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PUBLIC COMMENTS

THURSDAY, JUNE 18, 2009

6:00 p.m.

In the Matter of the Northern States Power Company (Xcel Energy) HVTL Route Permit Application/Hiawatha Transmission Line Project

PUC Docket Number E002/TL-09-38

Midtown Global Market
920 East Lake Street
Minneapolis, Minnesota

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1 MR. STORM: As I call your name out,
2 please come up the microphone and have your comment.
3 So just give me a second to redo the mic here.

4 Okay. I'm going to have do this part
5 without a mic, since I don't have a mic --

6 MR. McLAUGHLIN: I'm Peter McLaughlin,
7 chair of the Hennepin County Rail Authority --
8 Regional Railroad Authority. We own the property
9 that the preferred alternative is on. I just want
10 to clarify, it's not on 29th Street, it's on
11 Railroad Authority property. So I thought, just in
12 terms of context, we need to be clear, it's not on a
13 street, it's on Railroad Authority property that's
14 been designated for transportation and green space.
15 So I just wanted to make that distinction between
16 what Xcel is telling you and what the facts are.

17 It also is a historic district that the
18 line goes on and across a couple times. And I just
19 think in terms of the basic setting of the context
20 here, there was one error, it's not on the street,
21 it's on rail authority property that's designated
22 for transportation and -- for rail transportation
23 and for green space.

24 It may not be a park, but it's green
25 space, specifically designated, and that secondly,

1 it actually crosses the historic district as well.
2 And I think just in terms of the presentation of
3 what we're talking about, I thought that needed to
4 be said at the beginning. And I've got other
5 comments, but I wanted to at least set the record --
6 to be, you know, precisely clear on that.

7 MR. STORM: That's fine. Let's be fair
8 to everybody and I will call on people on the cards,
9 wait until I call on you to come up. Please come
10 up, state your name, spell your name, speak clearly,
11 and then once I get through the cards, if there's
12 more time I will ask for a show of hands and I will
13 select people that way. So --

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Use the
15 microphone.

16 MR. STORM: Okay. Before we lose total
17 control here, please wait until I call your name and
18 then come up and speak. Okay. I want to be fair to
19 everybody, I took the cards in the order that they
20 came in to us. So in order to keep control, I think
21 I'll have to hold on to the microphone.

22 So, Joyce Wisdom, would you please step
23 forward.

24 MS. WISDOM: Joyce Wisdom, J-O-Y-C-E,
25 W-I-S-D-O-M.

1 As director of the Lake Street Council
2 and a resident at 2816 28th Avenue South, within two
3 blocks of the proposed Hiawatha substation, I
4 support the proposed Hiawatha project for increased
5 electrical service to our business and residential
6 community. I encourage placement of the lines
7 underground, only if the cost can be distributed
8 across the entire rate base, not just Minneapolis.

9 Current and future needs require an
10 increase in power for South Minneapolis. Ours is a
11 decade-long need and growing cost to small
12 businesses from resulting surges and outages. New
13 substations and power lines will provide the quality
14 of power required for the commercial corridor now
15 and in the future to better serve and protect the
16 electrical equipment used by area businesses and can
17 positively impact potential for future development.

18 A lack of reliable power can also
19 diminish future development if a solution is not
20 agreed upon and necessary infrastructure installed
21 within an appropriate time line. My board and
22 members all recognize that the issues we address
23 tonight have both pros and cons.

24 Finally, Lake Street business owners'
25 needs and voices are important to this discussion,

1 but many are not here tonight for fear of losing
2 local customers who oppose this project.

3 MR. STORM: Thank you.

4 Next, Gjerry Berquist.

5 MR. BERQUIST: Thank you very much.

6 Gjerry Berquist, G-J-E-R-R-Y, B as in boy,
7 E-R-Q-U-I-S-T.

8 And I'm over 50 as well and I don't need
9 any retrofitting yet. I'm at 46 Prospect Boulevard
10 in St. Paul, 55107. I have said over -- and I'm
11 from St. Paul, and thank you for this wonderful
12 opportunity.

13 I understand over thousands and thousands
14 of hours by the community, neighborhood, and
15 businesses for many years created and have
16 implemented a plan to recycle an old railway bed for
17 green space and transportation. Congratulations for
18 what a wonderful job you've done.

19 I bike, and if I was much younger I'd
20 probably live around the greenway, I think it's a
21 beautiful spot. I am disturbed that this wonderful
22 community asset could be so easily reduced in value
23 by the inappropriate, that is, less expensive use of
24 high voltage power lines so close to this facility.

25 Even if we discount the possible health

1 impacts of living near high-tension lines, as I'm
2 sure Xcel Energy will spend a lot of time convincing
3 you that there is no impact, the sheer magnitude of
4 the visual impact to the neighborhood and the future
5 of the expanded greenway should be given serious
6 weight in any future decisions.

7 The impact of overhead transmission lines
8 in an urban neighborhood indicates further erosion
9 of which neighborhoods are important and, therefore,
10 kept clean and neat by industry and government, and
11 which neighborhoods continue to get more than their
12 share of the quote/unquote stuff such as polluting
13 industry, excessive traffic, and so forth.

14 As Karen Clark has told us in the past,
15 this neighborhood carries more than its fair share
16 and burden of industrial and economic blight. The
17 cumulative impact will be increased if these
18 overhead lines are permitted.

19 I have had the privileged to visit Paris
20 and some of the surrounding communities about ten
21 years ago. I noticed almost immediately a lack of
22 any overhead lines anywhere in the urban
23 environment. It's almost as if the French truly
24 understood the need to make sure that the visual
25 history and the visual space is protected. We could

1 take some tips from the French and their efforts to
2 preserve the visual beauty of their urban
3 environment.

4 Finally, I am here from St. Paul because
5 I'm concerned that this type of power line
6 transmission could deface one of our many beautiful
7 and charming neighborhoods. Already, we have
8 suffered by the wholesale slaughter of thousands of
9 boulevard trees to support -- to supposedly protect
10 the Xcel power lines running overhead throughout our
11 neighborhood.

12 If Xcel insists that more power is
13 needed, let them bury the power lines in a route
14 that is of the least impact to the neighborhoods and
15 let them pay -- let their stock payers (sic) --
16 stock board pay for the burial and do not permit
17 them to pass that cost on to any ratepayers.

18 Thank you very much.

19 MR. STORM: Next, Frank Lorenz.

20 MR. LORENZ: My name is Frank Lorenz,
21 it's F-R-A-N-K, L-O-R-E-N-Z.

22 And my personal standing in this is, I'm
23 a ratepayer and a resident, but only of Hennepin
24 County. And my objective is to get the lowest cost
25 line that is safe, but then to add costs to that

1 lowest cost to mitigate the visual impact or to
2 minimize the ugliness. Also, to select a plan that
3 causes the least disruption to residents and traffic
4 during the construction.

5 Therefore, I'm going to speak for a few
6 minutes to advocate route A1, which is overhead
7 lines along the edge of the greenway, but with a one
8 and a half percent add on, which is standard federal
9 government procedure for construction projects. One
10 and a half percent to the base cost that would be
11 allocated to the arts.

12 The man before spoke about gray hair,
13 I've got some, but I dye it. But Xcel Energy has
14 been turning on my lights since 1943, and whether
15 you like them or hate them, they're always rated in
16 the top five percent of stockholder-owned companies
17 that produce electricity. They're also rated in the
18 top three percent as far as safety records for their
19 employees. So, as I say, love or hate, they at
20 least are the smartest boy in the dumb row.

21 They have chosen a mix of power between
22 coal, hydro, which is purchased from Canada, and
23 nuclear, that has produced one of the only positive
24 business aspects for this state, which is low-cost
25 power compared to our neighboring states.

1 So again, love them or hate them, you
2 can't be lucky 65 years in a row. I guess the
3 question is, are they going to do the right thing
4 for this project, which is a relatively small
5 project for them financially in their capital
6 budget. I guess I would ask, for the record, that
7 they put, if not the top gun, at least a faster gun
8 on the project management of this so that that
9 person, whether it's he or she, gets a chance to
10 consider everything very thoroughly, not just
11 because it's a smaller project, it's a big project
12 for the people who live in this area.

13 I'm aware of only two blunders that Xcel
14 has made in the last 20 years. One, they hired a
15 former PUC Commissioner who apparently had pressured
16 executives for a job before he left the Commission.
17 At that time, the Star Tribune still had enough
18 reporters to dig this out and Xcel Energy pushed the
19 ejection seat on him and the executive who hired
20 him, the stockholders paid for that mistake.

21 The second thing that Xcel has done wrong
22 lately is spending big bucks chasing a false or
23 failed theory of deregulation, stranded costs, I
24 won't go into it. But they set up a separate unit
25 that went bankrupt and the stockholders paid for

1 that one, too.

2 So the only thing Xcel is under criticism
3 now before this project is their nuclear fuel
4 storage. And unfortunately, to the people that hate
5 them, it's not their fault. If you don't like the
6 problem there, you need to see the federal
7 government and talk to them about Yucca Mountain.
8 They've already taken your money through the rates
9 and they dug a huge hole in Nevada and now they
10 aren't implementing the storage project, which
11 leaves Xcel and everybody else out to lunch.

12 So I would recommend that we take the
13 lowest cost project, A1, add a percentage and a half
14 to that, which would be \$426,000, and give that to
15 the Minneapolis Arts Commission and let them make
16 decisions about putting art on the substation walls,
17 the power bases, and anything else that they can
18 decorate, and let the decisions be completely in the
19 hands of the art commission and not Xcel Energy.

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Where do you live?

21 MR. LORENZ: I live in the western
22 suburbs, but I grew up in South Minneapolis.

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay.

24 MR. STORM: Okay. Next, Pat Sharon
25 (phonetic), is that --

1 MR. SHANNON: No. Shannon.

2 MR. STORM: Shannon?

3 MR. SHANNON: Yup.

4 MR. STORM: Sorry, Pat.

5 MR. SHANNON: I --

6 MR. STORM: State and spell, please.

7 MR. SHANNON: My name is Pat Shannon,
8 S-H-A-N-N-O-N.

9 I am completely taken back (sic) by
10 the --

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Use the mic.

12 MR. SHANNON: I'm completely taken back
13 by the proposal to put up power lines. I know that
14 everybody in the community knows about green, how to
15 keep things natural, and here we are at a meeting
16 with a big company like -- privately-owned company
17 that's going to make money on this deal trying to
18 sell us on the power line business.

19 I thought that people had more awareness
20 than that in the community and in the state and in
21 these big companies. And it seems like, to me, that
22 they closed their eyes to things like this, and it's
23 just kind of appalling to me that we even have to
24 have a meeting. This should have been done a long
25 time ago and it should have been presented as an

1 underground project with the least amount of trouble
2 to the neighborhoods.

3 I hope that they, Xcel Energy, will
4 listen and see the people that are out here in
5 support of not having that thing in the sky.

6 And I also agree with Frank, here, if
7 they pressure us and they do get the towers up, I
8 would love to see the towers decorated in a way that
9 they don't look like a prison or the plain old
10 cement that we see everywhere.

11 And that's all I have to say, I just
12 really thought that people had more awareness and
13 would push it forward to help the community rather
14 than to put up an eyesore.

15 MR. STORM: Next, Tim Grote.

16 MR. GROTE: My name's Tim Grote,
17 G-R-O-T-E, and I'm here representing Allina
18 Hospitals and Clinics, specifically Abbott
19 Northwestern Hospital.

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Where do you live?

21 MR. GROTE: Taylors Falls, so I can
22 appreciate what your feelings are here.

23 Allina and Abbott Northwestern Hospital
24 are very interested and invested in the outcome of
25 this initiative. We've invested heavily in the

1 Phillips Neighborhood over the years, our corporate
2 headquarters is here, our corporate data center is
3 on Park Avenue, Abbott Northwestern Hospital, and
4 Phillips Eye Institute. And all our sites are
5 dependant upon reliable, quality electricity to
6 operate our facilities and serve our patients.

7 Over the course of the past 30 months,
8 January of 2007 through today, Abbott Northwestern
9 Hospital has experienced 239 significant power
10 quality and reliability incidents.

11 That's an average of nearly eight per
12 month. We've had 23 full interruptions and 216
13 significant other interruptions. As a comparison,
14 one of our facilities in Edina, our Center for
15 Outpatient Care, has experienced only 15 such events
16 over the same period of time, an average of only one
17 every two months.

18 Our current analysis indicates that
19 events occur mostly on Tuesdays, during the months
20 of March through August, which is no real surprise,
21 and interestingly enough, the highest frequency of
22 events occurred at 8:00 at night.

23 As you can certainly appreciate, the
24 reliable supply of power is of great interest to a
25 hospital. The high-tech nature of our business and

1 care environment are highly dependant upon this.
2 Imaging equipment like CTs and MRIs, highly
3 sensitive laboratory diagnostic equipment,
4 cardiovascular and surgical devices and equipment,
5 electronic medical records systems -- Abbott
6 Northwestern Hospital alone has over 5,000 computers
7 on its campus. All these are powered by electrical
8 infrastructure.

9 Power quality issues can and have
10 resulted in damage to equipment, like burnt-out
11 circuit boards, motors, patient dissatisfaction,
12 delays in scheduling, and having to reschedule
13 procedures or surgeries. It's increased costs,
14 rerunning a test, repairs to equipment, the
15 nonproductive nature of staff who have to respond to
16 power outages.

17 We have invested many thousands of
18 dollars in infracture to mitigate the impact of poor
19 and unreliable power and have thus far, thankfully,
20 had no negative patient outcomes related to
21 electrical issues. But we cannot continue with the
22 escalating frequency of incidents.

23 We've also invested many thousands of
24 dollars in energy conversations -- energy
25 conservation initiatives. In fact, we've just been

1 awarded the Energy Conservation Customer of the Year
2 award from CenterPoint Energy. We are committed to
3 continuing these efforts.

4 We view the modernization of an aging,
5 obsolete, and undersized electrical transmission and
6 distribution infrastructure, some dating back to
7 more than a half a century, as necessary and
8 imperative. Not to discount or minimize
9 conservation initiatives and use of alternative
10 energy sources, but these alone will not address the
11 issue of half-century old infrastructure and
12 increase in demand. Regardless of the success of
13 these other initiatives, the fact remains that
14 quality power needs to get from point A to point B
15 safely and reliably.

16 We understand and appreciate the
17 sensitivity surrounding the siting of the proposed
18 substations, the mode of distribution, whether it be
19 overhead or underground, and the routing of sets of
20 distribution lines, and we're not taking a position
21 on its routing.

22 But something must be done to address the
23 current and future needs of this area. We're open
24 and willing to work with the community and Xcel to
25 address these and other concerns.

1 Thank you.

2 MR. LORENZ: Let me just say, I live at
3 2900 11th Avenue South, Greenway Condo --

4 MR. STORM: Why don't you wait until
5 we're done with the cards, then --

6 MR. LORENZ: Well, I just wanted them
7 know.

8 MR. STORM: Okay. Next, Colleen Schmidt.

9 MS. SCHMIDT: My name is Colleen Schmidt,
10 it's C-O-L-L-E-E-N, S-C-H-M-I-D-T.

11 I represent Crew2, and stand united with
12 the Midtown Greenway Coalition. We are the
13 warehouse at the alternate proposed substation on
14 the Hiawatha side.

15 We are a business that was recruited to
16 the city of Minneapolis through its commercial
17 development process probably six years ago. We have
18 since brought in more than 150 jobs to local
19 residents and offer more than 1,200 subcontractor
20 positions that operate out of our facility every
21 day. So when we talk about impact to both the
22 community and the businesses and the green space
23 which runs directly behind our building on the south
24 end, it impacts more than just us as an
25 organization, or relocating us.

1 Most of our people who work for Crew2
2 reside in the city of Minneapolis, most of which
3 reside on the south side because it's easy
4 transportation and it's local for light rail and
5 it's easier for everybody to get to.

6 We're not opposed to energy. What we are
7 opposed to is the distribution of power overhead and
8 the diminished capacity to the corridor that has
9 just recently been developed. Several businesses in
10 that area have spent millions of dollars to come to
11 Minneapolis and offer affordable-wage jobs.

