

Before the New Hampshire Site Evaluation Committee

Docket No. 2015-06

Joint Application of Northern Pass Transmission LLC ("NPT") and
Public Service Company of New Hampshire d/b/a Eversource Energy
("Eversource") for a Certificate of Site and Facility for the Construction
of a New High Voltage Electric Transmission Line and Related Facilities in
New Hampshire

November 15, 2016

Pre-filed Testimony for F. Maureen Quinn,
member of the Southern Non-Abutters Group of Intervenors

Q: Please state your name and address.

A: My name is Frances Maureen Quinn. I live at 47A Nottingham Road in Deerfield, New Hampshire and have resided at this address exclusively since June 2009.

Q: Briefly summarize your educational background and work experience.

A: I hold a Bachelor's Degree in Nursing (1983) and a Masters Degree in Public Health (2005). I worked as a clinical nurse in the fields of obstetrics, general pediatrics, pediatric oncology, and pediatric human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection-related disease. I also worked as a federal public health policy expert in the areas of Medicaid, maternal child health, and community health grants.

Q: Have you previously testified before the Site Evaluation Committee (SEC)?

A: No, I have not. I have participated in several of the technical sessions held in September and October 2016 as part of the SEC review process for Docket 2015-06 Northern Pass Transmission-Eversource. The SEC recognized me as an intervenor in the order dated March 18, 2016 as a member of the Non-Abutting Property Owner-Ashland to Deerfield group of intervenors.

Q: What is the purpose of your testimony?

A: The purpose of my testimony is to communicate to the SEC my objections and various concerns regarding the proposed Northern Pass Transmission project and its impact on my property and livelihood as a resident of Deerfield.

Q: Where is your property located?

A: My property is located in the historic Deerfield Parade section of Deerfield, approximately one mile northeast of the intersection of Nottingham Road and Route 107 (North Road). My property abuts a large parcel of conservation easement land designated as WRP CE on sheet 179 of 180 in Volume IV Appendix 1 Project Maps of the application for this project.

Q: What is the proximity of your property to ROW?

A: My property line lies approximately 800 feet from the ROW.

Q: What is your property's current situation with regard to the existing transmission line?

A: The orientation of my house is north/southerly, with large windows along the entire length of my home as well as my entire deck facing south in a direct line of sight to the current transmission line. Because the current transmission towers are 75 feet in height, they are not visible above the tree line (even in the winter without leaves on the trees). I do not currently see any transmission lines or towers ever from any location on my property.

Q: How will the new lines change your situation?

A: The towers that are proposed in the application (as described above) and located closest to my property will be between 120-140 feet in height, i.e., 45-65 feet higher than the current towers. This means that where I currently see only trees at all times, I will see several (at least five) very large, unsightly towers across the entire southern and eastern boundaries of my property and beyond.

Q: What does the land mean to you and your family?

A: This land is my sole substantial fixed asset and represents the major component of my estate that I could provide to my children upon my death. I purchased this land over seven years ago because I had a very strong desire to live in a rural setting with unspoiled beauty and close proximity to historically significant culture and architecture.

My property fulfills a personal interest in living off of the land and enjoying the land in such a way that when I am home I am completely insulated from any signs of development. The land provides food for my family and me. It gives us general enjoyment and many opportunities for us all to engage in healthy activities in a serene, natural setting. My property is bounded on all sides with woods effectively creating that sense of insulation/isolation, even while I am within a few miles of community and commercial resources. The unspoiled natural character of this property will be significantly marred by the views of very tall and imposing towers and the noise of the high voltage lines may be audible from my property, which will

create disruptions of our peaceful enjoyment of the property and anxiety in anyone living or visiting the property at such times.

Q: How do you and your family use the land?

A: My land and its gardens, berry bushes and fruit trees provide healthy food for my family, friends, community, and myself. I take much enjoyment and pride in growing and sharing organic fruits and vegetables in an unspoiled setting. I am also currently exploring several opportunities for one or more of my children (and grandchild) to also live on the property, which would greatly enhance their quality of life and fulfill interests to also live a rural life.

Q: What is the impact the Northern Pass Transmission project will have on your land?

A: The Northern Pass Transmission project will permanently change the entire character of my property from an idyllic and unspoiled rural experience to one where large towers will loom over the entire property, destroying the unspoiled nature of my land. I will no longer be able to look out my windows or sit on my deck and enjoy a completely unspoiled view of beautiful woods. I am certain that if the Northern Pass project construction is allowed as proposed it will have a significant negative impact on the value of my property and will likely make it extremely difficult to sell the property. What was once a valuable asset, worthy of leaving to my children for their financial security and quality of life, will now be “damaged goods” and a burden. I do not concur with the conclusions presented in the pre-filed testimony of Terrence DeWan and Jessica Kimball with regard to the visual impact of this project and its impact on aesthetics. I believe that this project will most assuredly have a noticeable effect on the public’s use and enjoyment of NH’s scenic resources. I have seen photographs of towers in Canada that are the same type of towers as those being proposed for NPT. Their presence is extremely imposing, jarring to the senses, of an exceedingly unnatural character, and impacts a large swath of surrounding land, certainly many miles on either side of the towers. The impact on New Hampshire’s aesthetics and scenic beauty, as well as the aesthetics on my own property, will be massive and long lasting.

