

TOWN OF DALTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES FOR March 15, 2016

Meeting opened at 6:30pm

Present for meeting were DCC members:

Nancy Comeau, Cory StCry, Christine Rouillard, David Spreadbury, Ed Craxton, Danuta Lempert and Jay McCusker

Present for meeting were Northern Pass representatives:

Kevin McCune, Eversource Environmental Project Manager, Brain Bosse, Northern Pass Project Manager, Dana Bisbee, Northern Pass legal counsel, Kurt Nelson

Motion made and seconded to post-pone review of minutes from last meetings to the april 19, 2016 meeting

- Vote taken –all agreed unanimously (5-0)

Introductions of every in attendance

Topic of Meeting:

The DCC requested this session with Northern Pass Transmission representatives to seek information only. No commitment, representations, decisions, promises, or negotiations will take place tonight. The intent is to gather information on conservation issues that relate to the proposed installation and route of the Northern Pass transmission lines within Dalton.

Northern Pass Question and answer:

- Kevin presented us with a map detailing the route of the NP project

(Water and wetlands questions)

Nancy

1. How many stream impacts has NP identified in Dalton? Normandeau identified five in Dalton, about 112' of crossings.
2. Where are they? The two largest, Johns and Chase, will be spanned. Should not be a direct impact to them. The other three are smaller. They will be spanned or matted across. "We can go bank to bank. We estimate 369 sq ft of permanent impact in Dalton including the concrete footings for the towers. There are 19 towers planned for Dalton.
3. Why did you just file for a permit for the Johns River but not for Chase Brook? The wetlands permit we filed covers the Chase Brook – only the Johns River needed a Shoreline permit, Chase is too small for shoreline permit.

4. Have the wetlands along the shoreline been delineated? YES If so by whom?
5. What instruments were used to plot flags (GPS or survey instruments)?
6. When was delineation completed? Within the past 2 or 3 years we think.
7. Are there any existing flags? Not on site at present time. The blue cross hatching shown on the map we gave you shows the wetlands delineation which was done on site. The yellow and green cross hatching show delineations which were done on desktop using existing data.
8. When do you plan to re-do them? Flag will be in place before construction begins
9. How will you access the sites? Have access mapping along the ROW from public roads in Dalton. From there we stay within our ROW.
10. How are you seeking permission of private landowners in order to access your ROW? No land owner permissions needed to access ROW
11. How will you return the landowner's property to its original state? There should be no impact to surrounding property.
12. What if a landowner will not give you permission? There will be no landowner access needed in Dalton. In Dalton we access our ROW from public highway. From there we stay within our ROW. NP representatives will have door hangers with contact info for nearby land owners.
13. How do you plan to stabilize the bank of the river during and after construction? During construction hay/straw bales, NOT planning on using rip-rap, natural vegetation should come back within a few years after construction.
14. What materials will be used for stabilization of the river banks? We plan to use typical silk fence, hay bales (actually straw), straw waddles, juke pack, NOT planning on using rip-rap.
15. How do you plan to protect the water quality of the Johns River, an important resource for Dalton for recreation and for wildlife, during and after construction? We will not be driving through the Johns or the Chase Brook so little disturbance should happen. All shore stabilizing will be done from the side of the shore.
16. What are you planning for mitigation? If they do a good job of keeping the root base there, that is better than introducing new plantings. They expect and want the vegetation to return. Only 2.5 acres of permanent impact (filling wetlands) over the entire project. Mitigation will be paying into the permanent aquatics fund. "Restoration" is not being proposed.

Cory

17. Please describe the process, using maps indicating reference points, from beginning to end, of constructing the towers and stringing the lines at the site of the Johns River. All line will be strung from overhead, map was provided. (will include)
18. Is there a design and map available for the access route to the John's River construction site? Yes we have all of our access mapped out, from public roads them staying in our ROW.

19. Will you provide the design and map to the Dalton Conservation Commission? A site was provided at start of meeting, (will be included), and explanation was given on how to read.
20. Will you provide the design and map to the Dalton Conservation Commission?
21. Where exactly will the poles be installed? All structures are labeled on the provided map with a letter and a number, (example, X178-589), if map is flipped over the structure # is in the table. The table describes the structure the graph show what the structure will look like.
22. How deep in the ground will the impervious supports be? About 8' deep
23. The Johns River floods almost every spring. How will annual flooding impact this project? Flooding should not impact this project.

(From reading the Shoreland Permit Application)

David

24. You've checked Chemical Spray Rights in the application. What chemicals will be used?
They were not sure
25. What is the purpose of applying these chemicals?
26. At what times and how often will such chemicals be applied? They were not sure
27. How do you plan to alleviate erosion of the base of the towers during an annual flood?
28. Will chemicals be used on the supports above and/or underground? They were not sure
29. What are the side effects for humans encountering these chemicals?
30. Will you send us the MSDS sheet for the chemicals? Yes, we will send you those sheets.

