

APPENDIX 23: PUBLIC COMMENT ON SCOPING NOTICE

Following are written comments received in September, 2024 in response to a public notice by DEEP requesting input on the scope, structure, and timing of a Draft CT Siting Council Report. Many of the comments submitted to DEEP focus on CSC issues beyond DEEP's request for input, notably those comments from residents and leadership from Fairfield associated with a CSC decision on a transmission line application ([Docket 516](#)).

I am writing to voice my objection to the construction of monopoles by UI in Fairfield.

When this plan was first made public, it described replacing the overhead gantries along the train tracks. These gantries are perhaps 40 or 50 feet tall and are not visible outside the immediate vicinity.

We now know UI plans to instead build ~150-foot-tall monopoles, forever damaging the aesthetic of our town.

This change would only harm the citizens of Fairfield while offering us no benefit or even a rationale for the purpose of these towers.

Message submitted as public comments from multiple people

I am a resident of Fairfield and want to express my concerns over the placement of monopoles in Fairfield by United Illuminating. These concerns have been expressed to the Siting Council which approved a change to UI's proposal with no hearings to include public comment.

We have a number of serious concerns which need to be addressed. Our hope is that DEEP can examine these issues and report to the Siting Council and the public. We would like your comments on the following issues:

- Indiscriminate, clear cutting of trees and vegetation
- Damage to fragile eco-systems
- Removal of critical habitat for birds and pollinators
- Disturbance of private property
- Unsightly poles marring the landscape and scenic view
- Danger to birds as they fly, perch, forage and migrate
- Intrusion into protected wetlands
- Destruction of precious historic areas

- Trespassing on property without a Right-of-Entry release
 - Inability to hold the utilities to prior agreements about retaining trees and vegetation when their sub-contractors arrive and begin workI was thrilled when this bill was successful and gave you more influence in making decision about utility infrastructure.
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I wanted to take this opportunity to express my concerns about utility infrastructure in our town.

All communities need to plan for climate change, and the impact of increasingly destructive storms.

The best long term solution is to bury utilities wherever possible. Many studies have shown that it is the cheapest alternative in the long run.

It also has many other benefits, including no visibility to unsightly poles and lines, no structures up in the air where they can harm wildlife, eliminates necessity of cutting trees and disturbing important habitats for birds and all pollinators,.

Please analyze with a long term lens on the impact.

I am a resident of Southport CT.

I strongly object to the installation of unsightly poles marring the landscape in the historical Southport village.

When it comes to major issues that directly and specifically influence a community, the overwhelming majority of voices in that community should be respected and obeyed, over the voices of just a few, even if those few are in power. The powerful voices I am referring to are the people in charge at UI. In this case, the many voices in our town of Fairfield have spoken and it is clear that this project has not fairly considered our wishes which are based on very serious and impactful concerns. Below is a partial list of those concerns, but I assure you there are *FAR* more concerns that hit upon a wide range of aspects and categories. Please hold UI accountable to the people that are going to be most affected by their decisions. Thank you for your consideration.

I was driving in the Chopsey Hill area of Bridgeport the other day and saw the big steel poles in a residential neighborhood. My heart goes out to those homeowners who have to live with that view. I

cannot understand why in this day and age there is not an alternative to these oversized massive structures in residential areas. We pay some of the highest prices in the nation. Our picturesque New England landscape is eroding by the minute. Please be considerate of homeowners when installing these gargantuan poles. So many have pleaded for underground wiring which seems to make so much sense in our windy climate.

Also, I have not seen a mapping from the UI for the planned pole installation for Fairfield. This should be public knowledge by now. Did I miss this information?

I oppose the installation of new overhead lines. I think they should be buried.

Please , please, please hear our voices.

We don't want clear cutting of Fairfield trees and vegetation. Your organization has caused damage to fragile eco-systems in our open spaces and parks.

Please stop taking land that is critical habitat for birds and pollinators. Please stop disturbing our citizens' private property.

But the absolute worst damage you can do is the installation of the poles marring the landscape and scenic views in our town of Fairfield. This will also cause major problems with our birds as they fly, perch, forage and migrate. Stop your intrusion into protected wetlands and please stop destroying of our precious historic areas.

