

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
SITE EVALUATION COMMITTEE**

Docket No. 2015-04

**Application of Public Service Company of New Hampshire
d/b/a Eversource Energy for Certificate of Site and Facility**

August 21, 2017

**ORDER ON APPLICANT'S MOTION TO
POSTPONE FINAL ADJUDICATIVE HEARINGS**

This Order suspends the schedule for the adjudicative hearings and the procedural schedule in this docket.

I. BACKGROUND

On April 12, 2016, Public Service Company of New Hampshire d/b/a Eversource Energy applied for a Certificate of Site and Facility (Application) with the Site Evaluation Committee (Committee). The Application seeks the issuance of a Certificate of Site and Facility approving the siting, construction, and operation of a new 115kV electric transmission line between existing substations in Madbury and Portsmouth (Project.) The new transmission line will be approximately 12.9 miles in length. The Project is comprised of a combination of above ground, underground, and underwater segments. The Project will be located in the Towns of Madbury and Durham in Strafford County, and the Town of Newington and the City of Portsmouth in Rockingham County.

On January 20, 2017, the Applicant filed an Uncontested Motion to Stay Procedural Schedule. By Order dated February 15, 2017, the Presiding Officer granted the Applicant's Motion to Stay Procedural Schedule, until an amendment to the Application was filed and the Applicant and the parties submitted a new proposed procedural schedule.

On February 3, 2017, the Division of Historic Resources (DHR) requested an extension of time,

until March 31, 2017, to complete its review, due to receipt of extensive public comment. On April 24, 2017, DHR informed the Subcommittee by letter it could not complete its review of above ground resources before June 16, 2017.

On February 6, 2017, the Department of Environmental Services (DES) also requested an extension of time to a date that is “30 days after the date when Eversource provides all final requests for project impacts to be reviewed by DES, or to a date to be determined in accordance with proposed provisions included within the Applicant's Uncontested Motion to Stay Procedural Schedule.”

On April 26, 2017, the Subcommittee voted to extend deadlines for state agencies to provide final reports to August 1, 2017, and suspended the deadline for a final decision.

On May 22, 2017, a Revised Procedural Schedule was issued. The Procedural Schedule set forth specific dates for the adjudicative hearings and deliberations during October, 2017.

On August 1, 2017, the Subcommittee received a letter from DES stating that it cannot provide its final determination. Specifically, DES advised the Subcommittee that, given additional information provided by the Applicant to DES, that it needed additional documentation and time to evaluate this information and reach a final decision and enclosed a list of the additional documents that it requested from the Applicant.

On August 10, 2017, the Applicant filed a Motion to Postpone Final Adjudicative Hearings. The Town of Durham and University of New Hampshire filed a response.

II. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The Applicant requests postponement of the scheduled adjudicative hearings “until the concerns raised by NHDES have been appropriately addressed.”

The Town of Durham and the University of New Hampshire requested suspending the entire procedural schedule for the remainder of this docket until DES has filed its final recommendations.

Under RSA 162-H:7, VI-c, all state agencies having permitting or other regulatory authority must submit final decisions on the parts of the Application that relate to their permitting and other regulatory authority. *See* RSA 162-H:7, VI-c. Full consideration and evaluation of the Project's technical issues and impacts on the environment is required to meet the Committee's statutory purpose and to ascertain whether the issuance of a Certificate is warranted. It is in the public interest for DES to have all of the information necessary to complete its review of the Project. Suspending the procedural deadlines is also warranted to ensure the efficient and orderly process of this proceeding.

IV. ORDER

It is hereby ordered that the adjudicative hearing schedule is suspended;

It is hereby further ordered that all deadlines and technical session set forth in the procedural schedule are suspended;

It is hereby ordered that DES submit a monthly status report to the attention of Pamela Monroe, Administrator, no later than the twenty-fifth of each month, beginning in September 2017; and

It is hereby further ordered that the parties shall submit an agreed upon revised procedural schedule upon receipt of the final decision of DES.

SO ORDERED this twenty-first day of August, 2017.



Evan Mulholland, Presiding Officer
Site Evaluation Committee