PUBLIC COMMENTS

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8, 2009

5:00 p.m.

In the Matter of the Route Permit Application for a 345 kV Transmission Line from Brookings County, South Dakota to Hampton, Minnesota

PUC Docket Number ET2/TL-08-1474

Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites
20800 Kenrick Avenue
Lakeville, Minnesota

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MR. EK: So now we'll open it up to public comments, questions, concerns about suggested alternatives. So if I could just have folks who'd like to comment just step up to the mic here. I guess we can form a line down the row here, and we'll have the stenographer record your comments.

So feel free to step up.

MR. CHEMBERLIN: Get this show on the road. What do you need to know, Scott, names or anything?

MR. EK: Yeah, I'm sorry, I'm sorry. I needed a drink of water real quick. If you could state your name and spell it for the court reporter, please.

MR. CHEMBERLIN: Bob Chemberlin, C-H-E-M-B-E-R-L-I-N. Okay. I've been to Hampton a few times, and for the life of me I can't see what's going on there that needs all this power. Why Hampton? What's -- where is this going from Hampton?

MR. EK: That actually -- well, I can answer part of that. Maybe Craig can answer more of it. But that becomes part of the need issue, the whole need for the project and why it's going to Hampton and why it's needed to go to Hampton.

And let me explain that. That's a separate part of the project. Well, there's two separate dockets. There's a need part, and that need's been going on for two or three years. I'm not part of that need process, so I really can't --

MR. CHEMBERLIN: A need where? Are we talking about Twin City power?

MR. EK: Just need, is this line needed, period. Period, is this line needed. And so they have -- that's the PUC, Public Utilities Commission determines that. That's a separate process and it's been going on.

We're here tonight to talk about the routing process, where -- if the line was deemed needed, where exactly it would go. The certificate of need process has ended. Everything's been done. And, in fact, next week, next -- the 15th, which would be Wednesday, the Public Utilities Commission is hearing oral arguments from all those folks and intervenors that have been part of this whole process for the last couple of years on the need side. They'll listen to that. It is open to the public, not open to the public for comments or anything, you can go there to listen and hear what people have to say with regards to need for this

project.

On Thursday, the 16th, the PUC then just deliberates and they talk amongst themselves. That is also open to the public. You can go there. They don't -- they don't allow people to raise their hand and ask questions, but you can listen to what they're talking about. And at that time, on the 16th, they will decide whether this project is indeed needed or not needed. And depending on their decision -- if it's needed, this routing process keeps going. We keep going with this process here. If they say this project is not needed, everything ends. This whole routing process goes away right now -- or around that day.

MR. CHEMBERLIN: Okay. So back to my original question.

MR. EK: Right.

MR. CHEMBERLIN: You must -- I know what the meeting is today, but you must know what the need committees or whatever are saying, where is the need? I think we deserve the need if we're -- our land is being taken to feed St. Paul or --

MR. EK: Yeah.

MR. CHEMBERLIN: -- wherever.

MR EK: As I said, I'm not -- that's --

I'm on the routing side of the process.

MR. CHEMBERLIN: So you don't know where the need is?

MR. EK: No, I don't deal with the need at all. We have a whole -- two separate departments. One to help with --

MR. CHEMBERLIN: Okay.

MR. EK: One to help with the need.

MR. CHEMBERLIN: The substations, will those substations like the one out by Redwood Falls, Franklin, would that feed those communities? Are they drawing power from that or is it just a substation to up it to transmit it?

MR. EK: No. Yes, yes, the new substations, as Craig has explained in previous meetings, they are the on and off-ramps, and they would feed those communities in those special areas, you know, in Marshall and Granite Falls and Franklin and Hampton and off-load or on-load the electricity, you know, the transmission, the electricity to those areas.

MR. CHEMBERLIN: Which gets me to my real question. What is the reason that we're not following existing right-of-ways and easements, i.e., freeways, highways, Interstate 90, come all

the way over to 35 and north right up one side of the road? Why aren't we doing that?

MR. EK: Yeah. That's a question I'll -- that's a question I'll give to -- hand over to Craig. But at the same time, that is -- you know, it is your option to provide that as an alternative to this project and submit it.

MR. CHEMBERLIN: I hereby provide it as an option.

MR. EK: There you go. And now we have that in the record. It's just as good as submitting a comment. But I'll let Craig kind of comment on why -- why or why not it was not routed along 90 and so on and so forth because I wasn't part of that process.

MR. POORKER: Thanks. We chose to route it along the route that we did for a number of reasons.

Is this working yet?

MR. CHEMBERLIN: Yeah.

MR. POORKER: Okay. Good.

You're right. The substations that we're looking at, Lyon County substation is the first one we come to when we come out of Brookings County substation. There's been a lot of growth in

Marshall, not just in residential, but a huge amount of manufacturing. There have been a lot of ethanol plants come on line, and those are huge users of electricity. We needed to get some electricity to Marshall.

Same thing with the Franklin area. We have not so much growth right there, other than ethanol plants, but there is an issue there. We have voltage problems all around there. It's a struggle for us to keep the power going all the time. We have voltage drops. And that substation is going to help alleviate some of that.

The Helena substation is probably more of a breaker station. It looks like a substation, but that's so that we can interconnect with that existing 345 line that's there already. There's one there that kind of ties that 345 kV system together. And then from there we head to Lake Marion, and I think it's pretty tough to deny the growth that we've seen in the Twin Cities area in the last 30 years. Now, the population has doubled in the Twin Cities as well as Minnesota. Dakota County has seen significant growth, as well as Scott County, and there's a lot more coming. And so that's why we need to get to Lake Marion substation.

Hampton substation, again, we're connecting into an existing 345-kV transmission line, and that again ties that whole grid system together. It just makes it a little more robust and much more efficient and is going to serve a lot of the growth that's in the Twin Cities area. And we -- this area that we're in is the suburbs.

MR. CHEMBERLIN: So is that my answer to the need question --

MR. POORKER: I would say yes.

MR. CHEMBERLIN: -- that Scott had mentioned?

MR. POORKER: Yes.

MR. CHEMBERLIN: Okay. All right. Thank you.

MR. POORKER: Thank you.

MR. EK: Thanks for your comments, sir.

If you could state and spell your name.

MR. LAE: Sure. My name is Colin Lae, that's C-O-L-I-N, L-A-E. I'm a sophomore engineer in Lakeville, and I ran for state rep last year.

My question today, first of all, I'm somewhat concerned because we're looking at putting in this huge project. But, you know, land values are badly depressed right now. I'm sure a lot of

1 people are looking at this thing and saying, you
2 know, fair market value isn't what it used to be in
3 times like this. So I just feel for all the people
4 who are having this built on their land. Clearly,
5 they need to know that -- be reassured that they're
6 going to get a fair value for what they're giving
7 up.
8 Secondly, I should point out that there
9 was a newspaper article -- I see the guy behind me
10 holding it -- put out by an organization calling
11 themselves Citizens for Smart Energy. I did a
12 little research into this thing. Apparently it was
13 some extra advertising for tonight's event; but
14 they're actually, I believe, an astro-turfing
15 organization. I don't know if you understand what
16 that means. But this is a St. Paul investment firm
17 that shares an office and a CEO with that
18 organization, and I think that they're not actually
19 who they claim to be. So a lot of people here may
20 have come here tonight thinking that they're coming
21 to see about environmental impacts and that, which
22 is true; but they're using talking points from an
23 investment firm which may have interests along the
24 line site.
25 MR. EK: It's funny. Is that just recent

from around here?

MR. McCARNEY: Yeah, it's the Sun Current from --

MR. EK: Because last Monday in Marshall there was a similar advertisement in the Marshall paper.

MR. McCARNEY: Really?

MR. EK: We weren't quite sure who they were.

MR. McCARNEY: My radar goes up when I read Citizens for Smart Energy.

MR. EK: To be honest with you, I hadn't had time to even research who it was. I do have the article from Marshall, so -- but I haven't had time, with all these public meetings, to research it. But...

MR. LAE: Let's just say I had to do some digging because they didn't want to make themselves very well known. But, yeah, it's a St. Paul investment firm.

And I share the concerns of all the homeowners along the site. I hope that you pick a good route that takes into account their concerns. But I just want to let the people know that the newspaper article wasn't a valid organization.

MR. EK: Thank you. That's nice to know. It's helpful for me, too.

Could I have a -- Craig, could you maybe speak to the whole easement -- I know that's probably going to come up again -- and the fair market value and so forth.

MR. POORKER: Yeah, that question's come up at every meeting, is easements and acquisition and payments for those easements and how we do that, so -- which is my background.

This is a -- like Scott said, this is a big project. Minnesota hasn't seen a project like this in 30-some years. My background is easement acquisition, and working with Great River Energy I've learned a lot about acquiring easements for transmission lines. What we -- we do, by law and by constitution, have to offer just compensation. What just compensation is is defined by various state laws. When an electric utility pays for easements, we make a payment based on the number of acreage -- number of acres encumbered by that easement; and it is based on your land value, what land is selling for at that particular time that we negotiate an easement.

The easements that we acquire are for

this transmission line and nothing else. We buy the rights from you to build this transmission line, to maintain it and to operate it, and that's it. It's still your private property. If somebody else comes along and wants to put up a bike trail or bury a phone line or a cable or something like that or a snowmobile trail, they cannot do that unless they get another easement from you as a private landowner. That doesn't open it up to anything else. It's still your property to farm, to put fences up, put roads across. We don't have a lot of restrictions on that easement other than putting structures in there that could be hazardous to you or to the transmission line integrity.

But we don't just pay for easements. We also pay for damage that we do to your private property, and that would be damage to your crop if you have a crop planted. Or you have landscaping within that easement that we damage because of construction, we pay you for that. Crop loss, loss in crop yield because of soil compaction, that does take some time to get that back.

Also impacts to land values. The big concern that we've been hearing along this whole corridor is what is this going to do to my land

values. As a landowner and as a utility, if we are affecting your property values and -- affecting that, we have to pay for that. We don't just pay for the easement, but we pay also the impact that's going to be inflicted on your property, if there is any.

Some -- and everybody's property is different. This transmission line will affect different properties differently. There are no two pieces of property alike on the planet. So we're going to affect each one differently. We negotiate with every single property owner that is on this project, as well as other people that may have an interest in your property as well. So I'll --

MR. SWANSON: How about next door?

MR. POORKER: Next door?

MR. SWANSON: Next door to the easement?

MR. POORKER: Yep, if -- that's an issue that comes up as well. That's one of those aesthetic criteria that we have to look at. And the state looks at that as well when they're reviewing our route. Unfortunately, if you are across the road from the transmission easement and the easement is not encroaching on your property, there is no avenue for paying people for that. That's -- it's

something we wrestle with, and I understand that; but that's an aesthetic value that's going to have to be addressed in the -- that is addressed in the permit application and, likewise, is going to have to be addressed by the state as part of that EIS.

MR. SWANSON: So what you're saying is you'll compensate only the people --

MR. EK: Sir, you'll have to come up to the microphone so we can get it on record for you.

MR. SWANSON: Del Swanson. S-W-A-N-S-O-N, D-E-L. The question -- what you're saying is that you are -- the easement compensation is only for those people directly on whose property the line falls?

MR. POORKER: That is correct.

MR. SWANSON: If I live next door and there's a big 180-foot tower on my view toward the sunset, I get nothing for that?

MR. POORKER: That is correct. And we've heard from people that have issues with that anywhere from being right next door and we even heard from people that were a mile away that were concerned with having to view something like that. So it's an aesthetic value that will have to be addressed as part of the permit.

MR. EK: Thank you, Craig.

Yes, sir. If you could state and spell your name.

MR. McCARNEY: Kevin, K-E-V-I-N, McCarney, M-C-C-A-R-N-E-Y.

A couple of questions. One, will this project create a lot of jobs? Because this economy is in really tough shape.

MR. EK: Craig.

MR. POORKER: I would say yes. This is a -- this is a significant construction project. Everywhere -- everything from designing, surveying, engineering, steel manufacturing of the poles, wires, concrete. We are going to keep concrete companies quite busy for a while constructing this line. It takes a significant amount of labor. I think the big hope is, and I heard this comment last night, was is it going to be Minnesota labor. That's something that's kind of out of my control as the routing lead for this project, but as a taxpayer and a citizen of this area, I would hope that it would be Minnesota labor. But there is going to be significant job opportunities on this project.

Mr. McCARNEY: Now, will this -- will this help to keep our energy costs lower, this big

1 project?
2 MR. POORKER: I'm not sure -- that's
3 probably, again, in the certificate of need. I
4 think they probably had to address how that may
5 impact your rates. And there's a number in the
6 certificate of need, I don't remember, but I thought
7 it was like in the $1.70 to $2 a month range, that's
8 that it would increase.
9 MR. McCARNEY: Okay. Thank you.
10 MR. POORKER: Thank you.
11 MR. EK: Yes, sir. If you could please
12 state your name and spell it, please.
13 MR. KRASS: I will do that. My name is
14 Rod Krass, K-R-A-S-S.
15 I practice in the condemnation area, and
16 I'm here representing Tom and Kim Purdin (phonetic),
17 who are on the preferred route and want me to make
18 the comment that they don't want to be on the
19 preferred route, they don't want this project to
20 occur, and they don't want to shift it south onto
21 their neighbors' property either, because that's
22 what these projects do. If the other route gets
23 taken, your neighbor gets hurt instead of you.
24 Somebody -- somebody loses.
25 I have represented 55 landowners in the

1 MinnCan oil condemnation that we're going through
2 right now, and I can tell you a little bit about
3 this process that you're going to face because we've
4 gone through it. We challenged the certificate of
5 need, we challenged the route at the PUC, and then
6 we appealed that to the Minnesota Court of Appeals.
7 And you've heard that there's going to be
8 a decision next week on the certificate of need.
9 And I'm not a betting man, but were I a betting man,
10 I would tell you I would put very long odds on any
11 chance that the PUC is not going to approve that
12 certificate of need. I expect that's going to
13 happen. And when that happens, then we're in the
14 routing process, and the issue of whether or not
15 there's a need for this has gone and has already
16 been decided.
17 Now, what happens when a project like
18 this starts is that the companies involved are going
19 to bring in land agents. This is a huge project.
20 They're going to bring in a company of land agents.
21 Usually these companies are from Texas and Oklahoma.
22 Our experience on MinnCan was that most of our
23 property owners had two or three or sometimes four
24 different land agents knocking at their door, each
25 one saying something different, nobody having the

same story. And I recognize some faces here of people who have been through this and understand it. That's -- that's going to happen to you, too.

There's often some disinformation that's provided. We took a lot of testimony where people said, the land agents came and told us you'd better take our offer, it's better than nothing, and not -- not telling them that they had an opportunity if they wished to go to a hearing and have three disinterested real estate people in their county make a determination as to what their compensation ought to be and what their loss is.

I just heard a comment about a determination as to whether or not your remaining property has been damaged, and certainly that is compensable if it has. And I will tell you, of the 55 that I have had myself, twice, only twice has there been a recognition that that oil line has impacted anything except the easement taken. They almost always claim there is no impact to the remaining property. And that's always going to be a battle.

We showed instance after instance before the PUC of lack of notification. And we heard -- I was in New Prague last night, heard a lot of people

say this is going right through my property, nobody notified me, I didn't get one of those letters. And I will tell you, we had all kinds of people come up and testify to that extent; and MinnCan, which is Koch Refinery, took the position they had notified everybody. So we asked MinnCan for the list of people they notified. They refused to give it. So we went to the Commerce Department where Mr. Ek's department is, and that's the people's representative in all this, and we said you give us that list. And we got back -- I got back a letter from them saying, no, we consider this confidential information. The information as to whose property was being taken by that utility, they said, was confidential. But they were nice enough to tell me that I could start a lawsuit against the State of Minnesota and try and convince a judge to overturn their decision.