Additionally, I am very concerned that in foul weather and in the winter months I will hear noise created by the high-voltage power lines, yet another infringement on my personal life and experience, and another reason why my property will lose its current value. The sound studies conducted as part of application process by the Applicant do not offer any basis for believing that this will not be the case. While noise levels may not reach the EPA outdoor target threshold of 55dBA , it will likely be perceptible as unnatural and foreign, particularly in foul weather. There is also a substantial risk that, in foul weather, Deerfield’s nighttime levels of audible noise from these power lines will exceed the night time target value established by the EPA. The type and character of the noise that will be created by these power lines

will be foreign and unnatural. Even if at low levels, having to tolerate mechanical buzzing noises is a drastically different experience than hearing birds or other sounds in nature, or even the transient sounds of local traffic.

Other concerns relative to my land and the proximity of the NPT towers and lines include the risk of corona activity and radio noise. I will feel much more constrained and concerned for my safety in going out hiking or snowshoeing anywhere near the lines because of the risk of corona activity. We frequently enjoy snowshoeing during snowstorms. Such activities could now be a significant threat to life and safety. My enjoyment, and that of my family and friends, relative to being out of doors on my property, hiking or snowshoeing on my property and the adjoining conservation easement property will be destroyed by the presence of the NPT towers and the power lines they carry through our town.

Q: What other concerns do you have about the impact of the Northern Pass Transmission project on you and your community?

A: As a public health professional, I continue to have concerns about the health and safety effects of the project on those who reside along the route of high-voltage transmission lines. I have read Appendix 37 Exponent report that was submitted as part of the application and attended the public health and safety technical sessions in September 2016. I have also reviewed many related sources of information, including the European Commission's Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks (SCENIHR) Opinion on Potential health effects of exposure to electromagnetic fields (EMF) released in January 2015. A previous report on the same topic released by the same body in 2009 "endorsed the IARC assessment of classifying ELF magnetic fields as possibly carcinogenic to humans due to consistently observed increased childhood leukaemia risk in epidemiological studies (SCENIHR, 2009); the latter stems mainly from two pooled analyses based on studies completed before the year 2000, showing a two-fold risk increase with ELF magnetic fields above 0.3-0.4 μT (time-weighted average) but raising concerns about shortcomings of those studies preventing a causal interpretation (Ahlbom et al., 2000; Greenland et al., 2000). While it can certainly be acknowledged that no causal relationship has been firmly established, the 2015 report and the many meta-analyses discussed therein, could not definitively refute that such a causal relationship still might exist. Indeed, the 2015 report states, "The previous assessment of the 2009 SCENIHR Opinion on a possible association between long-term exposure to ELF magnetic fields and an increased risk of childhood leukaemia remains valid. A positive association has been observed in multiple studies in different settings at different points in time. Little progress has been made in explaining the finding, neither in terms of a plausible mechanism for a causal relationship with magnetic field nor in identifying alternative explanations." This continues to cause concern for me, my family, and for many members of the community living and raising their children and grandchildren in close proximity to the proposed high-voltage lines. Nothing that I heard in the technical sessions or in the Exponent report affords me any additional comfort.

Another health related concern that exists particularly for Deerfield is the extremely close proximity of 345kV power lines to the Sherburne Woods housing complex on Church Street in historic Deerfield's town center. This residential community provides housing for several dozen elderly residents of Deerfield, many of whom may have additional health concerns and even the presence of implanted cardiac pacemakers. The NPT application maps show that the 345kV lines will run less than 200 feet from the Sherburne Woods homes. The effect of such close proximity to the static electric fields and magnetic-field levels created by these lines on the presence of implanted cardiac pacemakers is not adequately addressed in the application, its appendices, or the pre-filed testimony of health and safety experts hired by the Applicant.

Q: Do you have any final comments?

A: Yes, this project is not a reliability project. It is optional and should not impose upon the residents/landowners of New Hampshire for no other purpose than to increase profits for private corporations.

The NPT project erroneously calls this project "clean energy" and "green." It is neither. The impacts on natural resources in Canada and the subsequent impact on greenhouse gases created by HydroQuebec disqualify the project from any claims of "clean" or "green." It will rely on a source of energy that has just as large (or larger) carbon footprint as fossil based energy projects. It has also impacted the native peoples of Canada and natural resources to which they have historic and legal claims.

The energy sector in this state and the nation is changing rapidly. This project will create a permanent scar across almost 200 miles and a substantial portion of New Hampshire's most beautiful lands using antiquated energy systems. NPT is not a forward thinking project, but instead relies on old ways of thinking about meeting our state and regional energy needs. Local, less impactful generation sources are becoming more popular ways of meeting energy needs. These micro-generation system designs create less dependency on vast grid-based systems which put millions of people at risk during outages and reduce risks of impact by such things as terrorism and significant weather events.

Lastly, it is very concerning to me that the Decommissioning Plan submitted by the Applicant is ridiculously minimal. It shows a complete disregard of the responsibility this company assumes in the theoretical construction of the NPT project. There are multiple scenarios under which decommissioning is a likely future event and the Plan submitted to the SEC affords no comfort to the communities who are expected to suffer the consequences of this project that they will not be left "holding the bag" when Eversource walks away or suffers future financial disaster.

I respectfully request that the Site Evaluation Committee disapprove and deny the application for this project.