

**Town of Needham
Board of Selectmen
Minutes for June 13, 2018
Needham Town Hall
Powers Hall**

7:30 p.m. Call to Order:
A meeting of the Board of Selectmen was convened by Chair Daniel P. Matthews. Those present were John A. Bulian, Maurice P. Handel, Matthew D. Borrelli, Marianne B. Cooley, Town Manager Kate Fitzpatrick, and Recording Secretary Mary Hunt.

7:30 p.m. Public Hearing: Eversource Energy - West Roxbury to Needham Reliability Project
Eversource Energy requests permission to construct a new transmission line within the public ways as shown on attached drawings. Project route is described as: commences at 15 Valley Road and continues west then south for approximately 1/4 of a mile and then turns to the southwest at the intersection of Peacedale Road. It follows Peacedale Road for approximately 1/4 of a mile to the intersection of Great Plain Avenue where it turns to the northwest. Then it continues for approximately 3/10 of a mile to the intersection of South Street then turns to the South. Then it follows along South Street for approximately 1 4/10 miles to the intersection of High Rock Street where the route turns slightly to the north. Then it follows along High Rock Street for approximately 5/10 of a mile to the point where the existing Eversource Transmission Line right of way is located. This work would replace one of the two existing overhead transmission lines that currently run between the Baker Street and Needham Substations on a line of double circuit towers (DCT). The replacement 115kV line would be installed on a combination of new overhead structures and underground. The Project, separating the lines on the existing DCT, is designed to improve system reliability in the event of contingencies including disruption to the existing DCT.

The Energy Facilities Siting Board has issued a final decision on this project dated May 18, 2018, and as part of the decision the Noticed Alternative Route was approved for this project. The Department of Public Works has approved this petition, based on Eversource Energy's commitment to adhere to the Town's conditions as described in the motion.

Mr. Matthews explained the project is one of a number of projects in the Boston area undertaken by Everource Energy as part of a national approach to the issue of reliability. He commented many proceedings have been held bringing the Town to this point, including Grant of Location and Route Siting before the state's Energy Facilities Siting Board. He said the Grant of Location proceeding tonight is a necessary step for implementation at the local level and deals with some of the specifics as to how the underground line will be constructed along the selected route. He said the process to this point has gone on for a couple of years with public hearings and a lot of community interest.

Domenic Nicotera, Project Manager, Eversource Energy thanked Town officials for holding the public hearing for a Grant of Location for the underground portion of the project. A Powerpoint presentation was viewed. Mr. Nicotera reviewed the project and showed a map depicting the entire route. He said Eversource Energy has secured all municipal, state, and federal permits required, and is now seeking the Grant of Location to be followed by street opening permits. Mr. Nicotera spoke about the timeline and schedule, construction process, traffic management and communication during construction, and gave contact information for residents.

Mr. Matthews asked if the Board had any comment. No comments were made.

Mr. Matthews reiterated Town staff has worked with Eversource Energy in reviewing the decision of the Siting Board, and the Department of Public Works approved the petition, based on Eversource Energy's commitment to adhere to the Town's conditions as described in the motion and as recommended by the Town Manager.

Mr. Matthews opened the public hearing inviting residents to speak.

Caren Zeitler, 5 South Court said she was under the impression the Town was insisting the vaults be placed at a greater depth than they now seem to be. She asked why the change was made? She commented the placement of each manhole cover is of concern, as they do not offer the same amount of shielding as a vault, noting some are within feet of homes or the Charles River. Ms. Zeitler asked about remediation if EMF levels are higher than anticipated. She also noted her street is a cul-de-sac and is concerned about exiting and entering the street and access of emergency vehicles.

Mr. Matthews asked Mr. Nicotera to comment on streets with only one access, as people need assurance they will, at all times, be able to enter and exit their neighborhood.

Mr. Nicotera said the Traffic Management Plan, in consultation with the Needham Police Department, has been approved. He said once construction begins, the plan can be adjusted as needed and that Eversource Energy maintains access for residents and emergency vehicles at all times.

Linda Asher, 16 South Court asked for the actual depth of the line and manhole. She asked if the manhole planned for the South Court area could be moved further down the street toward the intersection of South Street and Dedham Avenue. She suggested better communication and written notice to neighbors affected by the project.

