In Re:
SEC 2015-06
NORTHERN PASS, LLC AND PUBLIC SERVICE CO. OF NH

PUBLIC COMMENT HEARING
May 19, 2016

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STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
SITE EVALUATION COMMITTEE

May 19, 2016 – 6:05 p.m.
Mountain View Grand Resort & Spa
101 Mountain View Road
Whitefield, New Hampshire

IN RE: SEC DOCKET NO. 2015-06
JOINT APPLICATION OF NORTHERN
PASS LLC AND PUBLIC SERVICE
COMPANY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE d/b/a
EVERSOURCE ENERGY FOR A
CERTIFICATE OF SITE AND FACILITY
(Public Comment Hearing)

PRESENT FOR SUBCOMMITTEE
SITE EVALUATION COMMITTEE

Chairman Martin Honigberg       Public Utilities Comm.
(Presiding Officer)

Dir. Craig Wright, Designee     Dept. of Environ. Svs.
Christopher Way, Designee       Dept. of Resources &
                               Economic Dev.
Patricia Weathersby             Public Member
Rachel Whitaker                 Public Member

ALSO: Michael J. Iacopino, Esq. – Counsel for SEC
      Pamela G. Monroe – SEC Administrator

COURT REPORTER: Susan J. Robidas, LCR No. 44

{SEC 2015-06} [PUBLIC COMMENT HEARING] {05-19-16}
NOTED AS PRESENT:

Counsel for the Applicant: Barry Needleman, Esq.
Thomas B. Getz, Esq.
(McLane Middleton)
Marvin P. Bellis, Esq.
Elizabeth Maldonado,
(Eversource Energy)

Counsel for the Public: Peter C.L. Roth, Esq.
N.H. Dept. of Justice
Thomas Pappas, Esq.
Elijah Emerson, Esq.
(Primmer Piper...)

(Further appearances as noted on
sign-in sheets provided at hearing)
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PROCEEDINGS

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Good evening, everyone. Welcome to a public comment hearing of the New Hampshire Site Evaluation Committee. We have one docket before us this evening; it is the Application of Northern Pass Transmission, LLC and Public Service Company of New Hampshire, which does business as Eversource Energy, for a Certificate of Site and Facility.

Before I make the opening comments, I'll ask the Subcommittee members to introduce themselves.

MR. WAY: I'm Christopher Way. I represent the Department of Resources and Economic Development.

MR. WRIGHT: Craig Wright, with the Department of Environmental Services.

CMSR. BAILEY: Kate Bailey from the Public Utilities Commission.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Martin Honigberg, also from the Public Utilities Commission.

MS. WEATHERSBY: Patricia Weathersby,
public member.

MS. WHITAKER: I'm Rachel Whitaker.

I'm the other public member.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Sitting to my
right is Mike Iacopino, who is counsel to the
Site Evaluation Committee.

MR. IACOPINO: Good afternoon.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Out in the
entryway there's the SEC administrator, Pam
Monroe, one of the people greeting you when you
came in. There's one other person with special
status by New Hampshire statute here this
evening, Counsel for the Public, Peter Roth,
who is seated in the first row. Peter, if you
could identify yourself.

All right. We'll now open the
public comment hearing. And unfortunately, I'm
going to read for just a few seconds out loud.

On November -- I'm sorry --

October 19, 2015, Northern Pass Transmission,
LLC and Public Service Company of New
Hampshire, which does business as Eversource
Energy, submitted an application to the New
Hampshire Site Evaluation Committee for
Certificate of Site and Facility to construct a 192-mile transmission line running from the border in Pittsburg down to Deerfield.

On November 2nd of 2015, pursuant to RSA 162-H:4-a, the Chair of the Committee appointed a Subcommittee. The state officials -- or some of the state officials who were named to the Subcommittee exercised their statutory authority to designate senior members of their agencies to serve on the Subcommittee.

On December 7th of 2015, the Subcommittee reviewed the Application and determined that the Application contained sufficient information to satisfy the Application requirements of each state agency having jurisdiction under state or federal law to regulate any aspect of the construction or operation of the proposed facility. The Subcommittee also made an independent determination that the Application contained sufficient information to carry out the purposes of RSA 162-H.

In January, the Committee conducted five public information sessions:
Franklin, Londonderry, Laconia, Whitefield and Lincoln.

Back in December, the Committee had readopted its administrative rules with certain amendments. Those rules are in the New Hampshire Code of Administrative Rules, Site 100, 200 and 300. The readoption of the rules was required by New Hampshire law.

On December 28 of 2015, the SEC Administrator asked the Applicant to supplement the Application, to the extent that it was needed, to comply with the newly-enacted regulations. The Applicant filed supplemental documentation on February 26th of 2016. Prior to and following the Applicant's submission of supplemental documentation, the Subcommittee received a number of motions asking the Subcommittee to postpone or suspend the public hearings in this docket that were scheduled to take place in March.

