

1 **PERSONAL BACKGROUND**

2 Q. Please state your name and property address.

3 A. Matthew and Amanda Fitch, 291 Durham Point Road, Durham, NH 03824

4

5 Q. Please state your status in this docket.

6 A. We were granted intervenor status in the Seacoast Reliability Project docket along with
7 our neighbors initially as the Durham Point/Little Bay Abutters group and then later, the Durham
8 Residents per an SEC ruling. Our participation was not limited except that in “order to avoid
9 duplicative arguments and to ensure the prompt and orderly development of these proceedings,
10 [our] participation in this docket [was] combined [with the Durham Residents] for the purposes
11 of presentation of evidence, argument, cross-examination, and other participation.” Order on
12 Petitions to Intervene, dated August 24, 2016, at page 10.

13

14 **DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY**

15 Q. Please briefly describe the location of your property.

16 A. Our property is situated off Durham Point Rd on a private driveway that terminates at
17 Little Bay and sits on approximately 4 acres. Eversource’s ROW easement traverses a portion of
18 our lot.

19

20 Q. Please describe any unique characteristics of your property.

21 A. Our property is one of three (3) lots of adjacent family land owned on Durham Point since
22 the mid 1900’s. These lots are all still owned by family and are surrounded by 68 acres of
23 conservation land, historic landmarks, forests and Little Bay. We built our home here 13 years

1 ago and understand it to be the last home/driveway allowed off our deeded private road as no
2 further buildable subdivisions can be created with the adjacent family lots and conservation land.

3

4 Q. Are you familiar with the Eversource's Seacoast Reliability Project?

5 A. Yes.

6

7 Q. Please describe Eversource's easement in relation to your property.

8 A. The ROW easement traverses or cuts through a significant portion of our property.

9

10 Q. Please describe what utility structures you see on the easement.

11 A. The existing wooden distribution poles are not visible from our home and are shielded by

12 trees.

13

14 **SUMMARY OF CONCERNS**

15 Q. Please summarize your concerns about the impact of the proposed Project.

16 A. 1. Permanent, irreparable damage to the health of Little Bay from the proposed method

17 of crossing and cable laying. As a rare, fragile and important to many local communities

18 ecosystem, great care must be taken to ensure no damage occurs. A long term remediation plan

19 that includes financial considerations covering potential damages would seem to be a pertinent

20 inclusion.

21 2. Accuracy of pre-construction and illustrative ELF/EMF field measurements/readings.

22 There does not seem to be any actual measurements taken of pre-construction ELF/EMF

23 readings from the existing line, only "Calculations Assumptions of MF from Transmission

1 Lines” and “Calculation of EF from Transmission Lines” as outlined in the EMF Summary
2 submitted by the applicant, Pages 5-29, including Sections 2.1 and 2.2. Nor does there appear to
3 be a plan in place to confirm post-construction ELF/EMF readings compared to the
4 calculations/assumptions outlined in the sections noted above.

5 Illustrative readings for personal exposure to EMF were referenced in the EMF Summary
6 document, Page 2 as being recorded with “a meter worn at the waist of an Exponent engineer”
7 with no disclosure of what the meter was, its effectiveness or traceable calibration history.

8 A recent erroneously submitted document to the Seacoast Reliability Project docket referencing
9 calibration issues with Exponent’s magnetic field meter (Entertech EMDEX II) on another
10 project would have me as a layman question the accuracy of both the illustrative readings and
11 subsequently, the calculations and assumptions for pre and post construction.

12 3. No method to assess property value loss and homeowner compensation for such loss.
13 The proposed line runs directly through a portion of our property which, as I understand from
14 Mr. Chalmers testimony will have a negative impact on our property’s value up to the double
15 digit percent range.

16 4. Lack of detailed replanting or visual/aesthetic sightline restoration plan not provided.

17 5. Unclear time line for construction and restoration outlining any access issues to our
18 driveway or property.

19 6. What process will be put in place to address, remedy and compensate for any damage
20 to our private driveway and property. We are concerned with damage, deterioration and access
21 during construction.

22 7. We are concerned with how Eversource will monitor and maintain our road/driveway
23 and repair any damage during and after installation.

1 8. We are concerned about problems that may arise during construction and
2 communication regarding a calendar of work to be completed, hours of construction and
3 emergency contact numbers.

4 9. We are concerned with the tree clearing details on the easement during construction
5 and specific plans after construction to shield our home and road/driveway from view of the
6 Transmission line.

7

8 **ADVERSE IMPACT OF THE PROJECT ON YOUR PROPERTY**

9 Q. Do you have other concerns about the Project’s impact on your property or the enjoyment
10 of your property?

11 A. The pristine nature of our property will be changed forever by a permanent, towering,
12 immoveable structure that radiates ELF/EMF and possibly noise very near our home where we
13 work, educate and live.

14

15 Q. Has Eversource offered mitigation measures to address your concerns?

16 A. No. We have received exceedingly little direct communication from Eversource
17 regarding this project the impacts on our property.

18

19 Q. Do you have concerns regarding post-Project restoration?

20 A. Yes, for various reasons outlined in our summary of concerns.

21

22 Q. What provision(s) would you like put in place to protect against road damage, road
23 access, tree removal, blasting, construction equipment and other concerns you have outlined?

1 A. Conditions of construction that address our concerns established prior to project approval
2 between us and Eversource.

