Monticello to St. Cloud Advisory Task Force

Second Meeting – July 16, 2009

DRAFT MEETING NOTES

Welcome and Agenda Review

The facilitator for the task force, Charlie Petersen, State of Minnesota, Management Analysis & Development, welcomed task force members and all present. Task force members were asked to introduce themselves and share their designation (representing a particular constituency or serving as an individual citizen member of the advisory task force).

Charlie reviewed the task force charge and emphasized that the work of this day, the second meeting, was to further clarify and prioritize issues and concerns and to begin discussing alternative routes, route segments, and substation locations. Charlie also reviewed meeting ground rules.

Review and Approval of Meeting Notes

Task force members were asked to review the meeting notes and respond with any questions, edits, changes, etc. No changes were offered by task force members. Charlie noted he had tried but was unsuccessful in scanning in the map which Ron Schabel had presented at the first meeting. Task force members noted that they would like the map included in the meeting notes. Charlie said he would find a means to make this happen.

Review and Prioritization of Impacts and Issues

Task force members were asked to look at the "impacts and issues" categories they identified at the first meeting. Ms. Thelen asked if additions could be made, and suggested that the question of the type of energy carried by the line (e.g., wind power vs. coal-generated power) should be included under impacts on the environment.

To assist task force members in better understanding potential transportation corridor impacts, Ms. Svensson made a brief presentation on the Minnesota Department of Transporation's (MN-DOT) role in the route permitting process (see Appendix A for handouts). Ms. Svensson noted:

- MN-DOT has an accommodation policy that guides how roads can be used as corridors for other utilities. In general, utilities can be in the right-of-way (ROW) for non-interstate roads. For interstates (such as I-94) there is little ROW sharing and, because there is a federal interest in interstate highways, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is involved.

- MN-DOT is trying to apply its policies consistently across all of the CapX 2020 transmission line projects within Minnesota.

- There are examples of MN-DOT concerns for specific routes in (1) the meeting notes from this group's first meeting, and (2) in the MN-DOT letter on the Brookings transmission line project (handout). Concerns include safety, maintenance, expansions, costs, and scenic byways.

Ms. Svensson addressed questions and comments from task force members. Ms Svensson clarified that using an interstate corridor is not a definite "no go," but rather that if an interstate corridor is considered, then state and federal concerns need to be addressed in the environmental review process. Task force members asked about line sag and blowout. Mr. Lohr noted that the FHWA has addressed static aerial sharing of an interstate ROW (e.g., a sign that hangs over the ROW) but has not addressed dynamic sharing (e.g., wires that are outside the ROW but could blow over a portion of the ROW during windy weather).

Ms. Svensson noted that the MN-DOT comment letter for the Monticello to St. Cloud project would be submitted to the Office of Energy Security by July 24th. Thus, it would be available for task force members to review before the next meeting.

Charlie then led members through a "dot exercise" to prioritize impacts and issues identified by the task force. Task force members were asked to vote for their three most important "impact and issue" categories. The results of this voting are shown in the Monticello to St. Cloud ATF Prioritization Grid (Appendix B).

Identification of Alternative Routes, Route Segments and Substation Locations

Task force members were asked to work in small groups to identify possible alternative routes and substation locations. Each group was provided with a set of maps representing the Monticello to St. Cloud transmission line area and asked to use markers and tape to indicate route alternatives and to describe the alternative(s), explain what impacts they were trying to avoid, and suggest what new impacts might be created. The small groups reported back; their ideas and information about alternatives and potential impacts were shared with all present. Maps depicting the alternatives identified are included in Appendix C.

Next Steps

Charlie reviewed the process envisioned for developing a report of the task force's work and addressed questions. Mr. Birkholz clarified how the task force's work would inform the scope of the environmental impact statement for the project. Ms. Thelen asked if the comments from the public scoping meeting (July 2) would be available to the task force. Mr. Birkholz noted that they would be available and posted on the project website when they were complete: http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/Docket.html?Id=19957

Monticello to St. Cloud Advisory Task Force

June 25, 2009

Identification of Impacts and Issues as prioritized - *What land use planning or other impacts and issues need to be considered in the evaluation of proposed transmission line routes and/or sub-station locations?*

Cost impact	**Restate the need at every step in the process**	**Impact of stray voltage**	**Minimize transportation corridor impacts**	**Impacts on environmental features (wood, river, wetlands)**	**Impacts to future resident and commercial development**	**Conform to zoning and land use plans**
Priority Three votes	***Priority One vote***	***Priority One vote***	***Top priority 10 votes***	***Top priority 8 votes***	***Top priority 10 votes***	***Top priority 12 votes***
▪ Cost impact on rate payers for alternative vs. preferred ▪ Minimize cost shifting; local costs for infrastructure or other; state costs for same		▪ Stray voltage; don't raise it, prepare to respond to it	▪ Minimize transportation corridor impacts; seek input from local, regional and state agencies regarding existing and planned transportation corridors and facilities ▪ Protect township roads and right-of-way during construction; reconstruct as necessary; impacts roadway expansion ▪ Impacts on future road and interchange construction and expansion ▪ Why is 'MnDOT not easily allowing the powerline route in or near their right-of-way; land is now non-productive, 75 ft. into prime agland ▪ Impact to airport fly zone: St. Cloud, Maple Lake, Clearlake	▪ Environmental concerns ▪ Impact on water sources; this primary route runs through the City of Clearwater DWSMA, with the north side of I-94 being the emergency response areas and the south side a future emergency response area (future well site for additional development ▪ Wild and scenic river and sensitive wetland by Fish Lake, I-94 ▪ Meet regulatory requirements: environmental, permitting; scenic byway, historic and cultural, rest areas, wetlands and water resources, agricultural lands, endangered species ▪ Rural landscapes of Silver creek and Clearwater marred by zigzag line through townships ▪ Energy generation: coal versus wind	▪ Bel Clare Acres potential development area – St. Joe township ▪ Impact on underdeveloped land – industrial and other; this will impact the marketability of lands ▪ Alt. route – prime development, residential area (St. Joe Township and Waite Park – along Hwy 137 ▪ The alt. route south of Clearwater goes through a potential growth area ▪ Should locate substation to industrial area ▪ Residential and high density areas most impacted ▪ Proposed substation is right in middle of growth area	▪ Impacts to existing housing ▪ How about existing plans in the works ▪ Negative impacts on community aesthetics ▪ Agland existing right-of-ways least impact ▪ Impact on existing farming operations