On March 1st, I, as Chair of the Subcommittee, issued an order denying the request to postpone or suspend the scheduled public hearing. However, in that same order,
requests to conduct additional public hearings were granted, and it was ordered that two additional hearings would be conducted to allow the public to address the supplemental documentation that was submitted by the Applicant in late February. The public hearings that were already scheduled to be held in March, the five of them, were held in Meredith, Colebrook, Concord, Holderness and Deerfield.

The order and notice of tonight's public hearing was issued on May 4th, 2016. I want to note specifically and remind people that the purpose of the hearing this evening is to receive public comments on the additional information that was filed by the Applicant on February 26th, 2016. We would request that members of the public limit their comments to the issues raised in the supplemental documentation filed by the Applicant. Also, the people who were granted status of intervenors in this docket, we would ask them to consider whether it is necessary for them to comment during this hearing. As
intervenors, you have other opportunities to
make your arguments, present evidence,
testimony, and to cross-examine the Applicant's
witnesses as part of the upcoming adjudicative
proceedings.

For all of those who wish to
speak this evening, we would ask you to fill
out one of the yellow forms that are outside in
the entryway, get it to Ms. Monroe or Mr.
Iacopino, and we'll call everyone in turn. If
you wish to submit a written comment, all
written comments are reproduced on our web
site. The written comment form is -- I think
it's blue.

MS. MONROE: Blue, yeah.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Blue. So if
that's what you want to do, fill out a blue
form.

I will remind everyone that the
public comment period in Site Evaluation
Committee proceedings is extensive. We receive
and consider written comments, statements and
reports from the public throughout the pendency
of our proceedings up and until the time the
record is closed just before deliberations begin.

Mr. Iacopino, is there anything I forgot? Is there anything else I need to do?

MR. IACOPINO: No. Just one correction, though. The previous public hearings were in Colebrook, Plymouth, Concord, Deerfield and Londonderry. The list that you read were the prehearing information sessions. And that's my error. I'm sorry.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Londonderry, however, is not correct for the hearings that took place in March.

MR. IACOPINO: Oh, I'm sorry. You're right.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: It was in Meredith.

MR. IACOPINO: Yeah, okay. You're right.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: It does happen.

MR. IACOPINO: Yes, we have had a lot of public hearings.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: All right. I think we're ready to call on the first
commenter. You all will be happy to know I 
think we have fewer than 15 people signed up. 
We'll ask you to be concise and to the point. 
We'll ask you to keep your remarks limited to 
four minutes, if possible. If you need to go 
over, we're not going to cut you off. But once 
you've gone 4 minutes 30 seconds, I'll raise my 
hand to let you know where you are, and a few 
seconds after that I'll probably ask you how 
much longer you have to go. If you have 
something written, please provide a copy to the 
stenographer up front so she can get a good 
transcription of what you say. If you intend 
to read, please read relatively slowly so that 
the transcript reflects what you actually say. 
I think those are the best ground rules I can 
give you for now.

And I will call the first 
speaker, Roger Hinds, I believe is the name, 
and he will be followed by Katie Rose and Frank 
Lombardi.

MR. HINDS: Roger Hinds from 
Bethlehem. I made the display out in the 
lobby. This is what we don't want. If you
were here, you would be this tall, roughly.  
And these things are so big, standing beside it for the first time would probably scare you.  
And I know that for a fact because I stood at big towers in the Boston area as a youngster just to -- it actually even looks like it's falling down. It's an illusion, you know, when you look at it.

Anyway, I feel the people constructing these, they're not going to be from New Hampshire. A few may be. But they're going to be from Canada, the majority of them. After it's built, the employee ratio is going to drop to net of zero. There's certain people that travel just to inspect it once in a while. And I haven't heard there will be any monetary gain for New Hampshire. I have seen -- oh, they also have the same tower in Great Britain. It looks just like this. A lot more wires are projected more than likely, and each cable is going to be minimum 4 inches in diameter, probably a lot larger. We'll find out later. Anyway, can you imagine -- oh, and in Monroe, New Hampshire, most of you know
of the cable -- the towers down there, the 
small ones. People got leukemia from the 
radiation. I have an in-law that died from 
radiation because she lived near the tower. 
This was what the doctor said. But they 
couldn't prove it, of course. 

But anyway, what I was trying to 
express with this, with the display out here, 
was the enormity of just one tower. When 
this -- if this project goes through, from 
every single mountaintop in the state you'll be 
able to see it. There may be an exception, but 
from the majority of the mountaintops you'll be 
able to see it, and it won't be a pretty sight. 
And I can't understand why anybody would 
approve this. There's no advantage to the 
state. And I'll bet any taxes they pay will be 
way below what the minimum should be. Can 
almost guarantee that from experience with the 
landfill in Bethlehem. That's another 
disaster. 

I think it will be wise to say 

"No."

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Katie Rose,
followed by Frank Lombardi and David Holmander.

(Presentation sung by Ms. Rose and lyrics provided.)

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Frank Lombardi, to be followed by David Holmander and Linda Upham-Bornstein. That's a bit of a tough act to follow, Mr. Lombardi.