I am a homeowner in Fairfield, and I am concerned about the possibility of UI building monopoles throughout our town.

I am concerned about the cutting of trees and vegetation, I am concerned about the impact this will have on our fragile ecosystems. I am concerned over the impact this will have on our wetlands, which are essential in flood mitigation, which is an ongoing issue in Fairfield and in CT as a whole. I am concerned about people entering my property. I am concerned about the impact this will have on our avian population.

I am also deeply concerned that this is being done as a cost-saving measure over underground wires. UI and other CT electric companies are some of the highest-cost providers in the nation outside of Hawaii. We are already being gouged as electricity is essential in modern life, and we are bound to use the companies that service our area.

Adding towers that, while saving the company a few dollars that it doesn't need to save, also damage our ecosystem, de-beautify our wonderful town, and make us more susceptible to power

outages due to the risk of trees falling on lines during frequent high-wind events; it's an insult to our town that should not be allowed.

Please, do not ignore our township rights. There are **no** farfielders who want this, and UI can afford to do this right.

I am a lifelong CT resident, who currently lives in Fairfield, CT. I understand that you are interested in comments concerning UIs planned utility pole project through fairfield. While I cannot speak to the specifics of that project, I write to relay our horrific experiences with a similar right of way owned by Eversource behind our property.

As you are likely aware, Eversource has been granted a new monopole project in this state, and in the process, been granted a blank check by the state to "secure" its lines.

Eversource has an easement behind my property, where it has large poles carrying electricity for the state. This year, they started a project to replace the poles behind my property with even larger (over 100ft) monopoles. While were assured -- by Eversource workers-- that these poles would not be larger than the previous poles, these new monopoles tower at least 30' taller -- substantially above our tall tree line that had previously blocked our property's view of these poles.

Once it erected these poles, Eversource began a vegetation removal project in its easement behind our property. In the past, Eversource would come through with workers with chainsaws every 4 years and remove "incompatible" shrubbery/trees while keeping the "compatible" trees. This time, when Eversource workers arrived behind my property -- unannounced, on June 7, 2024, there were no individual workers with hand saws but instead large "shredder" trucks which began **indiscriminately** shredding **all** vegetation, compatible or incompatible behind our property. Eversource's project's supervisor, provided no help or insight into the project and threatened our neighbors with police action for asking questions. There was no consideration as to whether a shrub was compatible or incompatible or how it would impact the surrounding properties. There was clearly no consideration for the wetlands in the easement or the natural habitats that exist there. Moreover there was no recourse for concerned residents who abut Eversource's easement.

I reached out to Eversource about our frustrations -- including a lack of notice about the project (which I understand they are legally required to give), a lack of communication during the project and a lack of reasonable scope by Eversource. Eversource representatives met with me and my neighbors and members of the first selectman's office on June 12. It felt like a productive meeting where our concerns were heard, and we were promised remediation work and more communication going forward. A few weeks later, on June 19, 2024, workers were again behind our property. I immediately called Eversource again, and after inquiring within, I was told that no further work would be conducted behind our property. On July 1, workers trespassed on our property (not on the easement) and cut more shrubs and vegetation. I asked them to leave and did

not grant them permission to be on our property. I was informed by Eversource that there was yet again a "miscommunication" and they would be continuing more removal of shrubs/trees.

We have since met with Eversource's tree warden, who appears to be targeting our property in particular and asking for our property to be restaked (despite it already having been staked twice) to see if there are additional trees to cut down. He admitted that these additional trees are not within the 25' zone from the poles/wires, and are on our side of the stone wall barrier between our property and the easement. Nevertheless, he recommended that our property be restaked and additional trucks be sent out to cut more from (only) behind our house.

Eversource has easements and properties throughout the state. Some are large, some are narrow, some abut resident's properties, some abut the state's highways, and some are in the wilderness. There must be different standards for shrubbery removal dependent on the location. Eversource's easement behind our property is small -- about 80' total (25' on each side of the poles). It is in a residential community. I was shocked to learn that Eversource does not follow state or federal regulations for its vegetation removal but instead sets its own vegetation removal standards which it alleges comport with these state and federal guidelines. Eversource and UI should not be allowed to set their own arbitrary standards. They must be forced to use discretion / reasonableness in easements that abut residential zones. They must be forced to only cut what is necessary to protect the lines. Instead, Eversource admits that (1) they have one guideline for vegetation removal regardless of whether their lines abut residential zones (2) they have not updated their vegetation standards despite having erected taller poles that clear the tree line.

