

November 12, 2015

Town of Pittsburg-1526 Main Street Pittsburg NH 03592
Town of Clarksville-408 Route 145 Clarksville NH 03592
Town of Stewartstown-PO Box 119 West Stewartstown NH 03597

Pamela G. Monroe
Administrator
New Hampshire Site Evaluation Committee
21 South Fruit Street, Suite 10
Concord, NH 03301-2429

Re: NH SEC Docket No. 2015-06
Application of Northern Pass Transmission LLC and Public Service
Company of New Hampshire d/b/a Eversource Energy for a Certificate of
Site and Facility for the Construction of a new High Voltage Electric
Transmission Line in New Hampshire

Dear Ms. Monroe:

We the undersigned are Selectmen of Pittsburg, Clarksville and Stewartstown. Our three towns are jointly filing the following comments with the Site Evaluation Committee ("SEC") for its consideration in Docket No. 2015-06.

We represent the residents of the northernmost towns in New Hampshire. It is in our towns that the Northern Pass applicants propose to construct an entryway into the United States for a transmission line that would import electric power into this country from Canada. We hereby notify the SEC that our towns strongly object to construction of this transmission line. We further notify the SEC and the applicants, that as elected Selectmen in our three towns, we are unwilling to lend the applicants any assistance in their attempts to construct this transmission line as long as it contains any portion or segment that is constructed on above ground structures. Unless the Northern Pass project is proposed as a wholly underground project, our combined and coordinated opposition will be maintained.

Over the past five years, the voters in each of our towns have overwhelmingly made it known to us in person and in voting on town warrant articles, that they oppose the Northern Pass project because of the adverse impact that it would have on our scenic and cultural assets, property values and tourism businesses. At the March 13, 2012 Clarksville annual town meeting, the citizens of Clarksville, by petition adopted an ordinance which reads, "Other than high voltage electrical transmission lines in existence as of the effective date of this ordinance, there shall be no further overhead development of alternating current or direct current high voltage transmission lines within the borders of the Town of Clarksville. All such future electrical transmission lines must be placed underground within power line rights of way or within yet to be

established power line corridors and installed in a manner approved by the State of New Hampshire's Public Utility Commission and/or Department of Transportation. Distribution lines carrying electrical power and other utility lines such as telephone and cable television for local residential or commercial use may continue to be installed above ground, but undergrounding of such lines is strongly recommended and encouraged." In accordance with our civic duties as Selectmen, we will not act against the interests of those who elected us.

This project is designed to be a revenue maker for the applicants and their partner in Canada, Hydro Quebec—a provincially owned crown corporation. There is nothing wrong with making a profit. There is, however, something terribly wrong with a foreign government and out of state corporations making profits at the expense of our environment and our town resources in direct opposition to the will of our residents.

This project is classified as an elective project because it is not necessary for reliability of the electric grid in New Hampshire or New England. It is one of many such projects recently proposed to bring hydropower into the Northeastern United States, but it is the only one that is designed to be built substantially above ground on large structures that would be visible high above the tree lines in our communities, farms, forests and recreational areas. All other transmission projects currently proposed to carry Canadian generated power through New York, Vermont and Maine are designed to be constructed underground in existing disturbed road or rail beds or underwater without significant damage to the environment.

The total underground construction of this project is a viable and less environmentally damaging option according to the Department of Energy in its initial environmental impact statement. Yet, the Northern Pass Applicants continue to propose a primarily above ground project that will do considerable damage to the environment, visual resources and cultural heritage of many New Hampshire communities including our three towns. Over 2300 new transmission towers are planned to be erected in New Hampshire by Northern Pass in order to accommodate this elective project. For a relatively small further investment, it could be placed entirely underground.

The Northern Pass project appears to be proposed to serve the self-imposed "clean energy" wants and desires of our neighbors to the south who wish to purchase this power from a foreign country while sparing their citizens the need and consequence of hosting large renewable power generation facilities and transmission lines in their own communities or offshore from their urban areas. New Hampshire is already the host of many renewable power generation plants and is a net exporter of that power to the rest of New England. Quebec, of course, is anxious to capitalize on the opportunity to sell its provincially owned power at a higher profit than it could realize selling to its own citizens. So it wants to build a new transmission line through New Hampshire to reach

its intended market. Burial of the project would cost marginally little more in order to save New Hampshire's landscapes and environment. The solution is therefore really quite simple. If the proponents of the project outside our borders want it that badly, then they should be required to pay for complete burial. If that is too much to pay for this particular project, then the project should not be built at all.

The applicants proposed transmission corridor through our three towns would run a distance of approximately 16 miles on an entirely new energy corridor that they propose to build—a corridor that will be controlled and solely used by Hydro Quebec. Essentially, they want to take our environmental resources, property and local roadbeds for the benefit of a foreign government that may or may not transmit power over the transmission line depending on market conditions, political considerations, and a pricing policy that will not be constrained by limitation of its monopoly power or by public interest concerns for those who might consume it in the United States. As stewards of our Town resources, we object to this proposed taking of our property for private use of a foreign government.

Half of the 16 mile distance proposed to be traversed in our towns would be constructed using three separate above ground segments. These above ground segments would involve construction of new access roads and clear cutting of corridors up to 150 feet wide through our forests, farms and scenic areas. Moreover, excavation and pouring of concrete for massive foundations would be required for the erection of four transition stations and 72 above ground transmission towers up to 120 feet high. A great deal of our wetlands would also be directly impacted and damaged.