MR. LOMBARDI: My name is Frank Lombardi. And I live in Whitefield, where over 10 miles, 10.4 miles of above-ground towers are proposed to be built in a horseshoe around our village and through our most beautiful scenic views. I, along with the Town of Whitefield and many other Whitefield residents, am an intervenor in the SEC evaluation. We filed as intervenors because we want to protect our residents, our views, and the value of our town through taking part in the SEC process.

In reviewing Northern Pass's supplement to their Application prepared for the Site Evaluation Committee, I have many concerns regarding the Applicant's approach to this process and their transparency to the public. Northern Pass's supplement discusses
mitigation measures on Page 10 and 11. The information laid out here is incomplete and inadequate and sets out grossly unfair proposals. Nowhere does the supplement's discussion provide the obvious mitigation measures for our area, which is line burial. Does Northern Pass seriously assert that they didn't consider additional line burial to what they have already proposed? It had been publicly reported that Northern Pass has proposed additional line burial in some towns in our area, and that important information needs to be included in detail in the filing. Additionally, Northern Pass states that their more site-specific mitigation, which can help particular individual properties, will be considered at the final engineering stage. This is completely unfair to those who own property along the right-of-way. Northern Pass should be made to discuss each and every property along the line as part of the full, contested approval process. I insist that the SEC not allow Northern Pass to bury detailed decisions in a hidden final engineering process.
at the tail end of the approval procedures, but
that Northern Pass be made to discuss this now,
while the Public has time to fully evaluate the
scale of this project.

In the top paragraph of Page 12
of the supplement, Northern Pass takes a
non-helpful and rebellious approach to the SEC
process. When discussing how they plan to
avoid, minimize or mitigate impacts on
historical and archeological resources, their
response says nothing, that they provide no
detail or discussion. They simply claim
they're doing it and totally avoid the issue.
It is insulting to the public for Northern Pass
to refrain from this discussion. I want to
know precisely and in detail how Northern Pass
plans to avoid, minimize and mitigate the
effects that their towers would have on
important areas in our town and in every town
along the route. This ignorant approach that
Northern Pass takes in this area of the
supplement undermines the SEC process and the
right of the public to know how Northern Pass
will affect their towns. Northern Pass should
be directed to start the planning process over, with comprehensive and inclusive information listed in great detail. I ask that the Site Evaluation Committee further review the concerns presented here and grant the requests made in order to maintain a fair and due process for the good of the public and the integrity of the SEC process. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: David Holmander, to be followed by Linda Upham-Bornstein.

MR. HOLMANDER: My name is David Holmander, and I live in Whitefield. I operate a new business, North Country Art Gallery. My target customers are tourists. I have some concerns about the Northern Pass Project and how it will affect my customer base. Tonight, I would like to address some questions I have about the supplement to the SEC Application.

On Page 4 of the supplement, Northern Pass says that they have the right to build new power lines on existing rights-of-way. I understand that an existing right-of-way is for public transmission lines. The lines which Northern Pass wants to build
are private and should not be built on public
designations. Why does Northern Pass say they
have the right?

Northern Pass has prided their
project on providing jobs for the local
economy. On page 5, Northern Pass provides a
long list of contractors who they say will work
on the Project; yet, there are no Coos County
contractors listed. With Coos being the
poorest New Hampshire county and potentially
suffering the most from this project, it seems
this supplement should be talking in detail
about Coos County. Also on Page 5, it says
that Northern Pass will be paid for with debt
and equity contributed by Eversource. The
supplement fails to describe the three-state
RFP, in which Northern Pass filed an
application for massive ratepayer subsidies
from public ratepayers in Massachusetts,
Connecticut and Rhode Island. Northern Pass
should include this information and the effects
on the financing of the Project if they win the
RFP.

Page 8 through 10 outlines a
scenic resource analysis, photo simulations and
a viewshed analysis showing where the lines are
visible from 10 miles away. Many people were
unable to open these files on their computers,
and I doubt that they are the only ones that
this has happened to. How can the SEC hold a
public hearing on this information when it's
not available to the public? The SEC must
start over and get the information out in a way
the public can access and read it and then set
a new hearing.

On a greater scale, it seems
unfair for Northern Pass and the SEC to expect
everyday people to comprehend this supplement
and other documents. Many people who are going
to be affected by this project are busy working
and providing for their families. The results
of these hearings will directly impact these
people, and it seems to me that the approval
process is completely unfair to the greater
public concern.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Linda
Upham-Bornstein, to be followed by Alan McLain
and Robert Heath.
MS. UPHAM–BORNESTEIN: It's hard to hear the names over the applause. So, for those of us who have hearing loss, I could not hear my name announced earlier. I appreciate that heads-up.