12 So not only are we asking at this point
13 to be recorded as not wanting to leave this local
14 community, we don't want to lose our relationship to
15 the schools, to nonprofit organizations like Urban
16 Homeworks, where we develop homes for, we don't want
17 to go outside and be intrusive to our environment.
18 We're an organization that represents a green
19 alternative, renewable energy sources. Somebody is
20 willing to put wind turbines on their building
21 rather than see a substation go in where we belong.

22 And ultimately, we don't want to impact
23 our community through the retail district, loss of
24 our income, we spend our money in the community in
25 which we work and live. So not only are you

1 speak, in addition to stating your name and spelling
2 it, please state -- if you're representing somebody,
3 please state that and where you live.

4 Next, Liza Guerra O'Reilly.

5 MS. GUERRA-O'REILLY: Thank you very much
6 (speaking foreign language). My name's is Liza
7 Guerra O'Reilly, L-I-Z-A, G-U-E-R-R-A, O'Reilly,
8 O-R-E-I-L-L-Y.

9 I'm member of the United Confederation of
10 Taino People, we are indigenous people. I live in
11 the Longfellow community, my son goes to South High
12 and is in the All Nations Indigenous Program.

13 As an indigenous woman and mother who
14 exercises food sovereignty. I use the bike trails,
15 I participate in traditional culture events and
16 traditions as an indigenous person, and I'm gravely
17 concerned about the project regarding the
18 transmission lines and substations.

19 In the environmental assessment, I ask
20 you to incorporate these things in the assessment.
21 The need for the project is in question, there are
22 assumptions used for projecting demand-side growth
23 in the project area, and it must be transparent,
24 incorporate the latest policy information, and have
25 community input.

1 Second, the project must be assessed on
2 its impacts upon existing policy and laws regarding
3 climate change, greenhouse gas emissions. The
4 project must adhere to human rights norms, including
5 The United Nations Rights of Indigenous People who
6 live in protected areas. Any project must provide
7 free, prior, and informed consent to indigenous
8 people, communities of color, and others in the
9 proposed area.

10 The first point, considering the cost of
11 the project and ratepayer impact, sustainable and
12 alternative energy mechanisms such as sustainable
13 energy utilities that decreases energy demand and
14 creates local jobs must be considered and allowed
15 implementation in the South Minneapolis area.

16 Based on the latest census information,
17 there are over 75 percent people of color in the
18 Minneapolis Phillips Neighborhood, compared to a
19 state average of four percent. In addition, nearly
20 33 percent of the residents in Phillips belong to a
21 sensitive population, over the age of 65 or under
22 the age of five. Contaminants in Phillips are over
23 two times that of Minneapolis as a whole.

24 The unequal spacial distribution of
25 environmental risk and not-in-my-backyard industries

1 in Phillips is at the heart of environmental justice
2 issues surrounding the project. According to Xcel
3 Energy, 40 percent of the new energy load of the 115
4 kilovolts is proposed to come from new or renewable
5 energy sources.

6 Think about it, this would mean, then,
7 60 percent of that new electricity that's delivered
8 through the new 115 kilovolt line to the area will
9 likely come from conventional electricity generation
10 sources. Which means that already existing,
11 coal-burning, greenhouse gas-emitting energy
12 delivered to the affected area is now being proposed
13 to be increased in our area, and the transmission of
14 conventional generation sources, where -- are going
15 to be proposed to be delivered by that 115 kilovolt
16 line.

17 I find this completely unacceptable and
18 it flies in the collective faces and efforts of
19 people here to address climate change ravaging our
20 planet and our right to live and be free with
21 people -- free people without discrimination,
22 specific to our status as woman, as mothers, and
23 indigenous people.

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Time.

25 MS. GUERRA-O'REILLY: I want to

1 specifically point to the United Nations Rights of
2 Indigenous People, the Convention on the Elimination
3 of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and the
4 Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination
5 Against Women, this is an environmental justice
6 issue.

7 Finally, the point is this, either way
8 the consumer's going to pay, unbeknownst to them
9 that they may be contributing to increased carbon
10 dioxide emissions for energy needs in the proposed
11 area. But if given an alternative sustainable
12 mechanism like a sustainable energy utility, and be
13 given free, prior, and informed consent under
14 international human rights laws, we're going to
15 realize protections for Mother Earth, humanity, and
16 advance the mitigation of climate change.

17 I request human rights are incorporated
18 into the assessment. I request we get free, prior,
19 informed consent under the assessment. I request
20 that all stakeholders, businesses, hospitals get
21 informed consent as well, and consider this a stable
22 energy utility model to protect our children, to
23 protect your children, and humanity's generations to
24 come.

25 Also, you're going to have the

1 opportunity to mitigate the effects of increased
2 nonrenewable energy use and its impact upon on those
3 most affected by the devastation of climate change,
4 indigenous women and people -- people of color,
5 elderly, impoverished people who are the least
6 responsible for creating the effects of climate
7 change.

8 Thank you.

9 MR. STORM: Dee and Harry Dewilde
10 (phonetic).

11 MR. DEWILDE: We'll do a written
12 statement and send it in.

13 MR. STORM: Okay.

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: What was the name?

15 MR. STORM: Dee and Harry Dewilde.

16 Michael Kotch (phonetic).

17 MR. TKACH: Close. It's Michael Tkach,
18 T-K-A-C-H. I'm an East Isles resident, and I'm here
19 representing -- I'm a board member of East Isles.
20 First, I'd like to say thank you to the county,
21 Peter McLaughlin, and Tim Springer for making this
22 resource available. The fact that we have this
23 Midtown Greenway, I think it's a wonderful resource.

24 I know it took a lot of time and effort,
25 a decade and more to produce. I think it's a great

1 asset. I'm hoping that this effort, this project by
2 Xcel, will not harm the look of the Midtown
3 Greenway.

4 I understand the need for power and
5 seemingly ever increasingly needs for power. Of
6 course, I believe that conservation is our first
7 solution to reduce this need, if possible. But
8 please do not harm this resource, negatively
9 affecting development along the greenway corridor.

10 I stood with our community leaders on
11 Arbor Day to plant trees and to help beautify this
12 Hennepin County resource, and I strongly encourage
13 that the power line not be considered aboveground.

14 Thank you.

15 MR. STORM: Tim Springer.

16 MR. SPRINGER: My name is Tim Springer,
17 I'm executive director for a nonprofit organization
18 called the Midtown Greenway Coalition, and I live in
19 the East Phillips Neighborhood along the Midtown
20 Greenway.

21 The Midtown Greenway Coalition is a
22 grassroots, nonprofit organization with the mission
23 of facilitating community involvement in the
24 development and protection and enjoyment of the
25 Midtown Greenway.

1 Thank you to the state of Minnesota for
2 your machinations to evaluate this line, thank you
3 to Xcel Energy for reaching out to us before you
4 began your formal process, and thank you to
5 everybody for being here tonight.

6 Regarding the May 29 draft scoping
7 document and recommendations on what it should
8 include, on Item A, D as in dog, we want to be
9 looking at the underground of the 28th Street route.

10 Regarding Item 6, description of
11 alternatives to the proposed project. It's very
12 important that when they look at alternatives to the
13 proposed project, such as conservation and
14 distributed generation, I hope they're smart in
15 their techniques, that we bundle those things
16 together and see what kind of combination that can
17 yield in terms of megawatt -- megawatts -- avoided
18 megawatts, rather than looking at them separately
19 and not adding them up.

20 And also, to be fair, when comparing the
21 costs of these alternatives with the proposed
22 Hiawatha project, it would be really important when
23 identifying the cost of the Hiawatha project that we
24 not only look at the cost for installing the lines
25 and the substations, but also look at the cost of

1 the new generating capacity at the other end of the
2 line, because these conservation alternatives will
3 include not only the transmission but also the
4 generation capacity.

5 Regarding Item B, impacts and mitigation.
6 I'll just take them one at a time. Human
7 settlement, we need to look at impact on property
8 values. We got a call from a guy saying he was
9 going to buy very near here, he almost signed a
10 purchase agreement and he called it off because he
11 wants to see what happens with these lines.

12 We have developers telling us they
13 wouldn't built here even though this is identified
14 by the city of Minneapolis in the Midtown Greenway
15 Land Use and Development Plan as a growth corridor,
16 and this would nip that in the butt. So we should
17 look at the forgoing costs of development and
18 quantify that.

19 And maybe also look at what it would cost
20 for that development to happen in greenfield, in the
21 suburbs, where you have to install new sewer lines,
22 water lines, roadways, as opposed to that
23 development happening here.

24 Number three, regarding aesthetics.
25 The -- for trail users, this has been one of the

1 biggest comments that we've received at the Midtown
2 Greenway Coalition. This is a greenway, it's not a
3 regular transportation corridor. So this is a new
4 paradigm for a new century and we need to protect
5 it. The overhead lines are problematic.

6 Also regarding aesthetics, there is the
7 open space at Hiawatha Avenue where we recently
8 planted about 250 trees and shrubs on May 2, and
9 that's part of a larger plan where we planted all
10 together over 400 trees and shrubs. And this is a
11 very critical public open space at the nexus of our
12 state's two premier alternative transportation
13 corridors, the Hiawatha LRT and the busiest bikeway
14 in the state, Midtown Greenway.

15 Also, at this important location we have
16 great views of downtown, the Hiawatha Light Rail
17 Transit comes through, and it's people's first view
18 of downtown and the beautiful new Sabo Bridge, which
19 is an icon for bicycle transportation. This is a
20 very important public green space, we do not want it
21 taken over with the substation.

22 Recreation, number four. We should be
23 evaluating trail users -- impact on trail users. I
24 received an e-mail from a man named Steve Young
25 (phonetic) who reported that while riding his

1 bicycle on a bikeway in the Washington, D.C., area,
2 quote, I used to live in Washington, D.C., and I
3 used to bike -- I used -- I used to bike on a path
4 that ran under a high voltage line. Every time I
5 used this path, my bike would give me electrical
6 shocks as I rode. I believe the electrical field
7 that the power lines created a charge on my bike as
8 I rode down the path. It got to the point that I
9 stopped biking down the power-lined bike path. So
10 we certainly need to look at whether or not that
11 will happen on the Midtown Greenway.

12 Regarding transportation. The Midtown
13 Greenway, as I mentioned, is not only Minnesota's
14 busiest bikeway and one of the busiest commuter
15 bikeways in the country now, it also is a future
16 rail transit corridor. And if the high voltage
17 lines go in overhead, it's a problem for the trail
18 users and perhaps the electrical issues and I don't
19 know what it does to pacemakers, et cetera.

20 But even if it goes underground in the
21 corridor on the south rim of the greenway, we do not
22 yet know exactly how the Midtown Greenway core needs
23 to be reconfigured to fit in rail transit alongside
24 the trails. There are some segments of the corridor
25 that are simply too narrow to use the existing

1 corridor configurations to fit in rail transit,
2 which means that we'll need to widen the greenway
3 trench floor or create shelves partway up the
4 embankment for either the trail or the transit. And
5 until we know how that's going to happen and know
6 how we may need to fully utilize the corridor, we
7 should not be putting these lines in underground to
8 hinder that and remove our flexibility and maybe
9 even eliminate the possibility of using the corridor
10 the way it has been intended to be used for rail
11 transit alongside the trails.

12 Also, if you want to scoop out the
13 embankment on the south side for future rail transit
14 stations to provide proper and safe access to the
15 rail trains that have station platforms, we probably
16 could not do that with these lines up on the
17 greenway south shoulder. That needs to be looked at
18 as well, please.

19 Number six, land use. I mentioned
20 already, the Midtown Greenway Land Use and
21 Development Plan calls for increase in density along
22 this corridor to change it from its industrial
23 backdoor status to a future residential front door.
24 And so will these lines impact that? We believe
25 enormously that they will negatively impact that,

1 and so this intended use for the corridor and the
2 city's plan related to it needs to be looked at.

3 Items number nine and ten, flora and
4 fauna. I already mentioned the green space at
5 Hiawatha, which has been eight years in the making,
6 and the number of trees there.

7 Regarding historic features, number 11.
8 The Midtown Greenway is listed as -- is listed on
9 the National Historic Register because of its
10 trench-like -- unique trench-like character and the
11 embankment -- configuration of the embankments and
12 the repetition of the bridges, et cetera, et cetera.
13 And so it's not consistent to have the overhead
14 lines, and that needs to be looked at as well, whether or
15 not it's even legal to use the corridor in this way.

16 Number 15, regarding human health and
17 safety. When looking at electric and magnetic
18 fields, it's our understanding that the current
19 cutting edge research on health impacts isn't just
20 looking at laboratory mice exposed to elevated
21 magnetic fields. It has to do with the magnetic
22 fields and the electric fields and how they charge
23 particles in the air and breathing those particles
24 in, then they are stickier in your lungs.

25 I don't understand it fully, but we

1 shouldn't be looking at old research, we should be
2 looking at new research and understanding that
3 this -- through the charged particles in the airflow
4 are not directly magnetic field effects, and that's
5 the human health impacts that we need to be
6 understanding.

7 We have great concern in our community
8 about the possible increase of childhood leukemia,
9 which is the one potential health impact that
10 everyone says is still not known, whether or not
11 that's an issue. And then this new area of research
12 is really yet to be fully explored.

13 And also on Item B, we would add -- ask
14 that you add a new category, number 17, for
15 conservation, distributed generation, and load
16 management such as smart grids for two reasons:
17 One, when the lines go in, they should be done as
18 mitigation, and that this will maximize the benefits
19 of the investment in the Hiawatha project to make
20 sure we never have to do it again.

21 And then back to Item A3, project
22 location and setting. It will be important for us
23 to understand why this line has been segmented out
24 from Xcel's potential future lines, or dare I say
25 planned future lines, going from Highway 280 and

1 connecting with this line end to end, and then
2 potential other future lines that start at the west
3 end of the Hiawatha project and would likely go over
4 35W and then south. And if adding those together
5 makes it longer than ten miles, then the
6 segmentation of this line by itself keeps it under
7 the ten-mile limit and makes the application less
8 onerous and a certificate of need is not required.

9 Well, if these lines are looked at
10 together, perhaps a certificate of need is required.
11 So we would like to know why, and I don't know if
12 that comes under A3 regarding setting or if it's
13 somewhere else, but that's a big concern, issue, and
14 question that we have.

15 Finally, if the lines are built -- I
16 should reiterate that the Midtown Greenway Coalition
17 Board of Directors does remain opposed to the
18 Hiawatha project and believes that alternatives
19 should be -- should serve the need. We understand
20 that improvements are needed to the electrical
21 supply in this area, but we believe that we should
22 look forward and be aggressive in persuing the
23 conservation, distributed generation such as
24 combined heat and power, we are big users here, work
25 with all our residents, et cetera.

1 But if the lines must go in, they should
2 go in underground. They should not go along the
3 edge of the greenway, they should not be in the
4 greenway corridor, and the residents should get to
5 decide where the substations go and what the
6 mitigation related to the substation is all about.

7 And I thank you, again, for conducting
8 this hearing and we look forward to looking for
9 what's for the best outcome.

10 MR. STORM: Ann Kirn, K-I-R-N.

11 MS. KIRN: Hi. My name is Ann Kirn, I'm
12 a Midtown Greenway Coalition member and I'm a
13 regular user of the Midtown Greenway. I commute by
14 bicycle along the greenway three to four times a
15 week, April to October, and also use the greenway
16 recreationally on the weekends.

17 I've talked to a lot of fellow bicycle
18 commuters this past week and they asked me to speak
19 for them as a commuter. In a very short time, the
20 Midtown Greenway has become a premier green space
21 and a critical link in our bike path. Although the
22 Midtown Greenway is younger than the Minneapolis
23 Lakes Parkway, Cedar, Isles, Calhoun, Harriet, and
24 Nokomis, Minnehaha, West River Parkway, connecting
25 over to St. Paul and Mississippi River Boulevard,

1 Summit Avenue, and the Gateway Trail in St. Paul, it
2 has quickly been adopted and embraced by Twin Cities
3 families, commuters, recreational bicyclists,
4 walkers, joggers, youth groups, and its neighbors.

5 It provides a quiet and beautiful respite
6 from urban life. It is now an established and
7 essential part of the nexus of linear Minneapolis
8 parks and is a city asset. In fact, the national
9 bicyclists' organization, the League of American
10 Bicyclists, agrees and has recognized only a handful
11 of cities as bicycle-friendly. Minneapolis was
12 recognized at the silver level in large part due to
13 the addition of the Midtown Greenway.

