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PUBLIC COMMENTS - MINNEAPOLIS - 2:00 - March 16, 2011

In the Matter of the Northern States Power Company
Certificate of Need Application for
Two 115 kV High Voltage Transmission Lines in Minnesota

PUC Docket Number: E002/CN-10-694

March 16, 2011

Plaza Verde.
1516 East Lake Street.
Minneapolis, Minnesota

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1 MR. STORM: I'm going to open it up for
2 speaking. Couple things I want to state up front.
3 Try to keep your comments short. If we have time,
4 you certainly have a chance to come back and speak
5 again. I have a court reporter who will be starting
6 her portion as soon as I turn it over to the
7 audience. She will record your comments, your
8 questions, responses from me or from Xcel.

9 When you step to the mic, I ask you speak
10 slowly. I have a terrible time with that, as you've
11 just experienced. But speak slowly. State and
12 spell your name for the court reporter.

13 As I said, there are comment sheets on
14 the side. You don't need to use them. You can
15 write on your own stationery, you can go to our
16 website and write electronically or e-mail. The
17 comment period closes end of business, April 6th.

18 MS. YOUNG: I have a comment.

19 MR. STORM: First I'm going to call up
20 people who preregistered to speak. Once they're
21 done, then I will go by showing hands for people to
22 speak. It doesn't seem like much, but if you were
23 here for a routing, I had 300 people in the room,
24 and it made a lot of sense.

25 Let me see if this mic is on.

1 Okay. First commenter tonight is Timothy
2 Thomas. Please state and spell your name.

3 MR. DenHERDER-THOMAS: My name is Timothy
4 DenHerder-Thomas. That's Timothy, and last name
5 D-E-N-H-E-R-D-E-R, hyphen, Thomas, T-H-O-M-A-S.

6 I am an organizer who's been working with
7 a number of community groups and some of the local
8 business associations in this area around a
9 community energy plan. Basically, how do we meet
10 the energy needs of this community through energy
11 efficiency, renewable resources, technology, things
12 like that. I have three primary comments about the
13 existing application.

14 First, I've read the various scenarios of
15 what Xcel assesses we can meet through conservation,
16 renewable energy, etcetera. I would really
17 encourage an evaluation not just of the programs
18 Xcel currently offers and whether they're adequate
19 to meet the demand, but other, for example, best
20 practices programs around the country.

21 Two, that I've seen, just offhand, is
22 peak demand reduction projects in California where
23 they use a facility chiller, technology that saves
24 54 megawatts of demand in the area. And also,
25 another example where they developed a grassroots

1 program that had 90 percent adoption among the
2 business center and local community organization
3 areas.

4 This isn't standard practice, it's not
5 what we're used to, but I think it demonstrates that
6 there really are more viable alternatives to using
7 that transmission line to develop this scenario. We
8 should at least be looking at those; not necessarily
9 saying those are the solutions, but if we're
10 evaluating alternatives, we should.

11 Second, that current application kind of
12 evaluates a series of different strategies. So what
13 can we do with efficiency, what can we do with
14 solar, so on and so forth, and kind of identifying
15 each of those strategies by themselves is
16 inadequate. I think if we really want to see what
17 is possible, the application should demonstrate that
18 a combination of those strategies is not going to
19 change the demand direction in power forecasted.

20 And then, finally, there's a question of
21 once you've identified what the actual alternatives
22 are, what is the most beneficial and most cost
23 effective? And I feel that that should be evaluated
24 not just in terms of upfront costs, but also in
25 terms of what is the long-term impact in terms of

1 savings, financial savings to the community, in
2 terms of the economic development impact, job
3 creation impact for this community. This is a
4 community that is very highly affected by high
5 energy prices. Energy prices is a big issue here,
6 as well as unemployment. So, you know, we all know
7 that the least cost light bulb is not generally the
8 most economically beneficial light bulb over the
9 long term. That applies not just for an individual,
10 but for the entire community.

11 So that's mostly what I wanted to say.
12 We need to be thinking very carefully about what are
13 the long-term economic, as well as the health and
14 social impacts of this project on the community and
15 making sure that they're looking very carefully at
16 what is possible and what is the best function.

17 So I would encourage looking at those
18 different elements in the application and as we're
19 evaluating the scenarios. Thank you.