So, I am Linda Upham-Bornstein. I have a Ph.D. in U.S. history, and I live in Lancaster, New Hampshire. I am a non-abutting intervenor. And I know you told us to not make comments; however, I'm extremely frustrated with your process. I believe that you are denying our due-process rights as citizens and residents of New Hampshire. I have sent several requests saying that I cannot open the Applicant's February 26th application on your web site. I have received some very disparaging comments from your site, suggesting that the town had the full documentation, each town on the ROW, and that I should go to my town and read the multiple, multiple pages at the town office, or maybe even ask the town, which has no money, to give me copies. I, as a citizen who will be impacted, have a right to get these documents in a timely manner.
That being said, I also have been assigned to a group of a very large number of people as non-abutting intervenors. I was told there was a motion -- there was a decision made to reduce the size of that group. I have not received that decision, so I do not know what group I belong to. I have been told that we have to get data to you by May 23rd, Monday. How can I get data to you when I cannot access the site and I do not know who is in my group? We do not have the ability to select a spokesperson. And basically, we are again prohibited from participating in this process. I did receive information that you extended that date to, wow, June 7th. That does not help us when we don't even know who is in our group. So I specifically ask you to address this situation, to identify the groups and to get us that motion and decision as soon as possible, in a timely manner, and maybe not through your e-mail and web site service, which is now so onerous that we have to send e-mails out three times to get that. And then I received a complaint from one of your members
that you do not want to receive all of our
e-mails as board members. Am I supposed to go
through and hand pick each one of your names
out of those e-mails? This is -- I'm a single
person. I'm not the Northern Pass. I do not
have unlimited resources at my disposal to deal
with this. And I wish that you would, as a
committee, give me more, as other members,
other intervenors, more respect for our efforts
and recognize that we cannot access -- I went
to Plymouth. I teach at Plymouth State
University. We have great fiber optics, great
Internet. I could not download your documents
from the University. I can't download them
from my satellite network either.

As two people said before, the Applicants
made several claims that we have identified,
and I just want to -- I'm not going to
reiterate those again, in that they have been
so eloquently addressed previously. But we are
entitled to know what the Northern Pass
intends, not in its final stage, but now. We
cannot respond to it. We cannot respond to
mitigation.
I live in a 200-year-old home affiliated with the Weeks State Park, which is a state monument. It was the Weeks family home, and we preserved -- the Weeks family preserved the White Mountains, the very viewscape that Northern Pass wants to decimate.

So we ask that you take all this into consideration. I will give you a copy of my comments rather than read them all. But please disclose as much information ahead of time. By waiting until the end of the process, it's tantamount to closing the barn door after the horse has bolted.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Alan McLain, followed by Robert Heath and Denise Greig.


I believe that we can build this cheaper locally using our own manpower. I believe that the Northern Pass people will hire local companies, and I'm in favor of this. And I take them at their word that they will hire
us, and I'm in favor of this project. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Robert Heath, to be followed by Denise Greig and Cheryl Jensen.

MR. HEATH: I'm Robert Heath, and I don't understand this Northern Pass. I live less than 200 yards from Highway 110 to Potter Road. And I'm 80 years old, and I'd like to put some livestock in there for my sole purpose of eating. And there's already gas -- I own the land. It was leased before I bought the land. And I am from Coos County. And we have now two wooden poles and -- just one set. And then, the gas company, when I bought the land, was under contract. We have 13 orange stakes that stand about this high (indicating) in less than two-tenths of a mile. Why do you need this land? Just stop it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Denise Greig, to be followed by Cheryl Jensen and Dr. Art Hammon.

MS. GREIG: Hi, my name is Denise Greig. I'm not a resident from up here. I'm a resident of Deerfield. I am not an intervenor.
I have just a concern that I want to share with respect to the emergency response plan that is part of the attachments to the February filing. And the concern relates to what's happening in Deerfield with respect to the expansion of the substation.

We have one substation there. We have a great deal of expansion planned through Northern Pass: An additional building, many more additional lines, capacitors and a lot of other things that I couldn't even describe to you. What we have in Deerfield, we have emergency response. We have a town that has 4300 residents. And these emergency responders, if there is an accident or fire at that fire station, we have equipment in our town that dates to the '80s and '90s. We have a couple of new trucks, but we have a lot of older stuff. We have a volunteer fire department. So we are looking at a situation where we have a number of concerns about the safety not only of our emergency responders, but of our residents as well. So I ask that you take that into consideration in your
deliberations and as part of this process.

And I'd also ask you to consider part of this process about discussion about safety is: What does the utility offer to the town in the way of assistance? First thing you do when you -- and I'm not a firefighter. But, you know, you look at firefighting substations. Where's your electric people? How are they going to get to your town, and how are they going to assist your firefighters? Deerfield is a half-hour from everywhere. So, if a fire happens at our substation, I don't know where the utility response person is and their team. But if it takes them a half-hour to get there, all those contaminants and lots of really nasty things are going to be in the air, blowing into the residences that surround that substation, and a lot of contaminants going into the ground, and, you know, the Hazmat clean-up to follow. So I'd ask that you consider the safety at these substations and the location of these places in your deliberations. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Cheryl Jensen,
Commissioner Rick Samson.

MS. JENSEN: I'm taking a pass on speaking. Cheryl Jensen.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Thank you, Ms. Jensen.