14 The beauty and charm of the greenway, the
15 combination of landscaping, interesting old city
16 buildings and bridges, and a safe and smooth bicycle
17 path far from road rage, combine to create a
18 peaceful environment.

19 Large overhead power lines would
20 permanently ruin the visual beauty of this premier
21 green space and recreation area in the heart of the
22 urban core. The best proposed route is an
23 underground route to preserve the Midtown Greenway
24 and protect the value of homes in Minneapolis.

25 Thank you.

1 MR. STORM: Andrew Kirn.

2 MR. KIRN: Andrew Kirn, K-I-R-N, I'm
3 Ann's husband. I'm a regular commuter as well on
4 the greenway and I use it four times a week, five
5 times a week, and on the weekends regularly as well.

6 As I'm sitting here and I'm -- as
7 Commissioner McLaughlin came up here and I see Xcel
8 over here, I'm struck by the contrast, really, the
9 contrast of foresight and frankly -- foresight and
10 intelligence. I'm sorry, but I don't know why this
11 hasn't come up yet, but I remember the
12 Lake Street -- Lake Street being torn up over the
13 last couple years and I would think that would have
14 offered a prime opportunity to bury lines along
15 Lake Street. And the lack -- the failure of Xcel to
16 do so shows a great lack of foresight. I can't
17 believe they didn't come up with this idea that they
18 needed power around here until just April of this
19 year.

20 I'm really -- but in contrast, we've got
21 Commissioner McLaughlin and other people who have
22 created this magnificent green space that is a jewel
23 for Minneapolis and that all of us can enjoy. And
24 somehow we're supposed say, oh, because Xcel failed
25 to identify their need, that they should be able to

1 come and take away this amenity that was so
2 arduously worked for by people like Commissioner
3 McLaughlin.

4 So, you know what, I mean -- and I was
5 struck, also, it's not a railroad, it is a green
6 space. It is, to me, a park. I spend a lot of time
7 on there and to me it is a park. And that's a
8 public amenity, and you wouldn't put -- Xcel Energy
9 wouldn't come along and say, oh, well, let's run our
10 power transmission lines along Minnehaha Parkway and
11 maybe right across Lake Calhoun. But this parkway
12 is easily as valuable to this part of the city as
13 that parkway.

14 And on the Paris point, you don't have to
15 go to Paris to see underground transmission lines.
16 I bike out to Wayzata, in Wayzata you see
17 underground transmission lines. Out here in
18 Minneapolis, you want to put them overhead where
19 it's a blight to the community, a community that's
20 working very hard to build itself back up and to
21 increase its -- the amenities in our area.

22 Well, you know what, I just want to close
23 with one thing to say, go ahead and, you know, solve
24 your electrical transmission issues, but I'm telling
25 you one thing, hands off our parks and green spaces.

1 MR. STORM: Peter McLaughlin.

2 MR. McLAUGHLIN: First, thanks.

3 Peter McLaughlin -- it's off, it says on.

4 Okay. Thank you. Peter McLaughlin,
5 P-E-T-E-R, M-C, capital L, A-U-G-H-L-I-N. I live in
6 the Ericsson Neighborhood in South Minneapolis and
7 on the -- right next to the bike path that connects
8 to the greenway.

9 First, thank you for letting me make the
10 correction at the beginning of the session, I
11 thought that was an important clarification to make
12 to set the stage for the discussion today.

13 I've been involved in trying to work on
14 this neighborhood for a long time, and we've had a
15 lot troubles in the past and we've had -- we've seen
16 an incredible renaissance. And I invite anybody who
17 hasn't been through the Midtown Exchange to go
18 through the Midtown Exchange. Check it out, it's a
19 miracle here at the old Sears, and it's a part of an
20 incredible amount of investment that's gone on from
21 the -- when Honeywell left, we have Wells Fargo
22 investing, we've got Allina in here with their
23 corporate headquarters, we have a new heart
24 hospital, we've got housing developments here and
25 along the greenway.

1 And so this is a part, the greenway is a
2 part of the renaissance of this area. And reliable
3 electrical power is essential, we agree with that,
4 as the Hennepin County Rail Authority. We agree,
5 we've got to have reliable electric power to make
6 the modern economy work, so we're not contesting
7 that. How we get there is really what we're here to
8 talk about.

9 These things would be ugly, okay. They'd
10 be ugly and this neighborhood has had its share of
11 ugly pieces, ugly buildings, and neglected
12 appearance. But this is about more than ugliness,
13 it's about a lot more than just that it's going to
14 be ugly. This thing was -- we created -- Hennepin
15 County with the city of Minneapolis and others, we
16 created -- the park board and others, we created a
17 Community Works Project, and that project was to
18 take an old piece of infrastructure that was out of
19 date and transform it into a new, modern use.

20 That's what we have done, there's
21 \$30 million, approximately, in public investment
22 that's gone into this greenway. And the idea was to
23 create green space, a transportation corridor that
24 can work now and into the future. And we've done
25 that for bicycle paths, we've got it now for -- rail

1 is a possibility, a street car is a real possibility
2 here in the future.

3 But the other idea here was to create
4 green space that would be an amenity in a part of
5 town that is lacking in amenities, and it was to try
6 to create a connection. It might not technically be
7 a park, but it is green space in the modern
8 parlance, and it was a part of the vision that's
9 over 100 years old to connect the lakes on the west
10 side to the river -- the Mississippi River. It was
11 designed to be a green corridor, and that is what
12 has been achieved here and we want to protect that.
13 We want to make sure we haven't -- we're not
14 squandering this \$30 million in investment that's
15 been made and compromising it with an investment
16 that shouldn't be aboveground in this location.

17 Beyond that, the strategy of Community
18 Works was to encourage private sector investment
19 along the greenway and along the whole Lake Street
20 corridor. And we'll be submitting maps that show
21 the incredible success that's been achieved here.
22 The number of new developments along this corridor,
23 the number -- the amount of investment along
24 Lake Street is part and parcel to the vision that we
25 had when we created the Community Works Project and

1 designated this corridor -- this corridor as
2 something special. It's not -- it is linear, that
3 makes it convenient for a power line, but it was --
4 this will compromise the vision for green space, it
5 will compromise the vision for additional
6 investment.

7 And we went through this process down
8 between Minnehaha and Hiawatha where Xcel has this
9 other power line, and we looked and we could see how
10 much square footage of available, developable land
11 we would lose because of the power line. And then
12 you can also examine how much of the other space was
13 compromised and less valuable and less able to be
14 invested on because, again, of this power line.

15 So it's more than -- it is going to be
16 ugly and I appreciate those who stated that, but
17 it's also beyond being ugly. It's going to
18 compromise this vision that is coming into being
19 here through the efforts of both the public sector
20 and the private sector.

21 And the private sector has stepped
22 forward to make a lot of these investments. On the
23 green space side, you know, we planted over 3,000
24 trees, a heck of a lot of shrubs over the years from
25 these Arbor Day celebrations. We've been making a

1 green space and we've been intentional about it.

2 Third, this is a historic district and
3 we're going to be running a power line along -- in
4 this historic district and crossing it twice. And I
5 would argue we should not be spoiling a historic
6 district with an overhead power line when there
7 are -- when there is an alternative.

8 Finally, I don't believe there's an
9 alternative -- next to finally. I don't believe
10 there's an alternative -- an aboveground
11 alternative. I don't want to inflict this from the
12 greenway down to two residential streets in South
13 Minneapolis.

14 And I've asked Xcel on several occasions,
15 in both private meetings and public meetings, to
16 identify where they've actually built a high-tension
17 power line down an existing residential sidewalk.
18 They haven't been able to come up with an example,
19 and I've asked the question in public meetings and
20 private. And I think there's a challenge here, that
21 in this process, this would be precedent setting and
22 I think the PUC needs to examine, you know, whether
23 they want to go down this road of creating --
24 putting high-tension wires down residential
25 sidewalks that kids use to walk to school, people

1 use to walk to the grocery store. That's a
2 different scenario than other things that have been
3 done in this metropolitan area.

4 Finally, this is an environmental justice
5 issue. When you look at the demographics of this
6 corridor, this is an area that has had its
7 struggles, and this would be placing an additional
8 burden on this area that doesn't need to be placed
9 here. There is an alternative, I don't believe
10 there's a reasonable alternative aboveground, but
11 there is an alternative below ground. And for that
12 reason, I think that that's the option that ought to
13 be chosen, it's the only real option, I think,
14 that's available. And therefore, the ratepayers in
15 the five-state region ought to be paying for it,
16 that's the position we take.

17 Thank you.

18 MR. STORM: Amanda Dory (phonetic).

19 MS. DLOUHY: Could I get some help?

20 My name is Amanda Dlouhy, I live at 2932
21 Portland Avenue and I work at 2801 21st Avenue
22 South. Oh, my name, Dlouhy, D-L-U-O-H-Y. And I
23 work at the Green Institute Building, that was
24 formerly the Green Institute Building that the
25 Phillips Community developed.

1 These drawings were produced by the
2 Phillips West Neighborhood Organization with NRT
3 money in partnership with the Midtown Greenway
4 Coalition.

5 Commissioner McLaughlin spoke of a
6 renaissance in this area, and what gets lost often
7 in this discussion of power and kilovolts and rates
8 and money is the human scale. And these drawings do
9 a fantastic job of illustrating the human -- what
10 the potential of this area could be if we pay
11 attention to the human scale.

12 In these drawings you can see -- you see
13 the green space, you see the play space, you see the
14 area can be open to neighborhood residents, also to
15 the people who work here. It can be a free place
16 where children can go to play without fear of things
17 that would harm their security. And in these
18 drawings you will also see public art. Everything
19 here is human scale, the lighting is low to the
20 ground.

21 If you want, I can get a file of this to
22 go on the official record, we can arrange that.

23 What these drawings only begin to show is
24 the larger picture. This area, the Midtown area, is
25 the center of the -- it's the heart of South

1 Minneapolis. Especially -- these drawings, I should
2 say, are between Portland and Chicago on the
3 northern side of the greenway, and it shows how we
4 envision working with the existing businesses and
5 the Midtown Greenway Coalition to put in a promenade
6 where neighborhood residents and employees of the
7 area could go and meet and have free discussion with
8 each other.

9 And what these drawings only begin to
10 show is the way the -- this area is just the heart
11 of South Minneapolis and Chicago Avenue and
12 Lake Street and the greenway corridor, they connect
13 people from the suburbs, people from downtown,
14 people from all throughout South Minneapolis, and
15 the potential for open meeting outside in a green
16 space is incredibly high.

17 And I'd also like to mention that this
18 area is already one of the most diverse in terms of
19 the population that's living here, and when you add
20 to that the diversity of the people employed by the
21 businesses, by the hospitals, by the industrial jobs
22 that are still here along the greenway, along
23 Portland Avenue, you have this amazing mix of
24 people.

25 And future transit, I also would like to

1 mention, it's on the bottom of my notes. But
2 because of future transit, the potential for
3 bringing more and more people into the area is
4 incredibly high.

5 And what these drawings leave to the
6 imagination is the even greater potential that could
7 come if people got out in these spaces and talked to
8 each other and actually began to work together. I
9 know the hospitals in the area have shown commitment
10 to helping the people in their own backyard to
11 improve their health.

12 If -- our politicians have made a
13 commitment to improving transit. If our utility
14 companies would make a commitment to working with
15 the neighborhoods to implement solutions that would
16 provide sustainable energy for the future, the
17 potential's very high. And I hope these drawings
18 can help you see a hint of how that might work.

19 Oh, this is the site of the Oakland
20 substation (indicating), this is what -- you know, a
21 preliminary vision of what could be there. The
22 picture that was given in the slide show with the
23 walls, you know, is Xcel's vision. I propose that
24 we could work together to create something better,
25 the whole community could work together.

1 MR. STORM: Dave Burick (phonetic). I
2 know I butchered that.

3 MR. BURRILL: Thank you. It's
4 Dave Burrill, B-U-R-R-I-L-L. I live eight miles
5 from here by bike, I'm a regular commuter on the
6 Midtown Greenway. I represent the Midtown Exchange
7 here, I'm the property manager, director of
8 management for this building.

9 I want to thank Xcel and the PUC for
10 looking at this. I wish it would have been done a
11 couple years ago. We opened this project up
12 December 2005, we've had numerous power outages.
13 We -- I can point to a couple things where we lost a
14 motor, \$12,000 it cost us. A valve actuator, \$5,000
15 lost. We've had an Allina data room hit probably at
16 least 25 times.

17 We do need reliable power. I'm talking
18 next week with Solar Group, which is great, I mean,
19 I love green power. But we need reliable power
20 right now, and running a business like this is very,
21 very difficult. We had a power spike here two days
22 ago, the Global Market got shut down with gas, the
23 gas valve automatically shuts down when that
24 happens. It's very, very tough to run a business
25 without reliable power, so -- and I think that's

1 obvious.

2 I do feel, you know, Xcel can't pay for
3 this, the ratepayers have to pay for it, the people
4 that use the power have to pay for it.

5 Substations, quite frankly, I think we're
6 fine with the way the substations have been picked.
7 We think the Hiawatha station is good, we think the
8 Oakland substation is good. I love the design of
9 the Oakland substation, I mean I love the artwork to
10 dress it up, but we feel that's good locations.

11 I think -- certainly the bottom line is
12 the way the power lines look. Yeah, they're not
13 great. But I can tell you there's power lines from
14 here to work, there's one by a Bloomington building
15 that I manage, there's one in back by my
16 father-in-law and mother-in-law, you know, you get
17 used to them. I don't like them.

18 But I think the bottom line for us is --
19 and I haven't heard the answer as to how far -- the
20 underground power lines are going to cost two to
21 three times more than the aboveground, what's that
22 rate going to be? Are our costs going to up ten, 20
23 percent, or is it going to be minimal? I think
24 that's an important factor we've got to look at
25 also.

1 Thank you very much.

2 MR. STORM: Eric Gustafson.

3 MR. GUSTAFSON: Hi, I'm
4 Eric Gustafson, G-U-S-T-A-F-S-O-N, Eric is E-R-I-C.
5 I'm representing the Corcoran Neighborhood
6 Organization tonight.

7 It's clear there's a need for more power
8 capacity in the Midtown area. However, the
9 utility's preferred routing is an overhead
10 arrangement along the Midtown Greenway. And this
11 greenway has been built, maintained, and has
12 leveraged economic development through significant
13 public investment including thousands of volunteer
14 hours from this community.

15 I understand the EIS will examine human
16 and environmental impacts of this proposed project
17 and the possible mitigation of these. The impacts
18 will include diminished health and social benefit by
19 those thousands who use the greenway for which there
20 could be no mitigation. The impacts will include
21 diminished potential to continue the significant
22 economic development the greenway has leveraged, for
23 which there could be no mitigation.

24 The impacts will include diminished
25 opportunity for the city of Minneapolis to plan

1 transit alongside the greenway trail for which there
2 can be no mitigation. Again, it's clear that the
3 Midtown area businesses and electric users are short
4 on capacity, but it's also clear that Midtown
5 neighborhoods, residents, businesses, and public
6 spaces are as important to protect as those in any
7 area. And it's also the case that Midtown
8 neighborhoods have been exposed more than most to
9 the ill effects of industry and pollution.

10 Therefore, it is especially crucial that
11 the state of Minnesota join the city, the county,
12 neighborhoods, and the Greenway Coalition in calling
13 for and ensuring a thorough evaluation of electrical
14 needs, alternative solutions, and community impacts,
15 some of which can have no adequate mitigation.

16 The Corcoran Neighborhood Organization
17 stands with the Greenway Coalition in opposing the
18 greenway routing. Thank you.

19 MR. STORM: Kathy Florence.

20 MS. FLORENCE: Kathy Florence, with a K,
21 F-L-O-R-E-N-C-E, and I live in East Isles.

22 I have to put my glasses on. I only want
23 to speak on one point, and that is the potential of
24 putting high voltage power lines over the Midtown
25 Greenway. I hear the greenway spoken of as a

1 railway bed, a bike path, and a corridor, which are
2 all industrial terms that lead towards the
3 conclusion of least impact on residents.