Where I live, the impact to residents is great, and it is a fail on the part of Eversource and a fail on behalf our state in not protecting its constituents from a goliath corporation like Eversource. Eversource should have a policy of reasonableness and must consider the impact to its neighboring properties. Cutting a low hanging branch that would have no impact to its 100' poles, but would have a large impact to my view of my backyard, seems like an easy solution for Eversource (and the state). The impact to the property owner of destroying this vegetation is great, while the impact to Eversource of using a more reasoned, calculated approach at removing incompatible vegetation is minute. The State's granting to Eversource a right to demolish people's backyards is reproachable. Eversource's lack of consideration or care towards its neighbors is disheartening, as all we ask is a reasonable approach. What is more disheartening is that we have tried, in earnest, to have clear communication with Eversource and, in return, have received miscommunication after miscommunication.

I'm a 30 year resident of Fairfield, and I believe the reason Fairfield is a great place to live is that it doesn't look like so many over developed Suburbs around major cities in the US... its because residents take pride in the looks and infrastructure choices in our town.

I remain very concerned about UIs plans to place monopoles through Fairfield, and believe it would have an adverse impact on many features of this town. I'm particularly concerned about damage to our fragile eco-systems... which may be caused by clearing swaths of land and cutting

of trees and vegetation. The risks include damaging habitat for birds via excavation and tree removal, damaging protected wetlands, and causing danger to avian wildlife with the large poles. Additionally, the views and character of our town is what makes it special and different.... Having huge poles looming overhead would seriously diminish the appeal of our town. Please take actions so UI and future Utilities are thoughtful about where and how they upgrade utilities... rather than just taking the easy approach which will ruin our town.

My wife and I are the owners of Misha Properties LLC, the owners of 10 Spruce Street in Southport. That property consists of a very small lot on the corner of Spruce and John Streets immediately across from the north side of the Metro North tracks. The 4,000 square foot building on the site looks like is Victorian style home on a street with many Victorian style homes. Spruce Street is among one of the few designated historic streets in the Town of Fairfield and is steps away from Southport Village. I maintain my law practice there, and other business tenants also occupy the property.

There is simply no room for a monopole in this area. The office building and necessary parking areas utilize the vast majority of the property. Across the street there is a 5 foot easement between the street and the granite retaining wall holding up the Metro North tracks. There exists no place for the erection of a monopole.

This tree lined quaint street would be destroyed if 100 plus foot monopoles are erected here, even if possible, without destroying our office and property. Looking out my window now, I see church steeples hundreds of years old, not gigantic monolithic structures. Adding monopoles would destroy this beautiful, historic landscape and probably destroy this historic street and structure.

Please do NOT allow these monopoles to be erected.

As the leaves start to turn color in the historic garden by Long Island Sound that is Southport I am aware of the beauty but with apprehension. What if our opposition to the siting plans proposed by United Illuminating fails because the state takes the side of the utility ? If Southport is cut in 2 by these massive monopoles carrying power lines that can be easily buried in the railroad right of way ? Which will spoil the historic village ambiance and cast their ugly shadows on our beach, on our historic homes and long time village businesses and historic churches? This plan almost snuck through but concerned citizens with private donations mobilized to inform their neighbors that UI was waiting on approval by the state Siting Council to change our world. I love this display of the power of private citizens to rise up in opposition to power. The monopolistic power of UI will not prevail here or in any other community that is manipulated by lies and charades played by unscrupulous businesses.

Questions about monopoles to be constructed in my town of Fairfield, CT. I live about 1/2 mile from proposed site.

1. Are they safe? We had an earthquake in Fairfield last year. How strong of an earthquake can they withstand?

2. We are on the coast, with global warming and sea rise on the way. Can the poles and wires withstand the winds of a major hurricane? More importantly, can they withstand floods?

Note that Super storm Sandy (not a hurricane) inundated many blocks not so far from the proposed route and that a storm recently dumped a foot of rain in a couple of hours a few miles from here and was declared a disaster area.