The proposed transmission line would enter Pittsburg from Canada above ground on towers crossing the wetlands of Halls Stream and Halls Stream Road and then move upland high above the Connecticut River just north of the Vermont border and then down to a transition station that is proposed to be constructed near the banks of the Connecticut River just west of Route 3, a federally designated Scenic Byway. Highly important, scenic, cultural and historic areas of Pittsburg and of Canaan (in Vermont) would forever be adversely changed by the existence and dominance of this commercial intrusion into the pastoral landscapes surrounding the historically important Pittsburg area known as the Indian Stream Republic. The Indian Stream Republic was a sovereign nation located in Pittsburg from 1832-1840 with it's own constitution and congress. This land has been untouched for 175 years and we must keep it that way. This is sacred territory to our citizens. The Route 3 Connecticut River Byway entry to Pittsburg would also forever be diminished and the views of the Connecticut River valley from Stewartstown and Clarksville and Canaan, Vermont along the Connecticut River would forever be changed if this first segment of the project is built above ground.

When it reaches the banks of the Connecticut River, the Northern pass proposal takes the project underground for the first time in proposed trenching and a boring through and under Old Canaan Road, NH State Route 3 and the Connecticut River into Clarksville where another transition station is proposed to be built on the east side of the Connecticut River. From there another 23 transmission towers up to 105 feet high, would be erected running for 2.3 miles in a generally easterly line running to Route 145 on Ben Young Hill. This above ground segment in Clarksville would forever alter the views from important abutting conservation areas, including the Washburn Family Forest owned by the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests. It would also destroy the scenic vistas looking into the Connecticut River valley and Vermont to the west of Ben Young Hill along Route 145 which itself is a New Hampshire Cultural and Scenic Highway known as the Moose Path Trail.

The project then proposes to dive underground at another transition station to be erected on the west side of Route 145 where it would be buried under Route 145 and down Old County Road for 1.4 miles into Stewartstown. The proposal then has the project continuing in a generally easterly direction to a fourth transition station on Bear Rock Road where it would pop out of the ground and be built on 29 transmission towers up to 120 feet high for another 3.5 miles continuing east until it reaches the top of a high ridge on the Stewartstown/Dixville line. In this third above ground segment, the proposed transmission corridor and 29 towers would be starkly visible from some of the most valuable residential and tourism development properties in Stewartstown and Colebrook along Bear Rock Road, Harvey Swell Road, Noyes Road and Diamond Pond Road. In addition, this segment of the transmission line would ruin views from and entryways to Coleman State Park. The towers and transmission line would run directly along much of the southern boundary of Coleman State Park and it would cross high above Diamond Pond Road which is the only entryway to the Park.

Thus, the path of project construction in our three towns, if permitted, would not run south towards its proposed destination. Instead, the project would needlessly run from west to east leaving our communities at a point that would be no closer to its destination than when it entered from Canada. This alone is an absurd outcome and wasteful destruction of resources.

Where they have been blocked by landowners, the applicants claim they have the right to use roads without compensation by trenching and boring under them in a linear fashion. On most of those highways, roads and passageways, neither the state nor the towns hold fee title interests. Private abutting property owners have legal property rights that must be considered and, thus far, have not been adequately dealt with by the applicants. The applicants simply have no legal right or permission to take those private property interests for an elective transmission project. Given the overwhelming sentiment of the voters in our towns, we cannot and will not assist the applicants in

resolving these types of municipal road and private property rights conflicts unless the Northern Pass proposal is modified to be built entirely underground. Indeed, Stewartstown voters at the annual Town meeting in 2011 passed a directive requiring all future transmission lines in Stewartstown to be built underground. The existence and content of that directive were set forth in a Town of Stewartstown comment previously filed with the SEC on September 30, 2015.

We conclude by raising an issue of social justice and economic discrimination. The applicants insist on using older above ground transmission line technology in our communities to construct an entirely new energy transmission corridor. At the same time, the applicants have recently modified their project to propose using modern underground construction technology for 50 miles in the more affluent and politically influential White Mountain Region to our south even though there is an existing above ground transmission line corridor that could have been used—resulting in making the existing transmission line scar look twice as ugly. The applicants say they made this change in the White Mountain Region because they recognize the value of preserving New Hampshire’s scenic resources and landscapes. We therefore ask why the applicants don’t apply the same logic and value to our untouched landscapes and resources that have no existing transmission line scars. Our scenic resources and landscapes are the essence of who we are. They define our communities and our sense of place. They drive the economy of the area through tourism and the building, maintenance and repair of second homes and vacation properties. We therefore demand that the applicants employ the same standards and modern technologies in our communities as those that they have now applied in their proposal for the White Mountain Region. Nothing less will be permitted by our communities and we would hope that the Site Evaluation Committee will see to it that our local community interests and concerns are respected in full without further discrimination and social injustice.

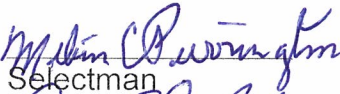
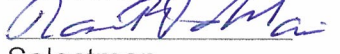
Sincerely yours,

Town of Pittsburg


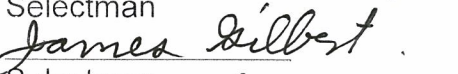

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By Judith E. Roche, Select Chair
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