Dr. Art Hammon, to be followed by Rick Samson and Joseph Keenan.

DR. HAMMON: My name is Art Hammon. I'm a retired science educator in the field of physics and chemistry. I have attended several public information sessions concerning the Northern Pass. I'm especially interested in the arguments by project representatives that underground burial is not fiscally feasible. Both Vermont and Maine seem to be able to do this. I have asked at a public session if there were any reasons why New Hampshire's geology or landscape made underground burial more difficult than our neighboring states, but the engineers have not yet been able to articulate a clear response.

I've done a "back of the envelope" calculation regarding the commercial value of the electrons that might pass through
the 1,000-megawatt buried line during the expected 40-year lifetime. The calculation begins with physical constants and then applies a rate of 18.7 cents per kilowatt hour, which is the current kilowatt hour rate on my last Eversource bill. It seems that the return on investment of this line, even buried, would be substantial for Eversource.

Here are the rough calculations:

1,000-megawatt line carries a million kilowatt hours of electricity per hour. Multiplying this by 24 hours in a day, 365 days in a year, and 40 years, the expected lifetime of that, it comes out to be 3.5 times 10 to the 11th kilowatt hours. Given the recent 18.7 cents per kilowatt hour that is being charged, to compute this using the estimates, the net value to the project stakeholders of the electrons sent through the buried Northern Pass line, 1,000-megawatt line over 40 years is $65.5 billion. If, as stated by Northern Pass Project officials at the public hearings, that a buried line might cost as much as $3 billion, that cost then represents 4.5 percent of the
revenues that would be realized from the line over a period of 40 years. Even adjusting for operating expenses, a 95.5 percent return on investment seems more than a reasonable business plan for the Northern Pass Project. Despite story lines by company officials that imply that a buried line is not fiscally feasible, I would remind them that the plural of the word "anecdote" is not "data." As my data show, a buried Northern Pass line, based on company information and applying current electrical rates, is feasible and reasonably profitable for the company. I hope these calculations might prove helpful in the decisions that are to be made. Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Commissioner Samson, to be followed by Joseph Keenan and Julie Moran.

DR. HAMMON: I have copies of my remarks for any members of the press who would like to have them.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Could you please wait and say the names after people are done
applauding? It's disrespectful --

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Actually, the applause is disruptive. I appreciate it. I'm happy that people are supportive of the views. But it's the next person's turn when it's the next person's turn, and that's --

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Talk about disrespect.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Commissioner Samson.

CMSR. SAMSON: Good evening, members of the Site Evaluation Committee. As you well know, my name is Rick Samson from 804 Piper Hill Road, in Stewartstown. And I am the Coos County Commissioner representing District 3, the largest geographic state in our state, and the district that will be most affected by this proposed Northern Pass Project. I have had to redo some of my remarks following the hearings this afternoon, which I appreciate. And I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you, Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee and Mr. Iacopino, for the decisions that were made this afternoon concerning the extension of time and
also the data request extension. That's much appreciated by all of us.

I am an intervenor. I appear here this evening not out of disrespect for this Committee, but out of concern for the impression that has been generated by the actions, requirements and methods that have been placed on the intervenors in this process.

I refer to my testimony of April 11th, when I appeared before this Committee. Many of my concerns then are still my concerns tonight. It appears that this Committee was more concerned with the Applicant's ability to have this proposed project approved sooner rather than give our state and our citizens their due process. I have attended almost every hearing since the first DOE hearing in Pembroke and am still under the impression that the Applicant is being favored in this process. The process is geared to the approval of this project, as was the approval of the Coos Wind Park, which is now being sold to a South Korean group.

I would respectfully request
that this Site Evaluation Committee give strong consideration to all the testimony that has been offered by all New Hampshire residents and groups that are representing the best interests of our entire state and not the interests of Hydro-Quebec, Eversource or Northeast Utilities.

The Coos Loop has been mentioned a number of times in relationship to this project. The Coos Loop has nothing to do with the proposed project, other than as a means for more financial gain for other large companies that have no respect for our land and its citizens.

This project should not and must not be rushed and approved at the expense of our state and our citizens. Time may be of the essence for the proponents of this proposed project to avoid the proper research and the true benefits or detriment to our state.

I respectfully remind this committee that you are charged with the responsibility and the obligations, of which I'm sure you're well aware of and are trying to
meet, to make the right decisions that will
reflect the character not only of our state,
but our citizens.

I have also been asked to read
a -- ask a question posed to me by the Chairman
of the Stewartstown Select Board here tonight,
and that question is: How many people here
have heard of the Energy Clear River Center
[sic], planned for burial in Rhode Island. It
is a 900-megawatt natural gas facility, energy
that could carry the slogan of "Made in
America." And I include it in the bottom of my
report, the web site that you could go to, to
get that information.

And as I stated in Lincoln, and
I will state here again tonight, I believe this
committee is doing as best they could, but
there is still no right way to do the wrong
thing. Thank you for your time and your
attention.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Joseph Keenan,
to be followed by Julie Moran and Will Abbott.