The PUC, Public Utilities Commission, ignored the whole issue of notice. They ignored the issue of the route because there was what's called a brown field route, the old route of an old pipeline that went down to Koch Refinery, and that was preferred by many, many people instead of what's called the green field route through a lot of farms

1 and homes coming around the west side of the Twin
2 Cities to get to the Koch Refinery. And the PUC
3 said, you know what, we don't have to look at that
4 brown field because the Applicant, Koch Refinery,
5 has told us it won't work. So that was the decision
6 they made, they wouldn't look at it.
7 We had no better luck, I will tell you,
8 in the Court of Appeals, which simply wasn't
9 interested in hearing any of this and affirmed the
10 decision of the PUC and on went the condemnation
11 process, then.
12 I want to tell you one more thing. In
13 2006 the Minnesota legislature passed a major reform
14 in condemnation law, long overdue, to give property
15 owners rights that they never had before. As an
16 example, for as long as I can remember the amount
17 that you received to pay for your appraisal has been
18 $500, and you cannot get a condemnation appraisal
19 for anything close to $500. The legislature changed
20 it to 5,000. There's always been a problem with
21 condemning authorities low-balling people, coming in
22 with a real low offer. And the legislature said,
23 look, if the commissioners find out and award an
24 amount 40 percent higher than your offer, they're
25 going to get attorney's fees. Really good approach,

a really good change. There was other changes. A great number of them on are relocation, business loss, things of that nature. Wonderful changes.

The problem is all these private utilities got themselves exempted from every one of those changes and are still under the old law. And a group of us went to the legislature this spring and attempted to get that exemption removed. We were unsuccessful. And we were unsuccessful because legislators aren't hearing from their constituents. And I told the people in New Prague last night, shame on anybody in this room who's going to be impacted or whose neighbors are going to be impacted who don't go home and write their state senator and their state representative and the governor of this state and demand to know why these private utilities, who are in the money-making business, why they get exempted when the state or the county or the school district or the city have to give you these rights.

And there is no rationale why your rights should be dependent on who's taking your land, because if it's a private utility, all those changes from '06 are out the window. And we're going to have another session before this condemnation starts

to make those changes. And it's only going to happen if people get upset enough and angry enough and understand this is going to impact you or a friend of yours or a neighbor of yours and demand that your representatives do something about this.

So in that process, when it starts, we're going to find out if we've got that change and you folks have those rights that everybody has when the state or government takes your property, or you're back in the 1950s when the initial condemnation law was first passed.

Thank you.

MR. EK: Thank you for your comments.

Just wanted to add one thing. You're more than welcome to go visit the eDocket, the website that we have, particularly the eDocket website for this project. You will find a list of all the addresses the notices were sent out to in PDF form. Once the comment period ends on the 30th, all comments that are submitted will be scanned into PDF and will be available on line. So I guess I can't -- I can't comment to what happened in the past with an oil pipeline project, but tonight we're talking about this transmission line project, and all the addresses are there. If you don't find your

address, give me a call. We could certainly find it. They are available on the website for you to view as of right now, today.

But thank you for your comments, sir.

Yes, ma'am. If you could state and spell your name.

MS. MILLER: My name's Mary Miller, M-I-L-L-E-R.

This is not our first contact with a transmission line for Great River Energy. Our first contact was in Arrow Lake Industrial Park about ten years ago, and it's for a 115-kilovolt line. They moved this line from an adjoining property behind us, so it was on the back of our property, to the front of our property on Hamburg Avenue. They told us it's not going to impact you or anything like that, but we can't do anything underneath that power line. They cut down trees underneath it. We can only put trees underneath it for a certain height. One question that I think everyone probably wants to know, how is this really going to impact my front yard? So what I'd like you guys to do is to tell us -- you've told us the height, you've told us the easement area. Are you going to clear-cut everything underneath these lines? Can we plant

anything underneath these lines? Can we do anything underneath these lines?

I'd like to applaud the gentleman before me. This is our third easement with any kind of an agency, be that a public utility electrical or the intersection that you see right out here that you probably drove through the construction area. We're not done with that one yet, but it is exactly as he said. You will lose, and you have no rights. No matter what you think you have, they aren't there.

MR. EK: Just to answer your question about the -- underneath the power line, it's my understanding that high-growing trees, of course, if they're going to interfere with the power line, no. They are going to have to be short.

MS. MILLER: What height, though?

MR. EK: Good question. Is there --

MR. POORKER: Usually 20 to 25.

MR. EK: 20 to 25 feet.

MS. MILLER: So it's a maximum height with a range?

MR. EK: There -- within that 150 feet. Within the hundred --

MS. MILLER: 150 to 180 feet, I believe it is.

MR. EK: No, 150 feet is the right-of-way.

MS. MILLER: Oh, the mailing we got said it could range, particularly on curves. We happen to live on a curve, and it's coming through our front yard. We live on a hill. It's going to be our view.

MR. EK: Okay.

MS. MILLER: Okay? So that's why we're asking these kinds of questions. So, once again, in that 150 to 180 feet, we can't plant anything over 25 or 20 feet?

MR. POORKER: Some of the restrictions that are on there, of course, tall trees are definitely a hazard to the transmission line. There are -- like I said before, you can pretty much do anything under that transmission line except have something there, whether it's a tree or structure, that could interfere with the transmission line or pose a danger to somebody that might be climbing in a tree or something like that.

MS. MILLER: So it's pretty -- it's not a hard and fast rule?

MR. POORKER: Oh, I think it is. We have a list of trees that are --

MS. MILLER: Okay.

MR. POORKER: -- a lot of species of trees that only grow to 20 or 25 feet tall, 25 feet tall. Apple trees are a good example, lilac bushes -- we have tree farms underneath our transmission lines.

MS. MILLER: We have apple trees and lilac bushes under the current line that runs in front of our property near the lake, so we're familiar with that.

MR. POORKER: That should not be an issue for us.

MS. MILLER: So are you saying that we could actually -- if we built a building that would be 25 feet, we can put it directly under that line?

MR. POORKER: I would say not, because you plant an apple tree or lilac tree, you're not going to be climbing in that. You build a shed or something 25 feet high, it's pretty tough to build without a crane or somebody up on the roof. And that is getting a little bit too close for comfort to those wires. So I would say no structures within that right-of-way.

MS. MILLER: See, I'm asking these questions specifically for those people that don't

know the answers. We already have been through this, and this is a bigger line with a wider easement area.

MR. POORKER: Right, right. The easement within the hundred -- is 150 feet to 180 feet. And the areas where we may be at 180 feet wide will be somewhere -- if we have to use an H-frame structure, and there may be cases where we need to make a -- have a really, really long span, and H-frames allow us to do that. River crossings are a good example. I can see us using H-frames in those locations. So, yes, the right-of-way would be up to 180 feet at those locations.

MS. MILLER: Curbs and corners is where we see them, also.

MR. POORKER: There shouldn't have to be.

MS. MILLER: There shouldn't have to be?

MR. POORKER: No. I think you're probably referring to probably anchor structures, right?

MS. MILLER: Yeah, I'm thinking specifically south of the Lake Marion station as it goes down Dupont Avenue.

MR. POORKER: Okay. I think where it turns or where there's an angle structure, there are

most likely some anchors in there. And we have proposed to build this line without anchors. So where we do have to make a corner, we're going to do that without anchoring those structures. That's something that we heard a lot from the ag community as well, is don't put anchors in our fields. And so we're going to design the structure and the transmission line to avoid that.

MS. MILLER: Okay. So I think you've answered all the questions, essentially. In a 150- to 180-foot wide area on your property, you will pretty much not be able to do anything except maybe plant some little apple trees.

MR. POORKER: I would say you could pretty much do anything except put structures or tall trees in there. You can fence it --

MS. MILLER: Which is the purpose of trying to at least hide the poles for some people. In our case we aren't going to have that option. It's going to be in our front window because we're on a hill.

MR. POORKER: Okay. Yes. And like I said before, you can put roads, driveways, fences, landscaping, smaller trees and shrubs, gardens. There are not that many restrictions for a

transmission line as opposed to a roadway where you can do absolutely nothing in that -- in that easement.

MS. MILLER: One thing I'd also like to comment to all of you. You may not be aware, but when someone takes an easement on your property, you continue to pay taxes on the dirt underneath that easement. Some people aren't aware of that. We actually own half of Hamburg. We pay the taxes on that street all the way up to the middle of the road. We also do that over here at this intersection. We do that at home, as you do if you live on a road and your property line abuts that. You will continue to pay property taxes on land you cannot use.

MR. POORKER: And that's correct. Most of you that live along a roadway that has a road easement, you do own usually to the center of the road --

MS. MILLER: Correct.

MR. POORKER: -- or to the quarter section line or section line. You do own that. However, your tax assessor should be looking at that as a value of 0, because that road easement, that 33 feet, you can do nothing with, so they should

take that into account.

MS. MILLER: According to Dakota County -- we've just been through this, we just finished our hearing in January because we declined the county offer -- that is not the case.

MR. POORKER: Yeah, again, I can't speak for them. But that's -- having come from a county and having a background in easement acquisitions for -- right-of-way acquisition for a small local county, that is the way -- I had a conversation with a tax assessor, and that's what we agreed to do.

MS. MILLER: Which county? Is it one of these affected here?

MR. POORKER: No. No, it is not.

MS. MILLER: Okay. We were told that Scott County is very similar to Dakota County. So I have not personally called the assessor yet.

MR. POORKER: And I don't think there's hardly anybody that's in this room that does not have an easement of some kind on their property, and most likely a road easement.

MS. MILLER: That's correct.

MR. POORKER: Without a road easement on your property, you're not going anywhere.

MS. MILLER: Right.

MR. POORKER: You're not getting home and you're not going to leave if you're in there. So everybody has an easement, and I'm not sure how the county addresses that or any road authority.

MS. MILLER: One final comment is -- the gentleman before me addressed this also -- we, as I said, have just been through this, and this was on a residential parcel. They typically don't do what they're alluding to here. They do not pay you for the impact on the remaining property. That, to them, is -- it's not worth it. And even with a hearing after the county offer and negotiating with your attorney or yourselves, that's really not going to amount to much. So you really need to review what the gentleman before me said. A lot of his points are right on. Thank you.

MR. POORKER: Yeah. And, again, that was MinnCan. I have no idea -- I've heard a lot about people that have been affected by MinnCan over the last year and a half. We heard that at every open house in Scott County and Dakota County.

But I think the electric utilities -- Great River Energy as an example. We have a lot of transmission in Dakota County, Scott County, and I've worked on projects in Scott County and Dakota

County. And from what I understand from those folks, we did okay. The projects that I worked on in Dakota and Scott anyway, we got done. They were 69- and 115-kV projects, granted, but we did it, I think, pretty well. We go out and visit with those landowners when we're done. I got every single easement without using eminent domain. That's not going to happen on every project. That's getting to be rare, in fact.

But I think we have -- as an electric generation and transmission cooperative that has a lot of transmission in Dakota and Scott County, we have to live and work here, we have to come back. If we mess this project up, it's going to be much more difficult for the next project; and there will be more, whether it's a new transmission line or an upgraded transmission line. We're going to have to work with some of the same people. I've worked on projects over by Miesville, I've worked on projects in Sand Creek and Helena Townships, and I think those have gone relatively well. And those same people in Helena Township were also notified in that same corridor when we sent out the original notice.

MR. EK: And also, to answer your question about the easements and tree clearing or

vegetation clearing, as we call it, it's boilerplate in permits, and we identify in the permits it's limited only to that easement and as necessary. So it's in the permit. They must follow what's in that permit.

And we do, of course, have a complaint form with the permit. Should you feel they're out of bounds, submit that complaint form. But that is very boilerplate in all the permits we issue for these transmission right-of-ways when it comes to clearing vegetation in a right-of-way, to answer that question.

Sir.

MR. BOB JOHNSON: Thanks, Scott. Bob Johnson. The gentleman in the blue sweater, are you aware of where -- is it Senate File 1112 on the eminent domain bill is up at the State House right now? Is that out of committee and -- do you know? It was Bly's bill, or Dahle and Bly?

MR. KRASS: It's my understanding that it didn't make the cut getting through the required committees before the cutoff date.

MR. BOB JOHNSON: I had heard Friday or Monday that it had gotten out of one committee and was moving to Senate committee or something. Just

wondered if -- the lady in the white.

MS. TOPP: It didn't make the March 27th cutoff; however, Bly and Dahle and Northfield are now working -- are all working to get an amendment to go into the energy bill. If it can be done by amendment, it could still be voted on the floor of the House. So it's not just an issue for the next session, it's still an issue for this session. It's really important that you contact your legislators.

MR. JOHNSON: And on that point --

MR. EK: Sir, could I just ask, if we're asking the public, if you have comments back, if it's a back-and-forth conversation, for respect for the transcriber, if you could come up to the microphone so she can get this on record and hear what you're saying, please. Just appreciate that.

MR. BOB JOHNSON: Scott, was it Frank?

MR. EK: Craig.

MR. POORKER: Craig.

MR. BOB JOHNSON: And, Craig, what co-op do you represent or work for?

MR. POORKER: Great River Energy.

MR. BOB JOHNSON: Great River. Of the total CapX project, what percentage of ownership or share of the CapX project is Great River?

MR. POORKER: Oh, I don't remember that. I think that's in the certificate of need also, but I'm thinking it's like 17 to 18 percent range.

MR. BOB JOHNSON: I think Xcel is about 43 percent.

MR. POORKER: I think higher than that.

MR. BOB JOHNSON: Higher than that? So, with respect, the work that your group has done might not play any real role in this whole routing process. And when you guys have maybe done a great job in the areas you've been in, those of us and others who might be impacted quite possibly might never see your folks. Is that accurate?

MR. POORKER: I think as far as this project goes, Great River Energy is the project manager for this project. They're going to see it through, through construction and restoration and everything like that. The final ownership of the line, as far as I know, that's still up in the air. The utility companies are negotiating who is going to own and operate that.

MR. BOB JOHNSON: Right. Thank you.

MR. POORKER: Okay. Thanks.

MR. BOB JOHNSON: And with respect to routing, is it accurate that -- Scott, that your

office is going to write the environmental impact study and then, after some additional process, that goes to the PUC for their consideration? Is that where that report goes?

MR. EK: Yeah. Yeah. I'll -- our office, the Office of Energy Security, does write the environmental impact statement. In fact, we've hired a third-party consultant to assist with writing that environmental impact statement. And yes, indeed, it does go to the public and it does go to the PUC, of course, for them to review.

MR. BOB JOHNSON: And just by the by, how many folks are employed at the OES?

MR. EK: I guess I wouldn't have that answer.

MR. BOB JOHNSON: How many are in your department?

MR. EK: Oh, in my department? I would believe in routing there's eight, I suppose.

MR. BOB JOHNSON: All right. Thank you. I appreciate that. Just a couple of questions I'd like to ask about routing.

Number one, are there any official criteria for routing the lines over homes or schools or hospitals? And if there are any criteria, can

you summarize those for us?

MR. EK: It's my understanding that's not going to happen with this line. They will not be routing lines over homes. One reason for this is that you cannot have a structure within that 150-foot right-of-way. So, therefore, there is -- it's not possible to route a line over a home because you cannot have a structure within that right-of-way.

