



**Hiawatha 115 kilovolt (kV)
Transmission Line Project
Advisory Task Force**

**Hiawatha Advisory Task Force
Second Meeting – July 15, 2009**

DRAFT Meeting Notes

Welcome and introductions

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).

Why we are here

Charlie reviewed with the task force, the charge of the task force and a draft plan for accomplishing the charge over the course of three task force meetings. Charlie noted that the plan would be slightly altered for the second and third meetings. The second meeting would be used to identify and analyze and various routes and substation proposed by the applicant or the task force. The third meeting would be to finalize any analysis and to discuss alternative energy generation options and the potential to raise mitigating options to reduce the impact of the substations or transmission lines. Charlie reviewed the ground rules and questions by task force members were discussed and addressed.

Member resolution

Tim Springer, a task force member representing the Midtown Greenway Coalition, offered a resolution containing ten points for the task force to review and discuss. The members reviewed and discussed the ten points and offered editing suggestions. The original resolution (see Appendix A) and a “track changes” version (see Appendix B) are attached. It was agreed by the members that time to discuss the resolution would be on the August 5, 2009 meeting agenda.

Review and approval of Meeting Notes

The meeting notes from the June 24, 2009 meeting were not reviewed and approved. This action will be done at the August 5, 2009 meeting of the task force.

Review of alternatives

Task force members identified additional substation location alternatives and route alternatives. They then discussed and identified pros and cons for each of the alternatives as follows.

Substation alternatives

Hiawatha Substation West (proposed by applicant)

Pros

- Closest to underground 28th Street route
- Existing vacant land, no buildings on site
- Not in residential area
- MnDOT owns land

Cons

- Eliminates largest green space on the Greenway
- At major intersection for bikes and cars
- Loss of community investment by removing landscaping and trees
- Planning in the area
- Interfere with Greenway that goes between existing buildings
- Impairs site lines to downtown skyline from light rail train
- Area is center of “green space;” a transportation hub; “place making”

Hiawatha Substation East (proposed by applicant)

Pros

- Industrial area
- Close proximity to transmission line and proposed routes
- Not Hiawatha West

Cons

- City spent 25 years working on building the building the substation would replace
- In a state approved and funded designated employment area
- Existing building houses 2 businesses that would be replaced (one business is “Crew 2”)
- Violation of City of Minneapolis comprehensive plan that has been approved by Met Council
- Deterrent to future development
- Site was cleaned up with funds from state Department of Trade and Economic Development with requirements for creation of jobs; City of Minneapolis moneys were also involved (Would funds be repaid? If so, by whom?)
- Divides industrial develop areas, isolates south building

Hiawatha Substation South (proposed by applicant)

Pros

- Industrial area
- Vacant land
- Allows relocation of greenway to preferred route
- Not Hiawatha West – impacting green space
- Could be interior building (discussion on whether this item is an option, applicant stated that the substation could have walls but is not a option to be fully enclosed)
- Substation could be shielded
- Divides green space from industrial area

Cons

- Industrial area
- Divides green space from industrial area
- In a state approved and funded designated employment area
- Violation of City of Minneapolis comprehensive plan that has been approved by Met Council
- Deterrent to future development
- Site was cleaned up with funds from state Department of Trade and Economic Development with requirements for creation of jobs; City of Minneapolis moneys were also involved (Would funds be repaid? If so, by whom?)
- Divides industrial develop areas, isolates south building

Gary’s Substation Alternative 1 – south and west of intersection of Minnehaha Avenue and East 26th Street (proposed by task force member) – See G-1 in map in appendix

Pros

- Vacant
- Industrial area
- Site cannot be developed

Cons

- Is site too small for substation
- On key intersection of 26th and Hiawatha
- In employment zone (mentioned earlier)
- Impairs major entrance to neighborhood
- Visible from 26th street
- Site is further from transmission line
- Impacts businesses, school, charter school
- Encourages the transmission line on 26th Street

Gary’s Substation Alternative 2 – existing parking lot west of 21st Avenue South, south of building on East 28th Street (proposed by task force member) – See G-2 in map in appendix

Pros

- Land now mainly asphalt (75%)
- Underutilized as a parking lot

Cons

- Impacts jobs – loss of business
- Not next to Hiawatha line
- Across from Green Institute
- Site may be too small for substation

Gary's Substation Alternative 3 – triangle shape of land, east of Hiawatha and north of Lake Street (proposed by task force member) – See G-3 on map in appendix

Pros

- Land is currently vacant
- May be undevelopable
- Further away from Alliance housing than Hiawatha West option

Cons

- Along active railroad
- Behind Target building and Alliance
- May block access to Target
- Site identified for a possible expansion of bike trail
- Site may be too small for substation location