MR. KEENAN: I'm sorry. I don't hear
very well, so I wasn't sure when my name was
being called. I'm just going to start my timer here so I don't go more than four and a half minutes.

My name is Joseph Keenan. I'm a doctor and psychologist, child psychologist, at Weeks Medical Center in Lancaster, New Hampshire. I've lived in this town for 20 years. I now own 280 acres of land in the Lost Nations area of Northumberland, with an undisturbed view of the western horizon of Vermont. The stretch of land between Paige Hill Road and Northfield Road is visible from my front deck. And there's a current right-of-way through that, that includes low-level towers that I hardly see. I could see them from the top of my property up by the White Mountain National Forest, but I can't see them from my house. So I was naturally, understandably concerned about this when I heard about the Northern Pass Project several years ago. I hadn't heard much about it until a man showed up on my property one day when I was mowing my field, carrying equipment. And he asked me, once he was already on my land
probably for 5 or 10 minutes at least, 'cause he had hiked up quite a ways, if he could take some photos and set up his equipment. I had no idea where he was from. But I was generous and took him up to the top of the field where there's that beautiful view of the western horizon. And he set up his equipment. Didn't look like photography equipment. But he set it up there and left it for 5 or 10 minutes while we chatted. And I asked him for his business card. He was from a group called Sewell, S-E-W-E-L-L, in Maine, and his name was Dan Livingstone. And I didn't realize at that time that he might be there for the purpose of taking information for this project. I still don't know if he was there -- there was another fellow who came onto my land as well at one point. I didn't get his business card. He was in a big hurry. He took some photographs.

So, in of August 2014, this man showed up on my land, as I said. When I heard about the Northern Pass Project, there was a public information session in Northumberland, in the town of Groveton. I went to the public
information session being held by Northern Pass, and I asked two separate representatives, who had their Google Earth laptops set up, the same question. I asked if they were -- 'cause I would be able to see the towers from my property, from my land. And it was peculiar, because they gave the exact same answer, almost as if it had been rehearsed. And to quote, because I recall exactly what they said, they said, "I can't tell you if you'll see them."

That seemed a peculiar way to answer the question, "I can't tell you if you'll see them."

I then had an appraisal conducted because I was having my property refinanced. And in the appraisal there were two pages dedicated to the Northern Pass as a potential disvaluing factor. So that concerned me as well. I recently had the property reappraised again for refinancing, and the property value has dropped 20 percent since that time.

Now, why am I here? I'm here because on Sunday night, late at night, past my
bedtime, I just thought that I wanted to see if I can find out whether or not I can see the towers from my land. So I go to the web site, the SEC web site, and I try to download one of the files that purportedly was going to tell me whether or not I could see the towers. I download about 25 percent of it before my screen froze. Now, my job is to help children who have psychological problems. My job is not to stay up all day and all night and go to the town hall and try to find this information. So I still can't find out the answer to the question I had two years ago because the PDF wouldn't load. So I'm a little frustrated, as you might imagine. And this process seems to me to be one where it's obstacle after obstacle for those of us who aren't paid to do this work.

And so, frustrated, I thought I was an intervenor. I registered to be an intervenor and then found out when the list came out that I wasn't on it. I asked your person, your representative administrator what had happened. I was one of the first people
who registered as an intervenor, I thought, and
then found out that I wasn't on the list. I
can't go back and prove that I was registered,
because every once in a while I empty my Gmail
box. So it's just the whole thing is very
frustrating, and it just seems to me that you
ought to be able to do better than this. I'm
sorry.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Julie Moran, to
be followed by Will Abbott and Daniel Zajic.

MS. MORAN: Thank you, ladies and
gentlemen. I appreciate your being here. I
also applied to be an intervenor, and I don't
know what happened to my application. I looked
at the list when it was done and couldn't find
it anywhere. I did everything it said on
there. So that didn't happen. I'll let it go.

But in this new section, there
is no additional burial. Why isn't there
additional burial in this new section? We have
time and time again -- the people have time and
time again asked for burial. I mean, we
opposed it in Colebrook and in Coos. We
opposed it completely, 100 percent. And to
compromise, we went and agreed that we would ask for burial. Where is the compromise from Northern Pass? Where is the consideration for the people? Is Northern Pass going to continue be given another tromp over the American people and the people in New Hampshire? I appeal to you, please. You're the SEC. You're the ones that -- you're the last stand we have. There is no other stand between us and this monstrosity that's going to take over for the next hundred years and have these towers on our land. We're asking you, please take it and do the right thing. Tell them to either bury the whole thing or to go away. New Hampshire doesn't need it. And we're begging you, this Committee, to stand between us and stand there for us and represent the people of New Hampshire against this transmission line from Canada. Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Will Abbott, to followed Daniel Zajic and Eric Meth.

MR. ABBOTT: Good evening, Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee. My name is Will Abbott. I'm here on behalf of the
Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests, and I have three comments. The first relates to the February 26th submission by Northern Pass relative to property rights. In the submission, the Applicant notes that the new rules regarding property rights read, and I quote, "The Applicant must provide evidence that the Applicant has a current right or option or other legal basis to acquire the right to construct, operate and maintain a facility on, over or under the site."