MR. BOB JOHNSON: So if your blue line on your photo maps go through some yellow or purple dots, then is it to be assumed that you condemn that property and those houses go away or what -- what happens to some of the dozens or hundreds of dots on the maps?

MR. EK: See, there's that confusion. You're talking about the route width. That's the width that's permitted. Within that 1,000 feet you might find a little -- a bunch of dots in there that are homes. But within that 1,000 feet there's only a 150-foot route width that would be placed in there. So...

MR. BOB JOHNSON: So --

MR. EK: So the homes that are included in there are not -- that's not part of the

right-of-way. The right-of-way is 150 feet. That would be somewhere within that 1,000-foot width.

MR. BOB JOHNSON: So you're telling us the lines aren't going to go over any homes, hospitals or schools?

MR. EK: No, they will not.

MR. BOB JOHNSON: Okay. I appreciate that. And in your meetings in Marshall and New Prague last night, I'm curious if any questions or comments came up that either surprised you or that you haven't heard before that maybe, with respect to routing, we'd want to know about here?

MR. EK: To be honest with you, all last week, today, last night in New Prague, whatever day it is today, Monday night in Henderson, all the comments have been very, very similar and very consistent. The -- I guess the ones that rise to the top are proximity to homes, electric and magnetic fields, stray voltage. And those are the real big three that have been just very consistent every meeting that we had -- I can say in every meeting that we have had throughout this whole scoping meeting process.

MR. BOB JOHNSON: Two other questions just quickly. Is the CapX project that starts in

Brookings and goes to Hampton, is that the CapX project in and of itself, or does CapX include from Hampton down to La Crosse and then on to Chicago?

MR. EK: Yes, this is just one part of this -- the whole CapX, this Brookings line. There are three other lines. There's one Bemidji to Grand Rapids that's considered -- what is it called, the small CapX or something, but it is part of the CapX, I believe. And then there is a line -- and, Craig, you might correct me -- but I believe it goes from Alexandria down 94 to St. Cloud. And then there is the one from Hampton, La Crosse and so forth. And all of those -- all of those projects are considered in the CapX. And those -- all of those projects are included in that need process we were talking about. So that need process determines all of those projects. Routing is just for this one segment of the CapX.

MR. BOB JOHNSON: Exactly so. However, need does impact the route, because if there's no need, there's no route, et cetera.

MR. EK: You are correct.

MR. BOB JOHNSON: Sure. And on that particular point, if the routing is stopped and is unable to cross the Mississippi down by La Crosse,

what part of the route or route to Minnesota gets changed or canceled, if any? If it doesn't cross the Mississippi, does the entire Brookings-Hampton segment still get built?

MR. EK: Yeah, we're -- you know, this -- we're talking about the Brookings to Hampton project. That's separate -- that's a separate -- that will be a separate routing docket once it -- once they apply for it. So I really couldn't comment on it, because we haven't received an application for it.

MR. BOB JOHNSON: All right.

MR. EK: We have no idea where it's going. So that's not something I could comment on at all. Tonight and for these meetings we're just specifically talking about the Brookings to Hampton.

MR. BOB JOHNSON: Right. And I understand that a certificate of need has not been issued for the Lake Marion to Hampton portion; is that accurate?

MR. EK: Yeah, there -- the ALJ in there did question the need in her findings, and that's something that will be decided by the PUC next -- next Thursday.

MR. BOB JOHNSON: All right. And I had

one other question, but I think that already got asked and answered.

So we appreciate your time. Thank you.

MR. EK: Thank you, sir.

If you could state and spell your name.

MR. FLAHERTY: Kevin Flaherty, F-L-A-H-E-R-T-Y.

All my questions are around the easement or associated with the easement. And I'm going to go back to the first gentleman who came up here and his question. And you had commented how our questions are as good as a documented comment to you that you're going to reference and so forth. So rather than having the 90 people or so in this room all come up and ask the same question, how can we reference to the person taking notes that it wasn't the question that was asked or questioned by one individual with regard to why aren't we using all of the existing rights-of-way, why aren't we using all the existing corridors for these lines?

I think you heard by applause that there are a lot of people that have that same exact question. So we can either have 150 people come up and ask the same question so that she can log that or it needs to be noted in some way that that issue

is an overwhelming concern by this entire group and the entire group is wondering why you wouldn't use existing corridors. And I don't think it actually got answered.

MR. EK: I think you just summed it up right there in comments, that the whole group -- you know, this isn't -- this process isn't a voting process for people to vote. This is an information-gathering process.

MR. FLAHERTY: I didn't -- I wasn't trying to refer that it was a vote. What I was trying to refer is that there's a large number of people that have that same issue and that same question and that same concern. So to have that registered, rather than having all of those people have to come up one by one and ask the same question, and again the question was not answered.

MR. EK: And could you just please -- I guess I don't understand --

MR. FLAHERTY: Why are we not using existing corridors and existing easements for the power line that is already there?

MR. EK: Oh, there's plenty of existing corridors and easements that are being used.

MR. FLAHERTY: But there's plenty that's

not.

MR. EK: Oh, sure. Certainly, certainly.

MR. FLAHERTY: That's the question. That's what the first gentleman asked, and it never got answered. So could that get answered?

MR. EK: Okay. And I will have to turn it over to Great River Energy because the state wasn't part of putting together the whole -- what you see up here. So I'll see if Craig can answer that question for you.

MR. FLAHERTY: Good. Thank you.

MR. POORKER: Yeah, thanks. The question is why we're not routing more along existing rights-of-way or corridors or something like that. And I think we tried, to a large extent, to do that. For the most part, we tried to follow existing roadways and utilize that right-of-way. The more right-of-way that we can utilize, the less that we have to impact private land ownership. If we can follow a roadway for the whole project, that would cut our number of homes impacted or properties impacted in half. And for the most part we did that. And if we didn't follow roadway, we're doing our best to follow quarter section lines or field lines and not go cross-country. And that's all, as

well, documented in our application.

And I think out of a total of 237 miles for the preferred route -- and the alternate route I think is 250 or 255 -- I think -- on the preferred route I think there's about 17 miles. It comes out to be about 5 or 6 percent of that link ends up going cross-country, if you will. So, for the most part, I think we did a good job of following existing corridors as much as we could.

But you're right, the easement acquisition question, as far as the number of people that would be interested in that, in our application we list 3,500 people that got our mailings that are within that 1,000-foot corridor or route width or wider, however wide it might be. 3,500 people. I would go on record as saying that each and every one of those 3,500 people is very much interested in easement acquisition, whatever route might get chosen. That's certainly significant.

MR. FLAHERTY: Are there -- were you currently -- you commented many times and made it very clear that you were taking into account the impact on property owners, ag, wildlife management areas, so on and so forth. And in a specific example, which also impacts me, when you first come

1 into Dakota County, you go north and you're going
2 north along an area which is zoned industrial. So
3 there's very little impact on property values and so
4 on and so forth. Then you come back south to
5 eventually go back north. When you come back south,
6 you then take it across a lot of farm and
7 agriculture and wildlife areas and residential
8 homesteads and so forth, and you make a large
9 impact, versus -- as a business person even, I'm
10 trying to figure out how this makes any sense --
11 versus continuing to take that down -- or Pillsbury
12 where it is zoned for commercial, and then going
13 down an existing easement along County Road 70,
14 which clearly already has large towers there.
15 Why would you go to all of the cost and
16 expense, not only what you're going to have to
17 reimburse those landowners, but also you're going to
18 have to do an awful lot more towers and pillars and
19 concrete and so forth?
20 MR. POORKER: Yeah, I think you're
21 probably referring to the alternate route, I think,
22 where --
23 MR. FLAHERTY: I'm referring to the
24 preferred route.
25 MR. POORKER: The preferred route?

MR. FLAHERTY: Yes.

MR. POORKER: And it is industrial where we enter Dakota County because that's right where I-35 is and --

MR. FLAHERTY: Correct.

MR. POORKER: -- that's of course not a residential area. That is -- for a strip up and down I-35 --

MR. FLAHERTY: Right.

MR. POORKER: -- that's generally industrial.

MR. FLAHERTY: I agree with you. That's what I said.

MR. POORKER: Yep, yep.

MR. FLAHERTY: Why aren't you continuing down -- my question is, why don't you continue down there where it is industrial, and then go down 70 where it's already zoned for this?

MR. POORKER: To the north --

MR. FLAHERTY: There's already existing lines on -- when you head east, versus coming back south along Pillsbury again and then cutting across all of these residential, farm, individual properties, wildlife areas, why would you do that? Not only the impact that you're going to have on

that property, but it's going to cost you less. I mean, just a rough guesstimate, it's going to cost you 40, 50, 60 more towers than you would need if you just continued down what is already zoned for this.

MR. POORKER: Yeah, there are -- I'm not sure where exactly you are. But let me talk a little bit about the preferred route that we take going out of Lake Marion. I think you're referring as going north and up to County Road 50 and County Road 70. Is that what you're referring to, up through the Farmington area?

MR. FLAHERTY: I'm referring to when you first come over, you go down to the freeway, as you agreed, to your substation. Then when you come back out of the substation, you head back south.

MR. POORKER: Right, and then --

MR. FLAHERTY: And then you cut across to go north.

MR. POORKER: Along County Road 86, I believe?

MR. FLAHERTY: Correct.

MR. POORKER: Right, right. And according to --

MR. FLAHERTY: No, it's not County Road

86 --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It's the alternate route. It comes up this way.

MR. POORKER: Show me on the map.

MR. FLAHERTY: You keep referring to the alternate route.

MR. POORKER: Yeah, I got --

MR. FLAHERTY: I'm referring to the --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It's Dakota County. Where's a map?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I have a little one.

MR. POORKER: Let's just bring this map up here. That's the right one, right?

MR. FLAHERTY: Yes. When you first come across and you go up to your substation, then you come back south to be able to go back north. So you're impacting all of this here (indicating) rather than going up to where there's already existing -- this is -- you did this and -- to your own comment, you did this because this is zoned industrial. It's easier following the 35 corridor. You can continue to do that all the way to 70 where it continues to be zoned the same way, and then going along 70 where there are already high-line

power lines there.

MR. PORKER: Okay.

MR. FLAHERTY: It doesn't seem to make even economic sense in any way that you would come back south to go north.

MR. POORKER: All right. I do see there's an existing 69-kV line, there's an existing 115-kV line. And I think where we do turn east, then south immediately along Pillsbury, I don't know if that's zoned commercial, but I do see a lot of homes in there already. There's a housing development right there.

MR. FLAHERTY: You've already gone by the homes. Now you're coming up to 70.

MR. POORKER: And if we go north, I do see -- I think that blue on there is most likely a wet area. I'm not sure if that's -- that's a pretty good-sized wet area that we'd have to cross as well. But this -- this is exactly what this meeting is about. Out of 237 miles, I would expect that there are going to be some portions where there could be possibly a better route. And that's what these meetings are all about, to get something submitted to the state, and they will have to look at each and every suggested route alternative.

MR. FLAHERTY: Okay.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Ask him if he studied that route.

MR. FLAHERTY: Have you studied that route?

MR. EK: Here's my suggestion to you, and this is the whole gist of having these scoping meetings, is -- what I suggest to you, we have at the back, we have folks that can print out maps of that specific area, and you can suggest the alternative you're talking about, about going up --

MR. FLAHERTY: Every one of these meetings I've been to the people have suggested this alternative route.

MR. EK: Okay.

MR. FLAHERTY: We've yet to see it discussed. We've yet to see any one of you say you've studied it.

MR. EK: Because, sir, that's what the environmental impact statement is for. We take the comments, we put them into the scoping document, and we study them in the EIS. Once that comes out, that's when you get to see what we've studied. Right now, of course, we can't right on the spot answer that question. That's why we're looking for

the alternatives and the comments from the folks so we can include that in our environmental impact statement and study -- study the impacts and compare them to what the Applicant has proposed. And maybe that alternative that you're talking about and has been suggested comes out to be a favorable alternative. That would be -- that would be vetted in the environmental impact statement.

MR. FLAHERTY: Okay. And to clarify for the other gentleman, there is no large water area he has to go over.

MR. EK: Thank you, sir.

MR. FLAHERTY: I have other questions about your easements. Where your 150-foot easement starts -- I'm asking this question as someone -- this is going to be my fourth easement, okay, in less than two years. So what I'm wondering is, your 150-foot easement, I just had an easement go through for a sewer line. Does your 150-foot outer reach of that easement start at the outside of the easement for the sewer line? So there's the road easement. There's the sewer line easement. Then does yours start after that? So every one of these damn easements is getting closer to my bedroom.

MR. EK: Those are easement negotiations,

which are --

MR. FLAHERTY: So that's what I'm wondering.

MR. EK: -- handled by the Applicant versus the State.

MR. POORKER: Any -- any easement that we have that encroaches on another facility, whether it's a roadway, a sewer line, or something like that, a lot of times we can overlap those easements. With a sewer line, I don't see why not. But that's something that we'd have to negotiate with probably Met Council, I would guess. It's probably their sewer line. But then again, I mean, those are routing issues. If it's getting congested in there, maybe we need to look at the other side of the road.

MR. FLAHERTY: You spoke earlier that you have a lot of experience at these issues. Now, if you're talking about a sewer line and they're very concerned about any breaks or any tears or any kind of leakage in those particular sewer lines, are they going to allow you to drill concrete, the size of concrete that you had explained earlier, in the easement for that sewer line?

MR. POORKER: The Met Council, or whoever owns that sewer line, will have stipulations on how

close we can be. And of course a lot of that's going to be access, that they have to access it somehow. A lot of that has to do with soil conditions. If it's a real soft soil that may collapse, they're going to want us to be further away. I have no idea what the soil is like out there. I would have no idea what (sic) the Met Council would be. Pure conjecture at this point where the route is going to be. We don't know that it's going to go right next to your road or your sewer line or the other side of the road.

MR. FLAHERTY: I know, but I do know that. The other question I would have for you is that when you did your -- when you did your site surveys and you did your studies to determine your routing, was that -- at that particular time, because this seems kind of new to you guys from a reference standpoint that we're talking about, had you taken into consideration this sewer line coming through, the amount of space that it was taking and the impact on property owners already? And then now you were going to take another 150 feet from that easement? And therefore -- as an example, the comment you made earlier, you're not going to allow this to go within 150 feet of any residence. I

1 think that if I talk about 150-foot easement puts
2 you in the middle. Now I go 150 feet from that
3 easement, I think you'll be in the middle of my
4 home.
5 MR. POORKER: Okay. And --
6 MR. FLAHERTY: So the previous gentleman
7 that came up here and asked about are you going --
8 are you going to condemn any homes or take any out,
9 I think that's a good question.
10 MR. POORKER: Okay. The question is will
11 we displace anybody, move anybody from their homes.
12 And that is an issue that all the projects -- all
13 the CapX projects talked about amongst their project
14 managers, and their decision was to not displace
15 anybody. We're not going to go over anybody's house
16 with a transmission line. So there will no homes
17 within that 150-foot right-of-way. So that's --
18 that's something that we looked at in the routing
19 issue.
20 MR. FLAHERTY: All right. Had you taken
21 into consideration the sewer line already coming
22 through and having to be outside the easement of
23 that?
24 MR. EK: Yeah, I just -- I just wanted to
25 let you know, we received a letter early on from Met

Council about this interceptor and so forth and their concern about it. And as this process moves on, when we start this environmental impact statement, we will be meeting with them because they will provide us with information on how that proposed route in that specific area would or would not impact their plans for that sewer interceptor. So we do have a letter from them, and we will be in contact and will be working with them throughout this process.