Former Xcel Substation Alternative (also Gary's Alternative 4) – triangle shape of land, east of Hiawatha Avenue from just north of where East 31st Street would intersect with Hiawatha to just north of where East 32nd Street would intersect with Hiawatha (proposed by task force member) – See Fmr Xcel SS on map in appendix

Pros

- Existing vacant land
- Less disruptive of sight lines
- Partially owned by Xcel
- Undevelopable as residential, commercial, industrial; no access
- Area is not planned for any use
- Currently a temporary parking lot, not used
- Not close to residential areas
- No impact on Greenway
- Close proximity to existing power lines
- Size of area should be large enough for substation
- Discussion on option to expand site into foundry area

Cons

- May be tough to connect line to where other substation is located
- Size of land, may be too small
- Possible loss of jobs at foundry if use to increase size of land space

Gary's Substation Alternative 5 – triangle shape of land east of Hiawatha Avenue north of East 26th Street (proposed by task force member) – See G-5 on map in appendix

Pros

- Land is currently vacant
- Land is owned by MnDOT and/or Met Council

Cons

- May be in employment zone mentioned earlier (need to check)
- Met Council potential building site, light rail
- Other side of freeway wall so cannot see from Little Earth
- Residential area nearby
- Near bike path, greenway to downtown
- Close to charter school
- Impact on businesses

Midtown North Substation Alternative (proposed by applicant)

Pros

- Land owned by Xcel Energy
- Only one house displaced

Cons

- One house displaced, affordable housing
- Inconsistent with City of Minneapolis adopted Greenway Development Plan, part of city's comprehensive plan
- Adjacent to Greenway
- Phillips project development area
- Hinders access to Greenway
- Adjacent to site on National Register of Historic Places
- Mature trees on site have to be removed

Midtown South Substation Alternative (proposed by applicant)

Pros

None identified

Cons

- Impacts businesses and loss of jobs
- Future site of density development
- Inconsistent with land use plan; Midtown Greenway Land Use Plan – Approved by City of Minneapolis
- Possible historical site
- Residential area with diverse population
- Adjacent to Greenway
- Phillips project development area
- Hinders access to Greenway
- Adjacent to site on National Register of Historic Places

- Mature trees on site have to be removed

Midtown 28th Street North Substation Alternative – north of East 28th Street between 4th Avenue South and Interstate 35W (proposed by task force member) – See Mt-28N on map in appendix

Pros

- More isolated than other substation options
- Away from residential area
- No buildings currently on site
- Borders freeway
- Could be a convenient site for substation if Xcel expansion of Hwy 62 and Nicollet
- Useful if route went around neighborhood – Interstates 35W and 94 option
- Negative impacts born by major user

Cons

- Area is currently a green space
- May be used for Well Fargo expansion
- Impact on electrical equipment of salt spray from freeway
- Impact on Well Fargo employees

Midtown 28th Street South Substation Alternative – south of East 28th Street between the Well Fargo building and Interstate 35W (proposed by task force member) – See Mt-28S on map in appendix

Pros

- Higher and better use than existing use
- Better site than Midtown 28th Street North
- Not a fully used parking lot, currently being used as a temporary parking lot during the Children’s Hospital expansion
- Borders freeway
- Could be a convenient site for substation if Xcel expansion of Hwy 62 and Nicollet
- Useful if route went around neighborhood – Interstates 35W and 94 option
- Negative impacts born by major user

Cons

- On Greenway
- Potential changes with the intersection of East 28th Street and Interstate 35W
- Close to soccer fields
- Close to high school across the Greenway
- Disruption of Well Fargo future expansion plans
- Hinders sight lines to downtown

Additional Midtown Option (proposed by task force member)

Xcel should review options for substation location west of Interstate 35W

Transmission line route alternatives

Routes A, B, and C (proposed by applicant)

Pros

- Lower cost than placing line underground
- Distributes power to identified location

Cons

- Impacts historic property
- Next to residents; diverse populations including: impact on residents living in poverty; indigenous people, particularly Little Earth; communities of color; women; children, and indigenous people; seniors; disabled, kids (especially Route B)
- Compound environmental health issues
- Loose development options (especially Route A); example noted of FHA note providing homeowner insurance in transmission line pathway
- Reduces esthetics quality in area; impacts sight lines
- Limitation on boulevard trees and loss of tree canopy in area
- Decreases options for non-motorized commuters in area; this may also be a negative health impact (especially Route A)
- Impact on green space equivalent to parkland; loss of parkland in urban area (especially Route A)
- Impacts trail users and may reduce number of users on trail (especially Route A)
- Impacts the possible expansion of transit and especially light rail transit in the area (especially Route A)
- Noise and interference
- Contrary to land use planning documents that have been adopted by City of Minneapolis, violates plans
- Impacts core city wildlife area; wildlife in Greenway (especially Route A)
- Cumulative health impacts on vulnerable populations, EMF health issues

