

**CONCORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES
Regular Meeting
July 23, 2014
Second Floor Conference Room, City Hall
41 Green Street, Concord, NH**

Attendance

Rebecca Hebert called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Members present at the meeting included: Frederick Chormann, Tracey Boisvert, Christopher Kane, Pamela Hunt, and Councilor Jan McClure. Senior Planner Rebecca Hebert and Administrative Specialist Patricia Murray from the Planning Division, and Danielle Pacik, Deputy City Solicitor also attended the meeting.

1. Non-public session for the discussion of conservation property in accordance with RSA 91-A:3, II(d) (7:00)

Ms. Boisvert moved to enter into a nonpublic session for the discussion of conservation property in accordance with RSA 91-A:3, II(d). Ms. Hunt seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously. The Commission entered into non-public session.

Following the discussion, the Commission moved to exit nonpublic session and seal the minutes. The motion was duly seconded and passed unanimously.

2. City Open Space (7:30)
 - a. Discussion of proposed substation on the Unitil conservation easement parcel off of Curtisville Road

Nick Golan, TF Moran, Jake Dusling, Unitil and Tim Britton were present. Mr. Dusling stated they were in front of the Commission a little over a year ago. The plans for two substations at Broken Ground have been refined. The proposed substations will feed approximately 6,000 Concord electric customers. He noted that the Commission preferred option 8A out of all the options presented to them a year ago. They took the comments from the Commission and Planning Staff and revised the plan. The footprint has been shrunk and impacts have been reduced. The substations are generally in the same location and they welcome feedback from the Commission. The schedule remains the same with service in spring 2017 and construction commencing early 2015; hoping to clear trees while the ground is frozen.

Mr. Golan presented the revised plans. He stated there are three parts to this project; distribution substation, transmission substation (located closest to the road) and utility corridor which leaves the proposed distribution substation and runs to the existing Hall Street distribution substation by an existing Right of Way. He stated it would be about a mile corridor leaving the distribution substation.

Mr. Golan noted that the presentation for Option 8A included some pros and some cons and they received good, constructive feedback. Mr. Golan went on to present the revised plan stating they had the opportunity to take the design a lot further using PSNH's and Unitil's engineers to look at general arrangements within each substation; look at how incoming and outgoing lines can be tweaked which have direct impact on tree buffers outside of these substations. The comments received from the

Commission indicated minimize the size of the substation and the width of the access road to the narrowest or smallest area required. The revised plans show an access road that is 20 feet wide which is the minimal allowable by Fire Department standard for the width of the road, which would go from Curtisville Road up to the distribution substation. Adequate turning radius for emergency vehicles and for oversized vehicles carrying equipment was provided. The size of the transmission substation has been reduced from 300' x 200' to 243' x 238'. The substation is not only considerably smaller but has been moved closer to the Right-of-Way; previously it was 40 feet away and now it is 20 feet away. This allows for an increase in vegetative setbacks. Other previous comments regarding the initial plan from the Commission included minimizing the size of the stormwater management basin and incorporating additional vegetation as well as fencing to screen the substations from the beaver pond and Curtisville Road. A landscape architect visited the site to document the existing tree screen. Mr. Golan presented photos of the findings. This information was then applied to lines of sight at the substation. The addition of hemlocks and white pines are proposed to infill to provide a more dense landscape screen. With the revised plan, the area went from 72 feet of distance of existing vegetative buffer from the beaver pond to the tree line to 166 feet. This was accomplished by reconfiguring the internal configuration of the substations; i.e., how lines were entering and exiting. The general arrangement of equipment was revised so that the lines no longer have to come out of the north end of the substation but can come out of the east side. The need for clearing to provide setbacks for the overhead structures is eliminated. The lines now come directly east out of the transmission substation into the distribution substation. One of the other setbacks looked at was the distribution area; previously, there was 136 feet of buffer and is now at 242 feet. After some discussion it was disclosed that 125 feet would need to be cleared in the right-of-way which would support three lines. Mr. Dusling explained that the right-of-way is designed to support five lines. Each line will have individual poles. The poles will be about 40 feet tall in all areas except when crossing 393 where they need to be taller. Each pole line has three separate wires on top to ensure, during a structure order break, that service could be restored easily by switching. Discussion about the necessity of having three poles ensued.

Mr. Golan expressed that the changes presented are more in line with what the Commission was envisioning. He requested feedback. Mr. Chormann asked for an explanation of the fourth and fifth lines. Mr. Dusling stated that this is a very large substation; the fourth and fifth lines are for future use and they do not want to come in and have to build another one in ten years. Mr. Chormann asked if the technology would be different in ten years. Mr. Dusling stated it could be and it is being based on general Concord needs. The timeframe is not definite. The idea is that these substations will serve the Concord area for half a century.

Ms. Boisvert asked if it was possible to abut the two pads to each other. Mr. Dusling stated from an electrical standpoint it is, but from a liability standpoint it isn't. Mr. Golan stated if they were pulled together it would create approximately 30,000 square feet of wetland impact; which would be a permanent impact versus 10,000 square feet of impact shown as proposed.

Ms. Hebert asked what the minimum width that can be cleared to accommodate the lines; especially between the two proposed substations. Mr. Dusling replied that they can relook at that and reduce that to the minimum amount of clearing. He stated they would have to confirm with PSNH what their minimum clearance is for transmission lines.

A discussion regarding the dimensions of the structures ensued. Councilor McClure asked if they had any representation or renderings of what the dimensions would look like. Mr. Dusling stated they

have representation of a similar site being built. A question regarding ownership was asked. Mr. Dusling replied that PSNH will own the transmission substation equipment and Unitil will request to grant them an easement for the land.

Councilor McClure asked if they could supply pictures of what this would look like with someone standing adjacent to the site. Mr. Dusling stated he could bring something next time. She would like to see a simulation if someone were at the beaver pond or at Curtisville Road and what they would see.

Ms. Hebert asked if other sites in the region were looked at given the location and the topographic constraints. Mr. Dusling replied that this is where they started and they need to be adjacent to PSNH. Discussion of other possible sites ensued. Ms. Hebert stated the Commission asked them to pursue other options for site. Discussion ensued regarding exploring other parcels. Ms. Dusling stated they would check their notes and reply. More discussion regarding alternate location ensued including the concept 13 located on city-owned land off of Portsmouth Street.

In Summary, Mr. Golan and Mr. Dusling will supply renderings of the site, a plan that shows the easement versus the area owned by Unitil, and a revised plan to keep the lines as close together as possible for the August meeting. Ms. Hebert stated she would e-mail further comments.

Ms. Boisvert moved to enter into a second nonpublic session for the discussion of conservation property in accordance with RSA 91-A:3, II(d). Mr. Chormann seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously. The Commission entered into non-public session.

Following the discussion, the Commission moved to exit nonpublic session and seal the minutes. The motion was duly seconded and passed unanimously.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:00pm.

A TRUE RECORD ATTEST:
Patricia Murray, *Secretary Pro-tem*