MR. FLAHERTY: Okay. Last comment. I, for one, take offense to any reference that property owners in this room should have their property devastated, their property taken from them, no longer be able to use it, have the aesthetics totally, completely ruined because it creates a couple of jobs. There's other ways to do that.

MR. EK: And I wholeheartedly agree with you, and that's something that we look at specifically. Thank you, sir.

MR. ZINIEL: Nick Ziniel, Z-I-N-I-E-L. I have just a couple of quick questions.

In regards -- I don't want to offend anybody that's close to me on the other side of 35W. I talked to a lady back there earlier. And I'm

looking at the map here from around 300th Street west up to about 250th, 260th, you're running that line on the east side of 35. Just a quick question. Is it easier to purchase land from homeowners and more difficult from MnDOT? Because my question is -- I see can you cross over 35 -- I'm not close enough?

MR. EK: No, I was going to look at what you said.

MR. ZINIEL: My concern is I'd like this put into the record to be looked at. I live kind of on the back side of this area here (indicating), which is a trucking stop over a rest stop. And as you can see, if you put that line on the west side of 35, you're going to impact virtually no homes for at least a mile. On the east side of 35, I know my neighbor up the hill -- you're talking about, you know, not destructing any homes. I know that couple are going to be 75 feet from this power line. We got a notification on that. And I'd like that to be looked at, but I'm wondering, is it tougher to buy the land from MnDOT? Because that is all MnDOT land over there. Why would we not run it across there instead of impacting all these residents on this side?

MR. EK: When you say tougher to buy the land, tougher for who to buy the land?

MR. ZINIEL: Well, would you have to pay more money for MnDOT than you would for us? I mean, you're dealing with state land compared to residential.

MR. EK: Who -- but, I mean, who would be buying -- who are you talking about buying the land?

MR. ZINIEL: The power company, I mean.

MR. EK: Oh, the power company. Okay.

MR. ZINIEL: Why -- I see this, there's hardly any homes here. And again, I don't want to offend anybody on the west side of 35 at all. I'm looking at this and I just kind of -- you know, after researching this, going there would not be a home within a thousand feet over here (indicating). On the east side you're going to be affecting about eight residents, and then one of the residents is going to be 75 feet from that power line. And that's just a question I would like documented and have you guys look at that line.

MR. EK: Okay. Exactly. And you have -- you bring up a good point. And this is something important that folks can do and that I've been trying to mention, is printing out maps like this.

1 And what you can do is, as a suggestion, is simply
2 draw a line on this side.
3 MR. ZINIEL: I did that already, left it
4 with the --
5 MR. EK: Okay. Great. And that's
6 submitted as a comment. We'll consider that as an
7 alternative. And yes, we will take a look at that
8 in the EIS and find out if that's feasible.
9 MR. ZINIEL: Okay.
10 MR. EK: Find out what the potential
11 impacts are on that side versus the other side and
12 compare it to all the other alternatives. So, yeah,
13 it's --
14 MR. ZINIEL: I'd like that for the
15 record. And I'd also, you know, for the record
16 this -- I don't want the alternate, and I don't want
17 the preferred either.
18 Are your companies not looking at wind
19 energy? You know, 2007 you put this stuff in. It's
20 2010. It's not going to be implemented until 2013.
21 You know, we're changing. You know, do we have to
22 put this line in? Are we looking at wind energy?
23 Can you eliminate upsetting all these people,
24 putting these lines through? Can we look at
25 alternative energy? There's a lot of people doing

that, so I'm wondering, are you researching that? From when you implemented this in '07 until you start construction in '13, a lot of things are going to change.

MR. EK: Actually, a component of this line is to get the wind energy and wind farms that are -- that are growing and being built in Buffalo Ridge, southwest Minnesota, and it's to get the energy from those wind farms onto a transmission highway to these demand centers. And so that's what this -- that's part of this line, is to get that wind energy, because that resource in southwest Minnesota is one of the best in the country. And so that is a big component of this line, is to get that wind energy to the demand centers across Minnesota.

MR. ZINIEL: One other question I have, too, is, you know, I've talked to several people about the impact of the stray voltage, the health impact. I know there's several homes, one my neighbor alone, is going to be within 75 feet of the easement. Can you -- do you guys have anybody that's done research on this on the impact? Because there is impact. I won't stand here and have you guys tell me there's not. It's been proven. Why do you not have someone here that can say, well, your

resident can be within a thousand feet, you will not be impacted. I've not talked to anybody yet, even on the phone, with you folks that can give anybody these answers. Because if you are within 500 feet, what is the impact going to be?

And I don't know if that's a question anybody else wants to ask, but I'm concerned about my kids. You know, I'm going to be within 500 feet of this, which will probably go in, you're not going to do a whole lot for me. I want to know what is that impact going to be long term on my children and the people that buy my house 10, 15 years down the line, if they buy it.

MR. EK: Sure. And I'm certainly not going to dissuade your opinion with what I'm going to say. We've studied EMF, electric and magnetic fields, in past projects, past 345 projects, 115 projects. We studied the literature. They've been studying this for the past 30 years. There is no -- they have not defined a causal link between transmission --

MR. ZINIEL: How about stray voltage?

MR. EK: Stray voltage is an issue.

MR. ZINIEL: I lost my dairy herd 30 years ago down in Iowa due to stray voltage.

1 MR. EK: Stray voltage can be an issue,
2 but let me get back to the EMF. They have not found
3 a causal link. However, they have not determined
4 that there is no link. The studies I've read and
5 we've put into our documents have said the risk is
6 very small. However --
7 MR. ZINIEL: But there is risk, right?
8 MR. EK: Right.
9 MR. ZINIEL: Okay.
10 MR. EK: And what I should say that what
11 that does, that means that we should continue
12 studying the subject. And this is a great
13 opportunity, because EIS's don't come along too
14 often. This is a great opportunity for us, for me,
15 to take a stronger look at that subject again,
16 update the data, and really take a stronger look at
17 the new information that's come out on that subject.
18 You know, sometimes people are looking back at
19 information that's been done 30 years ago. Well,
20 now we can start looking at information that's been
21 put out two years ago, you know, one year ago.
22 Maybe that information will shed some more light on
23 that subject. So, yes, we continue to -- we
24 continue to study that. And as I said, that's one
25 of the top three subjects that have come up in all

of these meetings. And I'm aware it's very important to people.

And stray voltage. It's not going to happen, you know, everywhere across the line. However, there will be instances where it will happen. And it comes -- it comes down to a matter of grounding, proper grounding. I don't know --

Mr. ZINIEL: I understand stray voltage. Like I said, I went through it 30 years ago --

MR. EK: Sure.

MR. ZINIEL: -- with a dairy herd. So that's why my question was to you. You come here, you know, you want to give us information. It would be nice to have better information on the medical background and the problems that you have with stray voltage and living within a parameter of a 345-K-volt system, because there are issues. You even said they're minimal, so there are issues. We need to know that as far as our families.

MR. EK: Yeah. We do have a WHO fact sheet that's been out there, and a lot of the websites you go to will reference that WHO fact sheet on EMF. We don't have a stray voltage one out there, but at the same time this isn't -- these meetings aren't the time to -- you know, we try to

answer the questions the best we can, but we're looking more to gather the information so we can answer those questions in the environmental impact statement. I'm doing my best to -- you know, to answer what we've done in the past, what we know now. But all that information will be vetted with the comments we receive from you and what you'd like us to study and will be included in the environmental impact statement.

MR. ZINIEL: All right.

MR. EK: And for stray voltage, I just wanted to add, it's boilerplate in a permit, where the Applicant -- if you find -- if you find that you do have a stray voltage problem, the Applicant is required -- we put it in the permit, the Applicant's required to come out and resolve that problem for you. So -- and that is a permit condition.

MR. ZINIEL: Okay. Thank you.

MR. EK: Yes.

MR. REID JOHNSON: Hi, my name is Reid Johnson, R-E-I-D, Johnson. I live in New Market Township.

Scott, my comment is just very specific, because you're asking for comment on alternates. We -- our family moved from the suburbs of the Twin

Cities out to Scott County because it was rural and it was beautiful and the views and vistas were terrific. And so I want to echo the comments of a couple of my colleagues that have been let's try as much as possible to keep the routes along existing easements as possible.

It just -- I'm specifically objecting to the eastern part of the route, the preferred route that goes north in New Market. It comes along County Road 2, and then it jags north and goes away -- or goes east. One of the things that I'm uncomfortable in a public hearing like this, if you can believe what Attorney Krass says, and I believe him because I used to work with him, is that this is -- this is done. The decision about whether or not there's going to be a line is over with.

So what we're really discussing here is which of these routes is the preferred route or better or are there some different ideas. And in that respect, I'm uncomfortable taking a position against a neighbor. But since I have to be selfish in a situation like this, I ask the question, why can't the preferred route coming along County Road 2 continue along County Road 2 until it gets to the freeway? I know that that probably affects more

1 people in the town of New Market; but by the same
2 token, that area is under construction right now,
3 the roadway is being built, the easement is huge.
4 There's also the issue of the racetrack
5 that's there. And it just would make more sense,
6 fellas, from my perspective not to take the route up
7 north and through pristine fields where there is --
8 you'd have to create an easement and you would have
9 to affect all of the homeowners who are along there,
10 such as myself.
11 It just would make more sense to go
12 continually along County Road 2. It's an existing
13 easement area, it's an area that's under
14 construction. The folks who live in that town area,
15 I don't know all of their houses and views, but from
16 what I can see driving through the area, basically
17 what you see is your next-door neighbor. For those
18 of us who live in the north part, we all enjoy the
19 prairie and the vista that's there.
20 And the last thing is, just on that
21 specific part of the route, it would avoid going
22 through the children's camp for disabled riders
23 that's along that route, which is also something I
24 would like to see taken into consideration. So
25 that's the specific comment I have.

MR. EK: Thank you. And I just want to let you know, you did a good job in describing it. So if you want to go ahead and submit a comment by paper, I encourage you still, but you did a sufficient job in describing that alternative and we'll have it on transcript, so...

MR. REID JOHNSON: Great. Thanks.

MR. EK: Thank you.

MR. SULLIVAN: Ralph Sullivan. I echo what the person ahead of me said. It should be going to the current right-of-ways. Take out the power line that's there and put this one in. But why is this plant in Brookings and not in North Dakota? How many millions and tons of carbon dioxide is there? From what I understand, it would be the equivalent of about a million cars on the road. And you could take that carbon dioxide in North Dakota and put it down into the ground and use it to pump up oil. And that's the most current technology for coal plants. There's just a new plant built in Germany, and the carbon dioxide does not go up into the air. It should go -- utilized in North Dakota. I know why the plant is being built in South Dakota. They don't have income tax. They get a big real estate tax out of this, and we'll be

paying for that juice that way.

Another matter is with the current market environment, we should be getting the equivalent of what our neighbor gets for microwave tower, a monthly check for that obstacle and that structure put on your property. It should be a monthly check. And it should be ten times more than what the neighbor's getting for a microwave tower.

This is 43 percent owned by Xcel. Well, the crack management there bought a big gas plant and ventures, and they pretty much ran it into bankruptcy five or six years ago, wrote it off, took a loss. And if it's this type of management running this plan, well, expect the worst.

You've got the Ford plant in St. Paul. We won't be making trucks there anymore. I don't know what's going to happen to that. We had a power plant in St. Paul that was coal, and a lot of money was spent to convert it to 30 percent natural gas and 50 percent waste, and we're getting good electricity out of it. There should be a lot of alternative explored.

And to take the best land that you have on your farm, your property, and that's what they pay you for -- well, they don't pay you for it.

They take it. You get nothing. Then 10, 20 years down the road they'll want to put another easement over it. I've been through that already too. You can't stop it. But the plant belongs -- if it's really needed, it belongs up in North Dakota, and you will utilize all the energy from the coal and you pump it into the ground and you push up oil. They do it in Texas with the carbon dioxide to get oil out of the wells.

MR. EK: Thank you for your comments, sir.

MS. SHEEN: My name is Heidi Sheen. And that's H-E-I-D-I, S-H-E-E-N. And I would like everybody to take out this sheet right here (indicating) that he referenced, Brad referenced, the WHO.

MR. EK: Scott.

MS. SHEEN: Scott, sorry. And he's talk -- I'd like you to turn to the back page. Okay? And the main question is -- on this particular paper, is does this transmission line -- would it increase children's exposure to the transmission lines, would it cause leukemia in children? And I think that's really an important question. And if you go through and you read the

1 third paragraph and the fourth paragraph, it raises
2 a lot more questions than it answers. And I was
3 chatting with a couple ladies here, and they say
4 that the research shows both ways. Research can
5 show that it doesn't increase leukemia in children.
6 Research has shown that it does increase.
7 And if you go further down, it's not just
8 looking at leukemia in children, it's looking at
9 other causes of cancer. And that's really
10 important, okay, because they do have a choice here.
11 They don't have to go in and put these lines in
12 communities where children are living. They have a
13 choice. They can already take existing routes that
14 are there. And every time we ask this question, why
15 don't you use your common sense and use what already
16 exists, the answers keep coming back, well, you
17 know, the need has already been assessed and
18 determined. Well, I wasn't invited to that meeting.
19 Were you? And all this will be taken into the
20 environmental impact. Will we even know about that
21 meeting?
22 And the reason I ask that is because, if
23 you look at what the World Health Organization says
24 in the paper provided by your own group here, it
25 says that, you know, the data is not clear. And

because it's not clear, it says that member states are encouraged to establish effective and open communication programs with all stakeholders to enable informed decision making. Well, we're all stakeholders in this, and how many people here got a letter in the mail inviting us even to this meeting? People who this thing is going to go through -- I chatted with two ladies in the audience, and this could go through their yard. They were never given a letter by Craig. Even though Craig said he promised he sent one, they didn't get one. They were not given a letter. And the only reason that they knew about this is one person saw the ad in the paper and another person had someone knock on their door and tell them about this meeting.

So according to the World Health Organization, all stakeholders involved should be invited to the table. And if you keep reading what that says, it says, these may include improving condition -- coordination and consultation among industry, local government and citizens in the planning process for ELF, EMF and many facilities.

Now, just think of all the people -- you know, you said 250 miles. This line could be pretty large. Think of all the people that are not here

today, that weren't invited here today, that this is going to affect.

April 30th, according to the gentleman outside, is when they close our opportunity to turn in to -- to turn in our comment sheets. Okay? April 30th. I just found out about this meeting randomly because I happened to go to Perkins last Saturday when we were trying to get a bicycle ride through Lakeville. And had I not been there and someone hadn't seen the ad in the paper, I wouldn't have known about this meeting. Well, that really concerns me because I'm a schoolteacher here in Lakeville and I don't want children having these lines put in their back yards or their front yards with the potential of getting leukemia or other cancers. And I think that, you know, the least Craig could do would be to make all stakeholders aware of this issue. I think that's critically important.

The other thing is that we're really looking at difficult economic times here. Lots of foreclosures, lots of homes being sold. And when these lines are put in your back yard or your front yard, when somebody comes to your home, they're not going to look at how big is your kitchen or if you

have a two-car garage to decide if they want to buy the home. They're going to say what's that transmission line doing in your backyard or, worse yet, your front yard, and they're not going to buy your home. So when you talk about, you know, fair assessment of your land and getting paid for these easements and everything like that, that's before the fact. After the fact, who wants to buy your land? You know, that has a really long-term impact on the community.