3. How long is their projected life span? Who is responsible for maintenance? How often will maintenance be done? Are they to be fenced? Will they be surrounded by gravel, grass, concrete, weeds?

4. Why is it that the lines are buried from the NY line to Fairfield but it is not feasible to bury them here?

UI should bury the lines underground. The tall poles are unsightly and would cause property owners to lose some of their land via eminent domain. The majority of our residents oppose what UI is trying to do.

Fairfield resident

Please save our towns from utilities riding roughshod through neighborhoods! The amount of clear-cutting that has gone on in and around utilities is horrific. Please protect our trees and our eco-systems including habitat for birds, animals and beneficial insects. Do not allow utilities to harm wetlands.

Do not allow poles and never-ending wires to criss-cross our skies and ruin our historic areas.

We also need protection from the utilities' subcontractors that do not adhere to regulations.

I am writing to express my strong opposition to United Illuminating's (UI) plan to install a 7.3-mile stretch of massive monopoles along the Metro North Railroad tracks in Fairfield. This project,

which requires more than 20 acres of permanent easements on private and public property, raises several significant concerns that I believe must be addressed.

Firstly, the indiscriminate clear-cutting of trees and vegetation required for this project will cause irreparable damage to our fragile ecosystems. This destruction will remove critical habitats for birds and pollinators, which are essential for maintaining biodiversity and ecological balance.

Additionally, the installation of these unsightly monopoles will mar the scenic landscape of our town, negatively impacting the aesthetic value of our community. The presence of these structures poses a danger to birds as they fly, perch, forage, and migrate, further disrupting the natural environment.

The intrusion into protected wetlands and the destruction of historic areas are also of great concern. These actions not only violate environmental protections but also disregard the cultural and historical significance of these sites.

Moreover, the disturbance of private property without a Right-of-Entry release is a blatant violation of property rights. The inability to hold utilities accountable to prior agreements about retaining trees and vegetation when their sub-contractors begin work is unacceptable and undermines trust in these entities.

The recent passage of House Bill 5507 by the Connecticut General Assembly is a step in the right direction, as it aims to correct the unfair bias towards utilities in decision-making processes. This bill will ensure that the needs of Connecticut residents are taken into account more significantly in future infrastructure projects.

I urge the CT DEEP to use its strengthened voice, as empowered by HB 5507, to thoroughly review and reconsider the approval of this project. It is crucial to protect our environment, public health, and safety when making decisions about the placement of utilities infrastructure.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I hope that you will take the necessary steps to prevent the implementation of this detrimental project.

Please protect our fragile eco-systems and the habitats that animals, insects, and birds rely upon for survival. They are unique to our town, and our town's infrastructure should absolutely support the wild life and natural settings that provide a critical backdrop to Fairfield and Southport. This includes burying electrical lines, anything else would be antiquated, and quite frankly cruel to the animals and habitats are a part of this beautiful town.

I am writing as a concerned citizen from Fairfield. The UI monopoles will be devastating to our areas history, properties, and to our wildlife. Cutting down all the necessary trees will not only be an eyesore, but it will displace animals and birds alike. Please do whatever you can to help!

In light of HB 5507, we want to raise to your attention our significant concern about the proposal of United Illuminating to place extremely large monopoles for electrical transmission through our community. As DEEP is preparing a study on how to protect the environment, public health, and safety when decisions are made concerning such utility proposals, I am hoping you will take into account our concerns.

Not only are such massive monopoles unsightly in a beautiful, historical coastal town, but they raise numerous concerns from an environmental and safety standpoint. We cannot afford to have Indiscriminate, clear cutting of trees and vegetation to make way for such poles. Our trees and vegetation are a critical part of our eco-system and we should not allow damage to our fragile eco-system.

This project appears to be simply a play by the utility to increase electrical transmission capabilities for their financial gain, while disregarding the needs of the communities they serve, allowing destruction of the beautiful local environment and raising safety concerns, while charging the customers to do it. If United Illuminating truly needs and wants to do the right thing for their customers (and helping themselves at the same time), they ought to invest in burying the lines under our roads, where it would not disturb our precious trees and vegetation, not disturb birds and pollinators, not intrude on wetlands, not trespass on private property or historic areas, and avoid unsightly poles. Burying the lines would also enhance the durability of the electrical infrastructure, being resistant to the increasing dangers of high wind storms.

