

SRP Comments on “Assessment Report on Potential Effects to Above-Ground Historic Sites for the New Hampshire Seacoast Reliability Project,” Heritage Landscapes LLC on behalf of Counsel for the Public, July 31, 2017

The following comments address the specific resources mentioned in Subsection 6 for each town chapter in the Heritage Landscapes Assessment Report.

Madbury -- “Summary of Potential Adverse Effect” (pp. 40-43)

Direct

1. Stone walls

Stone walls in the ROW and the Boston and Maine RR corridor: The National Register-eligible railroad was assessed by DHR with a finding of No Historic Properties Affected. Stone walls within the direct APE were identified and mapped on the Project plan sheets. Only one short segment of wall was found within the direct APE in Madbury on a parcel with a modern building and is not a boundary wall.

2. Foss Cemetery

The cemetery is not within the direct APE, though it is on PSNH-owned land near the Madbury Substation. It is about fifty feet north of the substation in the woods. The small cemetery was identified in the Project Area Form (PAF) as M-16. It was not photographed because due to the wooded condition of the site; no above-ground features were visible. It was not recommended for survey and the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources (DHR) concurred.

Indirect

3. W.H. Elliott Rose Company District

This previously determined-eligible historic district has lost integrity because the district no longer conveys its historic associations due to the removal of the rose range houses. The land is a large flat vacant site. The historically associated residences have no other unifying element. The former district and its components were addressed and photographed in the PAF. The architecturally significant Miles-Young-Elliott House (M-12, Photo 8) has ten acres of land, but no agricultural outbuildings. The adjoining land has been subdivided for new homes. No further survey was recommended and DHR concurred.

4. Perkins Road

Perkins Road is a historic road that retains stone walls and two historically agricultural properties, but it also includes about a dozen new homes. The historic resources on the road were mapped and photographed in the PAF and no further inventory was requested by DHR.

The Jackson House (M-18, Photos 12-13) was not recommended for survey and DHR concurred. The setting and landscape of the property have been changed by modern Christmas tree farming; the barn was replaced, and the ell on the house remodeled. The property includes thirteen acres, while other land has been subdivided. The surrounding setting includes existing transmission lines and eight new homes.

5. *Evans Road and Miles Road*

Evans Road and Miles Lane have stone walls, isolated historic houses and over a dozen new homes. The Nathaniel Meserve House (M-14, Photo 11) has a small open field behind the house and a carriage barn, but the farmland has been subdivided and the property is surrounded by five modern houses. DHR concurred that it did not have integrity as an agricultural resource with potential significance related to setting, landscape or views.

6. *Madbury Center Historic District and Town Green*

The significance of this potential historic district relates to the setting and landscape within the district. The potential district, which has not been previously determined eligible, was mapped and photographed in the PAF. It was not recommended for further inventory because, due to intervening trees and buildings, there is little potential for visibility of the Project from the town center according to 3-D modeling. DHR concurred.

Overall

Resources not specifically listed above include the Kingman Farm on Knox Marsh Road. The farmstead, which has been determined eligible for the National Register, and all of its associated land, are located outside the APE. Knox Marsh Road resources within the APE are addressed in the PAF. The current open landscape was created by the removal of the large greenhouse structures that filled the area historically.

Durham -- “Summary of Sites with Potential Effect” (pp. 48-50)

Direct

7. *Cable House*

The Durham Underwater Cable Terminal House is part of the Little Bay Underwater Cable Historic District, which was identified, evaluated, and assessed for adverse effects. The DHR agreed with the Applicant’s assessment and determined that the Project has the potential to adversely affect the historic district, namely through potential physical impacts to the cable house on the Durham side and the underwater cables. A resolution of adverse effects was reached through consultation among the consulting parties and is memorialized in a draft Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) among the USACE, DHR, and Eversource.

8. *Stone walls*

Segments of stone walls located within the direct APE have been identified and mapped on the Project plan sheets. The Durham Historic Association (DHA) was sent an updated plan sheets map set containing this information on May 17, 2018; the DHR was copied on the transmittal. A resolution of adverse effects on historic stone walls within the Durham Point Historic District and Newmarket and Bennett Roads Farms Historic District was reached through consultation among the consulting parties and is memorialized in a final draft MOU among the DHR and Eversource. In addition, stone walls that are current boundary walls are protected under the state statute (RSA 472:6 & 539:4) and no modifications will be made without adjacent landowner permission. Treatment of stone walls within the University of New Hampshire (UNH) was agreed upon and recorded in a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between UNH and Eversource.

9. Graveyards

There are no identified graveyards in the direct APE. The adjacent Mooney Cemetery is within the National Register-eligible Newmarket and Bennett Roads Farms Historic District discussed below.

Also listed under direct effects, the Mathes-Stevens House at 177 Durham Point Road (D-61) is located within the Durham Point Road Historic District determined eligible for the National Register and assessed for effects. The location of the Project on the historic Meader Farm/Elmhurst Farm, formerly associated with 300-310 Durham Point Road, is defined by several modern houses and the existing electric utility corridor. The Meader Farm/Elmhurst Farm (D-67 and D-68, Photos 192-193), also known as the Edgerly-Meader Farm, is a nineteenth century house with barns at 300-310 Durham Point Road,. The land has been subdivided and several late-twentieth century houses built. The historic buildings were not recommended for survey for significance in the area of agriculture, related to setting, landscape or views and DHR concurred.

