STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

SITE EVALUATION COMMITTEE

January 11, 2016 - 6:12 p.m.
Franklin Opera House
316 Central Street
Franklin, New Hampshire
(Merrimack County)

IN RE:  SEC 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.
(Public Information Session held
pursuant to RSA 162-H:10, I-a.)

[Consisting of a presentation by
the SEC, a presentation by the
Applicants, followed by a
Question-and-Answer Session, and
comments received from the public]

PRESIDING: Michael J. Iacopino, Esq. (Brennan...) (Presiding as the Presiding Officer)
Pamela G. Monroe, SEC Administrator

ALSO PRESENT: Iryna N. Dore, Esq. (Brennan, Lehehan...)

COURT REPORTER: Steven E. Patnaude, LCR No. 52
Susan J. Robidas, LCR No. 44
NOTED AS PRESENT:

Counsel for the Applicant: Barry Needleman, Esq.  
(McLane Middleton)

Counsel for the Public: Peter C.L. Roth, Esq.  
Sr. Asst. Attorney General  
N.H. Dept. of Justice  

Thomas Pappas, Esq.  
Elijah Emerson, Esq.  
(Primmer Piper...)

Also noted as present from the Applicants who were available to provide the presentation and answers to questions:

William Quinlan  
James Muntz  
Samuel Johnson  
Kevin Bowes  
Jerry Fortier  
Lee Carbonneau  
Bob Varney  
Terry DeWan  
Cherilyn Widell  
Mark Hodgdon  
Chris Soderman
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{SEC 2015-06} [Public Info. Session/Franklin] {01-11-16}
P R O C E E D I N G

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Okay, everybody. My name is Mike Iacopino. I am Counsel to the New Hampshire Site Evaluation Committee. I am here to run the meeting tonight.

But, before we begin, please take a look, there is a fire exit on my right, your left. There is another exit behind you, where the Fire Chief is at the door. Let's please keep those exits clear during the course of tonight's meeting. If there is any type of emergency, those are the exits that you should use. And, please go through them in an orderly fashion. Hopefully, that won't be an issue.

Like I said, my name is Mike Iacopino. I am Counsel to the New Hampshire Site Evaluation Committee. Thank you all for coming. We are here tonight in Docket Number 2015-06, the Joint Application of Northern Pass Transmission, LLC, and Public Service Company of New Hampshire, doing business as Eversource Energy, for a Certificate of Site and Facility. This docket is for the project that is commonly referred to as the "Northern Pass Transmission Line".

There are agendas on how we're going to proceed out at the tables. In addition, there are
yellow cards. For anybody who might like to speak at the appropriate time tonight, you should fill out a yellow card, and bring it up to the Administrator of the Site Evaluation Committee, who is on my left, your right, that's Pam Monroe. Or, to my associate, Iryna Dore, who's in the background, or any of the other helpful folks who are out at the front tables.

But, if you have a question, we would ask that you write it down, and these are questions for the Applicant or about the Committee process. We ask you to grab one of these green sheets from the tables out front and write your question down. What we will try to do is try to put them in categories, so that we talk about subject matter at the same time, to the extent that we can. I can already tell I've got a bunch of questions here already, and we haven't even begun the presentations.

The purpose of tonight's meeting: This is a public information session. No members of the New Hampshire Site Evaluation Committee are here. The Administrator, Pam Monroe, and myself are here. The purpose for tonight is to present information about the project to you all, as the public, to give you an opportunity to ask questions, and also to give you an
opportunity to tell us how you feel about the project. The manner in which we're going to do that is we're going to begin with the presentation that I will go through with you, to explain what the Site Evaluation Committee is and how it operates. We will then allow the folks from the project, from the Northern Pass Project, to make a presentation to you about what this particular project is about.

And, then, we will entertain questions from you all. And, as I said, those questions should be written down on a green sheet of paper and provided to any one of the folks working out back, to Iryna or to Ms. Monroe. And, those questions can be for me and Ms. Monroe, if they're questions about the process before the Site Evaluation Committee. Or, they can be to the Applicant, if you have questions about their project.

Once we're done going through all the questions, we will then take public statements. If you wish to make a public statement, you'll fill out a yellow card and bring it up here. We're going to call the folks, with some exceptions, in the order in which we received the yellow cards.

When you make your public statements, we...
ask that you please be succinct, concise. You don't need to repeat things that are stated over and over again by folks. And, we probably will limit the public statements that are made, public statements and comments, at this point, based upon the number that I see in the pile, probably to three minutes, give or take. We'll try to let everybody have their say. But, remember, there's a lot of people here. And, let's please be courteous.

During the course of this proceeding, if you disagree with something that is said, by me, by representatives of Northern Pass, or by somebody from the audience, please do not yell out loud. Okay? Everybody will have their opportunity to say what they need to say. We do have court reporters here that are taking everything down. If people start yelling while other folks are speaking, it is very difficult for our court reporters to take down what is being said. So, please, let's all be courteous.

And, we will begin with the presentation about how the Site -- what the Site Evaluation Committee is and how it works.

First of all, after today, if you have any questions, the best place to go to get information
about the Site Evaluation Committee is to the Committee's website, which is up there on the screen, www.nhsec.nh.gov. And, I'll put that up again towards the end of the presentation.

The Site Evaluation Committee was created as a part of the statute known as "RSA 162-H". The purpose of RSA 162-H is to provide a process by which the Site Evaluation Committee can balance the benefits and impacts of site selection on various very important considerations to the State of New Hampshire. Those include the welfare of the population, private property, the location and growth of industry, the economic growth of the state, the environment, historic sites, aesthetics, air and water quality, natural resources, and public health and safety. Basically, the statute recognizes that those are all important considerations that need -- that some provide benefits, some provide impacts, and -- some projects provide benefits and impacts, and that there needs to be a balancing test.

The purpose of the Site Evaluation Committee is also to avoid undue delay in the construction of new facilities. Another purpose is to timely consider the environmental consequences, to
provide full and complete disclosure about projects to
the public, and to ensure that the siting,
construction, and operation of energy facilities is
treated as a significant aspect of land use planning,
in which all environmental, economic, and technical
issues are resolved in a single manner, in an
integrated fashion.

In other words, the process is designed
to integrate all of the various permitting that occurs
when there is a major construction project. And, those
include environmental issues, economic issues,
technical issues, land planning issues, things like
that.

The Site Evaluation Committee is
essentially a one-stop" shopping center for permitting
for energy facilities and transmission lines. The Site
Evaluation Committee, by statute, preempts local
authority. In other words, your local zoning and
planning boards don't have the authority. The Site
Evaluation Committee, with a jurisdictional facility,
has the authority to determine whether or not a
particular project will be sited and constructed.

The Site Evaluation Committee consists
of a number of members. The Public Utilities
Commission has three members on the Committee, and their Chair is the Chair of the Site Evaluation Committee; the Department of Environmental Services, the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Services serves as the Vice Chair of the Committee; the Department of Transportation, the Commissioner for the Department of Transportation serves on the Committee; as does the Commissioner for DRED, the Department of Resources & Economic Development; also serving on the Committee is the Commissioner of the Department of Cultural Resources, or the Director of the Historic Resources, a division of that agency; and then we have two public members. And, I'm sorry to report that over the weekend Roger Hawk, one of our public members, passed away. So, there will be a -- and, Mr. Hawk actually resigned last week, but he passed away over this weekend.

There is an alternate public member. And, there will be orders issued, not only in the Northern Pass case, but in other cases that are pending before the Site Evaluation Committee, for the appointment of the alternate member as the public member.

And, the Committee today consists of
these individuals. Martin Honigberg is the Chairman of the Public Utilities Commission, and he serves as Chair of the PUC [SEC?]; Thomas Burack is the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Services, the Vice Chairman of this Committee; PUC Commissioner Robert Scott and Kathryn Bailey serve on the Site Evaluation Committee; and Jeff Rose, from the Department of Resources and Economic Development; Victoria Sheehan, our new Commissioner of the Department of Transportation; and either Van McCloud or Elizabeth Muzzey will serve on the Committee; and our public members now are Patricia Weathersby, and Rachel Whitaker is the alternate public member.

Each of the -- Each of the members who are state employees have the opportunity to appoint either a senior attorney -- I'm sorry, either a staff attorney or a senior director in their agency to sit in their stead on the Committee, and that, in fact, has happened in this case. So that the Subcommittee that will hear the Northern Pass matter is made up of these individuals. Chairman Honigberg will serve as the Chairman of the Committee; Mr. Burack will serve as the Vice Chairman; Commissioner Bailey will serve; Commissioner Rose has appointed Christopher Way, who is
the Director of the Division of Economic Development to sit for him; and Commissioner Sheehan has appointed William Oldenburg, who is the Assistant Director of Project Development for DOT to sit in her place; and then our public members, as I indicated, would be Ms. Weathersby and Ms. Whitaker.

That's the Subcommittee will be undertaking these proceedings, and, ultimately, making a decision as to whether or not to grant or deny a Certificate of Site and Facility in this project.

In every application before the Site Evaluation Committee, the public is represented by Counsel for the Public. Counsel for the Public is appointed by the Attorney General. His or her job is to represent the public in seeking to protect the quality of the environment and in seeking to assure an adequate supply of energy. Counsel for the Public is treated as a party to the proceedings, and has all the rights, responsibilities, and privileges of an attorney representing a party in a formal action, and, in fact, can be represented by counsel him or herself.

In this particular case, Counsel for the Public has been appointed, and it's Senior Assistant Attorney General Peter C.L. Roth, who is seated in the
second row here, who I will ask to stand. And, if you could just introduce yourself, Peter, and tell them how the folks can get in touch with you.

Let me give you a microphone.

MR. ROTH: Good evening, everybody. I'm Peter Roth. I'm a Senior Assistant Attorney General, at the Office of the Attorney General, the Department of Justice. I am Counsel for the Public, appointed by Joseph Foster, the Attorney General. I can be reached at my office at the Department of Justice. My direct-dial telephone number is 603-271-1270. Or, you can send me an e-mail. My e-mail address is peter.roth, R-o-t-h, @doj.nh.gov [peter.roth@doj.nh.gov]. And, I'm happy to hear from anybody from the public who has a concern or something to say about it, either in writing or talking to me on the phone.

What I cannot do, unfortunately, is to provide legal advice or representation to any individual or organization or community. My job is sort of -- is this the place to be going into this?

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Yes.

MR. ROTH: My job is sort of an unusual one, in that my job is to represent the public as a
whole, both the people who are against the project and
the people who are in favor of the project. So, it
makes it sort of an interesting kind of dance on a
knife edge.

I have representing me in this
proceeding, and this is a first for Site Evaluation
Committee proceedings, the Primmer law firm, which has
a Manchester and Littleton offices. And, these
gentlemen here in front of me are the attorneys from
Primmer, Mr. Thomas Pappas and Mr. Eli Emerson.

We will be looking at this Application
very seriously, taking a very long, hard look, and
litigating the issues that arise in it, and
representing the public to the best of our abilities
and time and effort.

FROM THE FLOOR: Would you repeat your
phone number again please?

MR. ROTH: I was asked to repeat my
phone number. It's 603-271-1270. Thank you.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Thank you,
Peter. There is a process that we go through in Site
Evaluation Committee matters, and that process involves
some fairly tight timeframes. Some of these timeframes
have recently been changed, with some changes in the
statute last year. But I'm going to put up a list of
what they are and go over them a little bit with you.

As many of you know, there were a series
of meetings that were required to be held by the
Applicants prior to even filing their Application with
the Committee. Those are called "Pre-Application
Public Information Sessions". They are supposed to be
held in each county, and I understand or there was
representations made in this Application that they
were. And, those have to occur at least 30 days before
the filing.

