmentally sensitive, historical and  
23 residential areas is progress. While I realize that the  
24 Siting Council is in no way responsible for the rules of

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1 eminent domain, I implore it to use its full powers to  
2 protect our environment and find that the over-ground  
3 alternatives are not at all appropriate for Weston and  
4 neighboring towns in this application. Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN KATZ: Thank you. (Applause).  
6 Next is Kevin Bidgood and on deck is Hal Shu -- Hal --  
7 yes, go ahead.

8 MR. KEVIN BIDGOOD: Thank you. My name is  
9 Kevin Bidgood, B-i-d-g-o-o-d. As you can see, we're  
10 double teaming you tonight. Jacqui may be the president,  
11 but I'm the CFO, so.

12 I commend the Siting Council for the  
13 manner in which they are conducting the public hearings  
14 by coming out to the towns that will be affected by the  
15 upgrade and listening to the concerns of the general  
16 public. I also commend you for your decision to hire an  
17 expert on under-grounding to help you better understand  
18 the technology that is today at our disposal and used in  
19 other nations.

20 As a resident of Weston, I'm voicing my  
21 full support of the underground options through this part  
22 of lower Fairfield County. It is almost unthinkable that  
23 there will be any realistic consideration for the  
24 overhead option through Weston in this densely populated



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1 corner of Connecticut, and yet the first alternative to  
2 the underground route or bring the lines through the  
3 heart of Weston and the other communities.

4 The Town of Weston has a deep commitment  
5 to maintaining a natural environment for the people that  
6 live here. This commitment to the environment with its  
7 woodlands, streams, and wetlands was a key factor in our  
8 decision to move to this community a year ago. We  
9 purchased the property that abuts the 115-kV lines today  
10 but is completely masked by the trees. If the  
11 alternative route is approved, we'll be facing the  
12 prospect of 105-foot monopoles in our sight line, the  
13 cutting down of trees, and the result in the increase in  
14 the water table around our property.

15 Many others will speak more eloquently  
16 than I on the environmental impacts to Weston of the  
17 overhead solution. I want to pose a number of economic  
18 questions that concern me as a homeowner and any other  
19 owners of property along the line. What is the mechanism  
20 by which homeowners will be compensated for the loss of  
21 their property? How will owners be compensated for any  
22 flooding or other damage that takes place to their home  
23 or property because there are less trees to take up the  
24 water or because ponds or streams are rerouted? How will

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1 homeowners be compensated in the eminent domain process?

2 How will each and every homeowner within the vicinity of  
3 the lines be compensated for the visual impacts of the  
4 lines? How will homeowners be compensated for  
5 construction activities? How will homeowners be  
6 compensated if their property becomes unsaleable as a  
7 result of having these lines close to their backyards?  
8 How can homeowners ensure that any compensation for the  
9 diminution in property values has been fairly calculated  
10 and is in line with trends that would have taken place if  
11 there were no transmission line upgrade?

12 There are multiple reasons why residents  
13 in Weston will proactively and vocally oppose the  
14 Alternative Phase 2 route. Uh -- I'll miss the next  
15 couple of paragraphs because I need to get to the end --  
16 I urge you to support the underground route and to listen  
17 to the voice of the people in the State of Connecticut  
18 who will most be affected by an over-ground solution.  
19 Your decision must be made in the best interests of the  
20 power consumers in Connecticut and those most affected by  
21 the route that you decide upon and must not be unduly  
22 influenced by any factors external to this State, such as  
23 federal pressure for a fast solution or the economic  
24 opportunities that the increased capacity will bring to

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1 the transmission companies. Thank you.

2 CHAIRMAN KATZ: Thank you. (Applause).

3 Next is Hal Shupack, on deck is David MacFarlane.

4 MR. HAL SHUPACK: You're getting better.

5 My name is Hal Shupack, S-h-u-p-a-c-k. I live at 9  
6 Autumn Ridge here in Weston. I am also the former First  
7 Selectman here in Weston and spent a great deal of time  
8 with the Siting Council and CL&P with Phase 1.

9 Needless to say, I am delighted to see the  
10 tenor of this meeting and the Council. It is a wholly  
11 different attitude than we saw the first time around.  
12 I'm also pleased of the application that's been made by  
13 CL&P and Northeast Utilities. This is an answer to our  
14 prayers. It's an answer to actually saving our  
15 community. Weston for many many years has been involved  
16 in preserving land and preserving the environment. It is  
17 one of the few things that we have here in Weston to  
18 offer our citizens, that along with a fine education.