Route A Underground (proposed by applicant)

Pros

- Reduced impact on potential future development
- No or minimal visual impact, not able to see
- Eliminates noise issue
- Less harm to historic sites
- It was noted a developer for a biomass heating company stated there was a “clear corridor” in the Greenway

Two questions raised during discussion on this route:

- How close to the buried transmission line can development in the area occur?
- How close will Xcel place the buried transmission line to existing structures and/or developed areas?

Cons

- Impact the condo development on the south side of the Greenway
- Potential health impacts
- Impact future rail development in the Greenway
- Impact future development in the Greenway
- Potential impact to residents in the area; also to residences
- Concern of insurance issues
- Potential interference to other utilities; for example, pipelines
- Watershed concerns because line will be buried
- Potential to impact city water lines on bridges
- Potential to impact just redone, gas mains along 15th Avenue

Route D Underground (proposed by applicant)

Pros

- Reduced impact on potential future development
- No or minimal visual impact, not able to see
- Eliminates noise issue
- Less harm to historic sites
- Does not violate land use plans

Cons

- Impact the condo development on the south side of the Greenway
- Potential health impacts
- Concern of insurance issues
- Potential interference to other utilities; for example, pipelines
- Watershed concerns because line will be buried
- Impact or close to existing residences
- Street is currently full of other utilities

Route E – north along Hiawatha Avenue to Interstate 94, west along Interstate 94 to Interstate 35W, south on Interstate 35W (proposed by task force member)

Pros

- Uses existing transportation corridor
- Does not go through green space
- Lower cost than to place line underground (option for underground along freeway)

Cons

- Impact major highrise housing at Cedar Box site
- Impact transit stations on interstates
- Conflicts with MnDOT policy
- Higher cost than overhead transmission lines
- Visual impact along interstates
- Residences/houses along Interstate 35W

Appendix A – Member resolution

Original resolution

DRAFT July 14, 2009

Resolution of the Hiawatha Transmission Line Advisory Task Force
Regarding the Public Utilities Commission docket #: E002/TL-09-38

If Xcel Energy’s proposed Hiawatha Project High Voltage Transmission Lines must go in, the Advisory Task Force recommends:

1. No overhead Hiawatha Project 115 kV power line should be routed through any south Minneapolis neighborhood, including but not limited to routes A, B and C.
2. Xcel should rate base all costs for any Hiawatha Project power line constructed.
3. The alignment of any Hiawatha Project 115 kV underground transmission line, including Route D along East 28th Street, must minimize adverse impacts on trees and maximize distance from homes.
4. Potential expansion plans east to a new substation near Highway 280, and west and south to a new substation near Nicollet Avenue and Highway 62, and potential capacity expansions of the proposed Hiawatha and Midtown Substations and high voltage transmission lines between them must be explained fully to determine if the Hiawatha Project is being segmented out of a larger project thereby skirting the Certificate of Need process, and to understand how such expansions could be avoided.
5. No greenspaces or trees along the Greenway should be adversely impacted.
6. Because an underground 115 kV power line on the south shoulder of the Midtown Greenway (on Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority Land or in the 29th Street right of way) may adversely impact implementation of (a) rail transit alongside the Midtown Greenway trails, and/or (b) future higher density development along 29th Street, Route A underground should be considered non-viable unless and until it is determined that there are no such adverse impacts.
7. Regarding the Hiawatha Substation: Xcel’s proposed Hiawatha West site is not acceptable given the ten-year community process of planning public greenspace at this site; the new substation site should be decided by the community; the following two sites should be studied further for as-small-as-possible footprint substations: Zimmer Davis site (shown in blue on Xcel’s project application maps known in the community as the Donnelly Stucco or DC Sales site), and the former Xcel substation site north of 32nd Street along Hiawatha Avenue combined with MN DOT land; and the substation should be designed with a creative team (such as an architect and an artist) on the larger project team from inception of design.
8. The only acceptable site for the Midtown Substation is directly north of or south of East 28th Street along the I-35W freeway.
9. The Hiawatha Project should include implementation of a South Minneapolis demand management/distributed generation program as part of any power line project approved.
10. The Hiawatha Project EIS should include an analysis of a route extending from the existing Hiawatha High Voltage Transmission Line west along I-94 and south along I-35W.

Appendix B – Member resolution

Members Resolution with track changes

(See PDF documents attached)

Appendix C – Map

(See PDF documents attached)