Once an application is filed, it's the
obligation of the Chair of the Committee to
expeditiously forward the application to any state
agency that may have regulatory authority over the
project, permitting or regulatory authority. In
addition, the Committee is charged with expeditiously
reviewing the application, to make sure that it
contains sufficient information for the Committee to
carry out the purposes of the statute. That's all been
done. And, on December 18th, 2015, the Subcommittee
determined that the Application was complete. And,
that was after hearing from the various state agencies,
who have permitting or other regulatory authority, and
after a review of the Application by the Subcommittee. 

Now, that date, December 18th, is important, because that's the date that all other timeframes will run from during the course of this proceeding. A Subcommittee was already designated. The next step is to hold hearings like this one today. And, there -- we have to hold one public information session in each county. Now, this type of public information session, as I explained before, is an opportunity for the public to learn both about how the Committee operates and about the project. It's also an opportunity to ask questions, and to give us your opinions.

And, we have to complete these hearings within 45 days after the acceptance of the Application. And, the dates that are up there are dates on which we already have public information sessions scheduled.

Today, the day after tomorrow, the day after that, January 20th, and January 21. Do I have that right?

ADMINISTRATOR MONROE: Yes.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Okay.

Those aren't the only public hearings that we have, though. Those are information sessions. After that, the Subcommittee itself will come to each county and
hear from folks. And, that's what we call a "joint public hearing". And, those hearings will be the Subcommittee, along with any state agencies that have jurisdiction over the project. And, those will be scheduled. In this particular case, we have to schedule five of them, to occur on or before March 17th, 2016. And, those dates are yet to be determined. When they are, there will be a public notice that will be, certainly, in the statewide newspaper, the Union Leader, and it will notify folks of when those public hearings, where the Committee actually comes and sits with other state agencies, will be held.

In addition, you saw our website up on the screen earlier. All of these notices you can find on the Site Evaluation Committee's website as well.

Once we have completed the public hearing process, there is a process whereby the state agencies must provide information to the Committee. And, the information that they provide are usually in the form of conditions, draft conditions, sometimes draft permits, which basically say "given what has been filed with us, number one, we need more information", or, number two, "we have enough information, and we recommend a denial of the certificate or the permit",
or, number three, "we would recommend that you approve the certificate with the following conditions."

Those are -- and, those conditions, what we call the "draft conditions" or "agency reports", are due 150 days after the acceptance of the applications. In this case, by my calculations, that's May 16th, 2016.

Then, we have to have final reports and final conditions from the state agencies within 240 days after acceptance of the application, and that is August 15th in this particular case.

After all that occurs, that's when the Committee goes into what we call an "adjudicative" mode. It's very much like a trial. There will be scheduled a hearing, at which witnesses will testify, and will be cross-examined. There will be, in the course of that proceeding, there's a discovery period in that course of proceeding, where the parties who are intervenors exchange information, and there will be testimony that is filed in advance. Then, there will be cross-examination, as well as arguments made about whether the Application for the Certificate should be granted or not.

And, then, ultimately, the Subcommittee
is required to issue a final decision within 365 days after the acceptance of the application. In this case, by my calculations, that's December 19th, 2016.

So, that leaves a period of time, between getting all the information from the state agencies and the one-year anniversary, to hold hearings and issue a decision. And, if anybody has ever read any of the decisions of the Site Evaluation Committee, they are very thorough, they are extensive. They run anywhere from 40 to 100 pages. And, they are -- it takes a while to get there.

During the process, state agencies are involved. There are state agencies that have -- already have permitting or what's called "other regulatory authority". And, those state agencies are allowed to do certain things within the course of the proceedings. They can review proposals and requests. They can -- they can determine whether they need additional information. They determine, as I've already said, whether the application is complete from their standpoint. They can submit recommended draft permit terms or conditions to the Committee. They can also identify conditions of concerns with respect to the project, and request or notify the Committee, or,
request and notify the Committee that they don't have any concerns about the project.

However, when they do have issues of concern, they can participate in the process. They can designate witnesses to appear and provide information to the Committee, and, of course, be cross-examined, like every other witness. And, they can also appoint a -- sorry, I'm falling behind here. They can also appoint a liaison to serve, to sort of coordinate with the Committee.

What's important to understand is that, if a state agency that has permitting authority says "we could not grant the Certificate", you know, "we could not grant this a permit in our agency", then the Site Evaluation Committee cannot grant the Certificate. What's also important is that oftentimes what we have is the state agencies recommend conditions to us. And, if the Site Evaluation Committee determines that there are different conditions that they would like to impose, rather than those suggested by the state agencies, then there is a process whereby the state agencies get to come before the Committee, they get notified, and they can inform the Committee as to why their conditions should be imposed, or if they have any
objections to the conditions that are going to be proposed by the Committee.

That's a new part of the statute. We've never undertaken it before. It will be interesting to see how that works out.

What's important to understand is, this, where we are today, is not really the beginning. A lot of stuff has gone on prior to today. Before any application with the Site Evaluation Committee is filed, and I can tell that many of you already know that, but, before any application with the Site Evaluation Committee is filed, it is not unusual for there to have been some reports prepared with the ISO-New England, to determine things like reliability and whether or not a project can get on the grid, so to speak. There are a number of environmental studies that are done, both by the applicants and by other interested parties. There are pre-permitting meetings that occur with virtually every state agency that's involved. There is consideration of the concerns of regional planning commissions, municipalities, transmission companies. Obviously, this is a transmission line, so, that's not a big deal. Power purchase agreements, financing, eligibility for tax
credits, and then the prefiling public information sessions in each county. So, a lot goes on before -- even before where we are here today in this process.

But, once we get to this process, every application has to contain certain information. They must satisfy the individual application requirements of each state agency. So, if you're going to impact wetlands, you have to make sure that you have a wetlands application as part of your Site Evaluation Committee Application. You have to satisfy the Department of Environmental Services that you checked all the boxes and make sure that that application is complete.

The application also has to include a lot of other stuff. It must reasonably detail the type of facility that's being proposed, tell us how large it is, what type of facility it is. It has to identify both the preferred choice, and any other choices for each part of the facility, with respect to a transmission line, that includes routes. Has to describe in reasonable detail the impact of each major part of the facility on the environment for each site proposed. It must describe in reasonable detail the proposals for studying and solving any environmental
problems. It must tell us about the applicant's financial, technical, and managerial experience and capabilities. It must document that the application has been provided to the governing body of each community where the facility is proposed to be located. It must describe in reasonable detail the elements of and any financial assurances for decommissioning of the facility. And, it must provide such additional information as may be required to carry out the purposes of the statute.

And, what's happened with the Site Evaluation Committee, in order to address that last item there, is we now have new administrative rules that were adopted, effective just about a month ago. They are available on the Committee's website. And, there are new requirements for applications, for applications for transmission lines as well. Any application that was pending on December 16th will be -- is subject to the new rules, unless an adjudicative proceeding has begun. And, in this case, an adjudicative proceeding has not begun. And, so, in that instance, the Committee must afford the Applicant a reasonable opportunity to amend the Application to include any new requirements that the new rules
require. And, we have, indeed, sent out a letter to
the Applicant in this particular case advising them to
do that.

So, that's sort of the background of the
process that we go through at the Site Evaluation
Committee. It is a lengthy process. It is designed to
measure both benefits and impacts of any particular
project. It applies to energy facilities, as well as
transmission lines. Right now, I believe we have three
applications pending before the Committee.

In every case, regardless of the type of
project that there is, there are lots of opportunity
for the public to participate. And, that's what I'm
going to go over with you now. First of all, and, by
the way, Peter, I didn't give them your dial-in number
to your office, but the main number for the Attorney
General's Office is 271-3658. And, one way that you
can participate is by letting Counsel for the Public
know your views, your concerns, whether you're in favor
or opposed to the project, and why. And, you can reach
him at that number as well. That's the main number
into the Attorney General's Office.

We also have pre-filing public
information sessions that I'll bet that many of you
were at, that had occurred in each of the counties. And, there there was opportunities to discuss and to speak about the project. And, in each one of those instances, just as we are having court reporters here tonight, there have been transcripts made of those proceedings, and they were filed as part of the Application in this case.

There are the hearings that we are beginning tonight. And, as I said, there are five of them that are going to occur within -- between tonight and the end of next week.

And, then, there are the joint public hearings, where the Site Evaluation Subcommittee, along with the various state agencies with jurisdiction, will hold public hearings, very much in the same manner that we're hearing this tonight, although the Subcommittee itself will be there.

In addition, upon the request of a governing body or municipality, the Committee must consider whether to have additional informational meetings in any particular municipality. And, we have had a couple of requests for those. And, those requests are pending.

And, then, finally, you know, everybody
that can will have an opportunity to speak tonight. But, perhaps even more importantly is the Site Evaluation Committee accepts written public comment right through the end of our proceedings, right up until the day that they close the evidence at the end of the adjudicatory hearings, right up until the time that they vote at the deliberative hearing. And, any member of the public can provide written comment, and can provide reports or other information that they think is important for the Subcommittee to consider. And, we have a special place on our website where all of that is public, and is made available to the public.

Finally, another way to participate as a member of the public is to move to intervene in the adjudicative proceeding itself. However, that's not as broad as the rest of our opportunities to participate. And, that's because, in order to intervene, you have to demonstrate that you have rights, duties, privileges, immunities, or other substantial interests that may be affected by the proceeding. And, that the interest of justice and the orderly and prompt conduct of the proceedings would not be impaired by allowing your intervention.

In this particular case, anybody who...
wishes to intervene in this case, there has been a
deadline set of February 5, 2016. So, if you feel that
you have an interest that is impacted, a substantial
interest that is impacted by this project, and you wish
to participate as a party, you have to file a written
motion to intervene by February 5, 2016.

So, there are lots of ways for the
public to participate. From folks who may only want to
have a -- to express one particular view, to folks who
may believe that they have some very important
interests that needs to be protected by actually
participating as a party.

Now, I'm going to go over the standards
that the Site Evaluation Committee applies. First off,
the Site Evaluation Committee must give due
consideration of all relevant information regarding the
potential siting or route of a proposed facility. It
must give due consideration to the significant impacts
and benefits of a project. And, it must consider
whether the issuance of a certificate will serve the
objectives of the statute.

Ultimately, the Committee must determine
whether or not the Application for a Certificate --
whether in that Application the Applicant has proven
that there is adequate financial, technical, managerial
capability to assure the construction and operation of
the facility in compliance with any terms and
conditions that may be imposed. The Committee must be
able to find by a preponderance of the evidence that
the project will not unduly interfere with the orderly
development of the region, with due consideration being
given to the views of municipal and regional planning
commissions and municipal governing bodies.

Now, earlier in this talk I told you how
the Site Evaluation Committee process preempts your
local process, your local zoning or planning board,
this is where your local process is considered by the
Committee. The views of municipal and regional
planning commissions and governing bodies are required
by statute to be considered by the Site Evaluation
Committee. And, I can tell you, from past experience,
that they indeed are.

The Site Evaluation Committee must also
determine whether or not a proposed project will have
an unreasonable adverse effect on aesthetics, historic
sites, air and water quality, the natural environment,
and public health and safety. If they find that the
Committee -- if the Committee finds that the project
will have an unreasonable adverse effect, then it will deny the certificate. If it finds that there will not be an unreasonable adverse effect, and all of the other requirements have been complied with, then the Committee should grant the certificate.

And, finally, a new finding that the Committee must make under our new statute is "whether the issuance of the certificate will serve the public interest?"

So, I've gone over with you now sort of the background of the Committee, who's on it, what the timeframes are, what the types of things that the Committee will consider, and how you, as the public, can participate.

Again, the Site Evaluation Committee's website is up there. And, it's www.nhsec.nh.gov. And, that's the best place to go for information. But, of course, if you have questions, you can always call us. Ms. Monroe will have cards, I believe, with her number on them, if you want to pick up a business card from her. Or, you can reach me at 603-668-8300.