Ed

31. On pg 14 of your Shoreland Permit application, for Document #EAA 1248 under "Applicable Rights", question #12, you have checked item D indicating that for any tree trimming, the wood belongs to PSNH rather than giving the owner the option of keeping wood – especially if it is outside the easement. Why? That is probably how it was specified in the easement. The information in document #EAA 1248 only reflects what the actual easement says.
32. Why does this response differ from the response to the same issue found on page 22 of your Shoreland Permit application, for Document #EAA 2597 under "Applicable Rights", question #12, where you checked C rather than D? This represents a different easement and appears to have different agreements.
33. Back to page 14 of your Shoreland Permit application, under the heading "Applicable Limitations", question #2. You have checked No. Am I to understand that this means there will never be voltage limitations imposed on these lines so that Eversource or some future company may increase the voltage or install additional lines to add voltage to these structures? Again, this reflects agreements negotiated when the easement was

originally developed. At that time they never expected higher voltage lines coming through.

34. Likewise, in question #3, you have checked No which means you could put a tower of 200-300 feet or more in the future? Why have you not put any height restriction here? Again, this reflects agreements negotiated when the easement was originally developed. At that time they never expected taller towers coming through.
35. On the next page it states "There shall not be more than six structures in the field." In this case, what is the definition of the field? Good question. We don't know. This was language from the original easement. **We noted that there would be many more than six towers in the current field! There will be 19 towers**
36. How tall will the towers be at the point where it goes over the Johns River? All towers going through Dalton will 115' or shorter.
37. How often will the towers receive a maintenance check? The towers could have 60-80 years of service or more. Inspections of the line are regular – walk the line, multiple helicopter checks each year. We also check the pole for deterioration. Any problem that may arise will be checked within 5 days.
38. What type of maintenance will be done?

Danuta

39. Where can we get a copy of the delineation report that is required to be done for our wetlands? 1 is in the DES application listed in appendix.
40. Does this project have a lifetime or is it on going? We have a 40 year contract with Hydro Quebec.
41. If it has a lifetime who is going to clean up after the project is finished? The State has asked about this also. Legislature may require decommissioning plan? SEC speaks to this. The new contract with HQ has decommissioning funds.
42. How long do you project this total installation will take from the time the first construction truck arrives until it is complete?
43. What will the site look like after you have finished?
44. If you do end up burying the lines, what are the issues you see to complete this proposed project? Possible need to trench through any wetlands and/or build pits and go under the river Possible impacts to cultural resources or endangered species.

Nancy

45. Have you talked to NH DOT about burial of the line down Interstate 93? Yes the project has met with DOT, discussions are ongoing.
46. As an abutting town, we are wondering what your plans are for the current transmission station in Whitefield? We have none related to NP. The lines will go right by there, but these will no downloading of power there. This is a part of the COOS loop and there are plans to upgrade it.

Ed

Our Conservation Commission and the Select Board are concerned about Public Health and Safety relative to these proposed overhead transmission lines.

Some of the residents in Dalton live in the Meadow Mist neighborhood, a community of 45 homes which include a number of families with young children. The closest of these homes would be within 75 ft of the proposed new overhead transmission line according to the maps you have furnished us. This is within the fall zone, which is, of course, a concern, but even more immediate are concerns for our citizens' health. Let me share three of these issues in particular.

First, in the July 20, 2015 Public Health and Safety Technical report for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement it notes the following (yellow emphasis is ours) in Section 2.1.4 titled Transmission Line Safety Issues (pg. 33):

"Under normal operating conditions, public safety hazards associated with HVAC transmission lines include electrical shocks. These can occur from working and recreating under or near transmission lines. Electrical shocks can occur from touching transmission towers or other large metallic objects near power lines. These result from voltage induced from the power line into nearby metal objects.....(Bonneville Power Administration [BPA] 2007)"

Second, A little bit later on the same page it states:

"Another potential public safety hazard associated with transmissions lines is arc flashes. Arc flashes occur when electricity from a high voltage line travels between conductors through the air. The gap distance varies according to the voltage. These occur in normal conditions but also can be caused by smoke from fires (BPA 2007 and Great River Energy n.d.). Arc flashes can produce intense heat and light. If individuals get too close to energized power lines without touching them an arc of electricity can form between the power line and the person and result in serious burns (Great River Energy n.d.)."

And, third, these lines will go right over an area where children play. As you may know, the IARC classified EMF fields as possibly carcinogenic to humans. Pooled studies demonstrated a consistent pattern of a two-fold increase of leukemia in children exposed to magnetic fields above 2-4 M-gauss.

Some states have taken these threats to public health and safety very seriously. Several states enforce firm limits on EMF while others have adopted siting rules. These states include: California, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Massachusetts, New York, Vermont, and Wisconsin. While New Hampshire has not yet set standards for setbacks from transmission lines, we have a responsibility to be diligent about protecting our citizens. What assurances can you give us regarding possible electrical shocks, arc flashes, and exposure to strong electromagnetic fields?

[What will be the strength of the electromagnetic fields generated by the high voltage lines?]

They did not answer this question directly other than to talk about the earth's magnetic field and the m-gauss say that the earth produces naturally. And that the current lines already give off a certain m-gauss but they never said what that was.

We need to be assured that what you are doing is thinking about the concerns of local citizens and municipalities since this proposed project would come right through a part of our community and have a strong impact on us.

Northern Pass representatives were thanked for attending with answers to most of our questions, any question they could not answer they will get back to with answers.

Next meeting April 19, 2016 at 6:30 pm work session at the town building

Meeting adjourned at 7:50pm

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