4 The greenway is, in essence, a park. It
5 provides recreational facilities for tens of
6 thousands of residents and visitors, and high
7 voltage power lines do not belong over a park. The
8 greenway is not only a park in and of itself, it is
9 now an integral part of the Grand Rounds National
10 Scenic Byway, one of only 126 areas in the United
11 States so designated for archeological, cultural,
12 historic, natural, recreational, and/or scenic
13 qualities.

14 The greenway bisects the Grand Rounds and
15 allows bikes and pedestrians increased access
16 between the two Grand Round parks of the Chain of
17 Lakes Parks and the Mississippi River Parkway, two
18 of the most highly used parks in the Twin Cities.

19 In fact, the State of Minnesota's website
20 states that the Chain of Lakes Park is the most
21 visited natural resource in Minnesota, drawing more
22 than 5.5 million visitors annually. Thank you to
23 the millions of hours of effort put in by private
24 citizens and government officials, and the millions
25 of dollars put in by city, state, and federal

1 government to give us the greenway.

2 We have added to what the federal
3 government saw fit to designate as a national
4 treasure. The Midtown Greenway is a de facto park.
5 High voltage power lines do not belong over the
6 Midtown Greenway any more than they belong over the
7 Mississippi River Boulevard or Lake of the Isles,
8 and we would not be talking about high voltage power
9 lines over Lake of the Isles ever.

10 Thank you.

11 MR. STROM: Theresa Nelson.

12 MS. NELSON: Hi, my name is
13 Theresa Nelson, I'm staff for the Midtown Greenway
14 Coalition, as well as I live --

15 MR. STORM: Spell your name.

16 MS. NELSON: What's that?

17 MR. STORM: Spell your name.

18 MS. NELSON: T-H-E-R-E-S-A, N-E-L-S-O-N,
19 I'm also a resident at 2312 22nd Avenue, so I bike
20 daily near the east -- the proposed substation at --
21 on the east side of Hiawatha.

22 My main purpose in -- at the coalition is
23 to involve the community in the development and the
24 beautification of the greenway. For the last eight
25 years I've been working on turning the brown field

1 area east of Hiawatha into a green space, into an
2 area that would be a greater vision than from our
3 LRT -- from the LRT line, what our visitors to
4 Minneapolis will see when they first arrive to
5 Minneapolis and see a great skyline. Down below,
6 for the years that LRT has been going on, they have
7 been looking down at a brown field, they've been
8 looking down at industrial areas in an area that is
9 lacking in our urban forest canopy.

10 And so through -- over 350 volunteers for
11 the past eight years have envisioned this green
12 space. It started as community gardens and it grew
13 into a -- native Minnesota trees and shrubs for the
14 area. Over 450 trees and shrubs have been planted
15 in this area, and if this proposed substation is to
16 be put in, 200 of those trees will need to be
17 removed.

18 So I would like to see Xcel study the
19 visual impact the substation will have from the Sabo
20 Bridge as visitors arrive to Minneapolis and descend
21 on the east side. I'd like them to study the visual
22 impact from -- coming down from the Sabo Bridge and
23 how trail users will be impacted by the visuals.

24 I'd like also them to study the social
25 impacts of the eight years that three hundred --

1 over 350 volunteers have contributed and the
2 thousands of hours of staff time and resources that
3 small nonprofits have given to this project.

4 I'd also like you to study the impact --
5 the environmental impact of the heat island effect
6 of removing this green space from this area and the
7 loss of 200 trees that would need to happen.

8 Thank you.

9 MR. STROM: Ralph Rye.

10 MR. RYE: Name is Ralph Rye, R-Y-E.

11 I remember the -- two points I have. I
12 remember the green space when it was a really good
13 recreational spot for my kids who used to come and
14 drop rocks on the coal trains that went by. So, you
15 know, it's been a recreational space for many, many
16 years.

17 It's also been recreational -- during
18 this time of the year there was always mattresses
19 under many of the bridges there, there was a lot of
20 recreation that comes on late at night that -- so we
21 have a lot of recreation in this area and I'm sure
22 that we all need that.

23 And I also have another point, on
24 history. So historically -- I'd like to address the
25 PUC when they do issue this permit. We do need

1 electricity. I worked for Xcel for over 25 years.
2 I -- so I have a knowledge of what the need of the
3 power and the reliability is here. There's
4 definitely a need for the line, no question about
5 that.

6 But there's also a history of how Xcel,
7 and how I was used to ask the PUC and the PCA to
8 limit the amount of investigation and scientific
9 study done resulting from current and past permits.
10 The example I want to give is the permit that was
11 given to Xcel Energy, at that time NSP, for Sherco
12 Power Plant, they wanted to double the power at
13 Sherco Power Plant. Now, that's a multi-hundred
14 million dollar investment. This is pennies, this is
15 a nickel-and-dime outfit. But Xcel was asked in
16 that permit to continue to study the effects of
17 putting tons and tons of sulfur into the air at
18 Sherco and it was too onerous to continue to study
19 that. That study was probably, in terms of Xcel's
20 money, roughly \$50,000 a year to continue studying
21 that over years and years and years.

22 We're not asking for \$50,000 to study the
23 effects of power lines in this area, but we do ask
24 that when the permit is given that there be some
25 sort of condition that ongoing, continuing study,

1 something that we have all been avoiding to say that
2 there's some sort of impact that can't be studied
3 scientifically. That also should be in the
4 conditional use permit, that that should be part of
5 the use that is continued to be studied.

6 So not only should we remember the
7 history of this, it's for recreation, but it also
8 should be continually studied with a good,
9 scientifically, experimentally designed study and
10 not something that can be thrown away by the PUC or
11 the PCA ten or 15 years down the line after the
12 permit is given.

13 MR. STORM: Robert Lilligren.

14 MR. LILLIGREN: I'm Robert Lilligren,
15 L-I-L-L-I-G-R-E-N. I'm a 6th Ward city council
16 member, so I represent the project area from
17 Chicago -- from Chicago Avenue west. Also, I'm a
18 former member of the board of directors of the
19 Midtown Greenway Coalition, something like ten years
20 ago. And I want to thank you for coming out and
21 having this hearing.

22 And I also want to thank so many members
23 of the community for coming out, and I want to
24 encourage you to sustain your involvement in this
25 and to expand and tell your friends.

1 And also, just to make sure that
2 everyone's clear, the Office of Energy Security has
3 created an advisory task force to assist in
4 developing the scope of the environmental impact
5 statement. And the membership of that task force is
6 listed at the table, it's community members and
7 government representatives, Commissioner McLaughlin
8 is a member, I'm a member, also a lot of city
9 council members, Elizabeth Glidden, Cam Gordon,
10 Council Member Gary Schiff, who was here until he
11 had to leave for another meeting. And I want to
12 encourage you to keep voicing your opinions and
13 voicing your positions to us, the members of this
14 task force that will help define the scope of the
15 EIS.

16 I'm going to speak briefly as a resident
17 before talking as a city council member. Then, also
18 summarize the city's position as establishing a
19 unanimously supported resolution authored by Council
20 Member Schiff, myself, and Council Member Gordon.
21 And then speak directly to six different impact
22 areas.

23 So taking off my council member hat, I
24 live at Lake Street and 3rd, I've lived on that --
25 or the greenway and 3rd, really, 2919 3rd Avenue in

1 the Phillips West Neighborhood, I've been on that
2 block for 27 years. So about the first 20 years I
3 was there, there wasn't a Midtown Greenway. And
4 like a lot of people who are here in this room, I
5 feel like we're part of a lot of the positive
6 changes that we've seen in this area, and the
7 incredible effort and individual investment that
8 we've made as residents, that is, partly the public
9 and private investment that has turned this area
10 around completely.

11 And I -- as a private citizen, I just
12 want to express my disappointment that Xcel would
13 bring forward an overhead power line as an
14 acceptable, preferred alternative in this area, this
15 area that has suffered a lot of impacts from
16 inappropriate investment. So that's my private
17 citizen position.

18 Now, as a city council member. The city
19 council passed a resolution that comments on our
20 interests in continuing economic growth and
21 development that goes here and addressing energy
22 needs to accommodate that growth. We also
23 identified overhead high voltage power lines as
24 incompatible with the character of this area and the
25 growth that we want to see.

1 We also referenced our own city
2 sustainability initiative and related climate change
3 and renewable energy initiatives, and we resolve
4 that the city of Minneapolis believes the time is
5 now to pursue the production of electricity more
6 responsibly, the delivering of electricity more
7 intelligently, and the consuming of electricity more
8 efficiently.

9 We also resolve that the city of
10 Minneapolis recommends that Xcel Energy delays its
11 routing permit application to the PUC Commission
12 (sic) for the Hiawatha project to provide greater
13 detail regarding the current and future electricity
14 needs that this project is planned to address, as
15 well as thorough analysis of aggressive alternative
16 methods to abate and/or supply the electricity that
17 is needed.

18 And we also resolve that if such analysis
19 is undertaken and fails to yield a successful
20 alternative approach to the need for high voltage
21 power lines in Midtown, that the preferred route for
22 the new high voltage transmission line is
23 underground below 28th Street. And that the cost of
24 burying the lines should be borne by the maximum
25 number of ratepayers, and that the city of

1 Minneapolis and Xcel further explore burying all
2 present and future high voltage lines in the city of
3 Minneapolis.

4 Thank you. That's the city's official
5 position.

6 Just briefly on six of the impact areas
7 within the EIS, one is on human settlement. This is
8 an incredibly densely populated area. I love
9 Commissioner McLaughlin's challenge to Xcel to
10 produce another example of a high voltage power line
11 on an urban sidewalk. Also, the populations that
12 are going to be impacted are tremendously high in
13 racial minorities and low income and other people
14 who are disproportionately impacted by projects like
15 this.

16 Also, I would like there to be a
17 component of the cumulative impacts that have been
18 suffered by the populations here in the project
19 area.

20 On aesthetics, a lot has been said that I
21 think is good, I think there should be a full
22 exploration of the negative impacts of the
23 aesthetics on the impacted population, also on the
24 users of the trail.

25 On the recreation, the negative impact on

1 the use of the -- on one of the -- the negative
2 impacts of what is one of the few green amenities
3 that actually serves this core part of the city.

4 Also, then on transportation, I support
5 what has been said by Tim Springer of the Midtown
6 Greenway Coalition.

7 On land use, this is a huge one for the
8 city of Minneapolis, I think Commissioner McLaughlin
9 did a great job of framing this. And tremendous
10 amounts of public investments have gone in, not only
11 in creating the Midtown Greenway, but in incenting
12 the development along the greenway. This project
13 alone has done \$130 million of public investment
14 that generated a \$300 million project.

15 We are right now, at the city of
16 Minneapolis, cataloging the types of development,
17 the amount of development that has gone on along the
18 Midtown Greenway corridor. And I would like the EIS
19 to include the evaluation of the public and private
20 investment that has gone on along this corridor and
21 what the projected impact of a high voltage power
22 line facility along the corridor would have on
23 future investment.

24 And lastly, on the impact of
25 archaeological and historic features. As has been

1 said before, the greenway trench itself is a
2 historic feature of this area. This building we're
3 standing in is on the National Historic Register,
4 that will have an impact of a high voltage power
5 line that cross right next to the building. So that
6 is one of the impacts that I would like to see fully
7 explored.

8 Thank you.

9 MR. STORM: Eric Hart.

10 MR. HART: Eric Hart, E-R-I-C, H-A-R-T.

11 I'm in the Longfellow Neighborhood and I've been
12 involved in the Midtown Greenway Coalition and in my
13 neighborhood for the last 15 years or so.

14 I'm going to focus my comments on the
15 Hiawatha substation alternative. For the last ten
16 years, we've focused on the area where, exactly, the
17 preferred alternative for the substation, we've
18 focused on that area of the green space. The area
19 around it doesn't have a lot of green space, in
20 Phillips there isn't and in North Longfellow there
21 isn't a whole lot. So the park board has standards
22 for how much -- how close green space is supposed to
23 be to residents, and that area doesn't really have
24 enough green space. So if they put a substation on
25 top of that area, it would definitely take away a

1 much needed green space.

2 Also, if the Hiawatha substation east
3 alternative is used and then the substation
4 expansion area is used, eventually it will close the
5 greenway where it goes between industrial areas.
6 And that needs to be mitigated and it needs to be
7 mitigated in such a way that it doesn't incredibly
8 inconvenience the greenway users without having to
9 go up to Minnehaha Park, to 26th, and back. Anyway,
10 that could be a big impact, that should be explored.

11 So -- yeah, but over the past ten years,
12 it's been a great community effort with Arbor Day.
13 And the Longfellow community council funded the
14 greenway landscape plans, so there's native
15 plantings all along the greenway in Longfellow. So
16 this definitely is a key piece of green space in
17 this town.

18 Thanks.

19 MR. STORM: Hugh Mahoney.

20 MR. MAHONEY: I promise to keep it short
21 so that everybody has a chance to talk. Because if
22 we take 30 minutes or so, you know, we can't
23 possibly get through all of these people. But what
24 I have to say is quite simple. Hugh Mahoney,
25 M-A-H-O-N-E-Y.

1 If you just look at these routes, we have
2 three routes, three which are heavily residential,
3 one of which I live on, and then we have the
4 greenway. Who in their right mind would run a power
5 line overhead down a residential street? It's just
6 totally inappropriate. And I can't imagine that
7 Xcel Energy, the corporation, would be quite that
8 weak-minded to even make this kind of a proposal.
9 And over the greenway, millions have been put into
10 it already, incredible amounts of energy have been
11 put into that dump to create what we've got now. To
12 run a power line over the top of it is just simply
13 idiotic.

14 And if they're going to run it down a
15 residential street, then they've got to buy us out
16 because our houses won't be worth peanuts. If you
17 run a power line over our houses, they will drop in
18 value by one half. I've got to sell my house
19 sometime and get a condo, it's an investment. I
20 can't be messing around with it and Xcel can't be
21 messing around with my house.

22 Thank you all.

23 MR. STORM: Jessica Friedrichs.

24 MS. FRIEDRICHS: Jessica Friedrichs,
25 J-E-S-S-I-C-A, Friedrichs, F-R-I-E-D-R-I-C-H-S. I

1 live -- I'm representing the Midtown Exchange Condos
2 on the greenway, we are located right here
3 (indicating) on 29th Avenue -- or 29th Street
4 between 10th and 11th, also preferred route, route
5 A.

6 Can I tell you I can't even believe that
7 we're to this point? I'm getting emotional and I
8 can't believe it, but a lot of us in this building
9 are new. Our building was built two years ago, it's
10 brand-new to the area. I can tell you that many of
11 us bought our units because they're located on the
12 beautiful greenway. My unit specifically faces the
13 greenway, I get up every morning and I sit out on my
14 little patio and I see everyone who is utilizing the
15 greenway. I can tell you there are so many people,
16 it starts about 5:00 a.m. and it doesn't end until
17 about 10:00. And it is heavily trafficked -- it's a
18 heavily-trafficked area.

19 And I forgot what I was going to say, but
20 here we go. But basically, I can't believe that
21 we're to this point that we're going to be putting
22 overhead transmission lines blocking my view. I'm
23 on the corner here on 11th and that is going to be
24 my view. It's going to be -- what, is it a pole
25 here and then transmission lines going over? And I

1 can't believe it.

2 The underground, it has to be a must. I
3 know that you said that the transmission line's --
4 the standard right now in 2009, it's the overhead,
5 and I can't believe that. That sounds ridiculous to
6 me, this must be underground. This has to be
7 underground. And I don't know what we are going to
8 do to get there, but we have to do it and I hope all
9 of us here are going to work toward that because it
10 is what is needed. I hope that this process is not
11 a formality, I hope that you are listening to
12 everyone here and what they do have to say. This is
13 my home.

14 Thank you.

15 MR. STORM: Hillary Oppmann.

16 MS. OPPMANN: I'm Hillary Oppmann,
17 H-I-L-L-A-R-Y, O-P-P-M-A-N-N. I live two and half
18 blocks south of the greenway in the Longfellow
19 Neighborhood. I commute on the greenway and I use
20 it recreationally, I ride frequently with my toddler
21 and my three-month-old baby.

22 But I also work for the Longfellow
23 Community Council and the -- I'm a community
24 organizer there. And more and more of my job
25 since -- over the last six years has been about the

1 greenway, particularly about getting native
2 plantings on the greenway and getting users and
3 volunteers involved and engaged with the greenway.
4 And it's a pretty easy sell because people love the
5 greenway.