The prefiled testimony of Mr. Kenneth Bowes, in which Mr. Bowes makes certain representations that Northern Pass has all the property rights they need to build the Project, this February 26th submission makes no mention of the fact that our organization has gone to Coos County Superior Court to challenge the right asserted to use our private property in Clarksville without our permission. The prefiled testimony of Mr. Bowes makes the factually incorrect and arguably misleading claim on Page 18, Lines 27 and 28, that 24 miles of the new right-of-way in northern
Coos County on private land owned by Bayroot, LLC, is subject to an agreement based -- this is quoting from their filing -- "on the lease between Renewable Properties, Inc. and Bayroot, dated October 1, 2012, and recorded at Book 1364, Page 456 of the Coos County Registry of Deeds." In fact, the referenced lease is not recorded at the Coos Registry, only a notice of the lease is recorded. The Subcommittee should require the Applicant to produce the entire lease referenced to meet the evidence standards set in the rules.

The prefilled testimony of Mr. Bowes describes the intent of the Project to use existing PSNH-owned rights-of-way in Dummer, Stark and Northumberland. No mention is made of an existing right-of-way currently located in the PSNH-owned right-of-way in Dummer and Stark, owned by the Portland Natural Gas Pipeline Company, which I believe Mr. Heath referred to earlier, which confines how Northern Pass can use the existing 150-foot-wide right-of-way in these two communities. The Subcommittee should require
the Applicant to provide evidence that Portland Natural Gas has been advised of the Northern Pass proposal and that Portland Natural Gas agrees that the Northern Pass Project, as proposed, will not interfere with the PNG property rights and that the new structures Northern Pass proposes to build in the 150-foot-wide right-of-way can be built in a way that complies with all safety standards regarding such co-located facilities.

I have a brief comment about the London Economics study. I think it's pretty clear that this document, which was filed in redacted form on March 28th by the Applicant, raises one of the most fundamental issues of this entire proceeding and goes to the heart of the new statutory finding that the Subcommittee must make, that the granting of the certificate proposed serves the public interest. This study is the only submission made by the Applicant that addresses the financial benefits of the Project to consumers of electricity in New England and New Hampshire. It's critical that the public have an opportunity to fully
review and comment on this study, and I would strongly urge that in the next public hearing, which I understand is yet to be scheduled, that you make it clear that, not only is the February 26th information filing a ripe subject for public comment, but also that the study, the London Economics study, is ripe for public comment.

Finally, since the February 28th filing by the Applicant of its supplementary information, and during the five public hearings the SEC held in March, the Applicant has suggested that the Forward NH Fund, a $200 million economic fund bootstrapped to this application, is somehow a part of the way in which the Project serves the public interest. The Subcommittee should reject the notion that it include benefits of the Forward NH Fund in its consideration of whether the Project serves the public interest. The statute clearly suggests, and the rules reinforce this suggestion, that the task before the Subcommittee is to determine whether the intrinsic energy benefits of the Project
warrant its approval. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Daniel Zajic, to be followed by Eric Meth and Nancy Martland.

MR. ZAJIC: Good evening. As a very new resident of Whitefield and a returning former resident of New Hampshire, I appreciate the chance to comment in public. I'm responding to the rejection of mitigation measures, and I'm here to advocate that every inch of this project be buried. I believe anything less than this represents a very bad deal for the economy of this region. Complete burial, if indeed more expensive as is claimed, would actually generate more local revenue because it would presumably be more labor-intensive and take longer. As far as the long-term benefits, the increase in the high value of tourism and property development are indisputable.

I recently purchased a home in Whitefield and will soon be installing enough solar power generation capacity to meet or exceed our entire household use. With available federal and state incentives, this
will pay for itself within a decade. And because of low-interest loans available for renewable energy projects, it will cost me nothing up front and a very modest monthly payment until paid off. The growth of household renewable power is exploding across this country, and it's accelerating as costs continue to go down. In the future, there will be less, not more need to import or transmit power across state lines, let alone from outside the country. I'm not at all opposed to having increased power transmission capacity. I think a robust infrastructure is beneficial and would hopefully generate much-needed jobs in the short term. However, complete burial is an achievable way to a win-win solution. We should not and don't need to accept any further damage to what is our most valuable asset, which is the natural beauty of this area. Ideally, we would not only demand burial of the entire project, but removal of existing towers at the same time. If we don't demand it now, it will never happen. We should use whatever authority we have to ensure we can attract
sustainable economic growth for not only this,
but all future generations. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Eric Meth, to be
followed by Nancy Martland and Susan Percy.