Rohan Derasari, 569 Chestnut Street asked the plan for pre and post testing of EMF levels? He asked if Eversource Energy will come to his home or will he need to

make a request? Mr. Derasari stated a planned manhole is in close proximity to an existing manhole on Chestnut Street. He asked if one manhole could be removed. Mr. Derasari asked if blasting will occur and remediation should his property, home, or foundation be damaged? He commented on safety. He asked the plan should an electrical fire occur or manhole cover blow up, acknowledging instances are very rare? Mr. Derasari asked if Eversource Energy will send a weekly email of impending work in specific areas.

Mr. Matthews asked Mr. Nicotera to discuss depth and construction of the line, EMF radiation, placement of vaults and manholes at South Court and at the intersection of Chestnut Street and High Rock Street. He also asked how residents will be notified, about blasting, and pre and post construction monitoring of EMF levels. Mr. Matthews commented the Town's approach and Eversource Energy's approach to monitoring EMF levels differ, saying it is expected the Town's approach will be implemented unless a court intervenes. Mr. Matthews commented the project is being constructed well within safety guidelines under known and available accepted sciences, however if a problem arises the Town, Eversource Energy, and state regulatory agencies will work to address any issue.

Mr. Nicotera said Eversource Energy worked closely with the Town on the location and depth of the line, incorporating many requests into the design. He said the line is deeper than in earlier designs, centered in the street. He commented on 9 vault locations which are approximately 1500 ft. in distance, noting shifting may be necessary and the Town will be notified. Mr. Nicotera said Eversource Energy is willing to expand the notification area. He said no blasting is planned, and pre and post construction photos of the route will be taken. If damage occurs, he said it will be remedied at the expense of Eversource Energy. Mr. Nicotera told Mr. Derasari Eversource Energy will do spot checks of EMF readings if requested, outside of pre and post monitoring.

Megan Aconfora, Siting and Construction Services explained a letter will be sent to residents within 300 ft. of the project, but is willing to expand the abutter list for the Town. She said door hangers will also be placed on front doors with notification. Ms. Aconfora said a notice will be sent to residents approximately 10 days in advance of specific work starting in their area. She asked residents to refer to the project website for weekly postings, and invited people to provide email addresses to her so she can keep in touch with updates.

Christopher Soderman, Manager, Transmission Line and Civil Engineering commented Eversource Energy offers to take readings of EMF levels at anyone's home, whether they are near the project or not, at no cost.

Demetrios Sakellars, Lead Engineer, Transmission Engineering clarified manholes will have a single circuit rather than multiple circuits. He said a tethered manhole cover is not typically installed, but could be considered.

Discussion ensued regarding streets with only one access (i.e. South Court), as well as the amount of time Eversource Energy will be working in each section of roadway.

Mr. Nicotera said Eversource Energy will quickly make provisions for residents needing to leave their street on short notice with the help of Needham Police. He commented it is understood emergency vehicles will have access at all times.

Rohan Derasari, 569 Chestnut Street asked for clarification regarding accidental explosions if a transformer is located within a vault. He also asked about the integrity of the subsurface street for heavy trucks after construction. Mr. Sakellars said no transformers or electrical equipment will be in the vaults, other than splices for the cable. Mr. Matthews also explained the process of gutter to gutter repaving the roadway after construction and Ms. Fitzpatrick commented the Town has a street opening procedure, regulated by the Board of Selectmen available on line and very specific to the subsurface materials that must be used. She commented Town staff, as well as contracted staff, will be on site daily inspecting all the work. Mr. Matthews said police detail and detours will direct traffic.

Linda Asher, 16 South Court asked for clarification of the EMF exposure and shielding. She reiterated her suggestion of moving the manhole further down South Street toward Dedham Avenue. Ms. Asher asked about the ability of emergency vehicles to access her street.

Mr. Nicotera reiterated access of emergency vehicles is critical at all times and traffic set up and authority is controlled by Needham police. He commented the manhole near Ms. Asher's home is between Livingston Circle and South Court.

Discussion ensued on placement of manholes.

Mr. Matthews clarified the goal is to not use any more manholes than necessary and the location of each is primarily dictated by a distance of approximately 1500 ft. He asked Mr. Nicotera the rationale for placing a manhole near South Court, and not closer to Dedham Avenue?

Mr. Nicotera said placement of manholes is challenging, with many variables to consider. He said it is not simple to move a manhole, concurring with Mr. Matthews that a cascading effect would occur.

Mr. Matthews asked for clarification on EMF radiation levels around manhole covers and the depth of each vault.