6 We work with many partners, especially
7 the Midtown Greenway Coalition, and we stand with
8 them on these issues. The Longfellow Community
9 Council passed a very similar resolution. Our board
10 opposes the overhead lines, we'd like to see the
11 lines buried. And also, it's particularly concerned
12 about the location of the substation, the eastern
13 substation, because that is actually located in the
14 Longfellow community and we'd like to see an
15 alternative site.

16 Let's see. I've been a part of the Arbor
17 Day committee in recent years. This is a project of
18 the Midtown Community Works Partnership that has
19 been so instrumental in building and creating this
20 amazing public amenity that we have. And we
21 planned, I think -- what was it, the ninth year?
22 There's been nine, I think, Arbor Day plantings, is
23 that right, Eric? And the past two were at the
24 site. Just this year, basically, on the preferred
25 site for the east substation and then the previous

1 year just north of it. And so it's like straddling
2 the greenway at the foot of the new Sabo Bridge.

3 Now, this plan -- it's not like we
4 decided suddenly to plant these trees after we found
5 out that Xcel was going to put their substation
6 there. You know, that was not like a, you know, oh,
7 quick, let's go plant some trees. No. We've been
8 in process with this for, like, ten years. I mean,
9 I've been attending meetings about the Hiawatha
10 green space, like, from my first week on the job six
11 years ago.

12 And I can tell you that, formerly, going
13 back at least ten years, documents at Longfellow
14 Community Council identified that as community green
15 space that the residents and businesses in the
16 neighborhood have, you know, sought to see green
17 space achieved at that -- what has been sort of
18 unused MnDOT land, leftover land from the expansion
19 of Highway 55.

20 There was a plan that was jointly
21 authored by the Longfellow Community Council and
22 Corcoran Neighborhood Organization in, I think,
23 2000, that proposed in detail a plan to convert this
24 very site to green space, this site north of the Cub
25 Foods.

1 And I also just want to point out that,
2 separately, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation
3 Board, I noticed -- I was very struck several years
4 ago when they undertook a strategic planning process
5 for parks in the city, that they had a big map at
6 one of their public meetings that showed where this
7 city lacked green space and public parks, and we've
8 had very visionary park leaders in our city over the
9 last century. And you know, I think there was a
10 goal of having a park within, like, six blocks or
11 four blocks of every house.

12 And that, amazingly, was mostly achieved
13 except in a few areas of the city. And so there are
14 really basically two big gaps on this map that the
15 park board had big circles on. And this site where
16 the eastern substation is proposed was at the dead
17 center of the biggest circle on the map.

18 And North Longfellow is within our four
19 neighborhoods, Longfellow Proper is this quadrant
20 (indicating), and then the northern section of it is
21 probably the lowest income and also the most diverse
22 section of our neighborhood. And residents there
23 have organized over many years to try to acquire
24 green space and have been frustrated and foiled in
25 their efforts.

1 This is basically one of the last
2 significant sites of size that is available and
3 the -- there's been developments, newer housing
4 developments such as the Hiawatha Apartments there,
5 just near -- north of Cub. And with the arrival of
6 LRT and of course the greenway itself and these --
7 we, you know, certainly hope to see more people
8 living in and using this area and needing green
9 space.

10 We -- the value of having this transit up
11 there with the greenway, the LRT bicycle trail, the
12 LRT line itself, and then this amazing, just
13 glorious bridge that Martin Sabo helped provide to
14 connect people and get them over the burrier of
15 Hiawatha Avenue would be so heavily impacted by
16 having a substation located right at the foot of
17 that hub that I just can't really fathom that Xcel
18 would see that as the preferred alternative.

19 And I understand that it's about cost and
20 that MnDOT land is essentially free. And so,
21 obviously, they spent, what was it, \$14.3 million
22 was their estimated cost to purchase the alternative
23 site. Yeah, that adds a significant cost, but
24 significant investments have already been made in
25 this site. The bridge is \$5 million, you know, to

1 the greenway itself, the LRT trail, the LRT line.
2 So you know, we're not talking chump change in terms
3 of the investments in this particular site that's
4 already been made.

5 As far as the issue of burying lines,
6 lines are buried in Downtown Minneapolis and I
7 presume that it's spread over the entire rate base.
8 I think that, in terms of setting precedent, you
9 couldn't find a better precedent for being outside
10 of the downtown zone that should require the largest
11 possible rate base to pay for preservation of these
12 public amenities.

13 And as far as conservation, Xcel Energy
14 sent representatives to the Longfellow Environment
15 and Transportation Committee meetings this winter, I
16 think it was. And when members -- residents of
17 Longfellow raised the issue of why hasn't
18 conservation been pursued more, it was essentially
19 dismissed as, oh, people have already done what
20 they're going to do. 50 percent of homeowners are
21 already on the Saver's Switch Program, we can't
22 expect any more.

23 And I would challenge, personally -- and
24 I know that the residents felt this way, too -- Xcel
25 to raise their standards. If in our current

1 situation, with global warming, we can't expect more
2 from both residents and businesses as far as
3 conservation, then we don't have much hope for
4 reining in our consuming energy needs.

5 So I just want to close and say thank you
6 again for this opportunity, and I will make
7 additional comments online.

8 MR. STORM: William Thomas. Again,
9 William Thomas. We'll move him to the back of the
10 pack.

11 Shalini Gupta.

12 MS. GUPTA: Thank you. Hi, my name's
13 Shalini Gupta, you spell that, S-H-A-L-I-N-I,
14 G-U-P-T-A. I'm with the Center for Earth, Energy,
15 and Democracy in Minneapolis, and I'm also a
16 resident of Southeast Minnesota and live in Prospect
17 Park, where I just found out today, thanks to Tim,
18 that some of the future lines are going to be
19 extended in that area.

20 So I just had a few comments that I'll
21 just read, it will be easier. Although a
22 certificate of need is not needed for this scale of
23 project under current Minnesota statutes, the
24 assumption -- the demands scenarios for the project
25 area that were developed must be made clear to

1 community members in the area. The demand modeling
2 must take into consideration the latest policy
3 development including the impact of implementing the
4 2007 state-mandated efficiency target and
5 conservation improvement program efficiency
6 investments, specifically in the project area.

7 Additionally, modeling must incorporate
8 the projected increased investment in energy
9 efficiency and onsite renewable potential in this
10 project area as promoted by the Department of Energy
11 and Minnesota Office of Energy Security through
12 upcoming 2009 Federal American Recovery and
13 Reinvestment Act funds and priorities.

14 The demand and expectations by consumer
15 classes must also be made clear. Who within the
16 project area is benefitting from the increased
17 electricity usage and who is bearing the burden of
18 cost? For instance, if demand projections are based
19 on commercial and industrial growth in Phillips and
20 South Minneapolis, are these growth assumptions in
21 line with the community vision for the neighborhood
22 long term?

23 Additionally, how will smaller consumers,
24 such as renters and other residents, benefit in a
25 real way? Considering the higher than average

1 renter rate of Phillips when compared to other
2 neighborhoods in Minneapolis and around the state,
3 it's important that this project does not result in
4 low-income renters and residents bearing the cost of
5 the project that isn't for their benefit.

6 Based on information provided by Xcel,
7 the proposed substations are estimated to cost \$25.4
8 million with the transmission lines, depending on if
9 they're buried or not, ranging from an additional \$3
10 million, aboveground, to \$16.4 million below ground.

11 Thus, regardless of the route chosen,
12 this project is at minimum an investment of
13 \$28.4 million into the community, likely to be
14 transferred through cost recovery to ratepayers.
15 For this amount of investment, the EIS should look
16 at how many businesses, commercial buildings, and
17 houses could be refurbished to decrease demand. For
18 that same amount of money, how much onsite renewable
19 energy could be developed to green Minneapolis and
20 how many local jobs could be trained and created?

21 By investing in the end-user needs of
22 South Minneapolis businesses and residents, these
23 types of actions would increase the income of South
24 Minneapolis residents, provide meaningful jobs, and
25 actually work to decrease energy bills rather than

1 increase them.

2 Someone earlier had mentioned a model of
3 a sustainable energy utility, and I just wanted to
4 give some context that is a model of bundling energy
5 services that Tim had mentioned for users, that's
6 being used in other places like Delaware,
7 Washington, D.C., places in Philadelphia are looking
8 at it, and then as well as West St. Paul are also
9 looking at it. So it's definitely an area and a
10 model to be looked at as -- for alternatives.

11 MR. STORM: John Brewer. John Brewer.
12 I'll put him in the back.

13 Bruce Karstadte.

14 MR. KARSTADTE: Yeah, that's me. Thank
15 you. My name is Bruce, B-R-U-C-E, Karstadte,
16 K-A-R-S-T-A-D-T-E. I'm a resident of South
17 Minneapolis, I'm the president and CEO of the
18 American Swedish Institute. Our staff, volunteers,
19 and members have been very active in the West
20 Phillips Neighborhood.

21 I appreciate the challenges of trying to
22 sort through this collision of interests that faces
23 everyone, sort of, through this aesthetic,
24 commercial, safety, environment, social equity
25 issues. And certainly we support the need for added

1 power, hopefully matched with the conservation
2 efforts, but I hope that there is also a rational
3 choice that's made.

4 I find it difficult to believe that
5 underground is not only just the first choice, but
6 the second, third, fourth, and fifth choices. I'm
7 going to -- I know many people have spoken about
8 Midtown Greenway, the use of which I'm entirely
9 sympathetic, but I'm going to speak about route B
10 which, if you look at the map, it goes from the
11 Midtown substation north along Oakland and then
12 makes a right-hand turn at 26th Street. What that
13 means is that the institution which I represent, the
14 American Swedish Institute, is passed not once, but
15 twice by the possibility of overhead power lines on
16 both the blocks, the 2600 block of Oakland and then
17 going west along 26th.

18 We're about to build a \$15 million campus
19 expansion. That, coupled with the ongoing
20 challenges and, really, opportunities of the
21 historic Turnblad mansion, means that -- I can't
22 really imagine that one of the city's great iconic
23 architectural masterpieces might be completely
24 encircled and encased by overhead power lines.

25 We have between 100- and 150,000 visitors

1 each year, many of them come from Sweden and Europe.
2 Snapshots are taken of the Turnblad mansion sort of
3 looking toward the west or the northwest. The
4 message that might be sent would be that Minneapolis
5 or this state doesn't care that much about its
6 historic architecture and the neighborhood residents
7 by looking at these power lines as a backdrop to the
8 historic Turnblad mansion.

9 Certainly I know that we need reliable
10 electricity. Green space is valuable, they
11 anticipate a potential for rail, I'm empathetic to
12 the issues of social justice. But there's something
13 about heritage in the historic remnants of Park
14 Avenue, which are also very important. And I find
15 it completely ironic that power lines, if an
16 overhead route is chosen along route B, would
17 encircle the historic home built by a man who had
18 the great foresight to be first in Minneapolis to
19 own a commercially-produced electric automobile in
20 1900.

21 Thank you.

22 MR. STORM: Sheldon Mains.

23 MR. MAINS: Sheldon Mains, S-H-E-L-D-O-N,
24 M-A-I-N-S. I've been a resident of the Seward
25 Neighborhood for 30 years and president of the

1 Seward Neighborhood Group. I'm going to be on the
2 task force.

3 These are my comments, these are not
4 comments by the neighborhood group because we have
5 more of them yet. Another little caveat, in a past
6 life I used to be involved in this program, like,
7 20 years ago. I did not work -- Bill wasn't there
8 at the time, Deb Pile wasn't working in this program
9 at the time, but just to let you know that.

10 I don't envy you. You know, I don't envy
11 the staff here. The law and rules for this program
12 were written assuming primarily rural, agricultural,
13 forest land, undeveloped routes. There are rules in
14 parts of the law that specifically deal with
15 agricultural land, mining, and tourism, there are no
16 parts of the law or rule that deal specifically with
17 urban land. You're going to have to be creative.
18 This is, I think, your first highly urban
19 transmission line to route. Good luck.

20 Now, just to direct some comments to
21 the -- everyone else that's here, the testimony has
22 been great. I think everyone has really given the
23 staff a feeling for how important the greenway is,
24 how this is not the same as routing it through rural
25 agricultural land.

1 But in the future, first of all, don't
2 forget you have to participate in the Administrative
3 Law Hearings that will be coming up near the end of
4 this process. To really have an impact you have to
5 do that. And to have an impact, you really should
6 tie things back to the law and the rules.

7 You're not alone in doing that. I don't
8 think it was announced earlier, it may have been but
9 I missed this, there's a public advisor assigned to
10 this program, Deb Pile, in the back of the room.
11 It's her job to help you be effective in
12 participating. So contact her, it's her job. She
13 can't give you legal advice, but she is there to
14 help you be effective in this process. And for most
15 of you, being effective means figuring out ways of
16 stopping an overhead line.

17 So, back to the staff, you've already
18 been creative in applying the rules. You know,
19 there's a piece in the rules that says a member of a
20 town board from the county has to be on the advisory
21 panel. There's no town board in Minneapolis so you
22 allowed for members of city-authorized neighborhood
23 groups. Thank you, that was being creative.

24 You're going to have to be more creative.
25 I'll give you some more examples, the law,

1 216E.03.5, analysis of the direct and indirect
2 economic impact of the proposed sites and routes
3 including, but not limited to, productive
4 agriculture land lost or impaired. Well, that's not
5 going to apply here, but what's going to apply here
6 is the impairment of economic development of urban
7 land. So really think about including that, what is
8 this going to do to the potential economic
9 development in this part of Minneapolis which is
10 finally turning a corner.

11 Next, prohibited routes. Okay. I'm
12 going to read the number, 7849.5930 of the rules,
13 Subsection 2. No high voltage transmission line may
14 be routed through a state or national park or state
15 scientific or natural area, blah, blah, blah, blah
16 blah, unless there's no alternative -- no feasible
17 alternative. Economic consideration alone does not
18 justify use of these areas.

19 Well, the greenway is greenery -- the
20 greenway is not a state park, I grant you that. But
21 it has a lot more usage than probably -- I think if
22 you took 20 state parks and the amount of people
23 that use those 20 state parks, it would not equal
24 the amount -- the number of people who use the
25 greenway for recreation and transportation. So

1 really think about how you apply that part of the
2 law.

3 So those are just two examples. You
4 know, another thing to consider in that is open
5 space is limited in these neighborhoods, there isn't
6 a lot of it. So if for a substation Xcel does have
7 to take open space land, I think you should require
8 the replacement of that land and all the amenities
9 on that land that they take. So think about that as
10 a mitigative measure in the environmental impact
11 statement.

12 7849.5920, factors excluded. I'm going
13 to read this, when the Public Utilities Commission
14 has issued a certificate of need, and I understand
15 they haven't and they don't have to, for a large
16 electric power generating plant or high voltage
17 transmission line, or placed a high voltage
18 transmission line on a certified list mentioned,
19 blah, blah, blah, questions of need including size,
20 type, timing, and questions of alternative system
21 configurations and questions of voltage shall not be
22 factors considered in the Commission.

23 Since there's no certificate of need,
24 this rule does not apply. This rule says at the
25 beginning, if there is a certificate of need you

1 cannot consider need and alternative sizes. I think
2 that means you should consider them, I think that
3 means you should consider alternative system --
4 system alternatives, especially since the routes on
5 28th, the routes on 26th, the routes on 39th aren't
6 real alternatives.

7 We've heard from our elected officials,
8 and they have asked Xcel for an example of a
9 transmission line down a residential neighborhood
10 and they haven't come up with one. So I would argue
11 those are not real alternatives and you have to, for
12 a real environmental impact statement, have
13 alternatives.

14 I'm going to propose one tonight. And
15 I'm going to propose this because I'm not -- I
16 understand there's need for electric power in this
17 neighborhood, there's more need, I understand that.
18 And I understand that conservation probably isn't
19 going to solve the immediate need, but is it
20 transmission or distribution that we need? I think
21 that some of the staff here will remember an NSP
22 proposal down Interstate 94 into Wisconsin quite a
23 few years ago. And they were using as an example
24 the problems with the electric power in Eau Claire
25 and Menomonie, and what it turned out to be was

1 problems with the old distribution system. That
2 line was turned down by Wisconsin and there are no
3 major need problems there.