19 So in doing that -- in building an  
20 alternative route, what you're doing is destroying your  
21 community. And that's why Weston so vehemently opposed  
22 Phase 1 and was certainly opposed to the alternate  
23 solutions. Twenty-nine houses is not what's going to be  
24 affected. Many, many more houses than that are going to

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1 be affected, houses that face the lines, houses that will  
2 affect the magnetic rays of the lines. The entire  
3 community is going to be affected. This will bisect the  
4 center of Weston. It will go right through the center of  
5 town. It will take historic buildings. It will take  
6 expensive homes.

7 We are not against progress. Many of us  
8 work in Fairfield County, many of us need the power at  
9 our offices and at our places of business. But certainly  
10 the solution that CL&P and Northeast Utilities is  
11 proposing now is a far better solution than what we had  
12 before. So, I urge you to approve it, and I hope that in  
13 the future this is the answer to our prayers here in  
14 Weston. Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN KATZ: Thank you. (Applause). I  
16 have four more names listed to speak tonight, David  
17 MacFarlane, Jeff Diamond, Tom Klaffky, and Bruce Decourt.  
18 If there is anyone else who wishes to speak, please sign  
19 up now.

20 MR. DAVID MacFARLANE: My name is David  
21 MacFarlane, M-a-c, F for Frank, a-r-l-a-n-e. I live at  
22 44 Birch Hill Road in Weston.

23 Chairman Katz and members of the Council,  
24 thank you very much for the opportunity to speak with you

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1 and efforts that you are making and listening to the  
2 communities that are affected by the decisions that are  
3 being made.

4 I wanted to express my strong support for  
5 the proposed underground route. The rural nature, the  
6 character of the Town of Weston is an important part of  
7 why we chose to live and work here. And clearly from  
8 everything that you've heard tonight, that would be  
9 affected by an over-ground route that would go right  
10 through the center of town.

11 Furthermore, I believe that the  
12 predominant need is, as they've said, along the coast.  
13 And it is right and fair that the route pass along the  
14 commercial and developed parts where the need is greatest  
15 as opposed to the rural areas in our town.

16 So, I urge the Council to approve the  
17 proposed route and to not consider the alternate routes.

18 Thank you very much.

19 CHAIRMAN KATZ: Thank you. (Applause).

20 Next is Jeff Demint, on deck is Tom Klaffky.

21 A VOICE: Chairperson, Jeff Diamond had to  
22 leave, so I'm submitting his --

23 CHAIRMAN KATZ: Thank you. Tom Klaffky.

24 How did I do?

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1 MR. TOM KLAFFKY: Pretty close. My name  
2 is Tom Klaffky, T-o-m, K-l-a-f-f-k-y, 58 Good Hill Road,  
3 Weston, Connecticut.

4 My wife and I moved here three years ago -  
5 - just over three years ago. And right after we moved,  
6 we found out about the proposals from Northeast Utilities  
7 to put up the poles and to widen the right-of-way. The  
8 reason we had actually moved here is because of the  
9 beauty of the -- the natural beauty of the surroundings  
10 and the opportunity to enjoy the quality of life that I  
11 think everybody here tonight is so vigorously defending.

12 We attended a lot of meetings about Phase  
13 1, and the meetings were run by Northeast Utilities or by  
14 the Woodlands Coalition or by the Town of Weston or by  
15 yourselves, the Siting Council. And I know that the  
16 Siting Council is charged with trying to balance the need  
17 for additional power against the cost of -- the cost --  
18 the monetary costs and the cost to the communities. But  
19 the thing that I noticed at the meetings is not a lot of  
20 the speakers were concerned about helping you with that  
21 problem, not a lot of them were trying to figure out how  
22 to help balance the need because they were too concerned  
23 about their own side. And it seemed like the whole  
24 point, the whole point of all the meetings was so

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1 contentious, that I don't think that it really -- it was  
2 really productive in terms of finding a solution. I  
3 don't think it was actually pretty, but I think the  
4 people came to a solution in Phase 1 that most people  
5 find pretty palatable. I guess it's not a hundred  
6 percent finished, but I think most people find the whole  
7 idea pretty palatable at this point.

8 Well an observation is it's amazing how  
9 far we've come, because as people are looking at Phase 2,  
10 we're way ahead of where we were. I think that now  
11 people have much more of an attitude that they'd like to  
12 try to find the balance. And it's not just that the  
13 Siting Council is responsible. I think that Northeast  
14 Utilities and United Illuminating and the public and our  
15 elected officials are thinking about trying to balance  
16 this need, and I think people are working together in  
17 this that they weren't doing before.