20 MR. STORM: Thank you, Tim.

21 Angelina Matias-Vazquez. Please state
22 and spell your name.

23 MS. VAZQUEZ: Yes, sir. My name is
24 Angelina Matias-Vazquez. A-N-G-E-L-I-N-A. Matias,
25 M-A-T-I-A-S, Vazquez, V, as in Victor, A-Z-Q-U-E-Z.

1 First of all, before I even advance my
 2 comments this morning, I want to just make a
 3 brief -- a brief update to my neighbors who are
 4 present here today. I want them to realize that
 5 last summer we spent almost -- well, many number of
 6 days going to the state capitol to get this
 7 certificate of need legislation passed. And, you
 8 know, many of us load up our cars with people from
 9 the community and we went up there.

10 Finally we got this certificate of need
 11 legislation passed. Unfortunately, and this is a
 12 very sad thing to me today and this is the reason
 13 why I want people to be aware of this, everybody who
 14 has this piece of paper here, the public meeting
 15 document, if you look in the back here it says
 16 non-contested.

17 I want to tell you why it is not being
 18 contested. We were not able to get enough money to
 19 hire a lawyer to represent us; this poor community
 20 in south Minneapolis did not have. I talked to a
 21 lot of people who have money, no one came to our
 22 aid. And -- but there are businesses here in the
 23 future doing all sorts of solar energy installations
 24 and what have you, and yet these people are not at
 25 this time helping us.

1 So for that reason when it says
2 non-contested, it just simply means we don't have
3 anyone to represent us and, therefore, we are out of
4 luck, as it were. But now I'm going to go ahead
5 with my comments.

6 I'm here today to talk about
7 alternatives, the alternatives to this high voltage
8 power lines. It is very sad to say that Xcel
9 Energy, in its certificate of need application,
10 failed to show how putting together a number of
11 alternative resources of renewable energy could and
12 would potentially address the additional needs of
13 this area. So it's not a matter of the demand, it's
14 how we meet the demand. And this community has a
15 vision and that vision is that this high voltage
16 power lines are not necessary.

17 In fact, these are all old way of seeing
18 things. The new way of seeing things and the future
19 of this community is with solar energy and other
20 forms of renewable energy. And so instead of us
21 spending \$30, \$50 million to bury some lines through
22 our neighborhood, we could take that money and have
23 this energy democracy vision where every one of us
24 will have a solar system installed in our home, hot
25 water heating systems.

1 All of these different sources of
2 renewable energy can be put in place. And the funny
3 thing is, everybody keeps saying that we need to be
4 conserving and yet, you know, God gave us the sun.
5 The sun is the most amazing source of energy. It's
6 endless. I mean, it's all there for us. It was a
7 gift that the lord gave us and now that we have the
8 opportunity to take advantage of it, we really need
9 to realize that this is a dream that can come true
10 and all we need to do is take the -- a portion of
11 the 81 -- approximately \$81 million the utilities is
12 taking from this community. And I'm just talking
13 about this very small -- the Phillips community
14 area, for the most part. \$81 million per year that
15 they're taking from us.

16 And all I'm saying is that Xcel Energy --
17 I'm asking all my neighbors to demand that Xcel
18 Energy invest some significant money here in our
19 community. They have invested money everywhere
20 else. Why not here, where it's mostly needed, and
21 why not now?

22 And that -- that is my dream, that every
23 home in our community will have a solar system in
24 our home which not only will provide our energy
25 needs, but would also provide energy to fuel our

1 solar cars, which, by the way, they're coming,
2 they're right around the corner. In a few years
3 everybody pretty much will have the choice of
4 driving an electric vehicle.

5 Thank you.

6 MR. STORM: Thank you.

7 Elliott Hughes. Please state and spell
8 your name.

9 MR. HUGHES: Elliot Hughes. E-L-L-I-O-T,
10 H-U-G-H-E-S. I just have a few concerns with this.

11 It talked about environmental effects;
12 air quality, biological resources, cultural, geology
13 and soils, health and safety, noise, all these
14 things. It seems like -- I don't know, you said
15 that there's going to be an environmental
16 presentation, like, in the coming months or
17 something? If you could speak to that.

18 MR. STORM: Yeah. Once the comment
19 period closes on the scope, I will develop a scope
20 recommendation to my commissioner. Out of that will
21 come a scoping decision which locks in the, quote,
22 unquote, table of contents for the environmental
23 report, then I produce the environmental report.
24 Once I'm done with that, I will then notice
25 everybody who's elected to be noticed and make the

1 report available to them prior to going into public
2 hearing.