4 So what I'm proposing as an alternative
5 is one new substation along Hiawatha Avenue, tapping
6 into that line with improved distribution lines,
7 buried or overhead, from there serving this
8 neighborhood, improved distribution lines from the
9 St. Louis Park substation serving this neighborhood.
10 And just driving around this neighborhood, a lot of
11 the distribution facilities are over 50 years old.
12 I mean, it's clear the distribution facilities have
13 to be improved. So I would really urge you to
14 consider a one-substation alternative.

15 Next, I want you to think about who pays
16 for undergrounding. In rural Minnesota when
17 transmission lines follow survey lines or existing
18 rights-of-way, which is what the rules say they
19 should, that reduces the impact on agriculture. And
20 that's good, that's important, but that costs more
21 than going straight through the field. Those
22 ratepayers don't pay for that additional cost, that
23 is paid for by all the ratepayers in Minnesota.

24 I'll give another example that some of
25 the staff may remember, again ancient history. When

1 the Benton County/Milaca line was approved way back
2 years ago, it was routed around the developed core
3 of Milaca. I think that added a mile, Milaca's not
4 that big. It was an incremental increase in cost,
5 the residents -- the ratepayers in Milaca did not
6 pay for that additional cost. So I would urge you
7 to consider that if undergrounding is determined to
8 be the best alternative, that all the ratepayers in
9 the state should pay for it.

10 Finally, I just urge you in the
11 environmental impact statement to consider all the
12 factors listed in -- factors considered under the
13 rule .5910, and I'm not going to read those because
14 you know what they are and they really have to be
15 considered.

16 Thank you.

17 MR. STORM: Emily Moore.

18 MS. MOORE: Thank you, my name is
19 Emily Moore, E-M-I-L-Y, M-O-O-R-E. And I want to
20 speak, as many others have, to the need for the
21 extra transmission. I know that Xcel has a number
22 of really good programs to help businesses reduce
23 their energy use, and I know that they've tried
24 really hard to publicize the programs and they have
25 had some successes. Such as, you've helped

1 benchmark and recommission buildings and you've
2 helped people with cogeneration systems. However,
3 in my opinion, you've only scratched the surface of
4 a wide array of possibilities for reducing business
5 use of electricity and residential use.

6 And I feel that the neighborhood,
7 especially through this process, can be energized to
8 work with Xcel to get the programs recognized, to
9 work with businesses so that they can recognize
10 where they're wasting. I see energy being wasted
11 everywhere, everywhere I go. If -- we do not have
12 to freeze inside a commercial building in the
13 summertime, it's wrong.

14 I believe that investment of this sort in
15 conservation will be smart business for Xcel, but it
16 will also enable you to join the rest of the world
17 in solving our problem. We cannot keep burning
18 coal.

19 Thank you.

20 MR. STORM: Angelina Matias Vazquez.

21 MS. MATIAS VAZQUEZ: Angelina is like
22 Anjelina (phonetic), but Angelina. Okay. Matias
23 Vazquez, M-A-T-I-A-S, V as in Victor, A-Z-Q-U-E-Z.
24 Thank you.

25 I -- number one, I want to speak as a

1 resident of the community. I live on 10th and 24th.
2 So number one, the first thing I want to say is
3 this, I just want to back up my friend Emily. She
4 and I were at a restaurant in our neighborhood and
5 we were freezing, and I was like, what is this?
6 It's so much waste. So she's right, we can work on
7 waste.

8 And you know, one of the wonderful things
9 that we have here in the Phillips Community is our
10 Phillips Community Energy Co-op and we are ready if
11 you want to work with us, anyone who has some
12 funding available, we would be more than happy to
13 work with you in conservation. We have been -- the
14 Phillips Community Energy Co-op has been working on
15 conservation for a number of years in the community.
16 We have a lot of members who are present here, and
17 so I just want to suggest that we utilize that great
18 resource. It's the only energy co-op in our area
19 and it's not being fully utilized.

20 And we know -- we have health
21 conservation workshops in the community and, as I
22 said, we do have members -- a lot of members from
23 this area. So that is one thing.

24 And the other thing is that -- and this
25 is the thing for -- I was looking at the list that

1 comprised the advisory task force and I'm really
2 concerned because I don't see here minorities,
3 people of color. And for those of you who are
4 present, I want you to know, I did send an
5 application to Mr. Storm and I don't know why I'm
6 not on the list. So we are involved, we want to be
7 a part of this process. So we need a woman of color
8 on this list, we need Native Americans on this list.
9 So please, what is this, mostly white males, a few
10 white females?

11 Okay. Whatever, I'm done. And another
12 thing that I noticed, too, that the Ventura Village
13 which is my community -- my neighborhood association
14 is not represented here. I don't know what
15 happened.

16 So last thing I want to say about this
17 task force is that I would like to see my state
18 representative, Karen Clark, who I think is present
19 here, yes, she's in the back. She should be on this
20 list, too, because she cares about my community and
21 I think she should be, you know, on that list, she
22 wants to be involved here. And my senator,
23 Linda Berglund, she is -- if she's not here it's
24 because she just had surgery, knee surgery, so she's
25 probably at home recouping. But I know that she

1 cares about our neighborhood and I think she should
2 be involved. Anyway, so that's the last thing I
3 have to say about this list.

4 But the next thing that I want to talk
5 about is that I haven't heard very much -- people
6 say about solar and wind energy and I'm -- I want to
7 ask people from Allina in particular, do they know
8 anything about the Green Institute that is in our
9 neighborhood? This Green Institute, this building
10 that is in our neighborhood, is using solar power
11 and other alternative sources of energy.

12 I don't understand, Allina just built a
13 huge -- a big addition on Chicago and they can't
14 think, but maybe they should use some solar since
15 they're the ones who are needing a lot of energy.
16 Hello, they should think about solar or green or
17 wind energy, what is that?

18 And why isn't Xcel Energy not thinking
19 about alternative power, wind energy sources, why do
20 we have to get all our energy from coal and nuclear
21 power? I don't understand why people aren't being
22 creative. I know that -- I know that you can do
23 better. So let's make sure we do better and I do
24 want to hear that we are going to meet this need.
25 We -- at least I would like to see 100 percent green

1 energy, but okay, 50 percent, so try to work on
2 that.

3 The next thing is -- okay. I'm almost
4 done. So there is this study at the University of
5 Minnesota, Department of Public Health, it's a
6 ten-year study that I think -- I don't -- what I
7 understand about that ten-year study is that these
8 electromagnetic fields are extremely harmful to
9 children and the elderly. But they're even more
10 harmful to people who suffer from cancer and are
11 trying to recuperate from cancer, and live within
12 300 meters from these high voltage power lines,
13 either overhead -- it's a little bit better than on
14 the ground. I say let's go for alternative sources
15 of energy and then we wouldn't have to worry about
16 any problems -- health-related problems.

17 Anyway, the last thing is that I am
18 working with Allina -- Allina, okay. So I've been
19 negative about Allina, but I want to say something
20 good about Allina, they are working -- or they have
21 this project here in our community called the Allina
22 Cultural Wellness Center Healthcare Initiative. And
23 I've been working with them since last December,
24 they're trying to help the residents in this area
25 who have no access to healthcare. And so I invite

1 people who are present here to be a part of that,
2 it's very important. We need to hear from you, we
3 need to know what your health concerns are, and they
4 are willing listen. So please take the opportunity
5 to be a part of this Allina Cultural Wellness Center
6 Healthcare Initiative.

7 Thank you.

8 MR. STORM: Carrie Anne Johnson.

9 MS. JOHNSON: Thank you. My name's
10 Carrie Anne Johnson, C-A-R-R-I-E, A-N-N-E, Johnson,
11 J-O-H-N-S-O-N. I am a resident of East Phillips, I
12 am somebody who lives less than one block from where
13 the proposed East Hiawatha substation would be put,
14 I am two blocks from where the trail is. I am a
15 mom, I have a two-year-old, you might have seen him
16 running around with his dad finally here.

17 One of the -- I want to address the need,
18 but I also want to address another point that I
19 haven't heard anyone yet mention. First off, with
20 regard to the energy, I know that some people have
21 mentioned the energy efficiency issue finally. I
22 know that as far as the need goes, that the CEO of
23 Xcel himself was quoted in the Wall Street Journal
24 just last November as saying that the need actually
25 decreased three percent, that's quoted, written.

1 The CEO of this company said that, that there was
2 less need. That's because we're all doing our part
3 because we are trying to conserve and because we're
4 broke. So we're not turning on the lights as much,
5 we're doing our part on that regard.

6 As far as how much energy is wasted, I
7 had read recently in Time in an article called
8 Wasting Watts, if anyone wants to refer to it for
9 the source, that the amount of energy that is wasted
10 just at the generation of the power plants is enough
11 to power Japan. That's how much energy is getting
12 wasted, and I equivocate (sic) that to us building a
13 freeway with three lanes and one of those lanes is
14 just dropped off right into the ocean, all day long
15 people are just jumping into the ocean, that is what
16 we're doing.

17 And so for them to say, hey, we have this
18 need, I'm looking around just in this building right
19 here, I went to the bathroom and I have been
20 sickened every time even before this issue came up
21 by those high -- super, super fast high-energy
22 dryers. They say that they're better -- they always
23 try to say, oh, these are so energy efficient. It's
24 like, no, if you had cloth that you washed, the per
25 person amount -- or just air-drying your hands

1 afterwards, using your own cloth that you bring with
2 you, for instance.

3 It's the amount of that, the automatic
4 doors, the automatic sinks, the automatic toilet
5 flushers, how much energy is that? How many lights
6 does every person have on here just for decoration?
7 I mean, how many lights do we need in this room,
8 really, to see? I mean, I bet we could have turned
9 off a ton of these with the amount of daylight
10 coming in through these windows and seen just fine.
11 And they could have used something like reflective
12 surfaces, like mirrors, to have like little dangly
13 things for color and sparkle, et cetera.

14 But that also applies to Abbott and to
15 Wells Fargo, I'm sure -- all right. There you go.
16 There you go.

17 Well -- and there are some possible
18 alternatives that other energy companies actually
19 use. For instance, in California the Southern
20 California Edison Power Company has a business
21 program in place, in use, three different
22 alternatives, something called ice-on-aircoil
23 technology.

24 Have you guys heard of them? Yes,
25 ice-on-aircoil technology?

1 MS. ASAH: Yes.

2 MS. JOHNSON: Okay. I would like to see
3 that here, that should be something that I would
4 like to be brought into the EIS that they actually
5 consider as a real alternative, a real viable
6 alternative.

7 Just the consumption, having read Xcel's
8 answers to the questions to the Midtown Greenway
9 with regard to the where the peak was, where the
10 real need that they saw was coming from, that was
11 the peak use in July and August when people turn on
12 their air conditioners.

13 This technology is something that is
14 coiled inside of the water and the building has it,
15 and then it's hooked up to what -- they have three
16 different ways depending on if they have a HVAC
17 system or whatever their system is, there are
18 different alternatives to hook it up.

19 And so what happens is, the water freezes
20 at night when it gets cold, and then during the
21 daytime, no energy is actually drawn, but it's
22 blown, that cold air is actually blown. So it
23 reduces -- well, it's part, a little bit, but it
24 reduces the amount of energy that is used during the
25 daytime.

1 So instead of, you know, turning on the
2 air conditioner during the peak time, it's blowing
3 around this cold air that's already there that was
4 generated at night. That is something that I don't
5 think a lot of us have heard of, I just randomly
6 happened to come across it. Things like that, in
7 addition to the wind and solar, really need to be
8 getting addressed.

9 And personally, I honestly am at the
10 point where I would rather have a -- suffer a
11 brownout, suffer a blackout, whatever, I'd rather go
12 tenting and have to forage for my own food at this
13 point than to live another day knowing what is
14 happening on a regular basis, right now, in another
15 place that most of us haven't even been talking
16 about should be addressed as part of the EIS, as
17 part of the impact that this transmission line is
18 going to do, and that is the people of Appalachia.

19 All the way from north to south, all the
20 way along -- between the East Coast and the Midwest,
21 that whole area of mountains, there is -- over 450
22 mountains have been flattened, 450 mountains. I
23 mean, just flattened.

24 They go in, they clearcut, they take all
25 of the trees away, then they set explosives, huge

1 explosives. And this is a new practice, this did
2 not happen -- underground mining was a whole
3 different boat, and obviously the people there much,
4 much more supported underground mining.

5 Honestly, they try to say that it's a
6 matter of jobs. Well, there's a number of jobs that
7 have been lost because of the massive -- the mining
8 using explosives has gone from 150,000 jobs in
9 underground mining to 15,000 because now they're
10 using these gigantic machines that are the size of
11 houses with drag lines that are the size of big
12 Hummers and SUVs, pulling away and just stripping
13 the entire earth.

14 And there's so much rubble that is left
15 over afterwards, they take the coal and then they're
16 put on to these big trucks that it goes on. And
17 they have to have a place to store the coal, the
18 coal is stored in these silos that Massey Energy,
19 for instance, one of the companies, has two silos
20 now, not one, within 300 feet, not miles or -- three
21 miles, but 300 feet of an elementary school. And
22 it's the last elementary school that is left in this
23 entire area that happens to be in West Virginia --
24 or in this particular -- in this -- I should say in
25 the Coal River area by coal.

1 The kids that go to this school, when
2 they get there -- and they have to -- because so
3 many schools have been eliminated because of the
4 explosives that are going off on a regular basis
5 when they are sleeping at night -- because it's
6 24/7, they're not going to stop, they just start
7 exploding and exploding and exploding and these huge
8 explosions are going off.

9 I mean, if we lived on mountains, that
10 would be us. We have to consider ourselves as a
11 community and consider other communities and what
12 the impact is with regard to this happening. These
13 people are suffering -- it's just countless, I mean,
14 you start reading some of these stories and you just
15 can't believe it that these people are actually
16 doing this and that the word is not getting out to
17 us.

18 So they have asthma, they have rashes,
19 they have diarrhea, there are kids that are actually
20 vomiting at the same time in their school classrooms
21 because of how impacted they are because of the
22 toxins in the coal. This is, like, continually
23 going on.

24 I just learned, actually, from one of the
25 organizations called ILoveMountains.org, that

1 there's actually going to be a very large protest at
2 this particular -- it's called Marsh Fork Elementary
3 School on June 23. So if anyone could travel over
4 there -- I'd love to be able to join them, I can't
5 with my two-year-old, but I would love to help stop
6 this.

7 They have to -- after the coal has been
8 dredged out, there's so much waste left over, they
9 have to find a place to put it. So what they do is
10 they make these things called impoundments, and they
11 basically take the valley between the leftover
12 mountains and then they fill the bottom with some
13 crushed rocks, they put a little bit of water or
14 something in there and build up the sides, and then
15 they just fill it up with this big, huge toxic pool
16 that is just gigantic.

17 And thing is they keep building the wall
18 and building the wall and piling it up and piling it
19 up and piling it up, and then eventually something
20 like what happened in Tennessee Valley Authority --
21 that I don't know if anybody even heard of, because
22 I didn't hear it on the news, the whole thing broke.
23 Dam breaks, it's on the top of the hill -- or the
24 top of the mountain, comes flooding down. There
25 have been so many people killed from the floods of

1 toxic waste. Can you imagine having to be stuck
2 swimming in toxic waste?

3 This is what they're doing. And when I
4 say they, I mean they, because Xcel Energy, while
5 they do get most of their coal from another location
6 that does not do this practice, fortunately, they do
7 buy some of their coal from a location that is in --
8 on Black Mountain in West Virginia where this type
9 of practice goes on every day. And it is going on
10 all over.

11 This is -- for instance, the Massey
12 Energy company, I liken them to Wal-Mart. They are
13 so aggressive, they will shut down whatever -- when
14 they want to buy a coal mine that's been going on
15 that's been union, they will buy them out, they will
16 shut the whole factory down, and shut it down for a
17 year and that way they avoid having to have any of
18 the union benefits.

19 So all of these workers lose all their
20 health benefits. People have heart attacks, they
21 can't even afford be to airlifted out because they
22 can't afford for the helicopter.