Indirect

10. Newmarket and Bennett Roads Farms Historic District

The DHR determined that the Project has the potential to adversely affect the National Register-eligible Newmarket and Bennett Roads Farms Historic District, namely by potential physical impacts to historic stone walls. A resolution of adverse effects was reached through consultation among the consulting parties and is memorialized in a draft MOU between the DHR and Eversource.

The Mooney Cemetery is a contributing element to the Newmarket and Bennett Roads Farms Historic District and direct and visual effects were addressed in the district effects tables. A 25-foot buffer from the northwestern corner of the cemetery will be enforced within the corridor. The nearest structure, an existing structure, is about 48 feet from the northwest corner of the cemetery. Archaeological subsurface testing was completed with the existing corridor adjacent to the cemetery and no evidence for an extension of the cemetery into the corridor was observed.

11. Durham Historic District

The National Register-listed historic district is outside the APE, about 0.7 miles from the Project at the closest point. 3-D modeling and field review indicates no potential views of the Project from the district, from the Oyster River or from the Gen. John Sullivan House, given the distance, intervening tree cover and buildings. The district was discussed in the PAF, though resources outside the APE were not mapped or photographed.

12. Durham Point Road Historic District

The Durham Point Road Historic District was identified, evaluated, and assessed for adverse effects. The DHR determined that the Project has the potential to adversely affect the historic district, particularly potential physical impacts to historic stone walls and granite quarry features. A resolution of adverse effects was reached through consultation among the consulting parties and is memorialized in a draft MOU among the DHR and Eversource.

Stone House Farm (313-315 Durham Point Road) was individually identified, evaluated, and assessed for adverse effects. The DHR determined that the Project would not adversely affect the property.

The Meader Farm/Elmhurst Farm (D-67 and D-68, Photos 192-193), also known as the Edgerly-Meader Farm, is a nineteenth century house with barns at 300-310 Durham Point Road,. The land has been subdivided and several late-twentieth century houses built. The historic buildings were not recommended for survey for significance in the area of agriculture, related to setting, landscape or views and DHR concurred.

Overall

Wagon Hill Farm is a locally important resource that has not yet been determined eligible for the state or National Register. There are scenic views from the fields and from the picnic area/boat launch. The property is outside the APE, 0.8 miles from project at the closest point and over a mile from where it could potentially be in view. The NH State Register-listed Folsom Tavern at the intersection of Back River Road and US 4 is also outside the APE, but has views in the direction of the Project, 1.75 miles away. Visual simulations by LandWorks for both properties show the potential for only minimal visibility of the tops of one or more structures among the trees. Properties on Newmarket Road in the Durham Historic District are addressed above.

Newington -- “Summary of Sites with Potential Effect” (pp. 54-55)

Direct

13. Flynn Pit

The Flynn Pit property does not have above-ground historic resources. It is not a historic recreational area. The only building is the small shed or warming hut which is not fifty years old. The wooded land with a small pond/vernal pool was historically a pasture, then used as a gravel pit, purchased from the Flynn family by the Town of Newington in 1966.

14. Frink Farm

The Frink Farm where the Project will be underground through the Frink field is included in the National Register-listed Newington Center Historic District assessment. See below.

15. Stone walls

Segments of stone walls located within the direct APE have been identified and mapped on the Project plan sheets. None of the stone walls in the APE in Newington are now associated with intact historic farm properties or historic districts. There are about seven wall segments, all on parcels with late twentieth century homes.

Indirect

16. Newington Center National Register Historic District (N-16)

The National Register-listed Newington Center Historic District was assessed for effects. The underground portion of the line will remove the Project from view within the middle of the district, which is a substantial mitigation measure and improvement to the integrity of the district. The overhead transition structure was mapped and illustrated in the Effects Table and follow-up communication with DHR. DHR determined the Project would not adversely affect the historic district.

17. Little Bay Road

The Alfred Pickering Farm on Little Bay Road has been determined eligible for the National Register under Criteria A and C and was assessed for effects. The transmission line easement directly crosses the property and the Project will be in view. DHR concurred with the Applicant's conclusion that the Project will have potential indirect adverse effects on the Pickering Farm. A resolution of adverse effects was reached through consultation among the consulting parties and is memorialized in the near final draft MOU between the DHR and Eversource.

Overall

The Flynn Pitt and stone walls are addressed above. All properties in the APE on Little Bay Road, Old Post Road and Fox Point Road were covered by the PAF. The visual effects of the Project on the intersection of Old Post Road and Nimble Hill Road at the Newington Center Historic District were assessed.

Portsmouth -- "Summary of Sites with Potential Effect" (p. 58)

Overall

No potential adverse effects to historic resources were identified by Heritage Landscapes in Portsmouth.