3 MR. HUGHES: Well, one of my concerns is
4 is our ability to, like, voice our concern with that
5 formally. Because what you said is after the PUC,
6 the environmental statement, that we will informally
7 be able to speak to that and address our concerns.
8 But I feel like it's very -- like, you know, a large
9 project like this could have, like, extreme
10 environmental impact and noise and health and safety
11 impacts on this community, which is a very large
12 community. And, you know, with previous projects
13 with this, it has ended up, like, hurting and
14 gentrifying the community, and we don't want to see
15 that again.

16 And so, like, one question I want to put
17 out there is, like, if, you know, with this informal
18 comment process, are we going to have a chance to
19 formally contest this project? Like -- like, right
20 now, as much as our voice is being heard, can we
21 actually, if we want the alternative, can the people
22 demand and, like, you know, the alternative and
23 actually shift the movement of this project?

24 MR. STORM: Okay. Hold on, Elliot.
25 There was a lot in there. Let me see if I can help

1 you understand the process. As I said, what we're
2 here tonight to do is to have you, the public, local
3 government and state agencies, assist me in scoping
4 the formal document. So if there's an alternative
5 to the power line that you want me to consider, you
6 need to add that during this comment period.

7 MR. HUGHES: Okay.

8 MR. STORM: If there is an impact that
9 you want me to consider, you need to speak up and
10 add that to the record during this comment period.

11 I will say that this situation is a
12 little unique. We've already done the routing
13 portion of the process. We haven't completed it.
14 We've done it all the way up through public
15 hearings. Part of that was environmental impact
16 statement. And there is an environmental impact
17 statement on the route and route alternatives that
18 are on the table currently. And I can certainly
19 point you in that direction, get you a copy of that
20 document.

21 It's -- we're a little out of position
22 because that specific work, that intense work on the
23 impact on the environmental issue for esthetics, for
24 light pattern, environmental justice, we've done
25 that with the EIS. What we're doing here is I want

1 you to help me scope what you think should be in the
2 environmental report that is relative to the need.
3 And those things would be size, type and timing and
4 environmental issues.

5 MR. HUGHES: So then one of my major
6 concerns would be air quality. Like, we want, you
7 know, no boisterous emissions, like, put into the
8 air in this neighborhood. We want, you know,
9 minimal noise, you know. We don't want people's
10 houses being, you know, torn down to build this
11 project, in terms of land use.

12 With groundwater and wetlands, I would
13 say that we need to preserve our wetlands, make sure
14 that our groundwater does not get poisoned at all
15 by, like, any of this project. With -- let's see.
16 Soils, we have to make sure that the soil doesn't
17 get poisoned with this project. And with biological
18 resources, like, we wouldn't want, like, water
19 being, like, taken from, like, natural areas, being,
20 like, sucked up to, you know, be used as a resource
21 for this project.

22 And then, also, I just want to voice that
23 it also says, like, areas of no-build alternatives
24 right here. And I think you stated that.

25 MR. STORM: It's building on.

1 MR. HUGHES: Yeah. I just didn't hear
2 anything about that. So, I wanted to, you know,
3 if -- you know, if it does come up, you know, that
4 you all want to do something that does have, you
5 know, some of these, like, negative effects on our
6 community, like that, we still have the no-build
7 alternative or, like, you know, or like at least --
8 yeah, doing, like, you know, renewable energy, like
9 geothermal or solar energy or other forms of like
10 energy.

11 MR. STORM: If I could, what I would
12 recommend to you is, one, either contact me
13 separately, I can get you a copy of the EIS,
14 environmental impact statement, that was done on the
15 route. And that document will have all those
16 effects that you've mentioned you're concerned
17 about. That will have analysis of them relative to
18 the routes that are on the table, the substation
19 that's on the table.

20 I don't want to put the cart before the
21 horse here. What I'm trying to get from people here
22 is since we're doing the need, we're doing the size,
23 type and planning. We'll look at no-build for sure.