Now, I referenced that we tried to get a bicycle ride here in Lakeville. We had to go to the city government and ask permission. Private companies, as the gentleman said, Mr. Krass, don't have to ask for permission because it's a private company. They're given special rights, and they shouldn't be given those special rights.

So my question to Scott is, I think we need to extend the time that people can submit comments, because I don't think this has been a very public process. And I'm going to ask that you extend it a month. Instead of April 30th, the comments can go in through May, the end of May. And that we have a chance for the community, whom this is going to impact, have a chance to come forward

and really make a comment on how they really feel about this, that they have a chance to respond. All right?

The meetings for need have gone on for what, two or three years? And now it's a done deal next Wednesday. We don't have any say that there is a need or there isn't a need. These meetings have the false impression of appearing very public, but they haven't been public. If they had been public, you would have run the ad in the paper inviting everyone to come instead of another organization.

The other thing that I think is really important is, okay, this is -- this is a public meeting comment form. Okay? It's a chance for people to really say what they think. You know, whenever you're trying to make change in something, you don't just let people send in random comments. You go out and you directly ask the community. You take a poll. You have a website, you let people log on and sign their names and you ask them like ten questions: Do you think this is a good route; do you think this should go right through our residential neighborhoods? That's the way you gather information. This is not the way you gather information. You don't invite people to the table.

1 You don't give them a chance to really express
2 themselves. When they do express themselves and
3 they ask questions, Craig doesn't really answer
4 them.
5 I mean, this is not the way you take
6 data-gathering information. I was a research -- I
7 was a graduate student at the University of
8 Minnesota and had training in how you do research
9 and take in data and information. And certainly,
10 you know, anyone who does anything in research knows
11 this is not the way you gather information; that you
12 take a small, itty-bitty pocket of the population
13 who just happened to hear about this meeting and ask
14 them to feed comments.
15 Okay. So I'm going to do an opinion poll
16 here. How many people got a letter in the mail from
17 Craig's company? Raise your hand and look around
18 the room. Okay. How many people didn't get a
19 letter in the mail? Okay. Right there I'm seeing,
20 what, 50-50? Okay. That makes your data false,
21 okay, because that means that the stakeholders are
22 not at this meeting today. Okay? And you know that
23 that makes your research invalid. Okay? That's a
24 really important point to be made.
25 The other thing is that we keep talking

about, well, the need has been assessed and so that's a done deal, and then that anything happens furthermore is going to happen related to -- let me grab the paper here because I want to have you look at their own papers that they've used here -- the environmental impact statement. Okay? Now, let's take a look at what this environmental statement -- impact statement is going to look at and, more important, what it's not going to look at. Okay? Look down at safety and health. Safety and health during construction and operation, electric and magnetic fields. It's not saying about -- anything about the long-term impact on health. It's looking at during the time when they stick the transmission lines in your backyard, what happens then, but it's not looking at the long-term impact. So they're not held accountable for that.

Let's look at the noise. Noise during construction and operation, noise-sensitive areas. Okay? Well, when those lines get wet or there's ice on them, they buzz. Okay? Maybe you're aware of that, maybe you're not. But they buzz and it's very loud. That's not being assessed here under human settlements. All right?

So the community is not having any impact

on what this environmental impact statement is going to look at. It's going to look at the issues they want us to look at, not the issues we want to look at. And we don't have the money to organize something like this so that we can come up with our own project to counteract what they say. All right? So I think that, you know, this is -- this is really important.

And I want to leave one point here, and that is that everybody here's made really commonsense comments, and these comments have been made again and again and again. But at the end of the day, they don't have to listen to one comment. These decisions have been made. And this is very similar to what's happening in third-world countries. When they put in a dam, all right, they go in and they promise they're going to do something. In that case they promise they're going to give electricity and they're going to give fresh water, and then they never have to.

In this case they're promising they're going to bring energy to different communities. Is that really what they have to do? Are they really going to do that? We're paying taxes for these easements. We're paying for that land. They're

1 getting all of this right-of-way. They're getting
2 all the advantages. The community's getting all of
3 the disadvantages. And that doesn't seem to be a
4 fair equation by any standard. So what are we
5 getting back?
6 The other thing is that they're using
7 dirty coal. You know, right now they're talking
8 about solar and -- or they're talking about wind
9 energy in this particular case, but they're not
10 promising to invest any of this profit into those
11 types of clean energies. This is pure profit on
12 their part for dirty coal.
13 And it seems like this whole process
14 seems not very transparent to the community. So my
15 first request, again, is that you extend 30 days --
16 at least 30 days the opportunity for people to make
17 comments. And the second request is that on your
18 website you take a different approach than just
19 putting in comments, that you actually do a poll and
20 you ask people what they really think. The third
21 thing is that you go into those communities in which
22 this is going to affect, those counties, those city
23 governments, and you talk with those governments and
24 let them bring their people together and comment on
25 this, not behind closed doors in a small, you know,

room in a hotel somewhere where most people don't know about it, but so that all of the residents in those communities get to hear about this and get to have their say.

And I'm sure -- just as these comments keep coming over and over again, use common sense, use easements that already exist, use the roadways and the freeways that already exist, I'm sure you'd hear that but on a massive scale, on such a massive scale that it would be next to impossible to ignore.

MR. EK: Well, all I can say to that is we'll take your comments into consideration. However, this -- because some of it was a little far off. This scoping meeting is precisely to get the public's opinion on the project itself. And we leave that -- that open, that public forum open so we can get comments that we don't know about, some things that we miss.

If we sit there -- if we put a form and dictate what we want people to put down on a form, I think that would be less fair. I would rather have an open form where people can fill in exactly how they feel, exactly how they feel about the project, exactly about the particular impacts in their neighborhood, on their street, in their back yard.

So this -- this is -- this is the process of transmission line routing. And, unfortunately, if you don't -- if you disagree with it, I'm sorry, but this is how it works. It's worked in the past. We do take all these comments. They all come across my desk. They come to my e-mail. I read all of them. I've had a woman here today that I actually recognized her comment that she had sent me. I read it already. She had come here today to comment. I read all the comments. They're all included, they're all important, just as important as the next. So it's a little disingenuous to say that this process and any comments that are submitted are not thought about by my office, the State of Minnesota, and so on and so forth.

So please don't let that discourage you on submitting comments, because I find it very important when it comes to this EIS and putting it together. And to answer your question, you will be able to view the EIS. That's the whole -- that's the whole point of having it, so the public can take a look and make sure we've looked at the impacts that this proposal, this project, this route may have on you, your family, your health, the communities, the cities.

We work with all the state agencies. They're required to work with us. We work with the local governments. We have two ATFs being set up to help us and assist us with the finer details of some of these areas.

So all I can say is we're doing our best to vet the information that's been supplied by the Applicants in their application, to ensure you, the public, are receiving the best information when that environmental impact statement comes out.

So thank you for your comments.

Please.

MS. ZUREK: I'm Kathy Zurek, K-A-T-H-Y, Z-U-R-E-K. I basically want to just go over the comments of the using the right-of-ways that are already there. I got the letter in the mail about the meetings and the utility lines going in, and there was a little e-mail address, if you have any questions, feel free to send an e-mail. And I did. I don't remember the person's name. He was very quick in responding. My question was why can't you use the right-of-ways and the lines that are already going down County Road 70 that was brought up earlier? And his comment was it's not feasible. Feasible is not an answer to me. I want -- I want a

reason, not not feasible, and no one has been able to give that to us.

MR. EK: I can answer that question. And you shouldn't have received that e-mail because that's already been put on record a couple times now, the route you're talking about, and it will be considered as an alternative. So we will be looking at it. So I'm sorry you received that e-mail. I don't know who you received it from.

MS. ZUREK: I would like to say I could get you the e-mail; but I had a problem with the computer, and I may have lost it. So -- but I did respond back to him, and I asked him the same question; and he was smart enough this time just not to reply back, which didn't make it any better, but I guess he didn't dig his hole any deeper.

MR. EK: You know, there -- I know the route you're talking about, and maybe the feasibility issues that may have been referenced were the issues with the airport. However, I know earlier this week people in my office have met with MnDOT and FAA. I don't know what the outcome of the meetings were because I've been so involved with -- I haven't been to the office. But I do know that route is -- has been mentioned more than once now as

an alternative to look at. We've talked about it in our office. And so it will be looked, just to let you know.

MS. ZUREK: Okay. Thank you.

MR. HELMBERGER: Good evening. My name is Joel Helmberger, H-E-L-M-B-E-R-G-E-R, from New Market Township. I've got a few comments to make here.

First of all, I've been told that the routing priorities for this line were, first of all, to avoid houses and to avoid households; second of all, to use existing right-of-ways.

This line enters New Market Township at Highway 2, immediately goes one mile cross country, uses one-half mile of existing right-of-way, and then goes another six miles cross country till it gets to the Lake Marion substation. So much for priorities.

I guess I'm going to talk about the north and south route, because to say the preferred route would indicate there's something good about it. I'm here to say and, for the record, that I want the south route; and there's a variety of reasons that were articulated pretty well by the Scott County planner.

And in addition to that, I believe the Lake Marion substation should be moved south to line up with the alter -- alternate or south route. And there's a couple of reasons for that. Right now, that substation uses about an acre and a half of land for its transformers. They plan to acquire another 15 acres at that site to expand that. I'm told by Craig that actually they would only expand it to five acres inside the fence. That's still more than three times what they're using right now. If they make that into a megasubstation, it's going to be calling every little distribution and transmission line project that comes across the south end of town and we'll all be attending these meetings for years. So we need to get on the bandwagon to get that moved south.

If they move that south, they could run south across -- across Dakota County, well out of the Eureka Township area, where there's much less houses. It just makes a lot of sense all the way around.

Let's see here. Then I guess my next comment is that I'm newly elected to the New Market Township Board. We made a resolution last night that we're -- that we're against this power line in

New Market Township for some of the reasons that I've articulated. While I don't like trying to push it onto a neighboring county, the property values across that county are much lower than they are in Scott County where they want to run with that line.

Also, the long-term comprehensive plan for that county is agricultural, 1 in 40, whereas where they're crossing in Scott County is it's 1 in 8 and part of it is 1 in 2 1/2, low-density residential all the way through. And that's what the comprehensive plan calls for in the future.

A gentleman up earlier talked about what he feels about the quality of management with Xcel Energy. It's kind of interesting. And if you look at the business section of today's paper, they revealed a million dollar compensation package for the CEO, and you got to kind of wonder how much budgets and incentives and bonuses tie into the route plan.

I guess one other thing that I'd say is when people brought this up earlier, they want to talk about the wind energy and they want to talk about bringing power to the Twin Cities. They don't want to talk about where it's going to go east of here, and they don't want to talk about where

80 percent of the power is going to come from the west end. And I got to believe it's the Big Stone power plant.

I guess that's it.

MR. EK: Thank you for your comments, and also thank you for submitting those alternatives that you suggested, now that we have them on the record. Thank you.

MR. HELMBERGER: Can I say one more thing? Just quickly. They don't want to talk about that Big Stone power project. It's been pretty controversial lately. They've gotten some bad publicity on it. And I guess my feeling is what they don't want to talk about is stuff that they feel they need more bad publicity on about as bad as General Custer needed another Sitting Bull.

Thank you.

MS. TOPP: Scott, that is a formal submission of my comments. My name is Beverly Topp. I'm a resident of Eureka Township.

I'm the chair of the Citizens Energy Task Force. That is a group that was formed to represent citizens in the certificate of need process. We did that. We hired an attorney. You can find out more about that by going to CETF, as in Frank, dot, US,

and you'll find lots of information there.

I've got a number of things to comment that have been talked about tonight, to comment on. One, we're talking about County Road 70 and that this meeting is to gather information and get suggestions from citizens, and Craig also reiterated that. But I'd like to point out that several months ago -- six months, maybe longer -- before the application was given to the PUC, the Township of Eureka submitted a formal resolution asking CapX to consider the route 70 through the industrial park. They did not. I talked to Craig on the phone. His answer to me was, no, we're not going to do that, we're going to let the citizens do that.

Now, the reason that bothered me so much is that already because of exceptions that CapX got for this whole certificate of need process, we had to form as citizens without deep pockets, without the money, but we had to come up with it to represent some of the facts that really needed to come out in this process, that we need -- that we knew needed to come out were being exempted by the utilities for having to submit.

I'd also like to call your attention regarding eminent domain. That is really true about

that law, that our bill didn't make it through the committees. However, it is being, as I said --

And I'm the person, if you want to write that down in your record, who said it is being suggested as an amendment to the omnibus energy bill at the Capitol.

So don't wait to contact your representatives. Do that now.

I would like to draw your attention to a case in Farmington -- Empire, actually, in 2007. There was an article in the Farmington Independent, I believe in December of 2007, if you want to look it up. And it was about the eminent domain process by Great River Energy, who will be coordinating what's happening on your land. And they offered two citizens along that way $14,600 for their easements for their homes. This is, I believe, in more of a residential area. Some of them just took it. But a few were really upset about that offer, so they hired an attorney. They did have to pay the attorney's fees because of the exemptions in the law. But this attorney came in, and here are the facts that they presented that got them a $55,000 settlement, not 14,6, but 55,000:

One, the reduction in the property value

done by an assessor actually showed that having the lines in their front yard was going to reduce their property value by 10 percent. Two, FHA does no loans on property that has large high-voltage transmission lines. So if they go to sell, they've already cut out a significant portion of their market. Three, people with pacemakers don't buy houses by these large transmission lines and, in fact, the manufacturers recommend that they don't because they interfere. So there's another piece of the market that you've just lost. So familiarize yourself with that case.

Regarding the health issues, the World Health Organization, that's good. Our group also submitted in the environmental review for the certificate of need process a number of studies that were done on health issues. And another one that came out was that women have a larger tendency to have miscarriages when they live near these high-voltage transmission lines. So you might want to check into that. This reminds me of the debate on cigarettes. Remember when they were safe? I think we're all going to find out on EMF that there's a lot more information coming.

Some of the citizens in our township have

reviewed the route sections and detailed maps provided by CapX and found them to be inaccurate and not updated for recent development. So take a good look at your section. They actually hired a company to get this data, and there was no scoring or ranking of attributes to select the route, so the consistency is questionable.

This just touches the surface of what points to a questionable process in determining routes. When an OES person was asked what they have done to protect the public interest in route development, they replied that they just took this data supplied to them by CapX, they just accepted it. And I understand them to be an agency that's there to protect the public interest, so my question is, why aren't they, at a minimum, reviewing in detail the data set to be sure that the GIS is available, that it's being used, but is the latest technology being used?

And the information -- in reviewing the rules that were set forth to follow for developing routes, they should have been checking those to make sure that the best routes for the public interest were used and were consistently applied throughout these lines.

The environmental impact statement that is going to be done should carefully review the harm that can be done to people and to the environment to assure that the fewest homes possible are involved and that unique land uses and natural areas are not disturbed.

I come from Eureka Township. We have not done development. We've kept our land as open space. Met Council wanted us to, Dakota County wants us to. Our reward for that is pipelines, gas lines, ditches full of, you know, the cables. And now we're going to look at these high-voltage transmission lines. And yet we have been a part of the farmland and natural areas projects for farmers, and residents have put natural areas in farmland and preserved them with permanent easements. And we have saved the wildlife management area along Trout Lake. We have been really good stewards of our township, and that means that it's probably cheaper to run through Eureka than it is up to County Road 7. As you know, you may have to pay by the foot up there. But, somehow, that doesn't seem like a great reward for being good stewards of our land. Okay.

