



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL

Ten Franklin Square, New Britain, CT 06051

Phone: (860) 827-2935 Fax: (860) 827-2950

E-Mail: siting.council@ct.gov

www.ct.gov/csc

CERTIFIED MAIL RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

November 14, 2016

Kathleen M. Shanley, Manager – Transmission Siting
Eversource Energy
56 Prospect Street
P.O. Box 270
Hartford, CT 06103

RE: PETITION NO. 1255 - Eversource Energy petition for a declaratory ruling that no Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need is required for the proposed Branford Double-Circuit Tower Split Project that includes modifications to the existing electric transmission line structure No. 4800, installation of a new electric transmission line structure No. 4782 and the separation of two existing 115-kilovolt (kV) electric transmission line circuits located within existing Eversource electric transmission line right of way between Interstate 95 and Eversource's Branford Substation facility, East Main Street, Branford, Connecticut.

Dear Ms. Shanley:

At a public meeting held on November 10, 2016, the Connecticut Siting Council (Council) considered and ruled that the above-referenced proposal would not have a substantial adverse environmental effect, and pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes § 16-50k, would not require a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need, with the following conditions:


1. Use of off-road construction equipment that meets the latest EPA or California Air Resources Board standards, or in the alternative, equipment with the best available controls on diesel emissions, including, but not limited to, retrofitting with diesel oxidation catalysts, particulate filters and use of ultra-low sulfur fuel;
2. Compliance with the provisions of Section 22a-174-18(b)(3)(C) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies that limit the idling of mobile sources to 3 minutes;
3. Approval of any minor project changes be delegated to Council staff;
4. Unless otherwise approved by the Council, if the facility authorized herein is not fully constructed within three years from the date of the mailing of the Council's decision, this decision shall be void, and the facility owner/operator shall dismantle the facility and remove all associated equipment or reapply for any continued or new use to the Council before any such use is made. The time between the filing and resolution of any appeals of the Council's decision shall not be counted in calculating this deadline. Authority to monitor and modify this schedule, as necessary, is delegated to the Executive Director. The facility owner/operator shall provide written notice to the Executive Director of any schedule changes as soon as is practicable;
5. Any request for extension of the time period to fully construct the facility shall be filed with the Council not later than 60 days prior to the expiration date of this decision and shall be served on all parties and intervenors, if applicable, and the Town of Branford;

6. Within 45 days after completion of construction, the Council shall be notified in writing that construction has been completed;
7. The facility owner/operator shall remit timely payments associated with annual assessments and invoices submitted by the Council for expenses attributable to the facility under Conn. Gen. Stat. §16-50v;
8. This Declaratory Ruling may be transferred, provided the facility owner/operator/transferor is current with payments to the Council for annual assessments and invoices under Conn. Gen. Stat. §16-50v and the transferee provides written confirmation that the transferee agrees to comply with the terms, limitations and conditions contained in the Declaratory Ruling, including timely payments to the Council for annual assessments and invoices under Conn. Gen. Stat. §16-50v; and
9. If the facility owner/operator is a wholly owned subsidiary of a corporation or other entity and is sold/transferred to another corporation or other entity, the Council shall be notified of such sale and/or transfer and of any change in contact information for the individual or representative responsible for management and operations of the facility within 30 days of the sale and/or transfer.

This decision is under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Council and is not applicable to any other modification or construction. All work is to be implemented as specified in the petition dated October 4, 2016.

Enclosed for your information is a copy of the staff report on this project.

Very truly yours,



Robert Stein
Chairman

RS/FOC/cm

Enclosure: Staff Report dated November 10, 2016

- c: The Honorable James B. Cosgrove, First Selectman, Town of Branford
Harry Smith, Town Planner, Town of Branford



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Petition No. 1255

The Connecticut Light and Power Company d/b/a Eversource Energy Branford, Connecticut Staff Report November 10, 2016

Introduction

On October 4, 2016, the Connecticut Siting Council (Council) received a petition (Petition) from The Connecticut Light and Power Company d/b/a Eversource Energy (Eversource) for a declaratory ruling that no Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need is required for proposed modification to structure #4800 which currently supports the 115-kilovolt (kV) #1537 line and #1655 line outside the Eversource-owned Branford Substation located on East Main Street, Branford. Council member Larry Levesque and Council staff member Fred Cunliffe conducted a field review of the proposed project on October 28, 2016. Farah Omokaro, Eversource-Siting; Bob Deptula, Eversource-Environmental; Nicholas Forzono, Eversource-Engineer; Chris Runde, Eversource-Project Manager; Stephen Lecco of G24 and Anthony May of Burns and McDonnell attended the field review.