24 So I'm looking at the -- the
25 environmental report will evaluate the environmental

1 impacts of the proposal and it will compare them to
2 solar, to a biomass burner, to other ways of meeting
3 that need. So try to keep that in mind as you're
4 thinking about this. But I definitely would
5 encourage you to at least look at -- go online, at
6 least look at that EIS, get a feel for some of that
7 detailed information you're looking for.

8 MR. HUGHES: Yeah. And with the biomass
9 burner, that's been proposed on a large scale in
10 this community before. So that would be something
11 that would be -- definitely be opposed once again.

12 MR. STORM: If I may, and then to cover
13 the rest of them, you said -- once the environmental
14 report is done and we'll be back for the public
15 hearing, from the informal versus the formal here--I
16 won't get too radical on that--but that public
17 hearing is definitely an opportunity for you to come
18 back. After you've read my environmental document,
19 after you've looked at all the other public
20 comments, after you've looked at the record, and you
21 can tell the judge, hey, I still think solar is
22 viable and here's why. It's your opportunity to add
23 the input to the record.

24 MR. HUGHES: Like, can we make a legal
25 contest to that? Because you said it's informal.

1 But otherwise we would need to present evidence that
2 would make that a formal contest, formal legal
3 contested?

4 MR. STORM: Elliot, if -- I wouldn't get
5 too wrapped up with contested. The contested case
6 hearing would not be contesting, I'm against the
7 project, I want to fight it. The contested hearing,
8 if one were granted, one were requested, that you
9 contest the material facts that are in the
10 application, that you don't believe the numbers that
11 Xcel is giving you. That's what that process is
12 for.

13 The informal public hearing still gives
14 you the opportunity to speak to the ALJ and voice
15 your opinion about the formal document, about the
16 project in general and to add information to the
17 record. If you think that you have some information
18 that the decisionmaker, the PUC, will find useful,
19 that's an opportunity for you to put it into the
20 record.

21 MR. HUGHES: Cool. Thank you for your
22 explanation. I just wanted to inquire.

23 MR. STORM: Thank you.

24 Raymundo Becerra.

25 MR. BECERRA (through interpreter): What

1 I want to --

2 MR. STORM: State and spell your name,
3 please.

4 MR. BECERRA: Oh, yeah. Raymundo
5 Becerra. R-A-Y-M-U-N-D-O. And his last name is
6 Becerra, B-E-C-E-R-R-A.

7 My concern is that I live close where you
8 said that you want to put a substation. I live
9 Chicago Avenue and 27th. And if it's close where
10 you're going to put that substation, what are the
11 dangers that we're going to have? Because I'm
12 thinking that if I'm that close, that there going to
13 be something bad, unless -- and that's what I want
14 to know, if it affects me in my home.

15 MR. STORM: Okay. Again, because of the
16 cart before the horse that we're dealing with here,
17 the other proceeding that involves the routing, the
18 routing docket, we have released an environmental
19 impact statement for that routing document. That
20 addresses the impacts of the substation locations
21 and that information is contained in that document.
22 And if you, through the interpreter, contact me, I
23 can get you a translated copy of the relevant
24 sections of that document.

25 MR. BECERRA: Okay. Thank you.

1 MR. STORM: Thank you.

2 Solita Bustamante.

3 MS. BUSTAMANTE (through interpreter):

4 Solita, S-O-L-I-T-A. Bustamante,

5 B-U-S-T-A-M-A-T-E -- M-A-N-T-E.

6 I live at 1834 and 28th Avenue -- 28th
7 Street. And I have my home there and I presume that
8 it is going to be -- what the consequences to be
9 there? What she wants to know is that because in
10 her block is only like three houses, she's concerned
11 that they going to take her house down.

12 MR. STORM: Okay. There are no houses --
13 there's no houses that are going to require to be
14 taken down in this project. And as to the potential
15 effects of this project, should it go through, I
16 would again refer you to the environmental impact
17 statement that I wrote specifically about the
18 various routes. And if you need or want the
19 relevant sections of that document translated, I can
20 get that translated for you.

21 MS. BUSTAMANTE: Okay. Thank you.

22 MR. STORM: Just have your translator
23 give either me or Jamie your information.

24 MS. BUSTAMANTE: Thank you.

25 MR. STORM: Thank you.

1 Hassan Jama. Spell your name, please.

2 MR. JAMA: Hello. My name is has Hassan,
3 first name H-A-S-S-A-N. Last name J-A-N -- J-A-M-A.

4 I'm from Abubakar As-Saddique Islamic
5 Center. I am the executive director. I am one of
6 the board of directors, Phillips Neighborhood
7 Association. I will make comments and I have
8 question for you.