That's all I have as far as a presentation of how the Committee operates. What we're going to do next is we're going to give the folks from
Northern Pass an opportunity to make a presentation to you about the project. And, then, we will undertake questions that have been written out on these green sheets. And, there looks to be a lot of them. And, then, after that we will take public statements.

So, without further adieu, if Northern Pass --

(Short pause.)


All right. So, I'm Bill Quinlan. I'm the President of Eversource New Hampshire. And, I do want to thank you all at the outset for being here tonight. I know it's a big commitment of time to come here and learn about our project, and I do appreciate you taking the time out of your busy day to be here.

I will tell you that these sessions have been very valuable to us as we designed this project. You know, as Attorney Iacopino mentioned, a lot has happened over the last 12 months. We have actually moved this project into formal siting here in New Hampshire. We also have announced what we refer to as the "ForwardNH Plan", and I'll share a little bit about
that with you in a moment. But much of that has been shaped from meetings such as these, based upon input from stakeholders across New Hampshire. So, again, thanking for being here this evening.

I'm most looking forward to the question-and-answer session and hearing your comments. But we are going to provide you some basic information about the project first, and then we'll get into the question-and-answers.

So, first, a short video. And, again, what this video is intended to do is to really give you a high-level overview of the project, to reintroduce our ForwardNH Plan, to the extent you're not familiar with it. I'll then drill down into what this project means for Merrimack County. And, then, we'll take questions and answers. Okay?

So, with that, Andrea.

[Video presentation provided on the Northern Pass Project.]

MR. QUINLAN: Okay. So, hopefully, that video gave you an overview of the project and our ForwardNH Plan. Again, much of that plan was based on feedback that we received from across New Hampshire. And, what we've really been trying to do is strike a
balance. We're trying to deliver a project that addresses the concerns that we've heard from many constituents here in New Hampshire about our original design, and have a project that allows us to deliver the type of benefits that are outlined there. We can get into that a bit later. But, you know, the input we've been getting has been instrumental in shaping this plan as we moved into siting.

So, what does it mean for Merrimack County? This is a depiction of Merrimack County. You'll see that there's approximately 38 miles of overhead construction through Merrimack County. I will say, all of that is along an existing right-of-way. Which means there is an existing transmission line and a cleared right-of-way, and the new line will run parallel to it. Okay?

Importantly, I think the video mentioned this, here, in Franklin, this is where we're going to convert from direct current to alternating current. So, there will be a converter station located here in the City of Franklin.

But the visual impact that, you know, I'm sure we'll get into later tonight, it's really focused on the aboveground structures that are roughly
80 to 85 feet in height. So, the new transmission line is going to be approximately that size. The existing towers and structures are in the 45- to 50-foot range.

One of the things that we've been doing, as we get into the detailed design, is working structure-by-structure to do what we can to lower the structure heights to the aboveground portions. And, in certain instances, actually changing the design of the structure, so that it is a more streamlined structure. And, I'll show you what I mean by that in a moment.

So, the key project elements for Merrimack: Okay. So, this is an example of a view simulation. Okay, this is from the top of Franklin Dam. And, you'll see the existing line, it's a 115 kV line, it's very difficult to see probably from back there, but it runs along this treeline from a distance. That's about a half a mile from the dam itself. So, this view simulation is intended to give a depiction as to what the new line will look like from that key vantage point. And, obviously, the river is here in the foreground.

All right. So, this next simulation lakes is going to show you what the view will look like, okay? And, now you can see Northern Pass is
running in parallel. This one structure does rise above the treeline, so, it's visible from this key vantage point. The balance of the Northern Pass line kind of runs in the foreground. This is illustrative. You know, our view simulation experts have prepared dozens of these simulations, so folks can have a perspective as to, you know, "what does this mean from these key vantage points?" And, you know, so, those are available to those who have an interest.

But what we're intending to show here is, you know, kind of a monopole design. This is one of the streamlined structures that I'm referring to. It was -- we made a decision to use a monopole construction in this place, due to the importance of this view. And, again, that's about from a half mile distance. Okay?

So, we know that view impacts are critically important, okay? And, these are something that we're going to continue to focus on. You'll see Department of Energy has issued their Draft Environmental Impact Statement. They look at the total view impact or scenic impact of this project. They characterized it in a fairly modest way overall. But we are taking it very seriously. You know, since the
Department of Energy had made this determination, we have made the commitment to have underground construction for that additional 52 miles that was referred to in the video. So, this was their determination before we had made that decision to go with underground construction there.

I think the video does a good job explaining why we selected it in that area. That's the White Mountain National Forest, the Franconia Notch area, the Application Trail. These are areas and important vantage points that we have been hearing consistently from across New Hampshire stakeholders that "you really need to take a hard look at this and do what you can." So, that's why we selected that area. But our work is not done on view.

And, these are steps that we're taking beyond that. You know, at this point, we have over 80 percent of the line is either underground or in an existing right-of-way, running parallel to an existing structure. Okay? So, that's an important data point.

There are things that we can do, are to look at the structure-by-structure design, there are things that we can do to minimize view impacts, like we can move a structure, so that it's less visible, and we
use shielding, some form of vegetation, to ensure the view isn't impacted. And, this is the work that we're going to continue to do as we move through the siting process.

So, my point here is, our work is not yet done on view impacts. We understand the importance of that issue. We're committed to working locally, both with landowners and municipality, on getting this right.

So, beyond view impacts, what does this project mean? Okay? There is clearly a tax implication of the project, which is roughly a $1.6 billion project. Here is a snapshot of what it means to Merrimack County, both at a county level and then on a town-by-town basis. And, you'll see we provided a range of taxes. For towns like Franklin or cities like Franklin, hosting a project of this magnitude could have a very significant impact from a tax revenue perspective.

As the video mentioned, there's about $30 million of annual tax revenue that this project will generate. Roughly, 10 million of that will reside here in Merrimack County.

The ForwardNH Plan: Here are the key
points that I want to emphasize. You know, at a New Hampshire level, when we look at this across a period of time, there's almost $4 billion of economic benefits to the State of New Hampshire in hosting this line. And, there's a wide range of economic benefits associated with this. First and foremost, lower energy costs. One of the things we heard from businesses in particular, but also homeowners is, "if we're going to host this project, it's got to lower energy costs here in the State of New Hampshire." Our estimate is that it will have a positive impact by about $80 million a year, and that's the New Hampshire portion of that. That's a conservative number.

There's a commitment we've made to create a $200 million fund. And, that's going to drive local community investment over time, particularly in areas that are hosting the line, such as Merrimack County.

We mentioned jobs and taxes. All of that, in sum, it's about $4 billion worth of economic benefits to the State of New Hampshire in hosting the line. Below the line, what we've done is listed the environmental benefits of this project. And, they're broad. You know, it will have a very significant
impact on carbon emissions here in New Hampshire and in New England. Over 3 million tons of carbon emissions a year will be the net impact.

We've also been thoughtful about, you know, "what would the impact of a project of this magnitude have on small-scale renewables, okay, renewable generation systems?" Which is something that you hear about, whether it's wind or biomass or other projects. So, one of the things that we've committed to do as part of Northern Pass is to build out some transmission infrastructure, particularly up in the North Country, and along existing transmission lines, to upgrade that infrastructure, to actually promote additional small-scale renewable generation. Because we understand that that's a important issue, not only here in New Hampshire, but in New England.

So, ForwardNH has very significant economic benefits, from our perspective, very significant, probably unparalleled environmental benefits to this region. This is our attempt to strike an appropriate balance. You know, our goal here is to continue to work towards a project that New Hampshire can support. We look forward to your questions this evening and your comments. They're terribly important.
in helping us as we proceed through the SEC process.

So, thank you for your time and attention. And, with that, I'll turn it back over to you, Attorney Iacopino.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Thank you, Mr. Quinlan.

We do have quite a number of questions. Mr. Quinlan, there is a hand-held there in case you need to pass it over to somebody who needs to answer questions.

And, Susan and Steve, how are we doing over there?

COURT REPORTER: All set.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Okay. We have a number of questions on these green sheets. We've tried to categorize them by category of question. All of the questions will be asked. Some of them are going to be repetitive. But the first one is from Representative Deborah Wheeler.

Now, the question is: What is -- or, rather -- Will the residents of Franklin benefit from Northern Pass energy-wise, or will Northern Pass be a pass-through to other areas?

MR. QUINLAN: Part of that was answered
by the energy benefit that I just referred to there. So when you look at that $80-million-a-year annual benefit, that is spread across customers throughout the state of New Hampshire. So that's the first level of energy cost savings. What's not in that number is the positive impact of a Power Purchase Agreement that we have negotiated with our partner, Hydro Quebec. And the purpose of that is to ensure that this is not a "pass-through project," as mentioned in the question. In essence what it does is, it reserves for New Hampshire customers 10 percent of the power flowing across that line. Why 10 percent? New Hampshire's about 10 percent of New England's total load. So we want to ensure that New Hampshire got at least its fair share of the power flowing over the line. So we got a commitment from our partner for that amount of power. It's going to be very competitively priced, and it's going to provide incremental energy cost savings to New Hampshire customers above and beyond the $80 million a year. So there's really two effects, both of which combined will have a very significant, positive effect on energy costs for New Hampshire customers, both business and residential.
The next series of questions involve historic resources. The first question is kind of long, so please bear with me. This question is from the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance, and they say: The New Hampshire Preservation Alliance, a statewide non-profit dedicated to preserving historic structures, communities and landscapes in New Hampshire. We are advocating for a thorough and complete review of the impacts of Northern Pass to historic resources, as mandated by law, by SEC rules, through Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation act, and through the Environmental Impact Statements under NEPA. We have been disappointed with the latter two processes so far -- so I suppose that's a Section 106 and NEPA -- and hope that the SEC is more timely and transparent. But insofar as it relies on the 106 process, it appears to be short-changing the public. There is a frustrating lack of adequate information and data, poor communication, and few opportunities for meaningful input by the public. Our specific questions are as follows: In the summer of 2015, as part of the Section 106, four project area forms were submitted to the Department of Energy and reviewed by the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources. DHR asked that

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aspects of the methodology be altered, and also
suggested specific historic areas that needed to
receive further analysis. In addition, citizens have
repeatedly shared concerns about potential impacts to
historic resources within their towns as well, but no
further information about the identification of
historic resources has been shared, and now it appears
the SEC review will proceed without that identification
being complete as well. So the questions, are: No. 1,
what is the status of your identification of historic
resources?

I'm going to go give you one at a time.

MR. QUINLAN: One at a time. Okay. So
I'm joined here by Cherilyn Widell. She's one of our
experts from a historic resources perspective.

MS. WIDELL: Good evening, and thank you
for coming this evening. This is a complicated
question, so I'm going to take a little bit of time to
explain precisely the identification, evaluation and
assessment process that's going on. And I think it's
important for you to realize that there are actually
two processes here: One that's been completed by the
preservation company, Lynne Monroe, who is here in New
Hampshire and knows the resources probably better than
almost any historic preservation consultant. We've prepared historic assessment reports for the filing of the SEC application.

Primarily, New Hampshire Preservation Alliance -- and this is an excellent question -- is asking about the Section 106 process. There is, under the National Historic Preservation Act, a requirement for federal agencies, in this case the Department of Energy, to locate historic properties that might be affected by them giving a presidential permit for this process. They are responsible for identifying historic properties, valuing them and then mitigating any adverse effects. We have, the preservation company and myself, for Northern Pass, completed a very thorough, comprehensive, broad-scope historic resources identification report. That report is posted on the web site for the SEC application. We have also provided it, both in paper form and electronically, to all the communities located along the line. What the New Hampshire Historic [sic] Alliance have asked for primarily involve local input into the Section 106 process. It's very important that the public, you, your comments, be incorporated in that. Those comments must go to the Department of Energy. They are taken...
into consideration in the project area form and other evaluations that they do. The Division of Historic Resources as well is a major player in the Section 106 process. And in our recommendations for moving forward on this application to the SEC, it would be to complete a programmatic agreement that outlines all of the identification, assessment and mitigation things that need to be done to take care of the historic properties. Having said all that, the report that has been completed, the finding is that there is no unreasonable adverse effect of the Project on historic resources. Does that answer the question?