And the other thing that should be considered in the EIS is that they should analyze in

detail effects on property values, noise, electric fields and, of course, we've talked a lot tonight about the EMF dangers.

Wind conditions. We heard for two years that these -- these lines are for wind, and yet they're curiously close to the -- what's the plant -- Big Stone plant in -- that the lines can be connected to that. But, more importantly, our intervenor status in the certificate of need process, our attorney asked that wind conditions be put on these lines. In other words, if the utilities are talking about bringing wind through, then they should be willing to say, yes, we'll take it as a condition on the lines; they don't get built without it. They have fought that every step of the way.

In closing, I'd like to read from the Minnesota Environmental Rights Act, 116B. The legislature finds and declares that each person is entitled by right to the protection, preservation and enhancement of air, water, land and other natural resources located within the state, and that each person has the responsibility to contribute to the protection, preservation and enhancement thereof. The legislature further declares its

policy to create and maintain within the state conditions under which human beings and nature can exist in productive harmony in order that present and future generations may enjoy clean air and water, productive land and other natural resources with which this state has been endowed. Accordingly, it is in the public interest to provide an adequate civil remedy to protect air, water, land and other natural resources located within the state from pollution, impairment or destruction.

I would ask you to apply at the OES -- and I'm sorry that you're the only one here to get all this, Scott, tonight because we know you're not just the only person up here. But I would ask you to apply this act to the work you are doing, to review and regulate the CapX lines if they are approved to be built. Citizens are looking to you to make this a fair and safe process in the public interest.

MR. EK: Beverly, I just want to thank you. I don't know if I've done this tonight, but earlier. That's a very, very, very, very good example of what we'd like to see. It was a thoughtful, effective and very precise comment on what she would like us to study, the issues she has.

So I just want to point out that's a very good example of what we'd like to see -- what I'd like see, I should say.

And also, Beverly, I do -- I just wanted to put in the record I will take your -- the comment form that you submitted up on the table. And also wanted to let you know, earlier today, Beverly, you may have seen this, the large BioInitiative Report, A Rationale for a Biologically-Based Public Exposure Standard for Electromagnetic Fields, was submitted to us earlier as a comment. So it is an important subject that we will be studying. I just wanted to let you know. Thank you for your comments.

MS. LAY: Susan Lay, L-A-Y. Live in New Market Township.

Just a couple of points of clarification. I'm afraid I'm not as organized. As Reid mentioned previously, sometimes this process makes you become a little bit selfish. I do want to also put on the record that, since the northern route or the proposed route comes right through my yard, that I would prefer to see the south route taken, the alternative route.

Question or clarification point for me. If the -- if there's a facility like a barn where we

have our horses -- and obviously it's a structure we need to have. We do thoroughbred breeding and layovers and things like that. And so some of our pastureland and our barn, about an acre and a half of our woods would be taken because they all are within 75 feet, you know, of the center line. We have three to four acres of wetland behind us, which means we cannot move the barn to another location. We already have pastureland on all the other sides. So for our particular case, we don't have an option, if you take our barn and some of our pastureland, to continue our business and to also, you know, have the windbreak of the woods.

So how do you address that sort of an issue? Because you said no people will be impacted as far as homes. But certainly that is something, where there's a livelihood or, you know, animals that are to be accounted for.

MR. EK: Yeah. I don't know exactly where you're located, and I don't know if they intend to put that line on your side of the road. But a suggestion -- and maybe we can meet after --

MS. LAY: Okay.

MR. EK: -- after the comments so I can see exactly where you are. But maybe a suggestion

would be is to submit an alternative that says, well, at least put the -- if the line's going to go somewhere, put it on the other side of our road. So then, therefore, that easement would not impact your barn and the facilities you are talking about. Another option is to suggest another alternative altogether, but -- not knowing exactly where you are right now, but I'd be -- I'd really like to meet with you after all the comments are finished and maybe we can put together some ideas on paper for your particular area.

MS. LAY: Okay. And I realize that I'm just one person. I can only speak about my property. But there's others who would likely have a similar situation, where it's not the home necessarily that's impacted.

Just a couple of very quick questions. Who do we expect -- who should we expect coming knocking on our door? It was talked about earlier that someone will come looking as part of the condemnation process. He mentioned, you know, people from out of state and knocking on our door. What is the -- who is allowed to come and talk to us?

MR. EK: Well, first of all, you know,

first it has to go through this need, which is next week.

MS. LAY: Right.

MR. EK: So they have to decide that. So once that's decided, depending on what happens there -- say it does go forward and the routing does proceed. We have to go through this whole year of routing, gaining -- seeking public input, vetting all these alternatives, analyzing these impacts, and submitting all this information to the Public Utilities Commission. They then have to decide whether this project deserves a permit and whether they'll give this project a permit. And if they do give it a permit, where it would be -- where it would be and so forth.

At that time, once the permit's issued, that's when the company would come out and negotiate with the landowners. They call them land agents, is what I know is the nickname for them. And that's when, after the permit is issued, they would come out and negotiate with you on where the poles would be located or the easements and so forth. So it's after the permitting process. It's once a permit's issued.

MS. LAY: Okay. And then, very quickly,

1 does the construction start west and move east and
2 is it kind of section by section, or are they -- you
3 know, they're working in Marshall but they're, you
4 know, coming into Lakeville doing some work, too? I
5 mean, what kind of -- you said it starts in 2011.
6 MR. EK: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah, I guess
7 that's not a question I can answer. Maybe Craig can
8 answer that question. I'm assuming they might start
9 kind of everywhere, but maybe Craig can answer that.
10 MR. POORKER: Yeah, it's hard to say
11 where construction would start, would we start from
12 the west and go east or east and go west or would
13 they work on numerous sections in there. It's going
14 to be up to the project manager, which is Great
15 River Energy, and probably up to the contractors as
16 well where they want to start. And issues might
17 come up like where they want to work, perhaps, in
18 the wintertime. There are wetlands where they're
19 going to be working in, soft areas, whatever, we
20 prefer to do that construction in the wintertime.
21 So they may work on separate areas along the project
22 to get that done under frozen conditions and then do
23 the other work when it is summertime or something
24 like that.
25 A lot of the issues to work out with --

also, your question with who's going to be knocking on your door to acquire easements. That's going to be somebody overseen by us. It will be somebody in our own department, and maybe we'd have to hire other people. Don't know exactly who that will be, but it will be somebody that's going to be representing -- or we are going to be represented.

MS. LAY: The utility?

MR. POORKER: Great River Energy.

MS. LAY: Great River Energy?

MR. POORKER: Yes, yes.

MS. LAY: Okay.

MR. POORKER: So a lot of issues to work out. Before we get to that, you'll be contacted about doing survey work. Before we even talk about easement acquisition, we're going to be talking about can we get on your property to do some survey work. And, again, part of that interview process by a right-of-way agent is negotiating with you on pole placements, trying to decide where the center line is going to be. The state may tell us exactly where the center line is going to be or they may tell us, Great River Energy, you find the center line in that thousand-foot route. So those are issues that we may have to negotiate with landowners there, too.

MS. LAY: So the blue line right now, if you do the 1, -- 000, you know, on the little map it has 1,000 foot and it has a blue line -- that does not necessarily mean, then, that that is the blue line; is that correct?

MR. POORKER: That is.

MS. LAY: It is going to be somewhere in that 1,000 --

MR. POORKER: Exactly.

MS. LAY: -- if that's the route that you choose?

MR. POORKER: Exactly. We do not have a center line chosen. That blue line you see is basically a reference line that we can use to measure out how close homes are or structures or existing rights-of-way and things like that. We do not have a center line, not even close. That will come in the next couple of years.

MS. LAY: Okay. Thank you.

MR. POORKER: Thanks.

MR. EK: Thank you.

MS. ANDERSON: Hi, my name is Debra Anderson, and I live in Castle Rock Township with my husband Scott and our daughter.

And I have a question and comment for

1 Scott. And it is could you -- you mentioned earlier
2 that there is going to be a process that the state
3 will do to look at the health concerns of EMF, and
4 I'm happy to hear that. And I just wanted to
5 understand better what that process will be and the
6 qualifications of the person or persons doing that
7 process.
8 MR. EK: Yes, yes. What we'll do, it
9 will be a literature search. You know, we're not --
10 we don't plan -- as far as I know right now, we
11 don't plan to do a new study on it ourselves for
12 this project. I have heard talks about it, maybe in
13 the future. But so it will be a literature search
14 of existing information. And we would have, as I
15 said, assistance from the Department of Health.
16 They would have to work with us and kind of guide us
17 through that project -- process as well, and we
18 would ask them for information. So primarily it
19 would be a search of literature. And we update the
20 information that we've used in past projects to the
21 current information we have. That big giant book I
22 held up, that's something new that was just given to
23 us today. That will be included. But, yes, we will
24 work with the various agencies, specifically the
25 Department of Health --

1 MS. ANDERSON: Okay.
2 MR. EK: -- when it comes to the issues
3 of electric and magnetic fields.
4 MS. ANDERSON: Okay. Specific to the
5 Department of Health, will that be an admin, will
6 that be a nurse, will that be a doctor, will it be
7 someone trained in statistical analysis and clinical
8 studies and probabilities related to what's in the
9 studies, or what will be the qualifications of the
10 person?
11 MR. EK: You know, it's too early for me.
12 We haven't even gotten that far yet to -- you know,
13 we're right in this early process. We haven't even
14 gotten that far to contacting them as to who it
15 would be. But of course we would want somebody that
16 is knowledgeable, experienced, and a professional
17 when it comes to electric and magnetic fields,
18 somebody who has the experience and who has looked
19 at this data in the past. And I know there are
20 folks within the Department of Health who have.
21 There was a White Paper put out by the State of
22 Minnesota and folks worked on it. So I do know
23 there are folks within MDH --
24 MS. ANDERSON: Okay.
25 MR. EK: -- that are experienced. But I

1 can't -- I couldn't name a name and who it would be
2 at this point.
3 MS. ANDERSON: Okay. Thank you.
4 Another thing that I wanted to reference.
5 I know a number of people were talking about, you
6 know, is there a relationship between if I live
7 500 feet, you know, what effect this going to have
8 on my child? If I live a hundred feet? If I live a
9 thousand feet? So I wanted to ask you if you are
10 familiar with this or the people that are -- you're
11 going to consult with are familiar with a recent
12 publication, and it's called Setting Prudent Public
13 Health Policy for Electromagnetic Field Exposure?
14 And like you said, it's important to look at recent
15 information. This was published in 2008 in the
16 Reviews of Environmental Health, Volume Number 23,
17 Number 2. Okay. And I'd like to read a paragraph
18 from page 95 of that study, please --
19 MR. EK: Please do.
20 MS. ANDERSON: -- as it relate to this.
21 So as related to the distance is why I'm reading it.
22 It says on page 95 of the abstract that I just
23 referenced, Several recent studies add to the
24 conclusion that the exposure/leukemia relationship
25 is strong, and they're citing a specific study when

1 they say Dramer (phonetic), et al, the name of the
2 study, studied rates of leukemia in children in
3 relationship to the proximity of their home to
4 high-voltage power lines. And then it says, The
5 investigators found a dose-dependent relation with
6 relative risks being 1.69, so 2 percent increase, a
7 95 percent confidence interval. And in clinical
8 studies 95 percent or higher is considered relevant
9 and not to be something that happens just by
10 coincidence. So, statistically significant, in
11 other words.
12 It also says that when comparing rates in
13 children living within 200 meters -- or if you want
14 to do the math on that, 656 feet; we've been talking
15 about 500 feet tonight -- to those living greater
16 than 600 meters -- do the math on that, that's about
17 1,968 feet -- from the line and the relative risk
18 being 1.23, with again a 95 percent confidence
19 interval, between spot measurements and magnetic
20 fields greater than or equal to 6 MG. So the
21 summary statement is, A significant P value of .01
22 -- and in clinical studies .05 means it's
23 statistically significant; this is .01, so very
24 statistically significant. A trend was found in
25 relation to closeness to the power line.

1 So what I am asking to have further
2 studied -- that's why I would like to know the
3 qualifications of the people that are reviewing the
4 statistical analysis, what kind of qualifications
5 they have to look at this. In this one study that I
6 referenced, there are -- and I didn't mention this;
7 this abstract was just published there are 121
8 publications and/or epidemiological studies specific
9 to EMF and negative cause on health.
10 So since there is a relationship stated
11 in this one study to leukemia in children when it's
12 between -- unless it's greater than 1,900 feet, I
13 would like to see a route that doesn't have houses
14 that are within 500 feet. There is a proven cause
15 in relationship to leukemia with children living
16 under -- within that 500 feet.
17 Now, if there was another clinical study
18 done on whatever, a drug, whatever, that said it
19 caused cancer, I can guarantee you that drug would
20 be pulled from the market. So I think it's very
21 important to make this statement publicly and also
22 to ask that further study be done, then, and an
23 alternative route be looked at that's greater than
24 1,900 feet. Thank you.
25 MR. EK: No, and thank you for -- you

1 did -- I want to make sure that you did
2 adequately -- or did describe the title of that
3 study so we have -- so we can have a look back at
4 that.
5 MS. ANDERSON: I'd be happy to. It's an
6 abstract, and it is titled -- let me find my right
7 page here again. It is titled, Setting Prudent
8 Public Health Policy for Electromagnetic Field
9 Exposures. And it was published in 2008, Volume 23,
10 Number 2, I believe the month was April. And it is
11 a 119-page document referencing 121 publications and
12 also providing suggestions on how the public -- how
13 the state should deal with things like this.
14 MR. EK: Fantastic. No, that's fantastic
15 information, and that's exactly what we're looking
16 for.
17 MS. ANDERSON: Oh, okay. Thank you.
18 MR. EK: You know, we need to look at
19 both sides of it, you know. There are both sides of
20 the fences, and we need to look at that data as
21 well. And just like I said, we received that big
22 document. Now we've received even more information
23 to look at.
24 MS. ANDERSON: Well, and this may be in
25 the big document.

MR. EK: Could be. Could be.

MS. ANDERSON: But it's important.

MR. EK: It's very important. And, no, I do not discount the importance of the issue at all.

MS. ANDERSON: And it's related to the people earlier tonight saying what about that 500 feet. There are a lot of -- I guess I could ask you, how many houses are within 500 feet?

MR. EK: I know it's in the permit application, but I don't have the numbers off the top of my head --

MS. ANDERSON: Okay.

MR. EK: -- right now.

MS. ANDERSON: Okay.

MR. EK: But it is in the permit application.

MS. ANDERSON: Yeah, I've reviewed it as well.

MR. EK: And what was I going to say --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Sounds like one would be too many.

MS. ANDERSON: Right, exactly. If it's your child it would be. If it was my child it would be.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: If it was Scott's

child it would be.

MS. ANDERSON: If it was Scott's child it would be. Thank you.

MR. EK: Thank you very much, and thanks for the information.

MS. ANDERSON: Thank you for the opportunity.

MR. EK: I appreciate it.

MR. KAUFENBERG: Hi, my name is Ray Kaufenberg. I'll spell it. K-A-U-F-E-N-B-E-R-G.

I want to start with a follow-up from something said earlier. I appreciate the statement made by the Applicant that some steps would be taken to mitigate the aesthetics of these poles -- or actually it wasn't the aesthetics, it was for ag use. They go with the one -- a structure with one base so that it would be easier to farm around it. So since that concession has already been made, I'd like to ask about a mitigating concession for residential people, people once you get to 35 and go through Eureka Township, for example, or on that southern route and past residences, in particular.