9 The first comment, they demand to have a
10 meeting to educate Midtown Phillips neighborhood and
11 small business about this. We don't know much
12 about. So I ask to have more meeting and to do more
13 translation, how it can harm us or affect us in
14 safety and economic ways.

15 Second, I have a concern. I believe this
16 high voltage transmitter impacts us and our safety
17 and our house value. And I don't think it's good
18 idea to grant or approve the certificate of need.

19 I think we can get alternative. We're in
20 21st century. As a cold nation area we can get
21 solar, wind, or water energy. We have 10,000 lakes
22 in Minnesota, so I think it's a good idea to use at
23 this time.

24 Also, I'm not expert, but I ask you if
25 it's possible the wires can be down into the ground.

1 That's the first question.

2 MR. STORM: Okay, Hassan. I hate to keep
3 saying this, but because we put the cart before the
4 horse, we have, in the previous docket, which is on
5 hold, the routing docket, we have developed the
6 environmental impact statement that addresses the
7 potential impacts of these lines. And there's a
8 good -- there's a great discussion of that in that
9 document. I would point you to that document.

10 Relative to undergrounding, the financial
11 decision has not been made yet. But I can say that
12 the other process, the routing process, has gone
13 through the environmental report -- environmental
14 report, the public hearing. We had a hearing, it
15 was a contested case hearing. The ALJ has released
16 her report. And in her report she does -- she is
17 recommending that the lines be underground, to the
18 PUC.

19 Now, that's a recommendation to the PUC.
20 The PUC is the final decisionmaker. And that
21 process, that routing process is on hold until the
22 need process catches up. Once the two processes
23 catch up and are in sync and the record goes back to
24 the PUC, the PUC will hold an open meeting where
25 they'll make final decisions and people can come to

1 that meeting and can speak to the decision makers
2 directly at that meeting.

3 MR. JAMA: We are in between 28th and
4 29th. Our address is 2824 13th Avenue. We have a
5 school, lot of children goes to our center, and also
6 there's a school next to us. Also, we have
7 beautiful greenway. So how do you think, if it's
8 approved, how that's affected, the transmitter, all
9 these things?

10 MR. STORM: Okay. I can't -- I can't
11 speak to what the final decision will be.

12 MR. JAMA: Okay.

13 MR. STORM: But I believe that if the PUC
14 follows the judge's recommendation and buries the
15 line, I do not believe that there will be a health
16 issue for the citizens.

17 MR. JAMA: You don't think health issue,
18 that's what you're saying?

19 MR. STORM: That's what I'm saying.

20 MR. JAMA: For the safety. How about the
21 environmental?

22 MR. STORM: I wrote the environmental
23 report, the EIS, environmental impact statement,
24 online. We evaluate the four or five routes. And
25 given the judge's recommendation that the -- to the

1 PUC that the route be -- that the line be buried, I
2 think--and it's only my opinion, I'm not the final
3 decisionmaker--if that line is buried, that there
4 will be minimal to no environmental impacts or
5 health effect.

6 MR. JAMA: I think Midtown neighborhood,
7 Phillips, we have enough problems. I think most
8 people in this area are immigrants. So I think we
9 need not high voltage transmitter, but we need a
10 resource to help our people. That's, I think, what
11 should be happening, as a Midtown Phillips resident.

12 So is there any way we can think
13 alternative? Because we think this one can cause
14 noise. Also, it can affect our house value. And I
15 think our insurance goes up because of the safety,
16 because of, you know, anything can happen.

17 MR. STORM: Okay. Hassan, the process
18 we're doing now, the need process, will look at how
19 else can we meet the need, other than the
20 transmission line? So this process will look at
21 that question. And it will be up to the PUC, the
22 ultimate decision makers, to decide if, one, that
23 they agree that the need is true, and, two, that if
24 the transmission line is the way to meet the need.
25 I really don't have an opinion on that at this time

1 in the process because we're still developing a
2 record.

3 MR. JAMA: Finally, thank you for your
4 time. Again, I demand not to grant certificate of
5 need, the reasons I mentioned earlier. Thank you.