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: If you say it does, because the next question is actually for the Committee, and I'll answer that.

The next question is: Will the SEC be relying on the as-yet incomplete data under Section 106 or some other data?

What you have to understand is, the Site Evaluation Committee is not necessarily bound to Section 106, although they certainly do consider that, or anything else that's done at the federal level. The Site Evaluation Committee's determination is whether or not, based upon the record before it, there is any
unreasonable adverse impacts to historic resources.
And the way that the Committee will do that is it will
consider all the information that has been submitted
with the Application. In addition, between now and the
time that we have our adjudicative proceedings, those
parties who are participating in the adjudicative
process will go through a discovery period where they
will trade information. And they will put on
witnesses, and those witnesses will discuss the effects
on historic resources. And from that testimony and
from the exhibits that are filed during the course of
the adjudicative proceeding, which may include all of
the Section 106 materials, I don't know if it will or
won't, the party presents that as part of the
application or as part of the adjudicative hearing. It
will be considered, and it's from that that the Site
Evaluation Committee will make its own independent
determination as to whether or not there are any
unreasonable adverse impacts on historic resources.
So, to the extent that this question is directed to the
Site Evaluation Committee, that's the way that they
will operate, and that's what they will consider. They
will comply with their statutory obligation.

The next question, though, does go to
the Applicant.

When will the necessary additional work be done to identify historic resources, and when will it be made available to the public?

MS. WIDELL: The historic property assessment report is complete. We evaluated 1294 properties in what's called "the area of potential effect," a mile on either side of the line. We identified all properties that were constructed prior to 1968, and we also used a viewshed map to see which properties had more than minimal views of the project. We also did what is called a "windshield survey," driving every mile through 29 cities and towns to see what properties may have been affected by the Project; we then found 194.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Okay. And the next question, I guess, goes to the SEC process, too.

It says: When will citizens be given the opportunity to comment and play a meaningful part in the process? Specifically, with only nine months to make a decision, how can this possibly be a timely part of the SEC process?

First of all, it's a 365-day process
from the date that the application is accepted; so, it's actually a year-long process for the Site Evaluation Committee. And as I explained during my presentation, there are many opportunities for the public to participate in that process. You can participate through Counsel for the Public and let him know your concerns about historic resources or any other issue. You can participate by coming to meetings like this one and asking questions, or providing your input through making a public statement or comment. And as I indicated before, everything at these meetings is being recorded, and it becomes part of the record that the Committee will consider in its ultimate determination. You can come to the public hearings, where the Subcommittee will be sitting, and there will be a similar process to what we're going through tonight.

In addition, as I said, and this is probably the most important thing for folks who don't intervene in this proceeding, you have the opportunity to present written public comment and reports throughout the process. And by statute, the Site Evaluation Committee is required to review those and consider those in its determination.
And then, finally, if you can demonstrate that you have a substantial interest in the Project that would be affected and that you won't interfere with the orderly and prompt holding of our hearings, you can move to intervene. So there are a number of different ways in which the public can participate, whether they're interested in historic resources or any other issue. And so that's the opportunity that the Committee will give to the public. And we do that in every case, not just Northern Pass, but in every case that comes before the Committee.

MS. WIDELL: Counselor?

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Sure. Go head.

MS. WIDELL: The report is done to accepted standards that are developed by the National Park Service for determining what properties are eligible for the National Register. Also, all of the individuals that do this work must meet the Secretary of Interior Standards for Professionals, for architectural historians, for historians in the case of archeology, for archeology. And the standard that is used for determining whether there's an effect is called "an adverse effect." And an adverse effect is
anything that might diminish either the significance --
meaning, why is that building important? Is it
architecture? Is it agriculture? Is it a cultural
landscape -- and then, also, whether it has integrity.
Would it affect the integrity, meaning its materials,
its setting, its design, association with the location
where its located? So, all of those things are taken
into consideration when you make decisions about, one,
what is the historic property that might be affected;
two, what is that property important for? What is its
significance? What is its integrity? And three, how
is it affected? What is the adverse effect? You can
have an adverse effect by demolishing a historic
building like this or putting a subway under it and
shaking it, or building a fast-food restaurant across
the street and visually changing what you see. But in
this case, the visual adverse effects is what we were
looking at. What we were looking at was from the
building, the view of the building, whether it isolated
it from its setting or whether it created a focal
point. And if you go to the report in your community,
you will be able to learn the effects of historic
properties on your town and of the Project. Thank you.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: We have one
more on historic resources. You might want to stay up
here.

Our family owns and runs Windswept Farm, a 140-acre historic farm built in 1745 in Canterbury. We run a B & B and have a sizeable and successful equestrian facility. Our clientele is drawn to the historic landscape and beauty. PSNH right-of-way goes through the middle of our land. Current power lines are hidden behind the tree line.

No. 1, why was our historic property not identified in your list of historic properties? And No. 2, do you acknowledge the negative impact to our two businesses?

MS. WIDELL: Thank you for your question. I'm not familiar with the individual property and would have to check the database of the 1294 properties we looked at. But I would tell you that we did a very thorough view of each property that I just described. We looked at the relationship of the building and its setting to the line; what was its significance; what was its integrity, and was there actually an adverse effect. So I would hope the information would help provide the reason behind not finding an adverse effect. And I would encourage you
to be in touch with the Department of Energy and the Division of Historic Resources for this Section 106 process, to make sure that the Department of Energy takes the property into account as well. Thank you.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Okay. The next two questions deal with the Site Evaluation Committee and its authority, so I'm going to answer those.

First one: Why can't New Hampshire citizens be allowed to vote in a statewide referendum? The fact that this decision will affect so many private residents' homes and lands makes it inappropriate for politicians to decide for us.

Well, the easy answer -- I understand the sentiment. But the easy answer is because your legislature that you voted for provided a process through R.S.A. 162-H. The Legislature did not provide for a referendum process. They provided for an administrative quasi-judicial process, which is what the Site Evaluation Committee process is. Unless the Legislature decides otherwise, that's the process that the law requires us to go through and requires you as the public to go through. So that's why there won't be a referendum unless one is called for by the
appropriate authority of the Legislature.

Next question also deals with the authority of the Site Evaluation Committee, and it starts off: SEC, what makes this commercial project any different than any other developer that wants to do construction in multiple towns? There is no benefit to the New Hampshire existing utility services, and it is not required for reliability. Why doesn't the SEC defer to the local town government for siting commercial projects like this?

And it's pretty much the same answer I just gave. The Legislature created the statute. The Legislature determined that the construction of energy facilities and transmission lines was important not only to the individual towns, but also to the entire state and the entire region. As a result of that, the Site Evaluation Committee was formed, and it was formed in a way, at least according to the Legislature, so that it took into account both local concerns as well as statewide concerns. And that's why, in the very first slide that I showed you here today, that slide talked about balancing benefits and balancing impacts. And the Legislature has determined that the wisest way to do that is through a statewide committee that will
make the determination for the public, because they
have determined that energy facilities and transmission
lines are such important features, that it ought to be
a statewide determination that is made. So that's the
answer, in terms of the authority given to the Site
Evaluation Committee comes from the legislature.

Now, the next series of questions deals
with financial issues and stranded costs. First
question is a stranded cost question.

The question is: I am concerned that
the investment might turn up as a stranded cost in the
future. Is this possible?

MR. QUINLAN: Short answer is no, it's
not possible. This investment is not being made by
Eversource New Hampshire, the former PSNH. It's being
made by Northern Pass Transmission, LLC. It's a
completely separate corporate entity. It is not a
regulated utility, in the sense that its rates are set
by the PUC. So there is really no possibility for the
cost of this project to be borne by former PSNH
customers.

And I will say that's been something
we've been trying to ensure from the outset. We've
been saying that New Hampshire customers will not pay
for Northern Pass, and that remains the case. So, even though we've added costs to this project by committing to additional underground construction, this project will not be paid for by any New Hampshire customers.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: And the next question is not really about stranded costs, but it's on the same page, so I'm just going to ask you, Mr. Quinlan:

Does the new undergrounding of the DC system allow for multiple terminals to be used -- for example, for wind power from northern New Hampshire?

MR. QUINLAN: I'm going to turn this question over to -- let me introduce them.

Jim Muntz is our President of Transmission; Ken Bowes is Vice-president of Engineering. So, Ken, if you could.

MR. BOWES: So I would say -- again, I would say the simple answer is no, it's not considered in the design today. It's not a multiple-terminal line. It's a single point, end-to-end line at this point.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: The next question deals with finances again.

I receive my power from New Hampshire
Electric Co-op. What effect will the Northern Pass have on my bill?

MR. QUINLAN: So, earlier I talked about the two effects that this project will have to lower energy costs to New Hampshire customers. The first one will ensure to the benefit of all New Hampshire customers. In fact, all of New England customers. So, if you are a New Hampshire Electric Co-op customer, when I talk about $80 million a year in total energy cost savings, a proportionate share of that will flow to New Hampshire Electric Co-op customers. The second effect, which is the lowering of energy costs as a result of the Power Purchase Agreement with Hydro Quebec, that will run to Eversource New Hampshire customers. But the short answer is: New Hampshire electric customers will see the lowering of costs by its pro rata share of the $80 million a year.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Okay. Mr. Quinlan, the next two questions are very similar, so I'm going to read both questions and let you answer, okay.

The first one is: Being a landowner in a business that relies upon the beauty and historic value which would be financially affected by this
project, how do you propose to compensate the
landowners whose land and livelihood is devalued? If
you don't think it is devalued, why do you not think
it's devalued?

And then the other question is very
similar.

How do you plan to compensate landowners
whose land will be devalued as a result of their
proximity to Northern Pass?

MR. QUINLAN: So, you know, without
getting into any particular property or landowner, you
know, we are working with those landowners up and down
the route to understand the areas of concern and to
address impacts where possible. I talked about some of
the things we're doing to address visual impacts
through the location and design of the structures. We
literally had hundreds of meetings with landowners
along this route where those very topics are being
discussed. As to the issue of will the transmission
line devalue adjacent property, it's a question of --
it's really a question of proximity and the specifics
of the land. Most of the studies suggest a fairly
modest impact on the value of the property perspective.
But notwithstanding that, our commitment is to work
with landowners to address their specific concerns along the route.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Next question's a little bit long.

A number of New Hampshire towns are in litigation with PSNH or Eversource over fees to be paid to those towns for rights-of-way, et cetera. Eversource is seeking to lower these fees. Can Eversource guarantee that, should the Northern Pass line be built, that it won't sue the City of Franklin after the fact to lower payments paid to Franklin in a fashion similar to what is happening with other New Hampshire towns?

MR. QUINLAN: Just so we're clear, those instances where we have an issue with an existing town or existing property, it's not as a result of using a right-of-way; it's how do you value utility property for tax purposes. And there is a industry-accepted practice for valuing utility property. It's consistent largely throughout New England and mostly across the country. And that's a methodology we're very comfortable with. Assuming municipalities are valuing property using that methodology, we're very comfortable making the commitment that was referred to here, which
is to not seek to abate property taxes. The only time we have an issue with the town is when they're using a different methodology that dramatically increases the amount of taxes paid by our customers. Now, we have a fiduciary obligation to our customers to keep our rates as low as possible. And when a town imposes taxes using a methodology that drives significant cost increases to our customers, that's when some of these issues arise.