Mr. Soderman commented in the case of South Court, the depth of the top of the cable will be in excess of 6 ft. or 7 ft. He said calculations provided to the EFSB are a further separation from the surface than what was assumed, which he said is typically 40 inches. He said directly above the vault is more sensitive to changes in

magnetic fields due to the depth of the cables, not the edges of the roadway. He said it is about 15 ft. offset from the center line of the cables at the vault/trench locations, the magnetic fields are relatively insensitive to the depth. Mr. Soderman commented on the EMF report provided by Gradient Corporation.

Patricia Gaudette, 92 High Rock Street is concerned about the close distance of manholes at the corner of Chestnut Street and High Rock Street. She asked if a manhole could be relocated towards the right-of-way where it is less populated? She commented she is concerned about EMF's and breast cancer.

Joanne Camann, 192 South Street concurred her concern is EMF's. She asked for Needham's plan should EMF rates be higher than anticipated, and whether there will be future testing.

Rohan Derasari, 569 Chestnut Street asked if it's possible to remove one manhole near the corner of Chestnut Street and High Rock Street?

Discussion ensued on placement, distance between manholes, and number of manholes. Mr. Nicotera described the rationale for having two manholes near the corner of Chestnut Street and High Rock Street. He said conditions vary along any route and there are restrictions on cable lengths that can be manufactured, transported, and pulled in to a manhole.

Christopher Dellamarggio, 177 Great Plain Avenue asked for clarification on the number of manholes, particularly the number at the intersection of South Street and Great Plain Avenue. He reiterated 4 manhole covers will be near his home, asking if there is a real or perceived danger of EMF's at each access point. Mr. Dellamarggio questioned if bicycle access will be rerouted? He asked the process for entering and exiting his driveway multiple times a day?

Mr. Nicotera confirmed 9 vaults along the route, acknowledging each manhole has 2 covers, as well as a small handhold for fiber optic cable, totaling 27 covers.

Mr. Soderman explained the EMF calculations, splice vault cable configuration, cable spacing, and minimum depth. He commented on safety standards recognized by the World Health Organization as put forth by the International Council of Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection.

Mr. Nicotera said accommodations will be made for accessing homes, and Eversource Energy will work with each homeowner to address their concerns. He confirmed a stretch of 150-200 ft. will take approximately 3 weeks to complete, as well as work hours on weekdays only from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Marissa Semprucci, 10 Richardson Drive expressed concern for acceptable levels of milli gauss, as her research indicates varying ranges. She asked what level of milli

gauss does Needham consider safe. She asked if wires will continue underground once reaching the railroad right-of-way near Richardson Drive.

Mr. Nicotera confirmed the line, once turning on to the railroad right-of-way, will continue underground until it reaches the fence at the substation.

Mr. Matthews clarified there is established, theoretical, and speculative science as to the technology. He said, as part of society, this is generally considered safe in most applications and there are recognized standards. He commented Needham's Board of Health has indicated the technology is reasonable and safe for the community. He commented pre and post testing will be conducted and the Town is prepared to do what is required to ensure safety.

Eric Biegeleisen, 207 South Street echoed concerns regarding EMF exposure. He asked for the acceptable level of milli gauss? He asked how many times will post testing be done, as milli gauss readings can vary from time to time?

Mr. Matthews commented the Town's intent is to do pre and post testing based on what Eversource Energy has told the Town about the lower levels they are attempting to achieve. He said if Eversource Energy does not achieve the levels they expect, it will be a "red flag."

Mr. Soderman offered residents with questions to email him at emfquestions@eversource.com

Mr. Matthews asked Mr. Soderman for the highest EMF levels residents can expect to see?

Mr. Soderman explained a conservative depth was used when modeling for the trench and splice vaults, as included in the Gradient report. He stated the current assumptions (actual transmission line current/amperes flowing thru the line at any given time) was calculated for an average everyday level, as well as for an assumed annual peak load day, as noted in the Gradient report. Mr. Soderman said the highest value was 98.6 milli gauss at the center line of the cables at the peak loading period (not at the side of the roadway or beyond).

Ms. Fitzpatrick added the Town is engaging a specialist to help develop guidelines for testing, as well as a monitor.

Caren Zeitler asked about remediation should levels test high in one or all places.

Mr. Soderman commented he has not encountered that and has done calculations and measurements on at least a half dozen projects.

Mr. Matthews further commented if the project does not reach tolerance levels that Eversource Energy is telling the Town it will achieve, Eversource Energy will have

to fix it. He said the utility is state regulated, but the Town has ways of bringing issues to the attention of the state. He also said standards may change based on science. Mr. Matthews said in extreme cases, the Needham Board of Health has the authority to issue a cease and desist order if they see something they believe is a present health hazard involved with the transmission line.

