

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
SITE EVALUATION COMMITTEE**

Docket No. 2015-06

**Joint 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**

**Pre-Files Testimony of Elmer and Claire Lupton
Direct Abutters in the Whitefield Area
Group 2 - Dummer, Stark, Northumberland, Whitefield, and
Dalton Abutting Property Intervenors (overhead portion of the
Project)**

What are your names?

Elmer and Claire Lupton

What is your contact information?

3 Tremont St.
Charlestown, MA 02129
617-388-5550

What is your status as interveners?

We own property at 75 Newell Lane, Whitefield NH. We understand that the currently planned route of the Northern Pass would go overhead directly across our property. We are included in Group 2 - Dummer, Stark, Northumberland, Whitefield, and Dalton Abutting Property Intervenor (overhead portion of the Project).

What are your concerns about the Northern Pass?

We have several concerns. The following list should not be regarded as all-inclusive: negative impact to the value of the property, negative impact to the enjoyment of the property, negative impact to the peaceful rural character of the property, disregard of what we understand were the conditions laid out by the utility company when lines were originally put across our property, security concerns including the potential for terrorism, safety concerns, noise concerns, health and wellbeing concerns, disregard for our interests as abutters and property owners, etc.

Why are you concerned about negative impact to the value of the property?

We believe from conversations with real estate personnel and from the general negative publicity concerning the Northern Pass that property with exceedingly tall, high voltage towers is at a very substantial disadvantage in terms of resale or valuation.

Our concerns can be summarized in this way: "Would you want to own or buy property with +130 foot tall electrical towers and high voltage lines going across it?" "Would you want to live in your house a quarter of a mile from huge power lines and towers?"

We understand that under these circumstances the property becomes unmarketable and if it is sold, it is at an extremely deep discount. The presence of the Northern Pass towers and wires on the property would also make the property slow to sell. It would require finding the very unusual buyer who would not be discouraged by intrusive power transmission wires and towers.

Why are you concerned about negative impact to the enjoyment of the property?

The dwelling at 75 Newell Lane is a quarter of a mile from the planned towers and power lines. We believe that the lines will be visible from our house. They will negatively affect the view and considerably reduce the beauty of the area. We also believe that the financial considerations mentioned above and the security, safety, noise, etc. considerations mentioned below will cause us continual concern and worry, making it impossible for us to have the quiet, contemplative enjoyment for which we originally purchased the property.

Rather than enjoyment, our initial and continuous thoughts will be the unnecessary and unwarranted intrusion which the Northern Pass represents. Every time we approach or leave our property, we will need to drive under the Northern Pass wiring and past the tall towers. They will be impossible to avoid or escape.

Why are you concerned about negative impact to the peaceful rural character of the property?

Currently the bulk of our property is forest land with green trees and some green meadow with a small portion bordering on Forest Lake. We have seen moose, bears, foxes, turkeys, deer, otters and other animals and birds including bald eagles. There is a working beaver pond on the property. The clear sky at night is amazing. It is entirely rural and beautiful. The intrusive presence of the massive industrial towers and power lines will change the character of the area to one that is industrial and developed.

Why do you believe that there is disregarding of what you believe are the conditions originally laid out by the electric company when lines were originally put across the property.

Although the current lines were installed a number of years ago, we understand that oral promises and commitments were made not to disturb the general character of the property. For example, we understand that promises and commitments were made not to erect towers taller than the surrounding trees.

Why do you believe there are security concern?

The area around Whitefield/Dalton, and particularly the area along Forest Lake road, is lightly populated., Forest Lake Road is very lightly traveled and very infrequently patrolled. The trimmed area where we understand the Northern Pass is planned is directly accessible simply by turning off Forest Lake Road.

If some person or organization planning damage or terrorism so desired, it would be trivially easy to fill a truck with explosives, drive it off Forest Lake Road to a tower, and set off the explosives

bringing down the tower and the wiring. The drive would take only 60-120 seconds and would appear almost impossible to prevent.

Very high towers and high voltage, high amperage power lines in a remote, unpopulated area would appear an extremely attractive target for planned damage or terrorism. This concern is based in reality. In November 2015 in the Crimea, power transmission lines like the proposed Northern Pass lines were downed by explosives in what was thought to be a terrorist attack. The result was that 1.6 million people lost power and the Crimea declared a state of emergency.

The Northern Pass towers would be attractive targets for vandals as well. Noting the propensity for vandals "tagging" any such structures, it appears very likely that beautiful areas of our property would be blighted with unsightly, graffiti covered towers. The very sparse population, infrequent patrolling and easy access on Forest Lake road would make our property a prime target for vandalism.

Why do you believe there are safety concerns?

The security concerns mentioned above would result in very high voltage lines being brought down and potentially shorting to ground. This would be exceedingly dangerous. The vandalism concerns mentioned above would likely attract youth, and their efforts to gain access would likely be unsafe and risky.

Why do you believe there are noise concerns?

High voltage overhead lines as planned are known to create loud popping and crackling sounds under some atmospheric conditions. These sounds would be audible from our property and might be audible from our house. These sounds would accentuate some of the problems outlined above, including loss of property value, loss of rural character, loss of quiet enjoyment and disregard of original promises.

Why do you believe that there has been disregard for your interest as abutters and property owners?

Although the Northern Pass has been in planning for a number of years with expenditures of large sums of money, time and other resources, no effort has been made to contact us directly to discuss or negotiate mutually acceptable conditions under which power lines might cross our property.

According to Eversource, it is apparently possible to bury miles of the Northern Pass below ground. There has been no effort to explore the feasibility of burial in our area. The area on and near our property is very soft ground making burial easy. Burial would mitigate or eliminate many of the problems and concerns enumerated above.