When I have read about that, I'm reading that what you're proposing is natural raw steel towers that are left brown, rust color and left to

rust, as opposed to the kind like you have along Highway 50 toward Farmington, which are blue or aluminum colored and blend in with the sky, or the kind they have with Bloomington which also blend in with the sky, which are either painted or some material that you don't see. So I want to ask you, as a mitigating factor, are you willing to agree to have these poles a color that's not offensive -- as offensive as, you know, a dark-colored object up against a light sky?

MR. EK: -- yeah, Craig, could you answer that? I don't recall if that was in the permit application, the weathering steel or whatnot.

MR. POORKER: Yes, that is in the application, and what we did propose in the application was to use what we call in the industry Core 10 (phonetic). It's rust-colored. And that's exact what we proposed in the application. So I would say that, if we get dictated by the State -- I mean, it's not our decision now. That's just what we proposed. And if the State says that they hear something from people where they want galvanized and the State tells us to do that, we're going to do that. That was something that we -- that our project managers had talked about, so I don't think

we have a big decision either way. If the State tells us that they want us, because of public input, to put -- put in galvanized, that's what we're going to go with.

MR. KAUFENBERG: I don't think the State should have to tell you. I think the people in this room should have and to say about that if it's going through their land and their community.

MR. POORKER: Exactly. That's what I just said.

MR. KAUFENBERG: So I want to go on record saying that that's what I would want. I would not think anyone here would want the other kind.

MR. POORKER: And that's exactly what I just said. If the people comment on that and the State reviews all those comments and -- that's the State's decision now. Once we applied, December 29th, and it was accepted as approved, we can't change anything now, unless the State tells us to. Myself, I'd be fine with that.

MR. KAUFENBERG: Okay. All right. Then regarding giving input to you as to issues and alternatives to look at in the environmental impact statement that you're preparing, I've got three

different categories of issues and alternatives. The first one is general issues and alternatives that should be looked at anywhere on the route. The second one is issues and alternatives pertaining to the route portion that is proposed -- the preferred route that's proposed to go through Eureka Township. And the third piece I have is on a smaller section of the route that's already been mentioned here tonight on the Dakota County map. Let's see, it goes south from the Lake Marion substation, only to go north again, and it impacts nine additional homes right in here (indicating) in a major way along Dodd Boulevard as well as right through this entire farm length-wise (indicating). So...

MR. EK: I just want to make sure we're getting the roads right here.

MR. KAUFENBERG: South of 245th, this line (indicating).

MR. EK: So it's the preferred?

MR. KAUFENBERG: The preferred.

MR. EK: South of 245th Street West, and then as it heads north two hundred --

MR. KAUFENBERG: That's right.

MR. EK: -- 240th Street West.

MR. KAUFENBERG: And I'm -- in my written

comments I have -- I want this to be looked at in terms of keeping this closer to the right-of-way, 245th, up to Dodd, and not impacting these nine additional homes. And I have all the impacts -- all the impacts in my written information. So I want to submit that right now.

MR. EK: Thank you.

MR. KAUFENBERG: As far as general issues -- and then that other location. As far as general issues, you've stated a lot of them that you have to look at and that the State requires that you look at by their administrative rules. I'd like to add a few to that list that are on there. I think in looking at environmental income -- an environmental impact statement on a pipeline, I realize that your scope can be broader. And even though you like to departmentalize this into route and need, in fact, you can look at the purpose of this project. And I would say that the purpose of each section of this project does have some relevance as to where that route goes and where those substations go, and I would like to have that looked at as part of the environmental impact statement.

I'd also like to have the future vision

for these power line companies in terms of power sources and substations and hookups to renewable, which they're required to do, and potential energy demand and the sources of these potential locations looked at. I'd like to see political, social, and economic environment looked at, including the current paradigm shifts that are going on regarding energy consumption and alternative energy and smart grid technology and conservation efforts.

I'd like to look at EMF, electromagnetic field shielding and underground line alternatives, as well as electrostatic mitigation. I'd like you to look at the potential, with these long lines all connected to each other, of additional terrorist threat and grid risks. I'd like to look at financial impacts to the power line company caused by the recession that we're in. I'd like to look at health issues related to EMF, static electricity in terms of their long-term impacts. I'd like to look at ethical and moral issues, including fairness in land negotiations and cultural values.

So I want to submit now a list of these general issues. And that was just 5 of the 15 I have on there.

MR. EK: Thank you. I'll take that

comment.

MR. KAUFENBERG: Okay. Now, regarding a specific location. You know, sometimes you have to look at a location on the map and then say what issues are important to that location and what impacts are present there that are relevant to that location.

So the location I'd like to look at is the preferred route as it goes through the entire Eureka Township, which is from here all the way to about here (indicating), because this is all Eureka Township, this square right here (indicating). So I'm looking at that line piece right there (indicating).

MR. EK: And that's 240th Street West?

MR. KAUFENBERG: That's right. It goes first along 240th, south of 245th, then up Dodd and then along 240th. So that's the stretch I want to talk about.

As an overview I'd say that this portion of the so-called preferred route raises several issues and negative impacts that should be addressed in the EIS, especially since two other viable alternatives to this portion of the route exist which would mitigate or eliminate the negative

impacts to the Eureka Township and its citizens.

The major issue is where the preferred route runs through Eureka Township is wholly incompatible land use that exploits the efforts of Eureka Township citizens to preserve agricultural land, open spaces and natural areas and to resist development and industrialization. The preferred route violates Eureka citizens' personal rights and cultural values. And all of the following issues and impacts and alternatives should be studied by the OES:

In terms of issues, I list -- I've numbered them A through G. A is property and land values should be looked at in this quadrant. B, wetlands, pond, woods, Vermillion River, creek and ag areas. C, aesthetics and electromagnetic fields, static electricity, noise shielding. D is disruption of farming. E is alternative route from Lake Marion substation north along I-35, Pillsbury corridor, east along Highway 7 to Highway 50. F, proposed alternative route from Lake Marion substation to Highway 86 and 47, which you've already identified as an alternative route. G, cultural values, personal rights, land use goals and plans, fairness and fair competition. The preferred

route disregards and exploits property owners as well as Eureka Township values, rights, goals and plans and disregard fairness in eminent domain negotiating and compensation.

So that's an overview of the issues I think you should look at; but I know that your decision whether to look at an issue depends on how important you think that issue is, you know, because you've got a zillion list of issues. So as much as I hate to go through this next part, I think it's important to state why those issues are important, particularly to Eureka Township citizens.

So the first one is property and land values. And this is a major negative. It has a major negative impact on current -- the power lines would have a major negative impact on current value and future development value of all property near the power lines, especially in Eureka Estates, which is this development right here (indicating) where you have all these homes. That's a huge cluster of homes right near that proposed preferred route. That's going to have a huge impact on a significant number of homes right there. These 150- to 175-foot rusty towers and power lines would greatly negatively impact the current and future value of

land that is, number one, closest to the lines for aesthetic and EMF reasons, which I'll describe below.

Two, as far back as the eye can see on the land, which has a lot of open space in Eureka Township, so that impact is bigger than it would be in another area where you have other buildings or houses to mitigate that view.

Three, wetlands along the route will be disrupted. And I'll explain how.

Four, because farming will be disrupted, I'll explain how later.

And five, because owners' personal rights of land use.

So those are the land -- that's why land use will be impacted. These are all interrelated, basically, but because those individual impacts are so negative, they negatively impact land values.

As far as then getting more particular, the natural areas and wetlands will be negatively impacted through dis -- destruction and disruption. Wetlands and associated wildlife, the pond Vermillion River/Creek and associated wildlife, wooded areas and associated wildlife, destruction and disruption of the above natural areas can occur

during power line construction, maintenance when they have to go in and repair, and continuously as a result of EMF, noise and other power line-related causes. So it will have an impact on our natural areas in Eureka Township.

As far as you looking at aesthetics and EMF, static electricity, noise, and farming disruptions I would have this to say: These 150- to 175-foot rusty towers above the highest trees would be a major negative aesthetic for all property owners along the route and all future property owners near the power line or within direct line of sight of the power lines. EMF and SE, static electricity, have been proven to be harmful to humans, especially children, animals, and to disrupt mechanical and electrical devices, defibrillators, communication devices, GPS devices, TV signals, school and business processes and testing equipment, et cetera, et cetera, which limits land use. And property owner -- property owners' happiness and well-being is impacted, as well as future development near the power lines.

Also, all the view sheds in Eureka Township are important to citizens of the Eureka Township. And so if you're running a line all the

way along 240th and along Dodd, people enter through those state roads like Dodd; and if they have to go through these power lines, it gives the entire township negative -- a negative connotation.

As far as farm work goes, when you farm nowadays and you do row cropping, equipment is substantially large, 40-foot to 100-foot. You know, it's not uncommon for sprayers over 100 feet. And going around these single towers, although it sounds easy, 75 or 100 feet in a field is not easy to do. It'll most probably result in chemical overspray as they try and go around, double spraying, which is a problem for ground land -- groundwater. It disrupts GPS mapping systems because of the current going through. Fencing, from what I understand, if you want to put up a fence for cattle or livestock you're going to get a shock through that fence unless it's grounded from those power lines because of the -- I don't know if it's the static electricity or the EMF. But, either way, that's a problem for farming. As well as when they come in to maintain these lines or construct them, they're compacting the field all around and that's a problem for yield.

As far as mitigating this problem through

Eureka Township, I think you have to look at your two alternatives that you've got. The first one has been talked about many times tonight, but it's so blatantly obvious, I think it's just -- it's wrong not to consider. And that's that route that goes north from the substation, Lake Marion substation, along Pillsbury, and then to Highway 70 and uses that right-of-way, goes over to Hamburg, then goes north again, then it goes to Highway 50, then it goes to Farmington and ultimately Hampton.

This is more appropriate than the preferred route for the following reasons: First of all, large power lines and existing right-of-way easements already exist between I-35 and Pillsbury going north from Lake Marion station, and then again east along 70, north on Hamburg and east on 50. This would be minimal new impacts and reduce construction, acquisition and maintenance costs.

Secondly, going north from Lake Marion to Highway 7 the power lines would go through industrially-zoned Pillsbury near I-35 where large power lines already exist and properties are primarily industrial. The power lines are more compatible with industrial land use because aesthetics, EMF and noise are not as important to

1 most industry as they would be to residents and to
2 undeveloped properties.
3 Third, going east from Pillsbury along
4 Highway 70 and north along Hamburg, the power lines
5 would go through an industrial park where large
6 power lines already exist. The power lines are more
7 compatible with industrial in this area and also
8 because buildings and signs distract people driving
9 through from the negative view and aesthetic impact
10 and buildings in the line of sight of the power line
11 buffer the negative line. In other words, you only
12 need a two-story building, if it's right in front of
13 you, to hide a power line. That's just, you know,
14 common sense. So you can go through there and have
15 that shielded -- or buffered from a lot of people.
16 Furthermore, the power company -- if any
17 of those industrial people complain that they're
18 getting the EMF and they can't run the equipment in
19 their industry, I talked to a company that will
20 install a device, a series of electronic end wires
21 in the ground that can reduce the EMF effect. They
22 will take it down considerably so that those
23 industrial companies can operate right next to those
24 power lines. And I think it should be incumbent
25 upon the Applicant to pay for that mitigating

shielding when going through there so they can go through that industrial park, if that's an issue. And I don't even think that's an issue.

Another issue that was brought up to me that I don't think should be an issue but the environmental impact study should take a look at is whether height and the airport is an issue. I heard that as a lame excuse as to why it shouldn't go through Highway 70 because it's too close to the airport, but, in fact, I've been also told by engineers that those lines can be lowered, there is ways to lower the lines using -- I gotta think -- I should probably ask the outfit that question.

MR. POORKER: H-frames.

MR. KAUFENBERG: Okay. Well, there are ways to lower the lines, let's put it that way. And so that Highway 70 route is a much more reasonable alternative than going through the middle of Eureka Township.

Another route that is already proposed as an alternate route, which I don't like going through other neighbors' property but, in fact, it happens to have more positives and less negatives than the Eureka Township route, would be the one down on Highway 86. And so that goes south from the Lake

Marion station, then it goes east along County 86 to 47 and then up to Hampton. It's a better choice for the following reasons:

From the Lake Marion substation, power lines would go south along Pillsbury-I-35 corridor where there is existing power line right-of-way. In fact, not only is there existing power line right-of-way, but it's right here (indicating) between your route. That red line is where you cut all the trees down. You've already put a power line there. You can go on this side (indicating) of the freeway, and you can go right down that line and not impact all those people along there. And so it's obscene that they're talking about coming through another swath down there when they already have the right-of-way and they already have a line in there and they can put this power line next to another line. And that absolutely needs to be looked at as a viable alternative.

Once it gets to Highway 86, then it goes along 86 to the east where there's existing right-of-way, and 86 happens to be the only major straight west-to-east road south of County 46 in the metro. So if you're looking at this logically, if you look south of 46, that's the next place that

goes straight, and that's an advantage to putting in a power line because you save money when you don't have to do the zigs and the zags and put the extra tension on the lines. You also make it less vulnerable to storms, terrorist threats and other things than going through the zigzag route where you go south to 245th and then you go north again and then you go east and then go south. That's a lot more expensive and this is a better route, 86.

Secondly, County Road 86 is a wide state road. It has wide ditches and right-of-way. It's got shoulders on the road. That is a huge contrast to Dodd Boulevard, which some in the paper have called Dangerous Dodd because of all the deaths on Dodd, which has no shoulders. Nor does 240th. So in terms of motorist safety, in terms of workers on the power lines, it would be safer for the trucks, maintenance workers to park on the shoulders than to be building along Dodd or 240th in Eureka Township.

Third, in terms of Highway 86, I understand from talking to the Minnesota Department of Transportation that they have had discussions between Minnesota Department of Transportation, Dakota County and Scott County regarding making County Road 86 what they call a principal arterial

road. That would put it on par with 494 -- or Highway 62, 494, County Road 42, County Road 46, the next one would be County Road 86. That would -- that would imply that they would have a hookup to 35W. It would imply that this would become a wide, you know, road, which would be noisy. Eventually there would be industrial people that want to move along there and probably be zoned, large portions of it, industrial.

So homeowners, unfortunately, as the future moves forward are going to be looking at that problem. They might have to move back or buffer their houses from that. Therefore, the power line would not be as detrimental an impact to them long term as it is to these Eureka citizens in the long run.

Fourth, County Road 86 provides easy future accessibility along its entire length for future power line hookups to wind, nuclear or other sources without having to snake power lines north to connect with the proposed northern preferred route. I think that's pretty important. This has got to be for the future. And I assume we're not going to get all our energy from South Dakota where all the revenue goes over there, and also there's state law

that says we have to put more into renewables. So if there is wind and it's south of the Twin Cities, if you have your line further south, it's easier to get to that. I doubt that any major, you know, power lines are going to be put -- any major power plants would be approved in Eureka Township because they don't even have industrial. So that would be a more logical site for that reason.

MR. EK: Mr. Kaufenberg, do you have all this down in writing?

MR. KAUFENBERG: I'm almost at the end here.

MR. EK: Okay. I just want to -- just out of respect of your neighbors and other folk who would like to comment.

MR. KAUFENBERG: Okay. All right. I'm just about done.

The last thing I'd say is I'd agree with the other individual, we could move the substation from Lake Marion down to 86, which would make it a better situation.