SELECTMAN METH: Thank you very much
for listening to me. My name is Eric Meth.
I'm a select board member from the town of
Franconia. We are an intervenor. And I'm not
here to touch on any specific issue, topic or
subject, but I think it important that you know
how much the Northern Pass Transmission Project
has upset our town residents and upset the
process of governing in our town. As the idea
of Northern Pass Transmission comes barreling
down our Main Street and right into the heart
of Franconia, I've finally come to understand
what that overused term "skin in the game"
means. And we have lot of skin in the game.
We've had to bring all our guns to bear not so
much on your process, but our process of
governing. Every day is another adventure as
this process goes on. We meet with our fire,
we meet with our police chief, we meet with our
life squad members, we meet with our water
commissioners. And thankfully, we also have some really bright and eloquent people who have pitched in and done yeoman's work. And as I said, it really has upset the process of governing our town. I've been a selectman for over -- a little over a year, and I've lived up in Franconia for about 10 years. I came here from -- I grew up in northern New Jersey. I practiced law in Philadelphia. And I question the fairness of this, of your process. I question the fairness of the transparency of your process. And I'm sorry to say that, but that's how I feel. I think today's ruling, that you gave us 10 extra days to submit data questions, I think that was fair, but it's something that shouldn't have come to pass. So I hope and pray that as data questions and discovery goes on, the process becomes a little clearer. So, thank you for your time. Appreciate it.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Nancy Martland, to be followed by Susan Percy.

MS. MARTLAND: Good evening. I've spoken to you before. I'll be very brief. I
just have one word that I'd like to explore with you. The word is "mitigation." "Avoid, minimize, mitigate," that's the preferred treatment, as I understand it. The "avoid" option is plain. It's as plain as the nose on your face and my face. The New Hampshire DES released what's posted today on the SEC web site, a finding to that effect, highlighting roadside burial as an available, feasible avoidance practice.

Mitigation involving, also proposed in the statement released by DES today, involving either direct conservation of land somewhere else or paying in the neighborhood of $3 million to a conservation fund is simply not acceptable when the "avoid" option is so very plain. Mitigation does nothing. Nothing to relieve the damage to those in the overhead path. Please think hard about this. I'll say it again: Mitigation is unacceptable when avoidance is an available option. Please insist that Northern Pass avoid damage by burying along roadsides as the DES suggests. Thank you.
CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Susan Percy.

MS. PERCY: Hello. My name is Susan Percy, and I have also been before you before. But I want to speak on one point, and that was a clarification or response on Christine Lake and whether there were any tower viewpoints along that. And I brought a picture so that you can see what I'm talking about. This is Dummer Hill right here at the end of the lake.

(Ms. Percy distributes document.)

MS. PERCY: On May 10th, 2016, Northern Pass Transmission submitted information from Terrence DeWan, Northern Pass Transmission's expert witness, regarding tower visibility from Christine Lake in Stark. Mr. DeWan stated that no towers would be visible from Christine Lake. He apparently made this assumption on two linear configurations, as detailed in his photo simulation on data obtained from Intermap.

Christine Lake is approximately 1.6 miles long and over half a mile wide, wider in Kauffmann Bay. On the western shore of Christine Lake, one looks directly at Dummer
Hill. The right-of-way traverses Dummer Hill and is clearly visible from the crest of the hill to the bottom of the hill. Towers along that sight line will be visible from the lake? At the eastern shore of Christine Lake, the proposed 95- to 120-foot suggested height, subject to change as noted by Terrence DeWan's VIA report, towers will be visible as they cross the access road and continue along the right-of-way over the ridge. At various points, those variable-foot towers are projected to be well above tree line and visible from multiple points from the west shore of the lake. We recommend that the assertion by Northern Pass on the effects of tower visibility on Christine Lake be reviewed for accuracy.

Of further note, in the area surrounding Christine Lake is land protected through easement to the State of New Hampshire and the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests. There are multiple hiking trails with mountain views. Huge numbers of Northern Pass transmission towers will be
visible from Victor Head, Bald Mountain, Giants
Grave, Potters Ledge, Devil's Slide and many
more trails through these protected lands in
Stark. Only one mountaintop, Victor Head, was
identified by Northern Pass through a photo
simulation by Terrence DeWan for Northern Pass
in the published documents. The visibility
conclusions from this single vantage point are
incorrect and should be reviewed. The impact
to this entire area should be addressed in a
more comprehensive manner.

Additionally, when the pipeline
was laid by the Portland Gas Transmission
Company, federal requirements through FERC
required pre and post water-quality testing be
completed on existing water supplies, including
the lake, streams and wells along Christine
Lake and in Stark. I ask that Northern Pass be
in compliance with the federal guidelines.

Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: And Ms. Percy
was our last speaker this evening. So, I thank
you all. There will be a notice issued soon
for an additional public comment hearing to be
held, I think in mid-June in Plymouth.

MS. MONROE: 23rd.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: The 23rd of June in Plymouth.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Where?

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Excuse me?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Where?

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Plymouth. I think going to be at the high school.

With that, we will adjourn.

Thank you all.

(Whereupon the Public Comment Hearing was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.)
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(5) ground - Julie

PUBLIC COMMENT HEARING - May 19, 2016
SEC 2015-06 NORTHERN PASS, LLC AND PUBLIC SERVICE CO. OF NH
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