Jean Carabuena, 580 South Street asked how the root system of trees will be protected?

Mr. Nicotera said a protocol is in place with the Needham tree warden and/or other town officials. He commented there are ways to minimize impact.

Mr. Matthews asked for questions or comments from the Board.

Mr. Borrelli asked about the progression and sequence of the construction schedule.

Mr. Nicotera said it is anticipated Eversource Energy will begin slowly on the right-of-way off High Rock Street, ramping up to 3 concurrent locations, spread far enough apart so the traffic management plans do not conflict with one another. He noted the 3 crew arrangement is to meet the proposed schedule, and the project may be shut down for the winter. He said the Town will be updated on progress.

Mr. Bulian asked the condition of the worksite at the end of each day, noting a number of children play in the area of Valley Road and Peacedale Road. He clarified work hours of 7 a.m. - 5 p.m., noting construction vehicles are not allowed to enter the site earlier than 7 a.m. Mr. Bulian noted the active bus route in the neighborhood. He asked if residents need to prepare for possible damage to their home (ie, photographing inside/outside). He reiterated care must be taken with water and sewer line. Mr. Bulian asked if work will continue through the winter and the process for snow plowing over steel plates?

Mr. Nicotera said typically at the end of each day steel plates will be staked over the trench with blacktop around the perimeter of the plate. He said sweeping and water trucks can be used to keep dust under control, and an Eversource inspector will monitor compliance. Mr. Nicotera reiterated a pre and post construction survey will be completed, but welcomed residents to take photographs as well. He cited examples of possible damage, saying Eversource Energy will make the homeowner whole if there is damage. He noted Eversource Energy has not experienced damage due to vibrations of heavy trucks. Mr. Nicotera said most municipalities have a winter work moratorium. He said generally work will stop January-March and the roadway will be restored for the winter.

Mr. Matthews asked if heavy equipment will be overnight in neighborhoods?

Mr. Nicotera said contractors are required to start and end with equipment at the yard every day.

Mr. Handel commented notification to residents must go beyond abutters further than 300 ft., as it is better to notify anyone who may be affected by the project. He reiterated contractors must not start work earlier than 7 a.m. or stay later in the day, not just at the construction site, but near areas of the site. Mr. Handel asked Mr. Soderman to compare EMF's at ground level vs. EMF's on overhead lines.

Mr. Soderman said there are many factors, but generally speaking, transmission lines with the same current usually immediately over the trench, there may be a higher field than directly under an overhead transmission line. He commented on spacing and distance of cables.

Mr. Borrelli echoed Mr. Handel's comments regarding notification to residents, especially neighborhoods with only one access. He asked if disruptions are planned and gas or water needs to be shut off for a period of time, and how will residents be notified?

Mr. Nicotera said there are currently no planned disruptions to Town services. However, he said if a situation arises where service needs to be stopped residents and the Town will be notified ahead of time.

Ms. Cooley thanked Mr. Nicotera for meeting the requests of the Town, particularly getting the line closer and deeper in the center of the road. She asked if Eversource Energy will coordinate with the Department of Public Works in communicating to residents on social media?

Mr. Nicotera said Eversource Energy is amenable to working with the DPW, suggesting people also look at the Eversource website and Town website for project information.

Mr. Matthews asked for additional public comment. No comments were heard.

Mr. Borrelli clarified construction hours, suggesting the motion include appropriate wording for school bus routes.

Mr. Matthews asked Eversource Energy if it had any further comments?

Mr. Nicotera thanked the Board of Selectmen and Ms. Fitzpatrick for the opportunity to appear and hopes Eversource Energy have explained the project sufficiently. He acknowledged construction is a disruption to the community and Eversource Energy works hard to minimize the impact.

Mr. Matthews asked Ms. Fitzpatrick and Mr. Miyares for further comment. No comments were heard.

Mr. Matthews closed the public hearing.

Mr. Matthews read the proposed motion, noting Mr. Borrelli's suggestion for additional wording.