Thank you for your consideration of these concerns on our environment and the safety of our communities. We sincerely appreciate the efforts of DEEP to look out for our communities, their safety, environmental beauty and long-term sustainability.

Regarding the study you are doing on how to protect our towns and villages from utility infrastructure plans, such as electric wire placement, that do not sufficiently consider community concerns, please prioritize the statements of the citizens who actually live in the affected areas.

Local residents know the “lay of the land” and how these projects can disrupt and impair neighborhoods and main street businesses. In particular, damaging private property, even inadvertently, as well as wildlife habitats — and the wildlife themselves — and trees, landscapes, wetlands, historic districts, and common sense road use.

There should be great scrutiny of utility company plans to take these “home town” factors into account — before decisions are made about approval — and more enforcement of restrictions when work crews actually arrive on site.

There are many reason to oppose this project, but my major concern is having a permanent swath of land under the control of UI accompanied by 100 + feet high poles towering over the tree lines though Fairfield, including the downtown shopping area, the Southport historic district, and the back yards of million dollar residential properties.

There is no reason why UI cannot put these lines underground. I do not understand UI's opposition to this clear and better alternative.

I am voicing my concern against the large monopole project in southern Fairfield. The monopoles will require clear cutting of vegetation as well as removal of mature trees. They are also ugly eyesores and will cause a decrease in biodiversity overall. I believe the utilities need to improve their infrastructure by undergrounding wires to protect our environment and neighborhoods. This investment is worthwhile in my opinion and deserves more serious conversation and consideration.

Please of not grant UI the rights to destroy Southport and Fairfield.

The proposed would only benefit UI, a company who has given us very high utility costs, and just so-so service. Every time the wind blows, essentially, we lose power.

Worst case, they can go underground on the existing (admittedly ugly) infrastructure. Best case, the whole thing (existing plus new) goes underground.

Be on the right side of history, and reject this. Do what is right for the community, the tax payers, the economy drivers.

In case it matters, I live in Southport.

IN Fairfield, UI is proposing installing separate monopoles to replace the current 115kv towers, which are attached to Metro North catenaries.

The proposed monopoles height can be up to 180 feet; this is considerably higher than the existing UI catenary towers .

The current towers and proposed monopoles will continue to be 115kv. Why is the such a significant increase in tower height.

Shorter towers would require a smaller foundation, which would require less space/impact and also lower total cost.

Additionally, the use of superconductor power lines would reduce weight and, in turn, reduce tower support requirements and overall size.

Moreover, superconductor transmission lines would enable increasing power without replacement.

Superconductors are not new, although there is new technology being developed as noted on the article (see link below)

<https://news.mit.edu/2024/veir-transforms-power-grid-with-superconducting-transmission-lines-0626>

As a lifelong resident of Fairfield, I am very upset about what is happening (and not happening) with the points listed below and how they affect the noise factor.

I live 2 miles from 95 and it is difficult to sit on my back porch with all the truck noise and the awful loud motorcycles - some days you can't hear yourself think, never mind having a conversation where you have to yell above the noise !

The noise difference between "before and after" all the clear cutting on 95 is significant.

When Fairfield residents can't even enjoy their own property, for which we pay high taxes on, it is disturbing and upsetting and quite the topic of conversation in town.

Please see attached letter to the DOT commissioner from the previous administration.

Are the barrier walls that exist elsewhere along 95 an option for Fairfield ?

Will you be replanting some trees and bushes as noise buffers ?

Thank you, in advance, for giving us back the nice QUIET town we grew up in and cherish.

When considering decisions about where utilities infrastructure is placed, please put protecting the environment and protecting public health as the most important consideration. Too frequently the financial interests of the utility is the most important issue considered.

Please include the following concerns in your upcoming infrastructure location study:

Indiscriminate, clear cutting of trees and vegetation

Damage to fragile eco-systems

Removal of critical habitat for birds and pollinators

Disturbance of your private property

Unsightly poles marring the landscape and scenic view

Danger to birds as they fly, perch, forage and migrate

Intrusion into protected wetlands

Destruction of precious historic areas

Trespassing on your property without a Right-of-Entry release

Inability to hold the utilities to prior agreements about retaining trees and vegetation when their sub-contractors arrive and begin work

As Southport homeowners, we strongly object to UI's proposal to install monopoles along the railroad tracks in Fairfield & Southport.