18 Now, I'm proud that we have the elected  
19 officials that we have, but I wanted to also talk about  
20 one who's not here, and that's Diane Farrell from  
21 Westport, who supports the proposal even though it  
22 disrupts things in her town. And I think it tells you a  
23 lot about the people who are supporting this who are  
24 inconvenienced, where if you went another way, their

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1 towns would not be. So the quality of life and the  
2 beauty of the surroundings are something that I think all  
3 of us want to protect.

4 And I'm asking you to approve phase --  
5 approve the primary route of underground because I think  
6 that we're well on our way to a proper solution for both  
7 phases. Thank you very much.

8 CHAIRMAN KATZ: Thank you. (Applause).  
9 Bruce Decourt. And then the last two speakers are Edward  
10 Musante and Mel Brenner.

11 MR. BRUCE DECOURT: Thank you, Madam  
12 Chairman. My name is Bruce Decourt, D-e-c-o-u-r-t. I  
13 reside at 18 Burr Street in Easton. I also happen to be  
14 Manager for the Aspetuck Woods Preservation Group.

15 And first of all, Madam Chairman and  
16 members of the Council, I want to add my voice to the  
17 speakers that have spoken before in expressing their  
18 appreciation and thanks for the good and diligent work  
19 that the Council has done to date on finding and  
20 supporting a preferred underground route for the  
21 transmission lines.

22 I'd also like to add my voice to those who  
23 have wondered why we persist in scarring our beautiful  
24 landscapes when there are viable alternatives at hand. I

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1 understand a proposed overhead alternatives for the lines  
2 crossing Easton is to raise the height of these towers  
3 from the current 80 feet height to 105 feet. That's  
4 equivalent to a 10-story building. And widen the  
5 existing 80-foot swath of cleared right-of-way by an  
6 additional 45 feet. This to me is not an alternative.  
7 This is more of the same, only much more so. If the  
8 opportunity to bury these cables and possibly eliminate  
9 these ugly and potential hazardous 80-foot towers is  
10 available, we should seize upon the moment to do so.

11 The Northeast Utilities power lines cross  
12 through Easton across division -- or North Street and  
13 Burr Street. As the Council knows, residents of Burr  
14 Street, the Towns of Easton and Westport, and friends  
15 throughout the surrounding area are engaged currently in  
16 a fight against a proposed construction of a 15-story  
17 cell tower, Siting Council Docket 273, mere yards from  
18 the existing power line stanchions. Is this section of  
19 Easton which then is facing two construction  
20 possibilities to be the dumping -- the commercial dumping  
21 ground for this area of Easton and by extension some of  
22 the surrounding communities?

23 My absolute belief is that neither of  
24 these overhead proposals is in any way appropriate

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1 environmentally, aesthetically, health-wise from proof of  
2 harmful effects of EMF, property devaluation, and result  
3 in loss in tax revenue, or contribute possibly to the  
4 quality of life. In fact, neither overhead approaches  
5 are necessary from a market need, but proposed for the  
6 economic convenience of purely commercial interests.  
7 Obviously, adequate power and energy are necessary  
8 requirements to maintain our quality of life, but there  
9 appears -- there exists before the Council now an  
10 opportunity to regain a balance between commercial need  
11 and safeguarding the environment.

12 I respectfully urge the Council to seize  
13 the opportunity and require CP&L and NU to bury their  
14 cables whenever and wherever possible. Thank you very  
15 much.

16 CHAIRMAN KATZ: Thank you. (Applause).  
17 Edward Musante. And then our last speaker is Mel  
18 Brenner.

19 MR. EDWARD MUSANTE: Good evening, Madam  
20 Chairwoman and members of the Council. My name is Edward  
21 J. Musante, Jr. That's M-u-s-a-n-t-e. I am the  
22 President of the Greater Norwalk Chamber of Commerce.  
23 And that's spelled J-o-b-s.

24 On behalf of our nearly 1,000 members in

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1 the communities of Darien, New Canaan, Westport, Weston,  
2 Wilton and Norwalk, our Board of Directors has voted to  
3 support the existing proposal for the preferred route for  
4 the Northeast Utilities Middletown to Norwalk line. Our  
5 members do this really for two reasons. One is that our  
6 members need reliable energy sources. We have members  
7 that range from Stew Leonard's to the Norwalk Hospital to  
8 some of the largest corporations in Merritt 7 to some of  
9 the smallest mom and pop shops in south Norwalk.  
10 Reliability is a huge issue in southwestern Connecticut.