So, back to the slide I was showing. We provided ranges of taxes under different assumptions associated with this project. We're also willing to make commitments to the municipalities or towns hosting in the form of, in essence, a tax pledge. That's something we would commit to on a town-by-town basis; taxes would not go below those numbers. And that's based upon the methodology that is accepted in the industry.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Okay. Mr. Quinlan, I have three more questions about taxes, and that's sort of the end of the financial circumstances. One of them is different than the other two. The other two are kind of similar, so I'm going to start with one that's a little bit different.
This project promises tax revenue for several years. Is that money coming from PSNH or Northeast Utilities? Where is it coming from?

MR. QUINLAN: Yeah, so the taxes are part of the ongoing expense of operating the Project. The way this project is being approached, Eversource is building the project. So we're incurring the expense associated with the project, and we'll recover it through our contract with Hydro Quebec. So, in essence, not only the original capital investment, but the associated expense for things like property taxes will essentially flow from Hydro Quebec to Northern Pass, to the municipalities.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: The next two questions are similar, so I'm going to read them both to you and ask that you please answer them both, okay. The first one's a little bit long.

Given that Eversource is presently suing something more than 50 small towns, many in the North Country, to reduce their tax assessments by as much as two thirds, why should select boards and citizens place any faith at all in the tax benefits estimated for Northern Pass to the host communities?

And then the other question that's
similar is: We are aware that PSNH is suing many towns right now to give PSNH tax abatements from promised revenue of existing projects. Please name all of the towns that PSNH is currently litigating against.

So you might want to take those one and two.

MR. QUINLAN: Okay. So they're obviously related questions. But, you know, back to my earlier response. To the extent the municipality is using the accepted methodology for determining taxes, we don't have an issue, and we pay our fair share of taxes. I think we're probably the single largest taxpayer in the state of New Hampshire on behalf of our customers. It's in instances where a municipality dramatically over-taxes our customers that we have to raise the issue. We have a fiduciary obligation to our customers to do so. There are several dozen municipalities in this state who have used methodologies that are really not consistent with the industry practice, and that's where we're working to resolve the issue.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Here's one you didn't expect here: How does this benefit the residents of Stark?
MR. QUINLAN: The residents of Stark will be similar to residents throughout New Hampshire. The Forward NH Plan I talked about, with nearly $4 billion in benefits to the state of New Hampshire, you know, a portion of that will go to the town of Stark. You know, Stark obviously is in the North Country. Many of the commitments we've made there are going to have a particular focus on towns like Stark in the North Country and other towns hosting the line. So, residents of Stark will see lower energy costs, will see job opportunities, will see tax benefits, and will see environmental benefits as well.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Why should I have to look at these towers and wires for my lifetime?

MR. QUINLAN: Well, that's --

(Audience applause)

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Go ahead.

MR. QUINLAN: So, you know, this project is a very important project to New Hampshire and to the region. If we are truly trying to replace the retiring power plants across this region, we've got to find alternative suppliers. Something will be built, whether it's transmission lines, wind projects, gas
infrastructure. The reality is that we've got to replace the power plants that are retiring, whether they're nuclear plants in Massachusetts and Vermont, coal plants, oil plants. Across the region, we are moving away from the generation fleet that this region has relied on for many decades to keep the lights on. In our view, this is the single best project for beginning to replace that retired capacity. It is a clean source of electricity. It is a reliable source of electricity. It is affordable, and it looks like a power plant -- meaning it's available all hours; it is not intermittent. That's why this project is in the best interest of New Hampshire and New England and should move forward.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Thank you, Mr. Quinlan. Now, about the next 12 pages we have are all questions that involve burying the transmission lines. Some of them have a little bit of a different take on them. I think I'll try to start with those.

The first question along these lines is: Did you study the option of burying Northern Pass along interstate highway corridors? If not, why not? If so, why did you not pursue such an action?

MR. QUINLAN: Yes, and I have Mark
Hodgdon here. So we have looked at many alternatives to the existing route, one of which is the so-called "4A option" under the Department of Energy's review. Those of you not familiar with the document, it's essentially to have the power lines run down Interstate 93.

So, Mark, can you address that issue?

MR. HODGDON: Interstate I-93 isn't really a viable option for burial of this project for a wide variety of reasons, but which I can't really cover in a meeting like this. But the most important ones are that, if you think of I-93, what it is, it's a major freeway through the state of New Hampshire. It is a central line that runs up the heart of New Hampshire from southern New Hampshire for both goods and services and trucking from southern New Hampshire all the way up through northern New Hampshire, to Vermont and beyond. It is intended to be a high-speed and efficient road. And that's very important from DOT's perspective. They want to protect the efficiency and the safety of that road and its design purposes.

In accordance with that, they've adopted rules for when a utility can use the right-of-way in what is called a "longitudinal" manner, meaning along the road rather
than across.

When you're going longitudinally, or with the road, you have to -- the first thing you have to do is show an extreme hardship. And DOT criteria sets forth a number of standards you have to meet to show extreme hardship. The most important one for people to understand is you have to show that you have no other viable alternatives. In other words, they want it to be a last resort. And from DOT's perspective, the roads that are proposed to be used are viable alternatives. From DOT's perspective, those roads are preferable than the impacts on I-93 that would result. Now, keep in mind that, if you could meet the extreme hardship criteria, if you could, DOT's then standards, the next level of standards would require, one, you can't be in the median, and most certainly you can't be underneath the existing roadway. They want you to be out at the existing edge of the right-of-way by the fence line. And if you drive up I-93, you'll see off to the left or the right -- actually, it would be on the right. You'll see the fence line off in the woods. And to access that area, they're not going -- you're not permitted to use the roadway itself. So you would have to build essentially...
an access road along that area, and you'd have to clear that area. And if you drive along, you'll see a lot of ledge. Extensive tree removal would be required. You'd have wetlands impacts. The change of the I-93 driving experience would be enormous. Quite simply, it's just not a viable alternative when you consider all those kinds of impacts would be required.

In addition, there is no further construction allowed in the Franconia Notch without federal approval. And you're not likely to get that for this sort of project. And keep in mind, Franconia Notch is, at least in my humble opinion, probably the most environmentally sensitive and culturally important area in our state. So you're not likely to get approval there, which means, as a practical matter, from Bethlehem down to Woodstock, you're going on the roads that are proposed, if you're going on roads. Those are the only viable options that at least I'm aware of. So, as a practical matter, I-93 just doesn't work as an option for those reasons and a number of others that have been stated in the record.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Okay. The next question is: What is the cost difference between the existing design and a complete burying of the
lines, and how long of a time would it take to amortize those costs?

MR. HODGDON: I'm a lawyer, not an accountant, so I have to defer to --

MR. QUINLAN: So I'll turn this over to the team in a moment. But the high-level incremental cost, if we were to go from 60 miles of underground construction, which is what we currently have, to 190 or so of underground construction, it's approximately an additional billion dollars. It's $5- to $10 million per mile of additional costs over conventional overhead construction. So, when you run that out, assuming, you know, kind of an average set of field conditions, it's about $1 billion of incremental costs.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: For the lawyer: If it is impossible to use the Route 93 as an underground corridor, why did New Hampshire DOT designate it as an underground utility corridor in HB626?

(Audience applause)

MR. HODGDON: Well, the -- is this on?

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Yes.

MR. HODGDON: The HB -- I forget the number --
MR. HODGDON: -- 626 process has been extended for years. And I think what they're referring to is the map that was provided. And if you look on the bottom of that map, it's "for discussion purposes by DOT." But remember, DOT will consider, under certain circumstances, using I-93. But when they do consider using I-93, it's out at the fence line. And that's where people sometimes don't fully appreciate the impacts that would result from being out by that fence line, both aesthetically and environmentally.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: More I-93.

You stated previously that you cannot use any part of the I-93 corridor for any part of a buried component of this project. Is this because New Hampshire DOT has told you the corridor is not available to you, or is it because of some other reason; and if so, what is that reason?

MR. HODGDON: Sorry, but I disagree with the premise of that. But that aside, DOT has not said you can't use it. They said you have to comply with our regulations. And it's those regulations and rules which are intended to protect the integrity of I-93 that we are focusing on and which I've discussed.
PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Next one probably goes back to you, Bill.

Is it -- isn't it true that, if the lines were to be buried, the cost of the Northern Pass project would increase? Wouldn't this create increase in property taxes collectable, and wouldn't burying the lines create more local jobs?

(Audience applause)

MR. QUINLAN: Yeah. So, as to the first question, clearly the cost would increase. Again, if we went from our current proposal to an all-underground project, it would add a billion dollars of cost. So the taxable property would go up and, therefore, the associated tax revenue would go up. As far as jobs are concerned, it depends. You know, underground construction is specialty work, okay. So it may be that you have to rely more on contractors from outside of the state of New Hampshire to perform that work.

You know, I will say that one of the things I didn't mention at the outset is we've made what we refer to as "New Hampshire first" commitment, okay. So, for the entirety of this project, in every instance we have an opportunity to put New Hampshire residents to work, that's our intention to do so. So,
while we may be bringing some national contractors to oversee this work, to the extent possible, all of this will be sourced locally, including the electrical.

So, I think as to the second question, you know, are there more jobs in it for New Hampshire for underground, it depends.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: I have five sheets of questions here that all pretty much ask the same thing. This one capsulizes it the best, and then there are some other sort of side lights on some of the questions. So what I'm going to do is go through them, but they all really come under the same heading of this question: Why can't the proposed power lines be buried, all of them?

The next one is: Aside from not making as great a profit, what reason is there to not bury all of the lines?

Next one is: As tourism is the third largest employer in the state, and the Lakes Region generates the largest percentage of tourism dollars, why does Northern Pass not consider the viewscapes of the Lakes Region as important as those of the White Mountains and propose burial of the lines throughout our region also?
The next one is: There are three proposed power line proposals in the Northeast, all of which have acknowledged that buried is technically feasible in New Hampshire. Why, therefore, are you not burying the line 100 percent, other than it will cost Northeast Utilities more money?

And finally: Today, housing developments have the utility wires buried. Why doesn't that apply to these utility wires?

These questions all ask why you won't bury the entire line. There's one question that suggests that consideration of the Lakes Region may be appropriate because of its tourism. If you could address of all of those questions, is that fair?

MR. QUINLAN: Yeah, we'll give it a try, okay.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Okay.

MR. QUINLAN: So, I said at the outset we've been working to strike a balance between a project that works technically, is affordable, and addresses, to the extent we can, New Hampshire concerns. And that's some of the things that we talked about earlier in delivering New Hampshire benefits. So, as to the question of underground, you know, if we
added a billion dollars of cost to this project with complete underground construction, our view is that the Project is no longer economical. At the end of the day, someone is going to pay for this project, and right now it's our partner. The additional billion dollars of cost with all underground construction is not a project that, in our view, is economic. So, that's one of the key drivers behind our decision.

Why did we select the areas that we did for underground construction? It was based on feedback that we received from across New Hampshire. Almost universally, regardless of where you were in the state and who you were talking to, people focused on the impact on the White Mountain National Forest. Mark talked about Franconia Notch. We heard that. And we heard the Appalachian Trail, didn't matter where you were in the state, repeatedly. So, in striking this balance and prioritizing the Project, you know, and let's mitigate the most critical views, that's why we selected the 60 miles that we've selected. It was based upon feedback from you in the state of New Hampshire and our attempt to strike a balance that addresses those principal concerns and is still economic.
PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: The rest of the questions don't fall within any particular category.

The first one is: What will be the impact to an already tough biomass market? These markets are crucial to good forestry in New Hampshire.

MR. QUINLAN: Yes. So I mentioned earlier that one of the things we're doing is we're going to be upgrading a portion of the existing Coos Loop. That's a transmission loop that exists up in the North Country. There are several biomass plants that feed into that loop. Our hope and expectation is that, through that upgrade we are actually going to unlock some of the small-scale renewables and allow them to get to market more frequently, whether they're wind or biomass or small-scale renewable. We've made that commitment, and we think that they're going to see a benefit.