These monopoles are sized for large-scale industrial transmission, which is not appropriate for our residential and historic neighborhoods, and the local schools that are also impacted.

From an environmental standpoint, our objections are numerous and we urge CT DEEP to take a stand on these to prevent UI from doing irreparable damage to our town.

Our specific environmental concerns, include:

- The clear-cutting of 6.5 acres of trees and vegetation that will not only destroy the quality, beauty & biodiversity of our environment, but will increase CO2 pollution and increase the already significant noise pollution that our neighborhoods face from I-95 and-Metro North.
- Damage to the fragile ecosystems around the monopoles, which include protected wetlands in sections of Fairfield and Southport.
- The use of additional pesticides and herbicides to kill the surrounding vegetation...which in addition to harming the delicate surrounding ecosystems, also pose myriad health concerns for the families and children who live nearby.
- And importantly, with the acceleration of climate change and increases in extreme weather and temperatures, these poles further increase our risk of wildfires when high-speed winds knock them down. This is obviously a major safety concern, as well, given that these poles will be located in densely populated residential areas.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter and for taking the necessary steps to protect our town, residents, and environment from UI's callous and dangerous proposal.

I am concerned about having the exceedingly tall and wide power lines built above ground and would like them buried, even at a much higher cost. They are unsightly and will ruin our town's vista.

Further, massive towers encroach on wetlands in the proposed plans, are a known health threat, endanger migrating birds, ground wildlife, and pollinators. None of this is good for our environment or for our planet.

There is, essentially, nothing positive about this proposal to build power towers above ground and along this route. They are a real threat to people's properties and their values.

Please install them below ground as they are in Westport and Norwalk.

Please see the list below of concerned citizens who object to the UI proposal to clear cut trees along the railroad tracks in Fairfield and Southport. This clear cutting will impact trees and vegetation in an already fragile ecosystem. Our environment is directly impacted by climate change which is a primary concern for all humans. It is a known fact that greenhouse gases contribute significantly to climate change. When UI burns fossil fuels to create its electricity CO₂, a greenhouse gas, is released into the air. Clear cutting not only increases CO₂ pollution but will raise the temperature of the land and will destroy its biodiversity. Science tells us that the leaves on trees and bushes help stop climate change by removing carbon dioxide (CO₂) from the air. The carbon is then stored in the trees and soil causing oxygen, the remaining element, to be released into the atmosphere. This process of cleaning carbon from the atmosphere helps provide cleaner air for all to breathe. By denuding the existing buffer of trees and vegetation for 7 miles, UI is destroying the quality and beauty of our environment. Furthermore, UI is ignoring the report by the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) for the world's need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by 2030 in order to avoid global temperature increases causing catastrophic threats to humans and ecosystems. Therefore, the FGC urges UI to find a less harmful process for improving its electric transmissions. Sections of Fairfield and Southport border protected wetlands. And are considered historic areas which will be compromised and endangered. These power poles are sized for large scale industrial transmission which are not suitable for residential and historic neighborhoods or near schools. We must demand that utilities respect property owner's rights!!!! SAVE OUR CITIES.

These giant power poles are a destructive force throughout the entire state of CT (frequently being placed without forewarning or ability to comment from the towns affected). Unsightly, they will destroy sensitive environmental habitat for birds, wetlands, historic areas and reduce property values for electricity production that currently we do not need. Rather than aggressively rushing to place these poles, time should be spent to plan an underground transmission line. The UI and Eversource were granted permission to operate in our state to provide a service. Instead, we are provided with a monopoly and nearly the most expensive electricity in the nation.

I am a lifelong resident of Fairfield and Southport, CT where, to this date, I have enjoyed selling real estate for 44 years. I am writing this letter with the hope that DEEP can influence United Illuminating to alter the horrible and environmentally devastating monopole plan in favor of underground installation of any new power lines.