11 I don't need to dwell on it. You know better than I the  
12 situation and that we need the power lines here.

13 Secondly, Norwalk and some of its  
14 surrounding communities are in a growth mode and are  
15 looking to increase their economic development, certainly  
16 not a town like Weston, which wants to preserve its  
17 residential and rural character. But the people that  
18 live in Weston and Westport and Wilton all need jobs and  
19 Norwalk is a major hub for economic activity. And in  
20 Norwalk we are looking to increase that activity.

21 I -- you may ask why I didn't speak at the  
22 session that you had for Norwalk and Westport at Bedford  
23 School earlier this month, for two reasons, (1) I  
24 promised First Selectman Woody Bliss that I'd spend more

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1 time in his wonderful town, and secondly, we have spent a  
2 lot of time with Northeast Utilities and their  
3 representatives to go over the specific plans and the  
4 locations because many of our members have concerns about  
5 how the construction activity will disrupt them. I can  
6 say that we are very satisfied with the responses that we  
7 have received. Northeast Utility has done nothing but  
8 been totally cooperative in this effort and plans to work  
9 with us in the future to try and minimize those  
10 disruptions to businesses where they will be affected by  
11 construction work when this project gets underway.

12 So just to summarize, the Greater Norwalk  
13 Chamber of Commerce supports the preferred alternative  
14 for the Middletown to Norwalk line and we hope that it  
15 will be approved. Thank you very much.

16 CHAIRMAN KATZ: Thank you. (Applause).  
17 Mel Brenner.

18 MR. MEL BRENNER: My name is Mel Brenner,  
19 spelled B-r-e-n-n-e-r. I live at 15 Slumber Corners in  
20 Weston.

21 I appreciate this opportunity to speak to  
22 the Council. I agree with the comments of those who have  
23 spoken thus far strongly favoring the underground  
24 approach.

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1 I'm glad that you had the chance today to  
2 drive around this area and I assume you saw the nature of  
3 the residential community and can visualize the damage or  
4 the severe damage that would be done if now we had 105-  
5 foot towers, as somebody just mentioned equivalent to 10-  
6 story buildings.

7 Without repeating the other comments that  
8 have been made, I'd like to offer just one other thought.  
9 The main purpose of this whole project we are told is to  
10 improve reliability. I submit that the underground  
11 approach would be most consistent with that objection.  
12 And in that regard, I think it's interesting to note some  
13 of the reasons that were given for the disastrous  
14 blackout we had in August. And here I quote from the New  
15 York Times of August 23<sup>rd</sup> of this year, of 2003, quote,  
16 "When an overheating electrical transmission line snagged  
17 into a tree just outside Cleveland on August 14<sup>th</sup>, the  
18 events that would lead to the greatest power failure in  
19 North American history began a furious avalanche  
20 according to the most extensive analysis of a blackout  
21 yet". A couple of months after that there was a further  
22 report which went on to say -- the report also says that  
23 three major transmission lines shut down because they  
24 sagged into trees and those failures helped cause the

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1 Ohio problem into a meltdown.

2 Earlier in 2003 we had the hurricane which  
3 did serious damage along the East Coast. And now I quote  
4 from the New York Times on that occasion, quote, "More  
5 than one million homes and businesses in the storm's path  
6 remained without power. In many cases we're not just  
7 making repairs, we're having to rebuild the system from  
8 ground up said a spokesman of the Virginia Power Company,  
9 there are places where there are more poles and wires  
10 down on the ground than are standing". I submit that  
11 underground would have avoided the start of the blackout  
12 that hit us in August and would have avoided the damage  
13 that was done in the hurricane here.

14 So in addition to all the other  
15 considerations, environmental, aesthetic, and so on, even  
16 for the purpose of reliability, I strongly recommend the  
17 underground approach. Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN KATZ: Thank you. (Applause).  
19 The members of the Siting Council would like to thank all  
20 those who came tonight to give us your spoken and written  
21 statements. We really appreciate your input into our  
22 decision making process.

23 We'd also like to thank the Town of Weston  
24 and First Selectman Woody Bliss for providing us the

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1 venue for this hearing and Woody's tours.

2 The next -- the Council's next stop on our  
3 listening tour for public comment is February 5, 2004 at  
4 7:00 p.m. at Mark T. Sheehan High School Auditorium, 142  
5 Hope Hill Road, Wallingford.

6 Again, thank you for your participation  
7 and please drive safely. We are adjourned. (Applause).

8  
9 (Whereupon, the hearing adjourned at 8:20  
10 p.m.)

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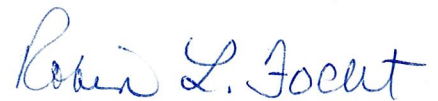


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