Motion by Mr. Handel that the Board of Selectmen approve and sign a petition from Eversource Energy to install a new transmission line within the public ways as shown on the Noticed Alternative Route subject to the following conditions, which the Board finds are necessary so as not to incommode the public use of the public ways:

- 1. Any design deviations must be approved in advance by the Director of Public Works/designee.**
- 2. Any traffic management plan changes must be approved in advance by the Chief of Police/designee.**
- 3. Construction hours are limited to Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. (excluding holidays) and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. in school zones where the school is in use except for extraordinary circumstances approved in advance by the Town Manager.**
- 4. The Chief of Police or his designee is authorized to order the work stopped if it is deemed necessary in his judgement, and to also alter the traffic management plan depending on conditions in the field.**
- 5. The final project will include gutter to gutter paving of all public ways involved in the route.**
- 6. The applicant will conduct pre- and post-construction EMF monitoring in accordance with a protocol approved by the Town Manager on behalf of the Board of Selectmen.**
- 7. The applicant will comply with all provisions of the Street Permit Procedures & Regulations dated April 1, 2012 specifically including the excavations, backfilling, and paving provisions of Section 9.**
- 8. The Board of Selectmen reserves the right to impose additional conditions as warranted.**

Second: Mr. Borrelli.

Mr. Borrelli made a motion to amend Suggested Motion to include "and detour areas with school bus routes" in #3 above.

Motion by Mr. Handel that the Board of Selectmen approve and sign a petition from Eversource Energy to install a new transmission line within the public ways as shown on the Noticed Alternative Route subject to the following conditions, which the Board finds are necessary so as not to incommode the public use of the public ways:

- 1. Any design deviations must be approved in advance by the Director of Public Works/designee.**

2. Any traffic management plan changes must be approved in advance by the Chief of Police/designee.
3. Construction hours are limited to Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. (excluding holidays) and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. in school zones where the school is in use and detour areas with school bus routes except for extraordinary circumstances approved in advance by the Town Manager.
4. The Chief of Police or his designee is authorized to order the work stopped if it is deemed necessary in his judgement, and to also alter the traffic management plan depending on conditions in the field.
5. The final project will include gutter to gutter paving of all public ways involved in the route.
6. The applicant will conduct pre- and post-construction EMF monitoring in accordance with a protocol approved by the Town Manager on behalf of the Board of Selectmen.
7. The applicant will comply with all provisions of the Street Permit Procedures & Regulations dated April 1, 2012 specifically including the excavations, backfilling, and paving provisions of Section 9.
8. The Board of Selectmen reserves the right to impose additional conditions as warranted.

Second: Mr. Handel. Unanimously approved 5-0.

Mr. Borrelli reiterated and assumes construction hours includes any vehicular access, according to Needham by-laws.

Mr. Bulian clarified in the case of Peacedale Road and Valley Road where there are many students, work would not begin until 9 a.m. when school is in session. Ms. Fitzpatrick confirmed Mr. Bulian's question.

Mr. Matthews queried whether school bus routes would be moved? Ms. Fitzpatrick indicated the School Transportation Office would make changes to bus routes, noting detours are common around construction.

Ms. Cooley asked Ms. Fitzpatrick if the school bus route is protected in the afternoon, as well. Ms. Fitzpatrick said she must assume that in certain circumstances, buses will be re-routed.

Mr. Bulian reiterated safety of children walking through the project site in the entire Peacedale Road, Valley Road, Intervale Road area, and is a place where a 9 a.m. start time on school days is warranted. He said further discussion is necessary for after school drop off and children returning to their home. Ms. Fitzpatrick concurred.

Mr. Handel asked whether construction could be timed, per the calendar, to avoid complications in densely populated area such as the Valley Road area. Ms. Cooley

said she is hopeful the Valley Road portion of the project will be done during the summer.

Ms. Fitzpatrick said documents will be amended reflecting conditions set by the Board of Selectmen “as attached.” She said the attachment will be amended before being provided to Eversource Energy.

Mr. Bulian pointed out #8 of the motion, in which “the Board of Selectmen reserves the right to impose additional conditions as warranted” covers everything.

Mr. Matthews said the process has been a long haul, particularly in a society that depends on a very complicated electrical transmission and distribution system for things people need every day. He noted many people had input, and although it is primarily a state project with the EFSB, the Town has had role especially in working out the design when considering the science and uncertainties. He commented he is hopeful we are at a point to have a result as good as we could have achieved, and one which will benefit the public going forward.

Mr. Matthews thanked the Board of Selectmen, Eversource Energy, counsel, staff, the Board of Health, the Town Engineer, and the DPW for their work.

The Board reiterated its vote on Mr. Borrelli’s motion to amend the main motion with a unanimous vote of 5-0, and on the main motion to allow the order of the Grant of Location, subject to the conditions as described in the motion with a unanimous vote of 5-0.

9:53 p.m.

Adjourn:

Motion by Mr. Handel that the Board of Selectmen vote to adjourn the Board of Selectmen meeting on Wednesday, June 13, 2018.

Second: Mr. Borrelli. Unanimously approved 5-0.