23 There was recently -- just last year,
24 there was a family with one child and they were
25 hoping to continue. Their three-year-old boy was in

1 their room sleeping and a 649-ton boulder came
2 rolling down the hill, unearthed from one of these
3 huge machines, and it landed right on the boy in the
4 bedroom, crushed him -- obviously crushed him
5 instantly. That has happened more than once.

6 I think that from the very beginning this
7 should not have been allowed to have been going on.
8 The amount of -- when we talk about the
9 environmental impact statement to human rights,
10 saying that that needs to be part of this, I mean,
11 we're talking about all sorts of human rights, about
12 how we're getting -- generating them.

13 I mean, honestly, I could care less how
14 it looks. I mean, it sucks, things already look
15 horrible compared to what nature should be, you
16 know, you're kind of already there. But as far as
17 what we are doing and how we are destroying the
18 entire -- we are raping the earth completely and we
19 are leaving -- all of the bobcats and all of the
20 cougars and all of the possums and whatever, they
21 all came streaming down at the same time off of the
22 mountains into these people's homes and into their
23 yards to become pets because there was no place left
24 for them to live. I mean, we're just destroying
25 that and that is how we're planning on generating

1 this because they're not talking about any type of
2 alternatives.

3 I think that at this moment in time, if
4 we do not actually force them, absolutely demand
5 them and stop them from going forward with something
6 of this nature, when they say that there's a demand
7 of -- 1.5 percent is what we've been told as far as
8 my understanding, and since it's not completely in
9 writing it seems to be -- this is the time that we
10 need to say we need to be using an alternative
11 source of energy. And if this is not the time when
12 it's not that big a deal and it's just a little bit,
13 then I don't know when it's ever going to happen.
14 This is when we have to demand this.

15 So that is my statement. Thank you.

16 MR. STORM: Okay. We're going to break
17 for a couple minutes.

18 (Break taken.)

19 MR. STORM: Okay. Folks, if we can rally
20 the troops back. Okay. Folks, if I can have your
21 attention, if you could reassemble. Okay.

22 Matt Norton. Is there a Matt Norton in
23 the house?

24 MR. NORTON: Thank you. Matt Norton,
25 N-O-R-T-O-N.

1 I'm going to reiterate just very quickly
2 a couple of the comments that were well put before.
3 I will keep this very short. One is, if you
4 consider the amount of avoidance, the avoidance of
5 the need for energy that could be accomplished by
6 spending \$20 million or \$30 million in this service
7 area by sending out teams of people trained to
8 retrofit houses and volunteering to provide
9 energy-saving features to homeowners and businesses
10 in this area, you could probably accomplish a great
11 deal and reduce the demand, perhaps even at peak
12 times.

13 Second, I think that the environmental
14 review documents need to factor in the added
15 greenhouse gas emissions that will come from
16 choosing to increase delivery rather than seek
17 avoidance. 60 percent of the increased capacity
18 will be from nonrenewable energy sources, according
19 to the evidence that we've been given.

20 In factoring in the project costs, you
21 need to factor in the change in neighborhood
22 property values, and that includes not just the home
23 and business values, but the long-term change that
24 that will have on our tax revenues -- property tax
25 revenues for the city.

1 It also seems to me that a number of
2 factors that were listed as considerations in
3 choosing the preferred alternative were factors that
4 are essentially paraphrased into cost, cost -- one,
5 the existing corridor, I think just about everywhere
6 in the city is a corridor of disturbance, and so I
7 think that that really is just looking at places
8 that are best adapted to power lines, that's a cost,
9 paraphrasing. Shortest route, likewise, is a cost,
10 paraphrasing.

11 Least impact on homes and businesses,
12 there's a state supreme court case saying that under
13 the Environmental Rights Act, that is not an excuse
14 for doing something that's more damaging to
15 protectable natural resources, under the State
16 Environmental Rights Act, that's Minnesota Statutes
17 Chapter 116B.

18 Using preferred substations, again, I
19 think that's a cost item. Claiming that the
20 alternative A is the alternative with the most
21 compatible use I think is absolutely laughable and
22 absolutely not -- that is not a compatible use with
23 one of the most highly used recreational corridors
24 in the southern part of the city.

25 So just to hit MERA, the Minnesota

1 Environmental Rights Act, again, Chapter 116B. I
2 think we're dealing with a protectable natural
3 resource as state law would analyze this particular
4 route. It is a protectable natural resource under
5 MERA and, because of that, we cannot use cost alone
6 as an excuse for doing damage to that. So I think
7 you need to factor in the possible added costs from
8 delays in the project if people get serious about
9 challenging an aboveground route alternative.

10 So I live on 26th Street and I'd like to
11 know one final thing, is this a segmented project?
12 It's not permissible to have a segmentation of
13 projects that require an environmental review, and I
14 would like to have some guarantee or at least some
15 very clear statement made in documents provided to
16 the public -- if there's already one there, forgive
17 me, I have not seen it. But I would like to know
18 whether there are additional stages planned --
19 long-term planning for Xcel that would take this
20 high voltage line, if it went along the greenway,
21 further down the greenway.

22 I've got one last comment and that will
23 be it. Please acquire, if you have not already
24 acquired for your environmental review and EIS
25 mapping, the 2008 -- it's available right now, the

1 2008 projected demographic data. The 2000 U.S.
2 Census Data is outdated already and so you can get
3 projected data for demographics that you could show
4 properly in your mapping what the effects would be
5 on minority communities and low-income communities.

6 Thank you.

7 MR. STORM: Todd Stample (phonetic)?

8 Carol Pass.

9 MS. PASS: Hi, I'm not going to talk a
10 long time, everybody has said a lot of what I would
11 have said. Oh, my name's Carol Pass, C-A-R-O-L,
12 P-A-S-S.

13 I've been concerned that there's so much
14 discussion of the lines on the greenway and I am
15 very concerned about the lines -- about running the
16 power lines elsewhere. I think there -- I know
17 Little Earth of United Tribes is moving a large
18 housing development right up on 26th Street. This
19 will involve lots of kids, and we really don't know
20 that much about what the electromagnetic field
21 really does. I know that everybody has said that
22 this is fine and that the health impact is not
23 really anything to be concerned about. However,
24 I -- for some reason the Europeans are all putting
25 these underground and they seem to think that

1 there's an issue here. So, you know, knowing that
2 that large development is moving into that area
3 makes me concerned and I just wanted to bring that
4 to the attention of the -- of Xcel.

5 But additionally, along the same lines, I
6 don't want to see this go down the residential areas
7 either. I mean, I appreciate the concern with the
8 greenway, but I don't want to privilege the greenway
9 above the rest of the area, particularly because of
10 the large number of already challenged people and
11 ethnic groups that live there.

12 Along those lines, if there -- the second
13 thing is, if there's a concern with involving the
14 community, I sympathize with Angelina about not
15 having a Latino person on the task force. But I
16 also see that the large Latino and Somali, Native
17 American and et cetera community is pretty much
18 uninformed.

19 There's not a lot of translated
20 information. I don't have anything from you guys
21 that I can go to Little Earth or, particularly, go
22 to the Latino community and flyer that, go to the
23 Somali community and flyer them. They don't know,
24 really, anything about this. And we have had an
25 almost 300 percent -- I think it's 500, but

1 Ms. Metchy (phonetic) tells me it's only three
2 according to the 2000 census, but recent indications
3 show that it's about 500 percent increase in the
4 Latino community. And we should really have
5 translated materials to hand out and involve those
6 people, if involvement is going to be a concern.

7 And regarding economic impact, I wanted
8 to encourage the Lake Street Council executive
9 director Joyce Wisdom, who's over there chatting,
10 that the businesses shouldn't be alarmed about
11 coming here. I really want the Lake Street
12 businesses to join us and push for all of these good
13 things.

14 We believe that there may be some -- I'm
15 not immune to the idea that there's a power issue
16 here, I just had a heart procedure at Abbott
17 Northwest and it was electronic and I really
18 wouldn't have wanted to have a brownout during that
19 thing. I mean, it would have been -- it would have
20 been not a nice experience, I'm sure.

21 I know that there is a need here, but I
22 think there are multiple ways of responding to that
23 that have been unexamined.

24 And regardless of that, I would encourage
25 the businesses to get involved and to help us sort

1 this out and don't be fearful that we're going to
2 somehow boycott the businesses or something like
3 that. I thought that needed to be said.

4 And I have to say that, with regard to
5 the cost and the overall project, I've been going to
6 many of these meetings and consulting with the Xcel
7 people and consulting with others about this, and I
8 can't say that I think that all the avenues of doing
9 it differently have been explored, or doing it
10 better have been explored.

11 I'm a little concerned about the overall
12 quality of the project. When I discussed this with
13 some of these folks, I was told that they were
14 thinking about this project for years and they were
15 aware that this really needed to happen and they
16 were very concerned about the whole issue and so --
17 that they hadn't missed a beat.

18 But then when I asked, well, why didn't
19 they run it underground when Lake Street was wide
20 open and they could have plopped the coils right in
21 there for not much money at all? And then I was
22 told, well, this came up quickly and we weren't
23 exactly aware of it and we couldn't intervene right
24 away because we weren't prepared. And I realized I
25 was getting the opposite explanation of what I had

1 just heard.

2 I mean, I'm sorry to be critical in that
3 way, but it does make me wonder about the whole
4 quality of the assessment of this, whether it's
5 really been carefully figured out. Because that
6 could have happened. If people were on watch to be
7 aware of this, that could have happened and it would
8 have really cut the cost. And I'm concerned that it
9 didn't and I'm concerned that the argument seems to
10 be going in two different directions.

11 I think with regard to cost, I think that
12 if there's only 16 million that this is going to
13 cost, this could be spread over -- this cost could
14 be spread over a very large area. And I think
15 Sheldon Mains has told us all kinds of examples
16 where that's really happened and those are wonderful
17 precedents to cite.

18 On the other hand, the millions and
19 millions that we will lose economically for years
20 and years and years if this goes through here, will
21 probably far exceed 16 million and they will be
22 borne only by the people here. That seems to me to
23 be a serious case of economic injustice, it's just a
24 real mistake.

25 I think, also, we need to look at -- we

1 need to look at the legislation with regard to this.
2 If the legislation says that -- what is it, a mile
3 and a quarter? If it's that small you don't have to
4 do a needs assessment and et cetera. I have to
5 honestly say that is dumbest law. I mean, we should
6 have based it on density. This whole thing should
7 be based on density and not milage.

8 I mean, a mile and a half -- I mean, you
9 know, if you go out in a cow pasture -- I mean,
10 we're talking about tons of people and so the
11 ten-mile issue doesn't make any sense unless the
12 only thing you're talking about -- again, this was
13 said, I think, but rural Minnesota or North Dakota
14 or something.

15 So I would suggest that we get our
16 legislators to redo this law, to look at the whole
17 thing, to put in some strong language just like we
18 did for the burner issue. That was a wonderful
19 precedent, and the kind of changes that you can make
20 to protect your community through legislature
21 because it isn't there right now and we need to have
22 it be there.

23 The last thing I want to say -- I think
24 it's the last thing, is that if there's a
25 \$16 million cost, you know, Obama's having us look

1 at the CEO executive pay, and I would suggest that
2 we look at the CEO executive pay of Xcel Energy.
3 They could pay for some of this, they don't need to
4 have seven- or eight-figure salaries. This is not
5 necessary any more than it was necessary to go to
6 Washington, D.C., in a corporate jet from the -- one
7 of the car companies. And they were severely
8 chastised and some of them lost their jobs. This is
9 the kind of thing where we should all share the
10 pain, big time, and I would suggest that the Xcel
11 Energy CEOs and top management that are making large
12 salaries share the pain with us.

13 So, thank you very much.

14 MR. STORM: Karen Clark.

15 MS. CLARK: Hi, thank you. My name is
16 Karen Clark and I live just a few blocks from here
17 and have for about 30 years. I also happen to
18 represent this neighborhood and two other South
19 Minneapolis neighborhoods in the Minnesota State
20 Legislature.

21 And so much has already been said, this
22 is such a smart group of people in this community, I
23 can only just maybe reiterate a couple of things. I
24 just want to thank everybody here for their
25 participation, and also for -- the officials here

1 for coming and taking all these words down.

2 Just a couple of things. The discussion
3 about environmental justice is just absolutely key.
4 There's been several people who have talked about
5 that, and I just want to reiterate that we have
6 mapped the issue of environmental justice in this
7 community and it can show that there's a
8 disproportionate impact of environmental toxin
9 exposures. We are in, right now, our U.S. EPA
10 arsenic residential superfund site in this
11 neighborhood. That's just one of the many other
12 kinds of issues that people here deal with. And so
13 when we start talking the disproportionate impact
14 of breathing exposures here, we have that to contend
15 with.

16 And I do want to remind people that we
17 did pass a state law in 2008 that said in the
18 Phillips Neighborhood, whenever there is a polluting
19 facility brought to the neighborhood, or proposed to
20 be brought to the neighborhood, several agencies
21 that are part of what -- what we call part of the
22 participating agencies must be consulted. That's
23 the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and the
24 Minnesota Department of Health, and they must do
25 what's called a cumulative health impact analysis of

1 any polluting factories in this neighborhood, in the
2 Phillips Neighborhood.

3 It's the kind of law we should have in
4 many of our cities where we have a majority of
5 low-income people and communities of color. But we
6 do have it in effect here and it's a law that can be
7 enforced and used, and I just wanted to mention that
8 to the folks in those -- at the PUC and the Office
9 of Energy (sic) and so on, we have that law.

10 Carol just talked about the other law
11 that we should have, which is dealing with the
12 certificate of need for this kind of facility to be
13 proposed. We actually did put a bill in last year
14 that said there would be a certificate of need based
15 on density rather than just based on the milage. So
16 we didn't get a hearing on that bill, it didn't go
17 anywhere last year. It's still alive, it could be
18 considered again this next year.

19 But the other thing to say is, from what
20 I understand, there really is more to this project
21 than what's being proposed here. We're talking
22 about probably more than ten miles based on looking
23 at this as a segmented project. And that sort of
24 strategy of dividing things up so they don't come
25 under certain laws, we're pretty familiar with,

1 aren't we, Council Member Remington? This happened
2 with the Highway 35W, divide things up and then you
3 don't have to be covered under certain laws. You
4 put it all together, all the segments, it would be
5 covered -- probably more than ten miles. So I just
6 want to mention that we're aware of that.

7 And then the other thing that has been
8 mentioned by several people is that this very same
9 department, Office of Energy Security,
10 President Obama did put money into it and bring
11 money here, that we are spending more than
12 \$100 million and it that has do with creating green
13 jobs and dealing with the issue of global climate
14 change and global warming and helping us in
15 communities like this be able to do things other
16 than erect more energy -- high -- transmission
17 lines. Do conservation, go into our homes and help
18 figure out how to make our homes more
19 energy-efficient, our businesses and so on. Many
20 people have talked about that, so I won't reiterate
21 it.

22 But it's interesting to me that the very
23 agency that's supposed to be in charge of looking at
24 some of those issues is the one who's receiving the
25 dollars to do this kind of work, and these are jobs

1 for that could be jobs for neighborhood people right
2 here, they're called green jobs. So I just wanted
3 to make that connection again for all of us.

4 I think that's about all I really want to
5 say. I support the idea that the advisory committee
6 be expanded so it really represents who lives in
7 these communities, and that wouldn't be too hard to
8 do. And I think we can submit some names and I was
9 talking to someone earlier who said they thought the
10 agency might be open to that.

11 So I thought I'd just thank you again and
12 thank everybody for being here tonight.

13 MR. STORM: William Thomas.

14 Mark S.

15 MR. SULANDER: Yeah. Hi, my name is Mark
16 Sulander (phonetic), and I apologize to Betty, I
17 didn't have a chance to talk with her at the brief
18 intermission that we just had. What I'm going to
19 say is a commentary on Xcel Energy. And as the
20 comments that were just previously made by
21 Representative Clark and other people about the
22 segmentation of this process, where they're calling
23 it a mile and a quarter, but any easy estimate, if
24 you look at what's already in the books, it's over
25 ten miles. And so, Betty, this is nothing personal,

1 this is a commentary on Xcel Energy.

2 I first attended the -- I won't do the
3 whole thing, I'll just do highlights of the time
4 line. I attended the very first Xcel Energy
5 Hiawatha, quote/unquote, open house, 6:00 p.m.,
6 October 29, 2008, in this building, lower level.