In today's world, with extreme focus on the environment, virtually all forward-thinking municipalities and first world countries have had the foresight and sensitivity to install new utility lines and wiring underground. The proposed monopoles present the cheapest and most profitable option for United Illuminating, with the worst possible outcome for thousands and thousands of local citizens and our immediate environment.

The following issues are of most greatest concern -

1) Undeniable and irreversible environmental impact – Soaring towers and webs of wires creating death traps for birds and migratory flocks, further displacement of, and restriction of the movement of wildlife, and treacherous conditions for recreational aviation, which does in fact take place in the area and along the coast.

2) Yet undetermined health risks to all life - human, wildlife, and vegetation - both short and long term. Magnetic fields possibly spreading carcinogenic radiation through the airwaves. Certainly not enough study of colossal monopoles has been conducted in suburbia. This is a horrible risk.

3) Far-reaching visual blight in what is today an irreplaceable, quintessentially New England setting; permanently destroying the aesthetics of historically significant, picturesque assets of the State of CT namely - Southport Harbor, Southport Village, Fairfield Center and the historic Village of Black Rock in Bridgeport.

4) Severe property devaluation for our local citizenry, all for the sake of increased profits for a foreign owned utility company. The grotesque, towering monopoles will present complete visual blight for miles and miles. All of this, at the expense of the citizens of Fairfield and Bridgeport.

The local citizenry and I implore DEEP to influence United Illuminating to transition the outrageous monopole plan and burying the power lines underground. The cheapest option of towering monopoles will needlessly create an industrial corridor and blight where once plant and wildlife was abundant and unharmed and beautiful neighborhoods existed.

I implore DEEP to address this very grave issue.

I have been on the board of and am the Master Bird Bander for CT Audubon Society since 1986! I've seen a lot of change, but nothing that promises to be so damaging as the plan UI has for erecting giant monopoles all through Southport to Bridgeport. Clearly, this is not to the benefit of the population, especially to those who might lose their homes, and in an historic district!

I, being a naturalist, a bird bander, monitoring migration from Birdcraft Museum in Fairfield, am ever so worried about the environment! Clear cutting the trees along the railroad tracks(one of the remaining areas migrating birds use), not only affects the birds, but the historic Birdcraft building and its six remaining acres. The birds are challenged already with loss of habitat; it's irresponsible to even think of making it worse. I have already noticed a reduction of birds banded since 1986; I urge you to stop this senseless project!

This can be solved by SPENDING THE MONEY to put the lines, if needed, underground.

As a Fairfield, CT resident, I am deeply troubled by the idea of UI's new mega poles that have been proposed to replace the existing poles. The huge, unsightly structures will change the character of some important historic areas in our towns.

I am also concerned about the removal of plants and vegetation that are critical habitats for wildlife.

For these reasons, I am opposed to UI's proposal to install these new transmission lines in this manner.

I am writing to request the agency consider and act on Fairfield residents' opposition to United Illuminating's plans for monopoles requiring more than 20 acres of permanent easements on private and public property along the Metro North Railroad tracks in Fairfield, CT. Residents of Fairfield want underground energy lines. We oppose the unsightly poles marring the landscape and scenic view of our town and destruction of our town's historic areas. Additionally, I understand Fairfield will have an inability to hold the utilities to prior agreements about retaining trees and vegetation when their sub-contractors arrive and begin work. We want our town to have control over the project so citizens can have a voice in how it is conducted. The project should minimize any environmental damage to the eco-systems that surround our properties.

Thank you for the careful consideration of where to place public utilities infrastructure, and the opportunity to share my concerns. As a resident of Fairfield, CT, I am writing to share what my priorities are for utilities placement in Connecticut.

Specifically, my greatest concern is the lack of long-term consequences being considered in the planning process. There are a variety of slowly unfolding changes for both the human population and natural environment that need to be taken into consideration so that utilities are functional in the long-term as well as the short-term. The intrusion of infrastructure into environments that are critical to sustaining bird and animal populations should be eliminated as an option for utilities; this includes wetlands, bird habitats, wild spaces and historic areas. These fragile ecosystems are core to retaining the vibrant and healthy flora and fauna that is so appreciated by Connecticut's residents. Not only the placement, but the height of the ultra-tall poles being considered by UI would cause danger to birds, whose numbers have absolutely plummeted in the past generation.