3

4 **ADVANCED NOTICE OF CREWS ON PROPERTY AND ACCESS**

5 Q. Please explain why you are concerned about prior notification regarding construction
6 schedules?

7 A. We home school one of our children and also both work out of our home. We are on our
8 property and in our home far more than most families. Knowing when crews and equipment will
9 be on or near our property, traversing our private driveway, etc will be important to ensure we're
10 able to both conduct work and continue an effective curriculum.

11

12 **ACCESS TO OTHER PORTIONS OF PROPERTY DURING CONSTRUCTION**

13 Q. Do you have a concern that you won't be able to access your property during
14 construction of the project?

15 A. Yes.

16

17 Q. Please explain.

18 A. The proposed project runs directly through a portion of our property thereby limiting or
19 preventing access to those areas directly and potentially other areas of our yard while
20 construction is ensuing.

21

22 **SOUNDS**

23 Q. Are you concerned about the increased sound coming from the Project, please explain.

1 A. Equipment, tree clearing, blasting, etc is expected to take place on or near our property
2 during the construction process. All which will likely inhibit access to some portions of our
3 property and possibly limit our ability to enjoy where we live. Being outside on a nice day,
4 working quietly within our home, etc has the potential to be impacted by the construction
5 process. These would have a material impact on our ability to work and earn a living from our
6 home.

7

8 **EXISTING POLE LOCATIONS AND VIEW**

9 Q. Has the location of the Eversource right of way easement changed on your property from
10 the time you first purchased your property?

11 A. No.

12

13 Q. Have the structures, including poles and wires, within the easement changed since the
14 time you first purchased the property?

15 A. No.

16

17 Q. Can you see the easement from your home?

18 A. Yes, however it is currently shielded by trees

19

20 Q. Can you see the existing poles from your home?

21 A. No.

22

23 Q. Can you see the existing wires from your home?

1 A. Yes, however this is typically driven by the seasons.

2

3 Q. Can you see the existing poles from the yard around your home?

4 A. No

5 Q. Can you see the existing wires from the yard around your home?

6 A. Yes.

7

8 **PROPOSED POLE LOCATIONS**

9 Q. Do you have any concerns or objections to the poles in the proposed locations?

10 A. Yes. A very large (~85') pole is proposed to be situated directly on our property. This
11 dramatic change will be a negative impact to our property value. This material negative impact
12 to our property value could potentially be mitigated by burying the lines through our property.

13

14 Q. When you purchased your property, were you concerned that there was an electrical
15 easement on your property.

16 A. No. The easement (NH Registry of Deeds, Book 577, Page 475) was granted in 1949 to a
17 prior, non-family property owner and the existing wooden structures had been present for as long
18 as any family members could remember.

19

20 **SCREENING**

21 Q. Has Eversource offered to mitigate the ability to see its poles and wires from your home?

22 A. No

23

1 Q. Please explain what Eversource offered for screening.

2 A. There has been no contact or communication from Eversource referencing or to discuss
3 any potential screening of the poles/wires.

4

5 **IMPACTS TO PROPERTY VALUE**

6 Q. Have you read the pre-filed testimony and report of James Chalmers?

7 A. Yes.

8

9 Q. Does he state in his testimony that he identified 19 properties whose value is potentially
10 affected?

11 A. Yes, on page 12, lines 11 through 15, he states that but we are unsure if our property is
12 included in that total because it was not shown on the maps prepared by Eversource. Mr.
13 Chalmers also mentions that some of those 19 properties may or may not experience a market
14 value effect. Our understanding from Mr. Chalmers testimony and hearing him speak at one of
15 the Durham public information sessions was that properties that are located close to the right of
16 way, or had poles situated on them and properties that had views of poles and/or lines would
17 have a negative impact on their value up to double digit percentages.

18

19 Q. Do any of the criteria that could have a negative impact on value outlined by Mr.

20 Chalmers in his testimony relate to your property?

21 A. Yes. Our home is approximately 80 feet from the easement which we understand to be
22 considered “close”. We will also have clear visibility of at least one 85’ pole that will physically
23 be situated on our property and also be able to see the new wires.

1 Q. Has Eversource proposed a method or means of valuing and compensating homeowners
2 for sale price impacts?

3 A. Not to our knowledge.
4

5 **CONCLUSION**

6 As intervenors and homeowners with a vested interest in the future of our property and
7 livelihood we would expect our listed concerns and remedies to be addressed as specific
8 “Conditions of Construction” in the final permit. These conditions would include:

9 1. Agreed upon loss of property value and compensation due to the large pole placement
10 on our property and negative visual impact of the new line/wires;

11 2. Repairs and maintenance to our private road/driveway ensuring it is in the same or
12 better condition than prior to construction;

13 3. Agreement with Eversource to repair and compensate for any damage caused by the
14 project from blasting, tree removal, staging of construction equipment, etc to our road/driveway
15 and property, during and after construction;

16 4. Appropriate landscaping and plantings to be done after construction;

17 5. Actual and accurate ELF/EMF readings from the existing lines as they stand now and
18 post construction completed lines, from our property where our family lives, works and plays;

19 6. Agreed upon remediation plan and/or options if the post construction ELF/EMF
20 readings at our property exceed the pre-construction readings and/or post construction
21 assumptions;

22 7. A clear and accurate schedule outlining when crews will be on our property, when
23 construction will take place, times of day, etc.

1 8. Agreed upon daily rate compensation for days when construction (noise, equipment,
2 crews, tree clearing, etc) will have a material impact on our ability to work and educate on our
3 property and at our home;

4 9. A remediation plan with anticipated costs relating to negative, long term and/or
5 permanent impacts due to the proposed Little Bay crossing agreed upon by all affected
6 communities.

7

8 Q. Does this conclude your testimony?

9 A. Yes.