You know, as to other biomass projects across the state, those plants generally are dispatched because they generate what we refer to as "renewable energy credits." Those credits are highly valued in the market. So, for the most part, unless there's a transmission issue, those plants should be running, so
it should not be negatively impacted by a project like Northern Pass.

    I will say, just back to an earlier point, you have almost 8,000 megawatts of generation retiring in New England for the five-year period, whether it's nuclear, coal or oil. Northern Pass will replace a little over 1,000 of those retiring megawatts. So there's plenty of room for other forms of generation to backfill that diminished supply.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Okay. Next question goes to economics.

Out of the $80 million in savings, what is the per-household or per-customer savings for people in New Hampshire? Is it $1 per year, $50 per year? Is it worth it?

MR. QUINLAN: So it's going to vary, depending on the customer, whether you're a residential customer, what your consumption is, or if you're a business customer. On average across the New Hampshire customer base, not just PSNH, but also the Co-op and Liberty and Unitil, we're estimating about a 5-percent energy cost savings. Now, in addition to that, I mentioned the Power Purchase Agreement which will yield some additional savings for Eversource New Hampshire
customers.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Okay. And the last two questions I have involve the Franklin facility.

Why is the conversion station planned for Franklin instead of Deerfield? Wouldn't it be less expensive to bury the lines if they were DC to Deerfield?

MR. QUINLAN: So I'm going to refer that question over to Jim or Ken. Or Sam. Sam is another one of our project engineers.

MR. JOHNSON: Hi. Careful consideration was made into where the converter facility would be located. We looked basically at any area between Deerfield and actually a little bit north of Franklin when we originally looked at the line. There's several considerations that need to be included, most notably from an electrical standpoint: Where does it make the most sense to site a facility; and then secondly, do you have a community that's willing to host you? Quite frankly, from the beginning, Franklin was a very open-armed community, and it made sense for us to put it here. So, the two big considerations are the electrical location within the system itself and then
finding a place that would host in the community.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Second part of the question was: Is it less expensive to bury the lines if they were DC?

MR. JOHNSON: No, it is more expensive to bury the lines. As Bill alluded to earlier, it's somewhere in that $5- to $10 million.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Stay here. One more question for you.

Would there be less line loss of electricity if the DC to AC converter station proposed for Franklin was built in Massachusetts?

MR. QUINLAN: Repeat the question, please?

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Would there be less line loss of electricity if the DC to AC converter station proposed for Franklin was built in Massachusetts?

(Company representatives conferring.)

MR. JOHNSON: Sorry. We're just having a little -- the answer is DC lines have less line losses on them. So if the line did go all the way to New Hampshire -- I'm sorry -- to Massachusetts, there would be less line losses. However, this project
doesn't bring the energy to Massachusetts. It brings it to a point in New Hampshire, where it enters the system in Deerfield.

MR. QUINLAN: Just so -- let me add to that, not from a technical perspective but from a financial perspective.

Having the power delivered to Deerfield, New Hampshire, will drive the biggest energy cost savings at that delivery point, okay. So, location matters. And another way of saying that is New Hampshire customers benefit from the fact that the power is delivered in this state as opposed to Massachusetts. The local price suppression is greatest at the point of delivery, okay.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Okay. I think that we have exhausted all of the written questions that we received. We're now going to move into that part of our meeting where we allow the public to make comments or statements. If you wish to make a comment or statement, you should fill out one of these yellow sheets at the table outside the doors and drop it off with Ms. Monroe here or with Iryna or one of the other workers out in the back. I have approximately 15 yellow cards right now. If that's all we're going to
get, I'm going to allow about four minutes per speaker. And just so everybody knows, I'm going to take the Mayor of Franklin and the city councilors first, and they will be given the same amount of time to speak as everybody else, okay. So let's start off with Mayor Merrifield.

Incidentally, if I call your name to make a statement and you're up in the balcony, there are microphones up there. You can speak from up there.

Mr. Mayor.

MAYOR MERRIFIELD: First I would like to offer a welcome to the panel this evening for coming to the city of Franklin, and certainly to everyone in the audience. I don't recognize all of you, so I think that some of you may be from out of town.

But I do want to invite you all -- I do want to invite you all to come back and enjoy some of the amenities that we have here in Franklin, whether in cold weather or warm, a lot of water resources. When I think about those water resources here in the city of Franklin, I think back to a hundred years ago when Franklin was a great commercial and economic center because of the water resources that are here. And I think that it's really fitting that Franklin may well
see, because of the DC converter station that we've
been discussing, may well see a second Golden Age
because of that great investment in our community.
Current estimates for the taxable value of the DC
converter station is about $400 million, and the entire
city of Franklin today is only valued at $500 million.
So it is an extraordinary, once-in-a-lifetime
opportunity for this community that has over the past
decades struggled tremendously with costs associated
with educating our students, caring for those in need
here with infrastructure needs. And I speak on behalf
of a united and unanimous city council, who just few
days ago fully endorsed this project. So we are
hopeful that the process will go smoothly for the Site
Evaluation Committee, and we look forward to approval.
Thank you.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Thank you,
Mr. Mayor.

Tony Giunta.

MR. GIUNTA: Thank you very much,
Attorney Iacopino. It's a pleasure to be here this
evening. Thank you all for coming. I want to give
credit to you in starting off this whole presentation
by making us aware of R.S.A. 162-H. And I think it put
it into perspective, and it allowed me to sort of start my comments by just highlighting some of the things you said that the SEC will consider when they're looking at this project: Viability of manufacturing, growth of industry, economic growth and welfare of the population. So, as a city councilor, instead of looking at the macro vision, let me show you a micro vision of what I see as a city councilor.

I represent Ward 1. Ward 1 happens to have the most industry and manufacturing in the city of Franklin. So I get a chance to interact with the owners of businesses and manufacturing. For the last two and a half years, I have to tell you that those owners, CEOs, manufacturing business owners, have told me they are very, very concerned with the price of electricity. I don't think it comes as a surprise to anybody in this room that New England has the highest electric rates anywhere in the United States. So they are fearful of the fact that they are no longer competitive, not just with India and China on an international scale, but on a national scale. When you're looking at twice the electric costs in this region as compared to the south, as compared to the west, they don't have to move thousands of miles...
anymore. The consideration is now: Do I move 250 miles to the southwest and get have half the rate for my electric costs? So if we're discussing here tonight and saying what is the effect going to be on me, what is my rate going to be, and you're paying $150 on average, it doesn't sound like much when it's 5 or 10 percent. But with the manufacturers and industry in this city, when they're spending a half a million dollars a year on electric rates, the ability to reduce that number in some cases in half by moving 250 miles has to become a serious consideration for these businesses.

Quick demographics about the city of Franklin. We have about 4400 workers in the city of Franklin; 20 percent of them working in manufacturing and business in this city. That represents four manufacturers that over 1,000 people in this city employ. If one of those manufacturers leaves, it's a significant impact to this city. And one has already. And I will tell you right now, when that industry leaves, they're very unlikely to come back. How do I know that? Because we've asked them. In 2006 an industry left. Last year we asked them, "Hey, how about coming back to the city of Franklin?" And their
answer wasn't just "No," it was "Hell, no, we're not coming back. We like it in the Carolinas. It's actually warm here in the winter time. Plus, our rates are a lot less when it comes to energy."

So it does boil down to us. I understand that. But recognize you're talking about 1,000 individuals in this city that depend on business and manufacturing. And if these manufacturers decide to leave, we are in serious trouble. So when it comes right down to the welfare of our population, please consider my comments and do whatever you can to help reduce the rates for our businesses and industries here in the city of Franklin. Thank you.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: City Councilor Doug Boyd.

MR. BOYD: "Support clean energy. Support the Northern Pass." I should have worn my jersey. I have one. Let me just say that I have done commercials for Northern Pass. A couple years ago I think I started that, only because I was extremely supportive of the Northern Pass. It's going to be a great thing our -- for all of New England. And I think the other thing, too, is it's welcome to have all you people here. I thought deer hunting season was over.
In any event, watching the situations and asking everything about what's going to go on for Northern Pass, they say 1200 construction jobs, and now they're thinking it's going to be a lot more than that for what has to be done. And that's going to give a lot of people some great jobs for a period of time.

Twenty-eight million dollars per year in local, county and state tax revenue; $20- to $35 million in low energy costs. These are some things that have to be emphasized. Even here in our great people's community, they're talking somewhere in the area of between $4- to $6 million. They're not absolutely sure what it's going to be in taxes. But I must say, if it was going to be nothing, we'd still be totally in favor of the Northern Pass for what it's going to do for all the great people that live here. But even if it was less, no one would care.

Every one of us that live in the great state of New Hampshire, in our great country, you should be supporting the Northern Pass 100 percent. Believe me, it's going to be fantastic. Sixty miles underground, that's going to be unbelievable. And when you go up and drive up through Lincoln New Hampshire now, this and that, you don't see a lot of that. And
you see the mountains and you see everything, and it's still great. And it's never going to change as a result of this. I'm very, very, very impressed with everything that has been done. And I did the commercials for them. I had some people say to me, "Well, how much did they pay you to do that?" Well, they didn't pay me one penny, because the only reason I would do anything -- as an ex-Marine, as an ex-state trooper and chief of police, the only thing I care about is what is in the best interest of this great state, and the Northern Pass is that.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Okay. Next we have Elizabeth Drogan [sic].

MS. DRAGON: Hi, my name is Elizabeth Dragon, D-R-A-G-O-N.

COURT REPORTER: Could you spell that, please?


As you heard this evening already, recently the city council voted unanimously in support of this project. But I'm sure most of you know it's not the first time we've had that discussion because we've participated in this process for the last few
years. And one of the reasons it's so important to us is obviously the socioeconomic impacts of the project for the city of Franklin, but also for the state of New Hampshire. It's a $1.6 billion project that is taxable. And giving the communities a revenue boost at a time when we're all fighting to come out of the biggest recession in recent history is very important. The city of Franklin, as you heard from the mayor, was once a vibrant mill town, but now we have students in our schools that, one out of every two are eligible for free or reduced lunch. That's our reality. The city of Franklin, as you also heard, has a tax base of just over $5 million, and this project would be approximately $4 million added to the tax base. That's $5 million of tax revenue each year, tax revenues that is brought to the city without impacting services. Oftentimes when a project is built in your community, there's also an impact to the services that are provided with that project. Once the lines and the facility are built, there really is, for most communities, no impact to community services; therefore, little to no increase of cost to provide services for a project like this.

And we heard about jobs. And I know
that there's been a lot of controversy about whether
the jobs are permanent or temporary. But any job is
important to a person when they don't have one.

Economic spinoff. When a project like
this is built, it's going to bring people to our
community. Tonight there are people in our community,
and when the construction happens, there will be people
in the community for over three years, those people who
might need lunch or stop at the store and buy a gallon
of milk. Certainly not something that's going to
support a business forever, but it might be enough for
that store or that small business owner to do that
project that they've been putting off for years. It
might give them that temporary boost that they so
desperately need.

We also know that we support renewable
energy, and this project will provide enough renewable
energy to power one million homes in New Hampshire.
That is not a small number. One million homes.

Also, it's important to know that the
Hydro Quebec project is entirely paid for by Northern
Pass. Oftentimes when projects like this are built,
it's passed on to the ratepayer, and this project is
not. So, in reality, we all like to use our cell
phones, but we often don't want the cell tower in our communities because we simply just don't want it in our back yards. But one can't function without the other. The same goes for projects like this. We all want to reduce our carbon footprint and have affordable energy to run our homes and businesses, so we need projects like this to get us there.