The last part, which is my conclusion, if you will, is that you need to look at, as an environmental impact, cultural values and land use goals. And that's certainly something the state has

said you should look at. And when you do look at that, you're going to find that the cultural values, goals and future plans of Eureka Township citizens have been affirmed over many years and are clearly documented in the township's comprehensive plans, ordinances, envisioning task force reports and way of life. Eureka Township citizens have affirmed that they strongly value:

One, preserving natural areas, open space and wildlife. Over 90 percent of Eureka's land is ag, undeveloped, wetlands and open water.

Two, they've affirmed preserving peace and quiet of rural life, which has allowed them to fight development from the pressures of neighboring communities.

Three, they've affirmed preserving farming and agriculture. Over 25 percent of Eureka's land is in the metropolitan ag preserve program, which is a long-term commitment for these folks.

Fourth, limiting housing to one per quarter quarter section and clustering housing is a low density.

And fifth, they prohibit almost all commercial and industrial except school and

1 churches. Only four-tenths of 1 percent of the land
2 in Eureka is commercial or industrial.
3 And so, therefore, when you look at the
4 cultural values of that community, it's obviously a
5 stark contrast to Lakeville, New Market Township or
6 a lot of the other areas you're going near. And
7 that should be respected. And the conclusion here
8 is this respect thing.
9 You know, everybody gets up here and they
10 all say, well, there's nothing you can do about it,
11 there's nothing you can do about it. You know, at
12 some point maybe citizens have to do something
13 dramatic about this. You know, the Declaration of
14 Independence states that we hold those truths to be
15 self-evident, that all men are created equal, that
16 they are endowed by their Creator with certain
17 unalienable rights, among them, life, liberty, and
18 the pursuit of happiness and that to secure these
19 rights, governments are instituted among them,
20 deriving their just powers from the consent of the
21 government -- governed.
22 We don't have the consent of the governed
23 in this community, and they -- and the pursuit of
24 happiness is unalienable right which people were
25 willing to fight for and take arms for. Maybe

that's what we have to do in Eureka Township, is take arms over this issue. By forcing these towers, these huge ten-story towers, and dangerous power lines through the township against the will, it defies the nature of what it means to be an American and defies our unalienable rights. The forced intrusion upsets the peace and quiet. And it's like exploiting the Amish for preserving their way of life. It's just plain wrong. It represents an affront to our rights and our pursuit of happiness.

Our country, way back when, was founded on Judeo-Christian morals and principles, and our currency still bears the words In God We Trust and our views are sworn in on the Bible. These utility companies that take land by eminent domain while being exempt from the laws that require fair negotiation and compensation to landowners is morally and ethically wrong and should not be allowed by this community. It opposes the spirit of the law regarding takings and the property rights in the Minnesota and U.S. Constitution and has no place in a free or moral society and absolutely no place in Eureka Township.

So that's the conclusion. And I'd just like to say that I think if it takes dramatic

action, then that's what people have to do. But enough is enough of this.

MR. EK: Thank you. I think you did a very thorough job of conveying your comments for the office. And I'll take these -- both of these here.

MR. KAUFENBERG: Yeah, one is on that other section.

MR. EK: All right. Thank you.

MR. MAHOWALD: Hi, my name's Parnell Mahowald, P-A-R-N-E-L-L, M-A-H-O-W-A-L-D.

Thanks. I'll be brief. Now, on the power line, okay, I live in New Market Township on Section 17. And a mile east of me there's a natural gas pipeline at that goes -- crosses -- it crosses once, and then it zigzags and crosses it again, and then it zigzags it again. So in the application it says that they're worried about the pipeline corroding, you know, over time with the electric current going through it. Why -- why do they have it zigzagging over three times when they can do it once?

And, anyway, this is -- this is my farm, I'd like to submit this. I don't know. But I'm a third generation. My grandpa bought it in '42 or '43, something like that. And I bought the farm

1 five years ago, and I spent $17,000 burying wires
2 underground. And now I got a shadow of -- I'll show
3 this. Now, if you take the property line, which
4 would be right here (indicating), right here in
5 these trees, so if you go up 175 feet, it would be a
6 shadow right there (indicating). So that would be a
7 health hazard. And it would -- your value is going
8 to go down considerably, and it's not going to be
9 worth much being in the shadow of a power line.
10 So -- and, you know, I'd hate to, you know, be
11 carrying around -- you know, have chains dragging
12 from all my wagons, you know, to ground them out so
13 I don't get static electricity from built up, you
14 know, wagons and stuff and augers that are higher
15 than 35 feet, you know.
16 And my dad's got a pacemaker. And my
17 neighbor across the road, he's got a pacemaker too.
18 And he survived -- in 1946 he was in Operation
19 Crossroads where he was seven or eight miles away
20 from a nuclear power plant or nuclear explosion in
21 '46, and he's got a pacemaker. He's 80 years old;
22 and he's like 600 feet from the line, which they're
23 going to give him nothing. And that's not -- he
24 already paid his price, to being eight miles away
25 from a nuclear explosion. He's got all kinds of

cancer. He probably won't be alive three years from now. Why should he have to, you know -- but -- and I wanted to -- anybody that Googles this, e-mail -- or I should say watch the video, Operation Crossroads, Google that and watch the short one. If you want to have nightmares, watch the eight-minute video. It's tragic, you know. You almost feel like you're -- you have a picture of these young -- bomb going off and then they've got -- you know, it's a nuclear thing. And a bunch of sheep that were on a ground zero and they got a picture of them, and that was not the disturbing part. The disturbing part was these people that know they have health effects. What they don't know are the young soldiers that were crawling over that wreckage of a nuclear bomb like it was candy, like it was May Day or whatever -- not May Day, you know, but was crawling over like it was kids in a playground, you know, young guys that are 20 years old or 18. Okay.

And I think it would be better off to put the property -- the lines somewhere where it's not, you know, affecting so many people on -- you know, like -- I don't want to dump it on Rice County, but they've got a bigger span of 40 acres per household. And New Market Township I think it's eight, one

household per. And that's about what I got to say. Okay.

MR. EK: Sir, could I -- could you, just for the record, so I can reference where you're located --

MR. MAHOWALD: I'm on --

MR. EK: -- give me your address again, please?

MR. MAHOWALD: Section 17. I e-mailed you that on Sunday.

MR. EK: Okay. But just so I have it again.

MR. MAHOWALD: It's section -- New Market Township, Section 17 on Dakota Avenue, 24416 Dakota Avenue.

MR. EK: Fantastic. That's what I wanted so I can take a look at exactly where you're located.

MR. MAHOWALD: And this map, you know, I've got a grain dryer that's 62 feet from it, you know, which, you know, what are they going to do, push it over 16 feet and -- you know.

MR. EK: No, that wouldn't be the case.

MR. MAHOWALD: Okay.

MR. EK: And also I --

MR. MAHOWALD: Or maybe I could maybe send you that.

MR. EK: Yeah, I was going to say, you know, this is your family photo. I don't --

MR. MAHOWALD: Well --

MR. EK: I don't think -- I really feel uncomfortable. This is a nice photo of your farm.

MR. MAHOWALD: Thank you.

MR. EK: We can -- we can definitely take a look at it, you know, on the project to see. And I would much rather have you just take that home with you --

MR. MAHOWALD: Okay.

MR. EK: -- instead of submitting it. I think it's much more valuable to you. Yeah, you can make a scan of it and e-mail it.

MR. MAHOWALD: Okay.

MR. EK: I think that would be fine.

MR. MAHOWALD: Okay.

MR. EK: But thank you. Thank you for your comment.

MS. BROWN: My name is Linda Brown, B-R-O-W-N, and I live in New Market Township.

I wish to enter into the record that I object to the proposed alternative route,

specifically where you go south from the Lake Marion substation, down Pillsbury, and then you go back north again. I -- I would propose a couple alternatives. One would be, as has already been suggested here tonight, to move the Lake Marion substation south along 86 so that you're making a straight route, you're not going north where there's population and disrupting all of the residents there.

It seems to me when you look at whether it's alternate route or proposed (sic) route, we're coming right through the heart of Scott County, which is -- has been exploding population that has many, many residences. And I just don't understand why there isn't more thought to moving the route further south and having less of an impact on less residences.

The other proposal that I wanted to make is, again, using the interstate corridors that are already existing there, going along the west side of 35W through that rest area, north up to County Road 70, and then possibly heading east from that direction.

You know, I think we really need to take into consideration the effect that this is going to

have on all the homes. And that comes to my second point, my concern with the stray voltage and the EMF and the long-term health effects on humans and animals. We already had one gentleman up here that has indicated his experience with the stray voltage and his dairy farm, and there's -- there's many other farmers.

Most recently, in the last year, there was a huge article in the Star Tribune or Pioneer Press -- I'm not sure which it was -- where a dairy farmer south down Spring Valley, Rochester area, that was -- has been in litigation with the energy company because he has -- animals are falling over dead and are no longer producing. What affects the animals certainly are going to affect humans. I request the Department of Commerce to seek out unbiased research on the effects, because they will find it does negatively impact human and animals, and we need to insist that the power company be held accountable for that and for what they are creating for all of us in the future.

I also am concerned and object to the fact that the power company is not required to reimburse those that are within a general area of these transmission lines. To say that it only

1 impacts these people over here when I'm standing
2 here is ludicrous. I mean, first of all, from the
3 stray voltage, number one, and from the aesthetics.
4 It's been said time and time again, property values,
5 if you're living near something like that, are right
6 down the tubes because nobody -- people are smart.
7 People know, they know now that there's negative
8 effects from this. Nobody wants to live by these
9 things. So you're kind of issuing a death sentence
10 for those of us that have property even in a
11 surrounding area of these things. And I think we
12 should be compensated for that.
13 The other point that I wanted to make,
14 you know, we're at a time where we're moving towards
15 going green, and I guess I -- why aren't we looking
16 more at solar energy, more at conservation methods
17 where we don't have to be transmitting electric
18 energy from out of the Dakotas into Minnesota, all
19 the way to Chicago? I'm not saying that we don't
20 need electricity. I mean, we need electricity. But
21 there's -- there's many other methods that could be
22 looked at so that we don't need to be constructing
23 these huge power lines that are having negative
24 effects on all of us.
25 And I respectfully ask the State

Department of Commerce to take their charge of representing and working for the people zealously and to hold the citizens as your top priority in this whole decision-making process for the betterment of the citizens and not for the betterment of the electric company.

And I guess I'll just end with sort of recapping. You know, my main concern is looking at different routes that are going to have less of an impact on residents. The -- during the EIS, I think we need to do a mindful, open-minded, unbiased study of the stray voltage issue and EMF. And I think as part of that we need to require that the power company institute measurements (sic) to eliminate those negative effects. You know, they can -- I don't care if it costs more money. We're talking long-term health effects for each one of us. And the other thing, I think, that is important that was brought up here tonight is extending the comment period beyond the April 30th date. I think there's a lot of people out there that are unaware, for one reason or another -- there's no reason to point fingers. It doesn't matter. They are unaware. And to extend the comment period another 30 days, I think, is not an unreasonable request.

Thank you.

MR. EK: Thank you for your comments. And I just wanted to note that you adequately addressed the alternatives. And also I wanted -- you talked about compensation for when the power line's on -- not on your land, but in your purview or what it may be. And, unfortunately, that's not a question we can answer in the EIS. That's a question for the lawmakers to decide. So, as Beverly pointed out, you know, contact the legislators on that one.

And for your other issues, they were brought up before, and, of course, we will be addressing them in the EIS. And -- and we -- I can tell you myself I am working for the citizens zealously for this project. So thank you for your comments.

MS. HELMBERGER: Hi, I'm Cindy Helmberger, H-E-L-M-B-E-R-G-E-R.

I've been to four meetings now, and I'm still zero convinced that it should be up in Scott County and Dakota County. So I will never be convinced.

I really just want to strongly suggest -- we've all heard it and several of us have said it,

is to move the Lake Marion substation south, get it out of where the population is, where the population is potentially going to grow. It needs to get down there where it's less populace.

And also for the people that stayed as long as you have, you've got a lot of time invested to it. So what -- I guess what I would really encourage you to do -- Scott's going to show you some more information for you to follow up. The information shows you, you know, who you can write. A couple of people have strongly said write your state legislators, you know, the state Senate, your rep, find out who they are. You've held here for a couple of hours. That's commendable. Go back and tell your neighbors that were here -- that weren't here, that couldn't make it. If there's some elderly people that might struggle with writing a letter, help them craft a letter. Maybe offer to -- have them mail a letter but also offer to also maybe e-mail that.

We need to do this as a community, and it's been a really good grassroots -- people telling people, flyers have been out there, good participation last night. So really go back and crank up people so that they are writing and they

are calling, getting their comments in.

I wanted to tap on to the gal that was ahead of me regarding extended period. What I would really like to have on record is that with that extension period, that CapX is required to send a letter to everybody affected in the townships, not just on that 500 feet, that it has to, on the outside of the envelope, clearly mark as best it can that this affects your neighborhood because of high-power lines that are coming through your neighborhoods. That way people aren't going to just go, CapX, don't know what it is, it's in the garbage, I'm recycling it. That's what happened to probably 95 percent of the people. They didn't know what this was. I really want that to be a requirement, that a letter goes out again to everybody in the townships that are affected in these counties.

Let's see. I've got to make sure I got everything covered here. I just have a quick question. I'm going to put you on the spot again, Craig. Of this $720 million, do you know approximately -- I remember reading something about 25 acres. I don't know if that's total acquisition. But out of the $720 million for the project, if that

1 does include acquisition, what percent is that in
2 paying for acquisitions?
3 MR. POORKER: Yeah, the preferred route,
4 I believe, is $700 million, estimated; and the
5 alternate route, I believe, is $755 million. What
6 percentage of that is acquisition, I'm not sure.
7 Good question. Because the property values in
8 western -- far western Minnesota are much different
9 than they are when you get to the metro area here in
10 Dakota County. I'm not sure what that total
11 estimate was. I do have that figured up somewhere.
12 MS. HELMBERGER: Okay.
13 MR. POORKER: And I think it's all lumped
14 into that whole thing. And I know that in our
15 estimates in the document, we spell out some of
16 those things. But, unfortunately, right-of-way is
17 not one of those. It's probably lumped in with
18 construction cost.
19 MS. HELMBERGER: So there wouldn't be a
20 way to have a ballpark figure of what that
21 acquisition would be for -- I mean, obviously we
22 just care about our counties.
23 MR. POORKER: I'm trying to think of the
24 acreage numbers. I know in the document, too, we do
25 say how many acres of easement acquisition it would

approximately entail. 400 acres or something like that comes to mind. I'm not sure if that's right, I'd hate to say what number it is, but that's in there. And to just come up with a rough estimate, I know southwestern Minnesota we used, in estimating, probably 8,000 an acre. And when you get to Dakota County, some areas you're looking at 40,000 an acre. That's what we've seen along the freeway.

MS. HELMBERGER: Okay. So it would be possible to call and get that information from you?

MR. POORKER: Yeah. I had figured that for the document itself.

MS. HELMBERGER: Okay.

MR. POORKER: So we can talk about that, sure.

MS. HELMBERGER: Okay. Great. Thank you for your time.

MR. POORKER: Thank you, Cindy.

MR. EK: Any additional comments tonight from any folks?

All right. Well, with that, then, we'll wrap up. And, again, as I said before, I encourage you to grab one of the comment forms out front, grab one of the handouts of the presentation with all the information, the websites, so you can therefore

provide a comment before the April 30th deadline. It's important that you do so. And you can do it by mail, e-mail, online, fax, and give me a call if you have trouble with either of those or want help putting together a letter.

But thank you all for attending, I appreciate it. And please submit your comments.

Thank you.

(Public comments concluded.)