6 MR. STORM: Okay. And a reminder that
7 once the environmental report is done, we'll be back
8 here, with a judge, in a hearing, and you can
9 certainly state your feelings then, too.

10 MR. JAMA: Thank you so much.

11 MR. STORM: You're welcome.

12 Elizabeth Young. Do you want me to bring
13 the mic to you?

14 MS. YOUNG: No, that's okay. Hello. Can
15 you hear me well enough? My name is Elizabeth,
16 E-L-I-Z-A-B-E-T-H. Young, Y-O-U-N-G.

17 My concern is in regard to medical
18 facilities in the Phillips area. I know that the
19 one that I go to, Smiley's Clinic, 2020 East 28th,
20 is right next door to a area they say they're going
21 to excavate that's on Hiawatha and 28th. It's a
22 full service clinic and I use it for most of the
23 medical implements and x-ray machines and so forth.
24 And I'm wondering if the equipment is going to be
25 affected by all this drilling and work over there.

1 And also a number of other medical clinics in the
2 area. And I'm just wondering how they will be
3 affected.

4 MR. STORM: Paul, do you want to comment
5 on that? I can --

6 MR. LEHMAN: Well, my background isn't
7 one in which I would be able to tell you
8 specifically the impact on medical equipment from
9 any of the work that we're doing in construction.
10 So I'm going to turn to my team to see if I have a
11 volunteer who might be able to address that? I'm
12 looking for a volunteer to talk about what impacts,
13 during the construction phase, there might be during
14 the development of the Hiawatha substation and how
15 it might affect medical equipment.

16 MR. GALLAY: Ben Gallay, G-A-L-L-A-Y.
17 I'm an electrical engineer with Xcel Energy's
18 engineering department.

19 Construction next to medical facilities,
20 other businesses and whatnot are kept to a minimum.
21 As far as equipment you're talking about, there
22 would not be any unnotified interruption of service.
23 And the type of work we're taking about wouldn't
24 interrupt the existing electrical service at all.

25 As far as vibrations and that sort of

1 thing during construction, we actually have a group
2 who are going to do a study before construction
3 starts to identify any facilities such as that.
4 They'll monitor equipment and monitor what sorts of
5 impact they're having and if it becomes at risk, we
6 stop construction.

7 They also watch for issues such as damage
8 to buildings, equipment. That isn't used to stop
9 the construction process. They assess damages after
10 the fact and make repairs and reparations.

11 MS. YOUNG: Thank you for that input.
12 The reason I'm asking this question is because it
13 was a concern of the University of Minnesota in
14 regard to the Hiawatha train going through the
15 university campus, and they specifically brought up
16 the concern about delicate medical equipment. So
17 that's why I was concerned. But you're quite sure
18 it's not a worry?

19 MR. GALLAY: Yes. Especially, since
20 you're talking about it, I am a little familiar with
21 the issues they have at the university. Some of the
22 concern up there was the repeated vibrations from
23 the trains, after they were installed, going through
24 and some of the long-term medical tests that they're
25 doing. If the test should be interrupted during the

1 seven-year process, they could lose all the data
2 they have. Invalidates the entire test. The worry
3 was about the repeated train traffic at some point
4 interrupting one of those tests, causing them to
5 lose so many years of information.

6 MS. YOUNG: Thank you.

7 MR. STORM: Thank you, Elizabeth.

8 Shirley Heyer. Please step to the podium
9 and state and spell your name, please.

10 MS. HEYER: Hello, Mr. Storm. My name is
11 Shirley Heyer. S-H-I-R-L-E-Y. And my last name is
12 H-E-Y-E-R. I'm on the board of the Midtown Phillips
13 Neighborhood Association. I've lived on 24th and
14 10th and 24th and 13th since 1972. Also 27th and
15 13th.

16 I'm here to ask about serious
17 consideration of alternative methods of producing
18 electricity. I was at the south side housing fair a
19 couple of Saturdays ago. There was a fairly young
20 man there who started his own business for solar
21 energy on homes. He is an engineer, decided to get
22 out of manufacturing and get into the assessment of
23 homes, one by one, and recommend to the homeowner
24 how solar energy could affect their use of
25 electricity. And he'd been in business about six

1 months in that field.