This project is vital to the city of Franklin in terms of tax revenue. But hopefully I've also illustrated it's vital to the state of New Hampshire as well. So, on behalf of the mayor, the city council, and myself, we continue our unanimous support for this project. And I'm happy to answer any additional questions you have throughout the rest of the process.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Next person in line is Joe Drinon. And when you approach the microphone, just spell your name for our court reporters, please.

MR. DRINON: Thank you for the opportunity. My name's Joe Drinon. I'm from Bow. We're not affected by this transmission line, but you don't have to be a Marine and a former fireman and a police or state policeman to love this state. And I'm
against this project because I do love the state. And I didn't appreciate the snide remark about the hunting season being over. I felt welcome to this town until I heard that comment.

I have a question for Mr. Quinlan. Hydro Quebec is paying for the entire Northern transmission line. What is the justification for the 12-1/2 percent return on equity annually that Eversource is receiving from Hydro Quebec? That amounts to -- I don't expect you to tell us what you think that is. Probably proprietary. But it would seem to me that's probably going to be somewhere around $100 million a year. The Project costs around $1.6 billion, something like that. So my question is two parts. What risk is Eversource taking on to warrant such an enormous return on equity, which is $100 million a year?

And my other question is, if you were to incur another $100 million -- a billion dollars in costs, how would that affect this 12-1/2 percent? And is that cost incurred by you or Hydro Quebec? How does that work out?

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Mr. Drinon, the time to ask questions was before, and we did it in
an orderly process. Now is the time for people to make statements. So I think for now we'll have to consider your question as a rhetorical question that people can consider. This isn't the time to quiz the representatives of the Applicant.

MR. DRINON: That's okay if you don't want to answer the question. That's fine.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: I'm sure there will be plenty of answers for you. Okay?

Again, we do these meetings in an organized fashion, so that everybody can go home with at least an understanding of everybody's position. And, that's the way we're going to run them tonight, and for the next four of them, and then when the Committee is, too.

So, if you have questions, and you come to another meeting, and you have a question, please write it down on the forms that we provide, so that the questions can be asked in an organized fashion.

The next person who has asked to speak is John Olson.

MR. OLSON: Thank you very much. Many of you know me by name. I'm a manufacturer. I employ 1,000 people in Charlestown. We pay -- manufacturing
pays over 70 percent of the taxes in the State of New Hampshire. We pay, other than professional services, we pay the highest hourly wages of anybody in New Hampshire. Our company's minimum wage, with bonus, was $22.72 an hour. And, everybody worked a 52-hour week, plus over time. And, they have huge benefits. That's what manufacturing brings to the state.

However, the cost of electricity, in our particular plant, is a major consideration. Millions of dollars a year are spent on electricity. And, we are the highest in the nation, published in the paper, by the way, highest in the nation. I'm getting calls, like the gentleman before me said, other manufacturers are, all over this country. Georgia Power quoted me 3.5 delivered, for all I want. My bill last month was 20.1 per kWh average.

Now, I'm worried about my 1,000 people and how long they're going to be here. I compete, I'm the only manufacturer of emergency warning signals. Yes, the blinking lights on the top of the police cars and the sirens, in the United States. Fourteen other competitors manufacture their products in China and India. I employ a thousand people in New Hampshire, 900 people in Connecticut, and over 250 people in
Coventry, England. I worry about about those people. But I have to worry about staying in business. And, the high cost of electricity is one of the decisions that have to be reckoned with.

When Northern Pass first announced, and started throwing around some numbers of how much electricity was going to cost, most of the Canadians right now get about 8.1, 8.2 per kilowatt-hour, plus delivery, plus delivery. I wrote editorial that were in every newspaper, on behalf of BIA, in support of Northern Pass.

But now that I find that we have almost doubled the cost of Northern Pass, yes, it will be more than double when you get through. I'm an engineer by profession also. I know how numbers work in the beginning stages and where they end up in the end. And, by the way, you don't need to have an A in Economics from college to understand who pays for this: You do. Every single penny comes out of your pocket.

Okay? Don't be fooled. Oh, "Eversource is paying for it", "this guy's paying". I haven't heard the people from Northern Pass say that; the people on the floor are saying it. They're not right. We are going to pay a much higher rate for electricity
than we pay now, when this is all done.

Also, it's over ten years late. I started trumping this thing in New Hampshire ten years ago, that we need power. When my general manager and vice president gets a call on a hot summer afternoon to shut down and go on generator, you don't have the power.

But let me tell you something, I've been talking to all my compatriots in New Hampshire, BIA members and manufacturers, we're going to have plenty of power without Northern Pass, because we're moving. The biggest manufacturer in New Hampshire is about to announce a move. And, other companies are moving one-by-one.

You will have a surplus of electricity without Northern Pass. It isn't worth the investment, because you can't afford what's going to come off of it. Now, that's 180 degrees past my editorials that I wrote. I'm sorry, but economics dictate that we can't afford what you're going to deliver. Thank you very much.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Thank you, sir. Our next speaker is Ruth Niven.

And, ma'am, if you could spell your last
name, too, so, the court reporters can get it down.

MS. NIVEN: My name is Ruth Niven, N-i-v-e-n. I'm from Franklin, New Hampshire. I've always lived in Franklin. I grew up in New Hampshire. Like many other New Hampshire residents, I love this state. And, it hurts to see that financial considerations sway our good judgment.

We were asked, in the guidelines, for our comments not to be repetitive. But those of us who oppose the Northern Pass Project have said the same thing for five years: "We don't need it. We don't want it. But, if we must have it, bury it."

After five years of saying the same thing, the Northern Pass Project has decided to bury 58 out of 192 miles of overhead transmission lines. That's not enough. Bury all of it.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Next would be Craig Pullen.

MR. PULLEN: Hi. My name is Craig Pullen, P-u-l-l-e-n. I live in Canterbury, Windswept Farm, 1745 it was established. And, now, we've undertaken that project. We're less than a quarter of a mile away from these lines. We count on the beauty of our area to bring our clientele to us. We're an
equestrian facility, we have a Bed & Breakfast there.  
Looking at our easement that goes  
through our property, you have an easement through for  
the lines that are there now, not for additional lines.  
Northern Pass is leasing it from the wrong people.  It  
should be the property owners.  I pay taxes on that  
property.  I maintain that property underneath.  

Sorry.  We leave our private property  
open for all public use.  You're not welcome on it.  

Sorry.  This is quite hard for me,  
because it's -- we've put a lot of effort and time and  
finances into maintaining our property.  It's, like as  
I said, it's 1745.  Why it's not a historic resource,  
why it wasn't looked at?  I couldn't tell you.  But I  
think your Application is incomplete, and the effort  
hasn't been there.  

Everybody has a concern here in this  
room.  There's only one answer.  If you want the  
profits, bury it for everybody.  That will make you  
happy.  Thank you.  

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Next  
speaker is Tiler Eaton.  

MR. EATON: Hi.  My name is Tiler Eaton.  

And, I'm here tonight as a New Hampshire resident.
And, I also support and work for thousands of International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers members in the State of New Hampshire. We are 100 percent in favor of Northern Pass, and believe the compromises that have been made are huge.

The underground section alone may be the largest and longest underground DC transmission cable, not only in the United States, but possibly in the world, according to ABB's website. So, you can check it out.

The jobs, they're real jobs. They come, you know, not minimum wage, where taxpayers have to, you know, like Walmart workers or whatever. These are jobs that come with healthcare, pensions, and other ways to support families.

But we heard it tonight, when we're in communities, when we do these projects, we're all about the communities. We spend our money in the communities, whether it be in restaurants, stores. This is a good project for the State of New Hampshire. It's a good project for the region.

And, again, a lot of us don't like change. But, you know, who thought that 20 years ago that, you know, everything that we did would be done
off of a cellphone, but we got used to that. I think we have to think about everybody.

I believe we should also concentrate on bringing manufacturing to the North Country. DC power is the best source for manufacturing. My family, we own property, own a home in the North Country. And, you know, it's, from when we first purchased it some 30 years ago, if you go up there now and you see some of these towns with houses boarded up, that it seems to me there's nothing there for the community, nothing there to keep the younger people to want to stay in the North Country, like people were before when the paper mills were going strong and all that.

So, this job is about lowering the cost of energy, not only for New Hampshire residents, but everybody in New England. And, I think it's the right time, it's the right thing. And, I hope it happens soon. Thank you.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Our next person who asked to speak is Carolee Longley.

And, ma'am, when you come up, if you could spell both your first name and your last name for our court reporters please.

MS. LONGLEY: Hi. It's Carolee,
C-a-r-o-l-e-e, and last name is Longley, L-o-n-g-l-e-y.

I'm very thankful for the opportunity to be here tonight. I'm a resident of Merrimack County, I live in Northfield. And, it's my opinion that this project will have an unreasonably adverse impact on the beautiful scenic and aesthetic quality of life that we enjoy in this state called "New Hampshire". This project will have an unreasonable adverse impact on the natural environment of this state.

If the Northern Pass cannot be buried 100 percent, then New Hampshire says "no". I say "no" to 85-foot towers. I say "no" to your 38 miles of overhead construction in my Merrimack County.

We have heard that New Hampshire will receive a benefit of $30 million in property taxes. Well, we just heard tonight that 10 million of that will remain in Belknap County -- I'm sorry, Merrimack County. How many cities and towns are in Merrimack County? Do the math. Will it be worth it at the expense of our natural resources?

And, the Northern Pass mentioned tonight the tax pledge that it will be on a town-by-town basis that they will not apply for tax abatements. People better pay attention.
It's been said that the Northern Pass will bring a new electricity source to New Hampshire. Really? We just heard here tonight that Northern Pass will carry 90 percent of the electricity to Massachusetts. Keeping only 10 percent of it in New Hampshire. Will this really benefit the public in New Hampshire? I say "no".

Don't fall for it, like the elderly gentleman said. Don't fall for it. As a Native American, who deeply respects the natural beauty and the natural resources of this state, I say don't let the Northern Pass scalp our lands. Spend the additional million dollars -- billion dollars and bury the Pass.

I've heard talk that Northern Pass will provide over 2,000 jobs for New Hampshire. The truth is, many of these jobs will require skilled workers. And, the reality is, New Hampshire is having a workforce crisis right now. We're lacking skilled workers. And, the Northern Pass is going to have to go out-of-state to hire some of these jobs. Don't be fooled. That's the truth.

Do the right thing, bury the Pass 100 percent, or I say "no".

{SEC 2015-06} [Public Info. Session/Franklin] {01-11-16}
PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Maggie Stier.

MS. STIER: My last name is Stier, S-t-i-e-r. I represent the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance. And, I just want to thank you for the opportunity to address you tonight, to ask questions and provide comments.

The review of historic resources is quite complicated. And, we understand that, for many in the audience tonight, the Section 106 process, the NEPA process, and the SEC process can be difficult to separate and understand thoroughly.

What I think is important to understand tonight is that not just buildings, but rural landscapes, and both pre- and post-contact archeological resources are at stake here. And, whether it's aboveground or belowground, here in Franklin, or anywhere throughout the state, this is a complex process. Made even more challenging by the timeframe, the number of people involved, and the differing sets of data, which have been shared so far and will be forthcoming.

It's important to the Preservation Alliance and to all of you involved here to say that
cooperation is going to be really key, between landowners, between the Department of Energy, between Northern Pass, all of the stakeholders and the consulting parties. That we do this in a collaborative and open and transparent and robust way as possible, to get through the review of historic resources, and to do whatever we can to agree on those adverse effects, using the proper channels, SEC review, Section 106 review, in particular.

So, we look forward to being part of that. Thank you.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: David Darlington.