The purpose of the proposed project is to eliminate potential transmission system thermal criteria violations based on the results of the May 2014 Greater Hartford and Central Connecticut Area (GHCC) Needs Assessment performed by ISO New England Inc. (ISO-NE). In accordance with the February 2015 GHCC Solutions Study performed by ISO-NE, the violations would be eliminated by separating the #1537 line from the #1655 line where they currently share a common double-circuit monopole tower. The #1655 line would be relocated onto a new separate single-circuit monopole structure #4782. This proposed project is currently identified in the June 2016 ISO-NE Regional System Plan Project List.

Specifically, the project consists of the following:

- a) Installation of a weathering steel single-circuit monopole on caisson foundation [structure #4782] approximately 26 feet east of existing structure #4800; and
- b) Relocation of the #1655 line conductor to the new pole and remove conductor supporting arms on the existing #1537 line structure.

The proposed project would be located south of I-95 and north of the Branford Substation and on the same subject property. The Branford River separates the structures and the substation. West of the site are apartments and east of the site are condominiums. East Main Street is south of the substation.

Construction - Environmental Effects - Mitigation Measures

The project would be constructed, operated, and maintained in accordance with established industry practices and in accordance with Eversource's December 2011 Best Management Practices Manual for Connecticut (Eversource BMPs).

Eversource would access the right-of-way off I-95. An existing access road would need to be graded, widened to to 16-20 feet and reinforced with stone to allow safe passage of construction vehicles. Eversource has received a Department of Transportation (DOT) permit for geotechnical work for the foundation and would request DOT to extend the permit for construction.

Erosion and sedimentation (E&S) control measures would be installed in accordance with the *2002 Connecticut Guidelines for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control* and Eversource BMPs. Temporary E&S controls would remain in place until construction is complete and all disturbed areas are stabilized.

According to the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's (DEEP) Natural Diversity Database, there are no state-listed endangered, threatened, or special concern species or critical habitat located within the project area.

The site is located in an upland area proximate to wetlands. Eversource proposes to use construction mats to protect the wetland area. A portion of the proposed project is located within the 100-year Flood Zone of the Branford River. Prior to a significant storm event the construction mats would be secured to impede lateral movement during temporary flooding.

Magnetic field levels at the edge of the ROW near structure #4800 would not be affected by the proposed modifications.

There would be no changes to the existing sound levels at the boundaries of the subject property as a result of the proposed project. Any noise related to construction is exempt from DEEP regulations.

The visual impact associated with the installation of the weathering steel monopole structure is not expected to be significant because of the modest height increase and use of similar materials. Specifically, the existing double-circuit monopole structure is approximately 105 feet tall. The proposed monopole structure would be about ten feet taller or approximately 115 feet tall. Mature vegetation adjacent to the ROW further buffers views of the structures.

During the field review, trees were observed in the location of the proposed structure that would be removed to construct the project. Vegetation clearing would comply with Eversource BMPs.

Construction is expected to begin January 2017 and be completed by June 2017.

Municipal and abutter notice

Notice of the Petition was provided to the Town of Branford and abutters to the subject property on or about October 4, 2016. The Council has not received any comments to date.

Conclusion

Staff recommends including the following condition:

1. Use of off-road construction equipment that meets the latest EPA or California Air Resources Board standards, or in the alternative, equipment with the best available controls on diesel emissions, including, but not limited to, retrofitting with diesel oxidation catalysts, particulate filters and use of ultra-low sulfur fuel;
2. Compliance with the provisions of Section 22a-174-18(b)(3)(C) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies that limit the idling of mobile sources to 3 minutes; and
3. Approval of any minor project changes be delegated to Council staff.