In addition, the indiscriminate cutting of trees and vegetation, which takes generations to grow back to mature height but also eliminates critical habitats for birds and pollinators, should be avoided in any utilities planning. The need for a thoughtful, low-impact approach to infrastructure development should be at the fore of DEEP's plans.

While public utilities are undeniably a key value to all residents, so is the wellbeing of the environment and animal populations around us. Their decline will affect us in the long-term, which is why these immediate decisions need to integrate further long-term considerations.

I am writing to voice my objection to the United Illuminating's plans to install a 7.3 mile stretch of massive monopoles requiring more than 20 acres of permanent easements on private and public property along the Metro North Railroad tracks in Fairfield. I believe these plans were made without consideration to the surrounding environment when alternatives are available. The indiscriminate cutting of trees causing both disturbances to the fragile eco-systems as well as the scenic landscapes is not justified when there are other options. The decision to install 7.3 miles of massive unsightly poles in a historic town known for its picturesque landscape should have been made with more thought and compassion for the residents affected.

Please accept my input on monopoles and above ground wires. I live in Fairfield and I am NOT in favor of monopoles. I think electrical wires should be buried. Monopoles are unsightly, do not belong in our historic district or right down the center of our town. Fairfield is a town, not a city. Please respect that.

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the installation of a 7.3-mile stretch of large monopoles, which will require over 20 acres of permanent easements on both private and public property along the Metro North Railroad tracks in Fairfield. This development poses a significant threat to the character and scenic views of our communities in Southport, Fairfield, and Bridgeport.

As a property owner and northside abutter of the Metro North tracks in Southport, I have experienced first-hand the actions taken by United Illuminating with the assistance of a third party, Cornerstone, to access my property and those of my neighbors without a Right-of-Entry agreement. I have invested considerable time and resources into my home, and the potential loss of my land is a serious infringement on my property rights.

The decision made by the Siting Council (CSC) to alter the original plan, which previously targeted the south side with implications for historical sites such as the Pequot Library and the Southport Congregational Church, has now shifted unexpectedly to the north side. This change has sparked considerable outrage within our town. It appears that the CSC has not exercised its authority in a manner that reflects the best interests of the citizens of Connecticut. Furthermore, the rising costs of our electric and utility bills are becoming unsustainable for many residents.

Additionally, the removal of trees and vegetation associated with this project will have adverse effects on our local ecosystem. Our community is already facing challenges with wildlife, particularly deer, and the introduction of these large structures may further exacerbate these issues and harm the landscape we cherish.

It is crucial that United Illuminating, their parent companies, and the CSC are held accountable for this project. As residents of this town, we deserve to have our voices heard and our rights upheld. I respectfully urge your assistance in halting this project and advocating for the burial of the power lines to preserve the integrity of our community.

Please stop the UI company from installing monopoles along the railroad tracks through Fairfield.

The plans have numerous intrusions to inland wetlands which no private entity would be able to encroach upon. The poles are unsightly and will destroy both private properties and historical areas of town. They also plan to remove many mature trees which are critical to our bird population.

The fact that natural vegetation such as trees and shrubs provide emotional calming and restorative powers, and in light of the facts that our world is negatively impacted by an increase in daily intensity much of which is caused by the pervasiveness of high speed Internet, every effort should be made by utilities to promote growth of large trees and vegetation.

Clear cutting is clearly destructive! Not just to every living creature in its habitat. But the result of clear cutting is similar to a prisoner being forced to endure a blank room with a naked light for days and weeks on end. How many fragile minds will be affected and at what cost? These questions must be considered when dealing with clear cutting.

Clear cutting can denude a bucolic historic landscape in a flash thereby resulting in serious financial impacts.

The purpose of HB 5507 is to guide legislators to think deeply and intelligently. To give lawmakers tools for responsible growth decisions. I hope all of Connecticut will benefit from HB 5507.

It is unconscionable that Connecticut and town governments have allowed these rapacious monopolies, (UI, Eversource, Aquarion, etc.) to run roughshod over the citizens and taxpayers of this town and state. They should never have accumulated such power and eminent domain should not be allowed to further enrich them. This is not the proper use of this instrument.

Thank you for your consideration In this matter and with great hopes you will lend your voice to the cause of the citizens.