MR. DARLINGTON: David Darlington, from Litchfield, New Hampshire. First off, I'd say, for Franklin, I don't blame them for wanting to take the money and run. But, unfortunately, it kind of reminds me of their heritage, like other towns in New Hampshire, they were an old mill town. But, and like Northern Pass, it affects more than just one town. And, I hope the SEC evaluates the entirety, and not single out what it does for Franklin specifically, because it's a false premise that you could build any other kind of construction site here.
I mean, with the mills, no one cared. They just took their effluent, threw it in the river, polluted everyone downstream. It's kind of the same thing with Northern Pass. It may be good for Franklin, but it's no good for the rest of the state. And, I hope you evaluate the entirety. Thank you.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Howard Moffett.

MR. MOFFETT: Thank you. I'm up here, too. I'm Howard Moffett. I'm a State Representative from Canterbury, also represent Loudon. And, I appreciate the opportunity to be here tonight.

Incidentally, I'm one of the co-sponsors of HB 626, the legislation to which reference was made earlier. Which would allow, but not require, high voltage direct current electric transmission lines, and other -- other energy infrastructure, to be buried in interstate highway rights-of-way owned by the state. I'm not going to comment on the -- on the representations that were made earlier about DOT. I think those are going to have to stand on their own. And, we'll see how that comes out. But that bill is now in the Legislature.

I'm not here tonight to attack Northern
Pass. But I do want to say a couple of things. I want
to make two points.

The first is, I understand the
significance and the importance of the converter
station to the City of Franklin, and especially to its
tax base. I don't think that can be dismissed.

But the second thing I want to say is, I
personally believe that Franklin's best chance of
seeing that converter station built is to have the vast
bulk of the Northern Pass Project, if not the entire
Project, buried underground.

Why? It's very simple. If the Project
were substantially buried, the opposition would
disappear. If it's not going to be buried, if the rest
of it isn't going to be buried, and, with all due
respect, Mr. Quinlan, you talk about "balancing the
interests", I don't think that you balanced the
interests between the White Mountain region, and the
North Country, and the rest of New Hampshire, from
Plymouth south. If you can bury it through the White
Mountains, you ought to be able to bury it in the North
Country, and south of Plymouth as well.

And, if the Project isn't buried, the
fight over this Project is going to go on for another
two, three, four years, in the courts, in the Committee, in the communities.

And, meanwhile, something very, very important happened last Tuesday in the State of Vermont that affects everything that we're talking about here tonight. The Vermont Public Service Board, which is the equivalent in Vermont of the Site Evaluation Committee here in New Hampshire, approved the New England Clean Power Link. That is another high voltage direct current electric transmission project, which would bring approximately the same amount of power to New England, but it's buried. It's buried under Lake Champlain, and under highways through the State of Vermont, to Ludlow, where it terminates.

The real significance of the New England Clean Power Link is that they started with their approval process three years after the Northern Pass. Northern Pass filed its Application in December of 2010. Northeast Clean Power Link filed their Application in late 2013. Clean Power Link now has all the federal approvals it needs and all the state approvals it needs. Why? Because it's buried. There's a message there.

And, I would suggest that, if you want
this Project to be built, if Eversource wants this
Project built, if Franklin wants this Project built, if
the IBEW wants this Project built, the best way to do
it is going to find a way to put it underground. Thank
you.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Our next
member of the public is Pentti Aalto. Sorry if I
mispronounced your name, sir.

MR. AALTO: That's not a problem. Thank
you very much for the opportunity. My name is Pentti
Aalto, P-e-n-t-t-i, A-a-l-t-o. I'm from Pembroke.

I guess my concern here is that we're
building a major piece of infrastructure that's going
to last for many years. It may or may not be needed.
It may be that, as we get into this coming decade or
two, that we're at the beginning of a process that's
similar to what happened with mainframe computers.
Over a fairly lower short period, personal computers
began to be the main way of doing computations. Now,
they're done on our phones.

We're at the edge of a process of
distributed generation that may substantially reduce
the need for long distance transmission in many cases.
It may become a white elephant in time. My sense is
that we will pay for it, as a previous speaker pointed out, one way or another.

I understand that I can't ask questions. But, for the Commission to look at, the 10 percent that's being reserved for New Hampshire customers, is that being reserved in the default service category or is that being for all customers? Our distribution charges are already very, very high.

This brings us to another piece of the issue with distributed generation. We're shortly going to be looking at issues of net metering. People that put in solar on their roof may find themselves exposed to charges of $50 or $100 a month of fixed charges, because they're supposedly not paying their fair share of the wiring that brings power to them. If that's the case, do we want to add more to that kind of charge?

I would argue, if this facility is built, that it should be required that it provide for support for the intermittent sources that will be developing, solar, wind and other sources, so that power can flow two ways. That we can make use of the storage capability in Canada, in an effective way, when there's surplus power here, to use it as a storage system. That would tend to increase the value of that
power in New England and in New Hampshire.

We have -- we're at a point where there are many, many questions that are going to be before us. We're entering a very disruptive period in electricity supply. I leave it to the Commission looking at this to determine whether this individual facility is necessary, or could another clean power type of circuit going elsewhere be less expensive, to do the same job, if it's needed? Thank you very much.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Thank you, sir. Next is Julie Moran.

MS. MORAN: Thank you. Welcome back, Bill. Julie Moran, M-o-r-a-n. And, the last time we spoke, you had said that you only heard to bury one spot, the Appalachian Mountain Trail. Well, I think you have to admit at this point that you've heard everyone say?

FROM THE FLOOR: Bury it.

MS. MORAN: In its entirety. So, the next hearing, we'd like to hear that you have heard us, that we said "Bury the whole thing."

Now, I've heard people say "well, maybe you shouldn't bury it in this forest or that forest, where nobody will see it." But you're hearing from the
people, and the people are asking you "Bury the whole thing."

We really don't buy the fact that, you know, burial is going to increase the ratepayers' amount. You know what? If Hydro-Quebec wants to cut their little percentage of 12 and a half or whatever outrageous percent they have that they're giving their investors, they could cut that a little bit and take off all that $1 billion in a heart beat. And, we would be all very happy.

I don't think that you're going to lower New Hampshire's rates. We're the highest in the country now. How you are going to lower them with one energy project? You can't. It's not going to happen. I haven't seen energy rates go down yet. The only way it's go to lower is when we all start producing our own electricity. And, some people are thinking of doing that.

So, that's not going to lower the rates. Northern Pass is not going to lower our rates. And, putting another billion dollars into it is not going to raise the rates significantly either way. None of us believe any of those things that have been told to us.

So, those of us from the very far North
Country where I come from, we're all completely opposed to this Project. And, as I told you, after our last meeting at the Mountain View Grand, we've all made a huge compromise. We've all said, "okay, we will stand with our brothers and sisters down below in Sugar Hill, and we will go for burial, rather than fight this whole thing, and fight against you and say, you know, "don't build this".

We have all said, from now on, "okay, we will accept it." If you said, and all your investors and Hydro-Quebec, and all the powers-that-be that you have to represent, and I feel bad for you, then, if they would allow you to say "okay, we will bury the whole Northern Pass", this sea of orange would change to blue.

[Audience interruption.]

MS. MORAN: That's all we need to know that you have heard tonight, is that we have consistently driven two hours from here and two hours from there, to come to these meetings for the last five years to tell you to "bury this thing". And, once the people listen to you that you have heard us, and that is what we're saying, and that they can save an awful lot of money from fighting this, and just start
building it, then you'll have a project. Your project will come. Our people will go back to work. They'll start burying things, they'll start doing electrical lines, they'll start doing the connections, they'll start doing everything that you guys want them to do, because we want them to go back to work as well. This orange shirt does not mean "I don't want my brothers and sisters to go to work." I want them to go back to work. And, I want the power to be the right price.

However, it's got to be buried. And, when it's buried, we believe that your Project will go through.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Our next speaker is Joanne Busch.

MR. BUSCH: Correction, it's "Johann".

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: I'm sorry.

MR. BUSCH: That's okay.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: And, if you could spell both your first and last name for our court reporter please.

MR. BUSCH: No problem.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Thank you, sir.

MR. BUSCH: It's Johann, Juliet Oscar
MR. BUSCH: Oh, I'm sorry. It's J-o-h-a-n-n, the last name is Busch, B-u-s-c-h. And, I'm a resident in Sanbornton. I wanted to express a few points. One is a historical point. Speaking to someone who I admire quite a lot, and that is Nikola Tesla, who was a great investor, who actually developed the alternating current, which is providing light and audio for us right now. And, one of his developments, after working in Colorado Springs, was the wireless transmission of electricity, which he had perfected during his time. And, he proceeded then to establish a tower in New York, in Long Island, called the "Wardenclyffe Tower". And, this was financed by JP Morgan. And, everything was going well, until it was found out that the electricity could be transmitted wirelessly to any point on earth, but the problem was that it would be unmetered. So, they can't have that. You know, no free electricity. So, that was the end of that, and it was shut down.

So, that one -- that one event, it was because of, from my perspective, the greed of one man. And, I'm just considering, like, we wouldn't have this...
problem, we wouldn't be debating this, if that had been allowed to continue. But it was mostly because of the power of this one man that had some greed, and was not willing to let that go through.

So, I'm just making the point, hopefully, that if we can be aware of greed. And, maybe that we -- if we can work on the greed that's inside of each of us, the world would be a much better place. Thank you very much.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: And, our last public commenter is Chief Kevin LaChapelle.

FIRE CHIEF LaCHAPELLE: Thank you, Mr. Iacopino. I appreciate the opportunity to speak tonight. I had no intentions in coming here tonight to speak. But, after listening to the comments and piecing together for the last five years the discussions about Northern Pass coming to Franklin, first of all, five years ago, I never imagined that I'd be the Fire Chief. So, it didn't -- at that point, it didn't really -- it wasn't a consideration. Been the Fire Chief and the Emergency Management Director for about four years now. And, it's very exciting, as a young fire chief, to have discussions about a project of this magnitude.
And, sitting back there tonight, I was thinking that I can only imagine the feelings that ran through the Fire Chief's head in Seabrook, in the early 1970s, of what type of impact that it would make on a community with that type of hazard coming in. And, I think that it was very overwhelming for him. I've talked to fire chiefs and police chiefs that were involved in the early 1970s with a project of that magnitude. It was very stressful for them.

And, I think, tonight, that I'm grateful to be the Fire Chief in a process like this, where folks are allowed to come in and speak their minds of whether you want the Project buried or if you want the Project above ground.

However the Project is completed, if it is completed, the safety that it will offer for our members, which is most important to me as the Fire Chief and the Emergency Management Director, and the citizens of our community, it's much safer than a project that was offered in the early 1970s as -- for nuclear power.

When we prepare grants on a daily basis in any department across the country, we always look at critical infrastructure. And, one of the things that
afforded us to have a grant issued this year was the fact that we were in close proximity to the nuclear power plant in Seabrook. We're 73 miles away from Seabrook. And, we do offer regional response to that area. And, when I talked to a grant writer in Florida, he said "You need to make sure that you write down that your 73 miles from a nuclear power plant, because that is a hazard. That you may not think is in your community, but you will respond, and it offers a hazard to those in your community and your first responders."

So, I only offer the comment tonight that I'm very grateful for the fact that we're not talking about a project that will necessarily harm our first responders and the citizens of our community. So, that's very important to me. And, I was only able to sow those thoughts up tonight by listening to everyone speak here in the room tonight.

So, I do believe that it's -- if it offers clean energy, and, most importantly, it's a safe project. So, thank you very much.

PRESIDING OFFICER IACOPINO: Okay.

Ladies and gentlemen, that's the end of our speakers tonight. Thank you all for coming.

Again, I'd just like to remind you all
the ways to participate before the Site Evaluation Committee. We take written comments until the conclusion of the case. There will be -- February 5th is the deadline to intervene, if you believe that you have a substantial interest in the proceeding. Good night, everybody.

(Whereupon the public information session was adjourned at 8:38 p.m.)