7 By the way, why are we meeting in such a
8 noisy location? I think this is unacceptable, we
9 should have a respectful meeting place for a serious
10 meeting like this.

11 On October 29, 2008, I entered the
12 meeting area and noticed a Star Tribune reporter
13 talking to local residents. I happened to know the
14 reporter and I greeted him and I went inside. I
15 then began talking with a number of Xcel Energy
16 officials, including two project managers, including
17 Betty Mirzayi, that were directly connected with the
18 Hiawatha proposal.

19 I asked them to show me the Hiawatha need
20 study and related need data. They said the need
21 study was not yet done. I then asked them for any
22 information on power failure problems in our area,
23 or power quality problems. They said they had no
24 information with them.

25 The very next day, I opened up the

1 newspaper and I see that that same Star Tribune
2 reporter was reporting on power failures and power
3 quality problems and they quoted Xcel Energy
4 officials. I was just a few feet away from that
5 reporter asking that question and I was denied that
6 information about the true need for this study.

7 Now, here's where it's relevant. They
8 want to get us divided talking about routes. Oh,
9 should it go up by my house on 28th or should it go
10 on 31st or should it go down Lake Street, which they
11 could have done when they opened it up to redo Lake
12 Street.

13 Square one, this is all about, is this
14 really needed for our area? This is a huge
15 interstate highway of power that they want to put in
16 our area and they refuse to show the need for this
17 project. Forget about routes, square one is let's
18 talk about need. And this is not personal, I'm
19 talking about Xcel Energy. Your own CEO was quoted
20 in the Wall Street Journal just a few months ago
21 saying that there was a nationwide decrease in power
22 demand of over three and a half percent. Power
23 industry analysts were also quoted in saying that
24 they were advising utilities not to invest in any
25 major expansion or transmission problem -- projects

1 at this time because of falling demand. Why are we
2 here doing this, what is the rush?

3 Xcel's clear failure on October 29, 2008,
4 to answer my direct questions is unacceptable
5 behavior by any entity, let alone one regulated by
6 the PUC and the State of Minnesota. It is also
7 unacceptable behavior by Xcel Energy, a company that
8 claims to have high ethical and environmental
9 standards.

10 In the ensuing weeks after the October 29
11 first, quote/unquote, open house -- by the way that
12 is an unacceptable process. They herd you around
13 one by one, the employees outnumber you by three to
14 one. There's 30 Xcel -- there's 20 Xcel employees
15 there and there might be four or five residents, and
16 they herd you around you can't hear what everybody
17 is asking. We need regular meetings where they can
18 go on record and tell us exactly what their project
19 is about, not divvy it up into little anecdotes with
20 residents as they walk around the room.

21 I then -- in December, I attended a
22 special Xcel meeting with a number of neighborhood
23 leaders at the offices of the Midtown Greenway
24 Coalition. I had requested and received approval to
25 videotape that meeting. At the end of the meeting,

1 the executive director of that association asked the
2 project manager -- and again, not personal, you're
3 representing your company, so I know you're doing
4 your job. I asked project manager Betty Mirzayi
5 directly when we would be provided, as a community,
6 with the need study that was done for the Hiawatha
7 project and associated need data. She promised, on
8 videotape, to provide that information. She and
9 Xcel never provided that information. I would be
10 glad to copy up any number of DVDs for anyone that
11 wants one, including the PUC and Xcel. And I'd like
12 the PUC to answer why need is not a part of this
13 determination.

14 I then attended the final open house Xcel
15 held in January 2009, you might you recall we had to
16 climb up to the top floor of Plaza Grande (phonetic)
17 on Lake Street, and I went up to Betty Mirzayi,
18 again with a recorder running, and asked why we did
19 not yet receive the Hiawatha need study or the need
20 data? She said that Xcel had decided not to provide
21 it.

22 They misled us from the end of October
23 through the middle of January, and we still don't
24 have any of that information. If they think this
25 project is so necessary, why won't they talk about

1 the need? That's because, like their colleagues
2 Enron, they're interested in selling power over in
3 the Ohio Valley, the East Coast. They can sell our
4 cheaply-produced coal power at Big Stone 1, just
5 across the South Dakota border, possibly Big Stone
6 2, Sherburne, that's one of the dirtiest coal plants
7 around, and ship it where they can make a lot more
8 money.

9 And you know how they have to do that?
10 They have to build high voltage transmission lines
11 through our neighborhood. That's why they don't
12 want to tell us exactly how much power we need
13 because we don't need it. They want to run it right
14 over the top of us and bulldoze right through our
15 neighborhoods and take advantage of where we are.

16 And like Carol Pass just said, forget
17 about 16 million additional dollars, the losses that
18 we will suffer for not having a good spine -- a
19 quality spine for development along this wonderful
20 parkland that has been worked on for over 20 years
21 or more is going to be far more than \$16 million.
22 But it's not going to be Xcel, it's not going to be
23 the rest of the state, it's not going to be the Twin
24 Cities that suffers those losses. It's this
25 developing area right out here, which is a gem, if

1 anyone has ever taken the time to go and actually
2 ride your bike or walk down that path.

3 In addition, as Representative Clark just
4 said, we tried to get a bill into the legislature
5 that prevents Xcel from taking advantage of a law
6 that was passed just a few years ago that allows any
7 project less than ten miles in length not to go
8 through a full need certificate study.

9 I'm asking the PUC and Xcel right now,
10 there's no reason why need should not be part of
11 this determination. Xcel has failed miserably, this
12 is unacceptable behavior. You should include that
13 in the full PUC process, a full need certificate,
14 and we're watching. That's why we're here, we're
15 talking about scoping, we're talking about what's
16 going to be included, it's going to be included and
17 we're watching.

18 Ladies and gentlemen, for all those
19 reasons that I have listed and more, that I will be
20 happy to provide on videotape, e-mail communications
21 with Xcel officials, I'll be happy to provide that
22 and I'll provide further dates and times.

23 With all due respect, I understand you're
24 working for Xcel and I'm sorry, but we have to call
25 accountability where it's needed. With all due

1 respect, but I'm asking the PUC -- on behalf of our
2 entire area, the PUC and Xcel Energy for
3 accountability.

4 MR. STORM: Dave Bicking.

5 MR. BICKING: Hello, it's Dave and it's
6 B-I-C-K-I-N-G. And I live in the Corcoran
7 Neighborhood close to South High, a few blocks from
8 this project.

9 People have said a lot of good things
10 about why it shouldn't go down the greenway. I want
11 to talk more about the need and it's hard to follow
12 Mark because he said a lot of what I said (sic)
13 very, very well. But I think bringing this back to
14 the process we're in right now, the scoping of the
15 environmental impact statement, I think it's very
16 important in A6 there, there's a description of
17 alternatives to the proposed project, transmission,
18 generation, and conservation alternatives, and I
19 think those are particularly important.

20 But we are at the wrong point in this
21 process because we don't have a description and a
22 full knowledge of what the need is. I think this
23 process needs to be put on hold until there is that
24 description and until there is that knowledge.
25 Because how are they supposed to do a description of

1 alternatives to the proposed project -- in other
2 words, alternative ways of solving the identified
3 problem -- if they will not identify the problem?

4 You know, I mean, clearly the need -- you
5 know, I have sympathy for the businesses, large and
6 small, in this area that are concerned about the
7 reliability of their power. But this is a huge
8 project, something that's going to be there
9 permanently, or 30 years. It's a large magnitude to
10 solve a problem that we don't know what the
11 magnitude of that problem is.

12 If they need to be able to provide, what,
13 three percent, five percent, ten percent more power
14 to this area, do they need this huge 115,000 (sic)
15 kV power line going through our neighborhood? I
16 suspect they don't. And how long is this needed, is
17 this a permanent solution to a temporary problem?
18 Without that needs assessment, we don't know, not
19 only how big is the problem, but how long is that
20 problem going to be there.

21 We are looking at a situation where, you
22 know, if this is a 30-year solution in terms of the
23 need for power and how much power is consumed in
24 this area, I think nature may intervene here quite a
25 bit before that 30 years and make sure that we

1 reduce the amount of our power consumption.

2 So the economy also is a situation here,
3 I don't know exactly how long they've been planning
4 this, but I would guess it's at least two years
5 involved in here. And so if they did projections of
6 power usage -- first of all, we don't know what
7 projections, we don't know what assumptions they
8 used, but this needs assessment they did was two
9 years ago and people may have noticed, but things
10 have happened to our economy since then.

11 And you know, that's when he talked about
12 the three percent decrease in power usage generally.
13 But just in general, we're seeing a lot of projects
14 in this area, you know, building projects and other
15 projects that have been planned two years ago and
16 there's a hole in the ground and the project has
17 been put on hold.

18 Well, without that needs assessment, we
19 don't know, should this project also be put on hold?
20 I would say that very likely it should. So -- also,
21 when we look at this, and other people have talked
22 about this, too, what is this project? It's a one
23 and a half mile spur from the existing 115,000
24 kilovolt, or maybe higher, going along Hiawatha.

25 Now, that's kind of an unusual project to

1 have a spur just one and a half miles long. It's to
2 provide power, you know, not all along Lake Street
3 or along the greenway, but it's to provide power to
4 the Oakland substation from which then it will be
5 distributed to the properties in that area, which
6 includes a couple of big things like the hospitals.

7 But if it's just to provide power to that
8 one substation, how much energy needs to run down
9 the greenway or any of these other alternatives
10 we're supposed to be thinking about? What we do
11 know is that there is a plan for a power line to
12 come up from, I don't know exactly, roughly,
13 Crosstown Highway, come up maybe along 35W, I'm not
14 sure exactly the route, to that Oakland substation.

15 Now, if that's the case, and we're
16 talking about need for power radiating out from the
17 Oakland substation, maybe that power could come up
18 that line instead, along 35W in an area which is
19 being currently rebuilt and reconstructed for the
20 busway and lord only knows what else is going on
21 along there. Why is that line not being built first
22 to supply that power in that area? Frankly, I don't
23 know, and none of us really know.

24 But what I suspect, because there's also
25 a line coming down from Highway 280, I believe, to

1 the Hiawatha substation, it looks a whole lot like
2 they're not doing this, a one-and-a-half-mile spur,
3 to supply power to our neighborhood so that our
4 neighborhood, because of our concerns, needs to have
5 a power line through the middle it, running down our
6 streets or down the greenway.

7 No, I think it's much more likely, as
8 Mark said, that this power is coming through our
9 neighborhood and is being sold to our neighborhood
10 as a necessary project for our neighborhood but,
11 instead, is a necessary project for Xcel.

12 So I think at this point, this whole
13 process, the environmental -- the scoping of the
14 environmental impact statement should be put on
15 hold. First, because I think projects like this
16 generally can be put on hold because needs have
17 decreased or at least are changing based on nature
18 and the economy. But it should be put on hold
19 because it's impossible to do a good environmental
20 impact statement that talks about alternatives to
21 the proposed project when we don't know what is the
22 problem they're trying to solve.

23 Thank you.

24 MR. STORM: John Brewer.

25 That was the second call for John, so

1 he'll have to submit his comments in writing.

2 Okay. Is there anybody -- anybody who
3 hasn't signed a card who wants to speak?

4 Paula, state and spell your name, please.

5 MS. MACCABEE: My name is -- wow, that's
6 loud. My name is Paula Maccabee, M-A-C-C-A-B-E-E,
7 and I live at 1961 Selby in St. Paul and I'm working
8 with the Midway (sic) Greenway Coalition.

9 I'm not going to add to the substance
10 here, but I do want to correct one impression that
11 Mr. Storm might have given at the beginning. In his
12 process, creating the EIS, it doesn't matter whether
13 you're a party or a participant. But the decision
14 making is going to be in a contested case proceeding
15 in front of the Administrative Law Judge and the
16 PUC, and there's a world of difference between being
17 a party and a participant.

18 A party can bring in expert evidence,
19 whether that's expert evidence of decline in
20 property values, expert evidence of demand
21 potential. A party can also ask questions of Xcel
22 called information requests which they have to
23 answer. Participants can't do that.

24 So as this process moves forward, this is
25 a good first step, this has been a lot of activism,

1 but the real decision-making process is yet to come.
2 The contested case is given more weight than the
3 public speaking. And whether it's working with the
4 city, working with the county, working with the
5 neighborhood organizations, working with the
6 Greenway Coalition, participation in the contested
7 case hearing proceeding is indispensable. And
8 people really need to band together, at least a few
9 key organizations, in being willing to become
10 parties in order to get answers to some of the
11 questions that were asked tonight and in order to
12 make some of the points tonight with the help of
13 expert evidence.

14 Thank you.

15 MR. STORM: Thank you, Paula.

16 And if you remember, there's a slide that
17 has Beverly Heydinger's -- the Administrative Law
18 Judge assigned to this case, there's a slide that
19 has her address in it. So please contact her office
20 if you're interested in becoming a party, and again,
21 make sure you get on her service list.

22 Anyone else who didn't fill out a card
23 but would like to speak, raise your hand.

24 State and spell your name for the record,
25 please.

1 MR. SEMBLA: Doug Sembla.

2 MR. STORM: You're going to need the mic.

3 MR. SEMBLA: Doug Sembla, S-E-M-B-L-A,
4 East Phillips resident and so I guess a member --
5 oh, sorry, I usually hold it too close, so I'm
6 trying to avoid doing that.

7 Anyway, I think most everything's been
8 said tonight, but I just wanted to say that nobody's
9 been as brutally honest as they should have been.
10 We're trying to make this a really polite forum, and
11 I think we should be really honest and realize that
12 what we're talking about is something that's
13 outmoded. There's dozens of different energy
14 options out there, the fact that we're only talking
15 about a handful of options, such as the Midtown
16 burner or this, is a lack of foresight. And I think
17 people should be really honest with those who are
18 trying to push these sort of outmoded, useless
19 options on us, especially without even providing any
20 sort of proof that's valid, in my opinion.

21 Anyway, enough said. If baby wants to
22 say hello, you can say hello, too. Say hi, don't
23 say meow, this is an official public hearing. I
24 tried.

25 MR. STORM: Okay. Is there anyone else

1 who hasn't filled out a card but would wish to
2 speak?

3 Okay. I want to remind you that the
4 close of the comment period is July 10, so get your
5 comments to me by July 10.

6 Xcel has asked if they could just have
7 some comments and I'd like to give them the
8 opportunity take a couple minutes to do that.

9 MS. ASAH: They're not comments, they're
10 just a couple of clarifications that I didn't make
11 when I gave my original presentation.

12 The first is that there is a need
13 document that's been provided, it's in the
14 application, it's Appendix D.

15 We do have some Spanish-translated
16 materials, and that's only because I speak a limited
17 amount of Spanish and there's a few materials that
18 got translated, but we don't have any in any other
19 languages and we are aware of that.

20 We are the number one home provider in
21 the country, we've been recognized by several
22 different organizations.

23 Power delivered by this project will
24 serve the project area and no other place. It will
25 address the area's power issues, I don't think I

1 made that clear in my first presentation. This
2 increased capacity will not increase CO2 output, I
3 know it's a little bit confusing. Generation that
4 Xcel currently produces will not be increased by
5 this project. Generation will stay the same, power
6 capacity in this area will increase only because
7 they're tapping into existing transmission.

8 It's a bit confusing, if you have
9 additional questions about why the generation won't
10 increase, please do feel free to see me afterwards
11 and I can explain it to you.

12 The other thing is that we support the
13 Phillips Energy -- excuse me, is it the Phillips or
14 Long-? We support the energy cooperative here in
15 the area, we're the financial supporter, we provide
16 almost all of their operating budget, and a price
17 drop will not occur from this project. Thanks.

18 MR. STORM: Okay. I want to thank
19 everybody for coming out. It's important that you
20 participate in the process, this is just the
21 beginning. Remember, your comments are due to me
22 July 10, end of business.

23 Also, be aware that the task force's
24 first meeting is next Wednesday in one of the rooms
25 in this building, I'm not really sure which one, but

1 it's in this room (sic).

2 If you have any questions in the meantime
3 or throughout the process, please feel free to
4 contact me, or Deb Pile if you want to have her
5 explain some of the rules or ways that you can
6 participate.

7 And again, thank you for coming, and that
8 will conclude the meeting.

9 (Public comment concluded.)

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