



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL

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**CERTIFIED MAIL
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED**

May 23, 2003

Gabriel B. Stern
Planning and Operations Director
Connecticut Municipal Electric Energy Coop
30 Stott Avenue
Norwich, CT 06360

RE: **PETITION NO. 620E** – Connecticut Municipal Electric Energy Cooperative (CMEEC) and South Norwalk Electric Works (SNEW) petition for an expedited declaratory ruling that no Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need is required for the proposed emergency installation of a temporary 23 MW peaking project in Norwalk, Connecticut.

Dear Mr. Stern:

At a public meeting held on May 20, 2003, the Connecticut Siting Council (Council) considered and ruled that this project would not have a substantial adverse environmental effect, and pursuant to General Statutes § 16-50k would not require a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need.

All work is to be implemented as specified in the petition, dated April 11, 2003, and additional information dated May 2, 2003, and in accordance with our Opinion, dated May 20, 2003, a copy of which is enclosed.

Very truly yours,


Pamela B. Katz, P.E.
Chairman

PBK/laf

Enclosure

c: Parties and Intervenors
Honorable Alex A. Knopp, Mayor, City of Norwalk
Michael Greene, Director of Planning and Zoning, City of Norwalk

PETITION NO. 620E – Connecticut Municipal Electric Energy Cooperative (CMEEC) and South Norwalk Electric Works (SNEW) petition for an expedited declaratory ruling that no Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need is required for the proposed emergency installation of a temporary 23 MW peaking project in Norwalk, Connecticut.	} } } }	Connecticut Siting Council May 20, 2003
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OPINION

On April 11, 2003, the Connecticut Municipal Energy Cooperative (CMEEC) and the South Norwalk Electric Works (SNEW) submitted to the Connecticut Siting Council (Council) an emergency petition for an expedited declaratory ruling for a determination by the Council that no Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need (Certificate) would be required for the emergency installation of a temporary 23 megawatt (MW) combustion turbine electric generating unit in Norwalk, Connecticut. The proposed site contains an existing SNEW power plant and substation which have been at this site for many years. CMEEC and SNEW are proposing this project in response to an award issued by the Connecticut Light and Power Company (CL&P) for the installation of 60 to 80 MW of temporary generation in southwestern Connecticut due to the high risk in the summer of 2003 for electric service interruptions. The project would be limited to no more than a total of 500 hours of operation between June 1 and October 31, 2003.

The temporary project would provide generation for the Norwalk area, using a 23 MW General Electric TM2500 dual-fuel gas turbine mounted on four tractor-trailers. Yankee Gas would extend distribution pressure gas service to the site using approximately 7000 feet of pipe through secondary roads. It is not expected that gas service would be available for the planned June 1st start of the project, but is expected to be available on or before July 1, 2003. In the interim, the project would rely on ultra-low sulfur distillate oil as a fuel.

The Council held a public hearing on this project in the City of Norwalk on May 15, 2003. At this hearing members of the local community voiced their concerns about the importance of reliable electricity to their homes and businesses. The Council recognizes the serious and chronic electric supply problems occurring in the densely populated Norwalk-Stamford area, which is increasingly stressed during the summer months. The project qualifies for entry into the Independent System Operator (ISO) New England market system and would provide power into the local distribution system at 27.6 kV, making the project

useful in alleviating reliability problems. The Council recognizes that installations of distributed generation may improve the reliability of electric service.

The Department of Environmental Protection is expected to issue its Air Permit for this project shortly. The project's turbines would be identical to those recently approved by the Council for the Waterside Project in Stamford and would yield far fewer emissions than older generating technology currently in use.

Noise effects associated with the operation of the gas turbines are a concern of both the public and the Council. The noise study conducted by TRC indicates that with appropriate mitigation, including the installation of a temporary 17-foot sound wall, noise levels will be within State and local limits at local residences. Visual effects would also be mitigated by the sound wall.

The City of Norwalk Zoning Commission issued a resolution approving this project on May 6, 2003. The resolution includes 12 conditions. The Council commends the Norwalk Zoning Commission for its thoroughness, believes the conditions are reasonable, and will therefore adopt them. The Council is concerned, however, that an operating emergency could occur outside other designated daylight operating hours of 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Accordingly, the Council will provide an exemption to allow operation beyond these hours in the event Independent System Operator (ISO) New England declares that an OP-4 Step 12 emergency exists or is imminent, which could result in local blackouts.

This is the second consecutive year in which the Norwalk-Stamford area finds itself in an emergency situation for electric supply. However, the Council was aware in 2002 that emergency measures would be needed again in 2003. Indeed, we are already aware they will likely be needed once more next year. These deficiencies were certainly known to CL&P and ISO, yet they waited until late February of this year to issue an RFP, potentially putting electric service at risk, and the Council and responders to the RFP in a needless, and unrealistic time constraint. As a result, one applicant withdrew after two hastily prepared proposals, while the Waterside project and this petitioner will be each be hard pressed to meet their imposed June 1 deadlines. This situation cannot and must not be repeated next year.

The installation and operation of this temporary generating facility should result in no substantial adverse environmental effects, especially when operating under the limitations imposed by the DEP and the City of Norwalk Zoning Commission, and the Council will therefore grant approval of this petition with the

following conditions: an exemption to allow operation outside of the designated daylight hours in emergency situations and to avoid blackouts, that in addition to serving as a temporary peaking project, the project be allowed to improve reliability and that the Resolutions of the Norwalk Zoning Commission of May 6, 2003 be adhered to.

In accordance with the above, it is so ordered.