2 He takes about \$300 to assess the
3 property. And he has found that for an average
4 home, \$10,000 investment would reduce the use of
5 energy by 30 percent per house. He did mention that
6 we have a lot of trees out here. But I've been
7 looking at the houses and there are plenty of homes
8 that could benefit by this. And this right now,
9 there's enough in federal stimulus money and rebates
10 that the homeowner only would have to pay out of
11 their own pocket \$1,500 to get that \$10,000 worth of
12 improvement.

13 I think we seriously need to look at that
14 for this entire area along this route. He also
15 talked about businesses along Lake Street. He said
16 anybody with a flat roof, given that they have to
17 have the right structure to hold the weight of the
18 solar panels, definitely could be looking and
19 getting into solar energy on their roof.

20 I do know that the Lake Street council,
21 Joyce Wisdom and her staff are, this afternoon,
22 doing an alternative energy conservation mitigation
23 workshop for the uptown neighborhood of businesses,
24 otherwise she would be here.

25 And for the last two years, including

1 some help from Xcel programs and others, they worked
2 with the small businesses up and down Lake Street to
3 mitigate the excessive use of energy and to improve
4 use of energy up and down Lake Street from
5 Hiawatha -- well, the whole end of Lake Street from
6 uptown to the river. I think we need to take a few
7 more years to find out whether we really need these
8 lines. And solar, geothermal on the big buildings
9 like the hospital and Wells Fargo are definitely
10 something that needs to be looked at.

11 I would like to comment on a few
12 questions people asked. Vibration, and there's
13 reparations if your building is damaged.

14 I was on the committee from the
15 neighborhood when the grain elevators were torn down
16 on the SECIA site. The contractor did measure
17 existing basements before the work started.
18 Vibration did damage one house. When the homeowner
19 went to Hennepin County because they promised that
20 they would do -- make amends, they said, See the
21 contractor, he carries the insurance for that. The
22 contractor said, Sue me. How is a little homeowner
23 supposed to sue a big contractor?

24 Through political pressure Hennepin
25 County eventually bought out that house and that

1 homeowner to make things good. It took a little
2 while. So I wouldn't necessarily trust contractors
3 to back up the claims that reparations will be made,
4 particularly when homeowners are involved.
5 Vibrations do matter.

6 The health issues. If we don't have the
7 substations on either end, that would make a big,
8 big difference. The substation that's on the west
9 end is surrounded by homes and it's on the edge of
10 the Midtown Greenway. The only way that substation
11 could be put in there without causing harm is to
12 bury it, like they do on the east and west coasts.
13 The substations make a loud whine and some people
14 are really sensitive to that noise, up to a mile
15 away.

16 So I think there are lots of ways we need
17 to look at to see if we can't produce electricity
18 here more openly and more efficiently. Thank you.

19 MR. STORM: Thank you, Shirley.

20 That takes me through my cards. I will
21 go by show of hands now. Please step up to the
22 podium, state and spell your name. Thank you very
23 much.

24 MS. WARD: My name is Nancy Ward.

25 N-A-N-C-Y, W-A-R-D. And I want to speak to some of

1 the same points that have been covered.

2 I would like any consideration for
3 alternative energy be considered in the aggregate.
4 So not individually and then individually
5 discounted, but to look at a whole range of
6 complimentary alternatives together.

7 Another thing, health impacts. I
8 understand those were addressed in the EIS, but to
9 have those be part of the consideration of cost. So
10 health impacts on individuals in chronic ways. I
11 know this is a hard thing to measure, it's a hard
12 thing to put a dollar amount on. But, you know,
13 we're talking about health care. When budgets are
14 out of control, state and national budgets, city
15 budgets are out of control, and health care costs
16 are a big part of it, we need to be tracing back
17 some of the sources of those costs and integrating
18 them, not internalizing them.

19 Another thing is that there is
20 legislation protecting Phillips neighborhoods
21 specifically for cumulative effects of toxins. This
22 is another one. I believe that that legislation
23 only addresses particulate matter. I'm not positive
24 about that. But this is an impact and I would like
25 to see it continually assessed and included as part

1 of some of those cumulative effects.

