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July 19, 2004

Hon. Pamela B. Katz, Chairman
Connecticut Siting Council
10 Franklin Square
New Britain, Connecticut 06051

Dear Ms. Katz:

Subject: Docket No. 272
ConnDOT's Comments on the Preferred Overhead/Underground
Routing for the New 345 kV Electric Transmission Line and
Associated Facilities

Pursuant to the request of the Connecticut Siting Council, the Connecticut Department of Transportation (ConnDOT) herein provides its comments on alternate preferred routing (overhead/underground) for the proposed new 345 kV electric transmission line and associated facilities in Connecticut between the Scovill Rock Switching Station in Middletown and the Norwalk Substation in Norwalk.

ConnDOT is submitting the following comments, categorized by the four segments, along with the ConnDOT's Town Road Urban ("TRU") maps for ConnDOT's preferred alternative routing for Segment 4. Due to the size of the TRU maps, ConnDOT requests bulk filing status for the plans. Concurrent with the filing of the hard copy of the TRU maps, ConnDOT is also filing several copies in electronic portable document format on cd-rom. ConnDOT has submitted electronic copies of the TRU maps on cd-rom to each of the Applicants and the municipalities of Bridgeport, Fairfield, Norwalk and Westport. ConnDOT will provide an electronic copy of the TRU maps on cd-rom to any party that requests one.

Segments 1 and 2 (Middletown to Milford): Within Segments 1 and 2, the Applicants' (Connecticut Light and Power Company, Inc. (CL&P) and United Illuminating Company, Inc. (UI)) proposed routing is within CL&P's right of way. The potential impacts to ConnDOT's transportation system are minimal within this corridor. Therefore, ConnDOT has no comment regarding the Applicants' proposed routing for these segments.

Segment 3 (Milford to Bridgeport): Within Segment 3, a small section of Route 1 is included within the Applicants' proposed underground route. However, the vast majority of the proposed route within this corridor is located along other roads than Route 1. Therefore, ConnDOT has no objection to the Applicants' proposed underground route for this segment, provided that the Applicants' enter into an appropriate encroachment agreement with ConnDOT for the use of the State highway rights of way.

Segment 4 (Bridgeport to Norwalk): Within Segment 4, a substantial portion of the Applicants' proposed overall route (shown in red) is within the Route 1 right of way. The enclosed mapping (bulk file) depicts ConnDOT's preferred alternate route (shown in blue) for the Applicants' proposed underground 345 kV transmission line between Singer Substation in Bridgeport to the Norwalk Substation in Norwalk.

ConnDOT's selection of this preferred alternative route is based on the following criteria: a minimized number of turns to accommodate the proposed high-pressure, fluid-filled transmission system; lower volume roadways in non-commercial areas, where possible; and reasonable terrain. The overall utilization of Route 1 within the ConnDOT preferred alternative route is reduced significantly from the preferred route submitted by the Applicants. All of the local streets selected in Fairfield, Westport and Norwalk are two-lane, suburban, mostly residential streets with rolling terrain. It is expected that with lower traffic volumes on these town roads, daytime construction would be permissible with reduced inconvenience to motorists when compared to the Applicants' proposed route.

Upon leaving the Singer Substation, ConnDOT's preferred alternative route follows Atlantic Street, a two-lane, urban residential street in Bridgeport and turns northerly to Park Avenue. Park Avenue is a wide median-divided boulevard with a gradual upgrade as it travels in a northerly direction. The route proceeds westerly on Wilson Street and a series of other two-lane, predominantly residential town roads through the towns of Fairfield and Westport, rejoining the Applicants' proposed route on Route 1 at Long Lots Lane in Westport. ConnDOT's preferred alternative route coincides with Applicants' proposed route west along Route 1 and then along the northern alternate around the center of Westport. ConnDOT's preferred alternative route continues on Murray Street to Route 53 in Norwalk, turning southwest for a short distance and continuing west on Cannon Street and a series of local roads to the Norwalk Substation. Although the ConnDOT preferred alternative routing is approximately 25.6 miles versus the Applicants' proposed route of 22.5 miles, the ability to construct the facility along local roads during daytime hours should reduce the cost of construction by expediting the construction schedule.

Please feel free to contact me should you have any further questions or requests.

Very truly yours,

Arthur W. Gruhn, P.E.
Chief Engineer
Bureau of Engineering
and Highway Operations

Enclosures
cc: Service List