

THE GENERAL COURT OF MASSACHUSETTS
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1053

July 27, 2012

Thomas May, President
NSTAR
800 Boylston Street
Boston, MA 02199

RE: IMPACT OF NSTAR VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PROGRAM ON THE TOWN
OF NEEDHAM

Dear Mr. May:

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the representatives of NSTAR, Mark Reed, Annemarie Walsh, Bill Hayes and Bryan McDevitt, who took the time to meet with Needham officials on July 26th. This meeting was an important step in ensuring appropriate and helpful communication between NSTAR and the Town, and through the Town government to Needham's property owners along NSTAR's right of way. In attendance at the meeting were Representative Denise Garlick, Maryanne Jefferson representing Senator Richard Ross, Katherine Shea and Robert Fowkes representing Congressman Steven Lynch, Jerry Wasserman, Chair and Dan Matthews, Vice Chair of the Needham Board of Selectmen, Town Manager Kate Fitzpatrick, representatives of Needham Public Works, Needham Fire Department, Needham Police Department, Needham Park and Recreation, Needham School Committee, Needham Conservation Department, Needham Golf Club, Trustees of Reservation, MBTA, MBCR, and other Town officials.

We understand NSTAR's need to assure uninterrupted operation of the power grid and to accomplish that goal in a cost effective manner. At the same time, we know that NSTAR respects the importance of minimizing inconvenience to the public and the right of residents to the quiet enjoyment of their own homes and property. Our goal is to partner with NSTAR to ensure that these goals can all be met in the most satisfactory manner possible.

Town officials and other stakeholders have made the following requests:

1. The Town asks that NSTAR make a good faith effort to assure that every property owner has actual notice of the type of work planned on or adjacent to his or her property, as well as the approximate date that the work will be performed. A notification to property owners should be in writing and sent by first class mail.

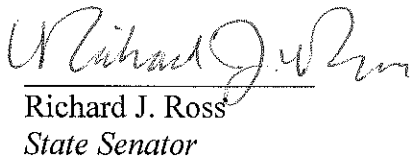
2. The Town asks that NSTAR arrange to have specific trees proposed for removal and/or ROW easement lines/work area marked out as soon as possible.
3. The Town asks that NSTAR be willing to meet with each property owner to discuss his or her concerns and options.
4. The Town asks for written assurance from NSTAR that the work plan that is communicated to the residents is followed by its contractor.
5. The Town asks that NSTAR consider leaving some trees in place that are deemed to be incompatible with the ROW but which are not yet at a height that would cause concern. This phased approach would provide the Town and abutters the opportunity to consider alternative vegetation plantings over the next few years as the incompatible trees grow and may become problematic.
6. We request that the Town's Tree Warden or his designee be kept informed about the proposed work and its progress and that NSTAR cooperate with the Tree Warden's monitoring of the project on both public and private property within the Town.
7. The Town asks that the work be no more extensive than that which is reasonably required to protect the transmission lines from falling or other tree contact, and that the work not cause more hardship than absolutely necessary.
8. The Town asks for your response to some special concerns. These include, but are not limited to, the Elmwood Road area and neighborhoods with similar concerns which deserve special attention given its densely populated nature and proximity to both the transmission line and rail corridor. Also, the DeFazio park complex, the Needham Golf Club, and land under the Trustees of Reservations/DCR and wetland areas.
9. Officials had several specific questions for NSTAR, as follows:
 - a. How will property owners be able to identify the limits of the easement?
 - b. How will NSTAR mark out the limit of its ROW?
 - c. How will NSTAR ensure that the ROW area does not become an attractive nuisance and create public safety problems?
 - d. How will NSTAR monitor and respond to erosion concerns?
 - e. How will NSTAR's contractor maintain communication with the Town's Tree Warden?
 - f. What options will be considered with respect to safety concerns in our neighborhoods and in the areas surrounding the Needham Golf Club and DeFazio Park Complex?

We appreciate your written response to the concerns and questions that have been raised before the vegetation management program begins in Needham and continued communication throughout the process. Please do not hesitate to contact Kate Fitzpatrick, Town Manager, if you need additional information or have any questions.

Sincerely,


Denise C. Garlick
State Representative


Kate Fitzpatrick
Needham Town Manager


Richard J. Ross
State Senator


Michael F. Rush
State Senator

cc: Needham Board of Selectmen
Needham Town Officials and Stakeholders
Mark Reed, Director of Government Affairs - NSTAR