2 Thank you.

3 MR. STORM: Thank you. The show of
4 hands. Gentleman there. State and spell your name,
5 please.

6 MR. WENZEL: My name is Joel Wenzel,
7 J-O-E-L, W-E-N-Z-E-L. And I'm a resident of the
8 neighborhood.

9 And I would just like to add, Angelina's
10 comments about neighborhood engagement and comment,
11 again, that this neighborhood and those affected by
12 this infrastructure are largely impoverished, and
13 also transient. And so I would ask that
14 environmental report, that where possible you make a
15 comment that -- or, you comment that objections
16 filed by the -- filed by the neighborhoods in a
17 formal way aren't always possible relative to the
18 nature and the wealth of the neighborhood. Given
19 that, these processes generally are favored towards
20 larger, wealthier and more organized entities.

21 I would also ask that if you, in your
22 environmental report, through your research, if you
23 find any negative impacts, that if not already
24 required by statute, that you extrapolate the weight
25 of those impacts based upon the number of people

1 that are being affected, given that this area is a
2 very dense, residential area.

3 And one final comment, that would you
4 please consider the possibility of upgrading the
5 current infrastructure to be able to carry a higher
6 load of -- or, energy load or add multiple additions
7 of smaller lines that are making inroads from
8 multiple directions and through multiple ways, such
9 as above ground and underground, rather than just
10 one -- one large column or spine of a line, a high
11 capacity line.

12 Was that clear? Do you need anything?

13 MR. STORM: Understood.

14 MR. WENZEL: Thank you.

15 MR. STORM: Thank you.

16 CarrieAnne Johnson. Please state and
17 spell your name.

18 MS. JOHNSON: Hi. Thank you. My name is
19 CarrieAnne Johnson. C-A-R-R-I-E, A-N-N-E. Johnson,
20 standard spelling.

21 I'm a resident of east Phillips. I live
22 across the street from the current Hiawatha
23 maintenance facility, and I live one block from the
24 proposed Hiawatha station.

25 I want to back up a little bit and say

1 that whether by eating food, burning wood, busting
2 wood or splitting atoms, humans have always thought
3 to extract energy from nature, cheap and abundant
4 energy, to fuel our growth. First it was powered by
5 burning wood, but depleted the forest, led to the
6 rise of coal, which is now supplemented by
7 petroleum. Our addiction to these dirty sources of
8 energy have fueled the rate of climate change and
9 our dependence on it will cause consequences of peak
10 oil to be particularly severe.

11 We must transition into a culture that
12 consumes drastically less and create an energy
13 infrastructure that's based on non-polluting,
14 renewable and decentralized energy sources in order
15 to avert catastrophic collapse. The trick is
16 transition to a new paradigm before our energy --
17 excuse me, before our infrastructure completely
18 decays. We already are seeing this happen as our
19 cities are less and less able to fund street
20 repairs, to build -- repair bridges. Instead of
21 putting band aids on everything, now is the time to
22 do the hard work. To problem solve, to be creative,
23 to adapt.

24 We shouldn't fix the road and then send
25 out giant trucks over them. We can fix those roads

1 and dedicate them to biking. I don't mean just for
2 commuting, I mean for actually hauling things. We
3 could create bicycle highways from one end of town
4 to the other. Why would that decrease the amount of
5 electricity consumed? Because people who exercise
6 to commute are going to have better metabolisms,
7 people with better metabolisms are not going to be
8 the ones sitting around sedentary, watching TV all
9 day; they are going to be more active, they are
10 going to be healthier, they are going to make
11 healthier choices. And when people feel safe to
12 bike regularly, those choices are going to translate
13 into a better society for all of us.

14 I'm not asking you to solve all of the
15 world's problems, but I am asking that you do not
16 prevent us from solving this one creatively. I'm
17 not saying you have to teach us how to build
18 lifeboats, but we're all in the Titanic on this one.
19 Please don't cripple our ability to build our own
20 lifeboats by taking us down faster.

21 Thank you.

22 MR. STORM: Thank you.

23 Back to show of hands. Anyone else like
24 to speak? Okay. Seeing no show of hands, I'm going
25 to wrap this up with a reminder. If you want to get

1 your concern into the scope for the need
2 consideration, you have until April 6th to get your
3 information to me. Again, you can go to our website
4 and you can comment electronically. You can e-mail
5 me. My business card is on the table. You can
6 snail mail me. But it is important to get your
7 comment.

8 I also want to remind you that we will be
9 back here for a public hearing before an ALJ --
10 actually, you will have another opportunity, once
11 the environmental report is released, to express
12 your concerns on the need to an ALJ, administrative
13 law judge. Once we cross that road and we go to the
14 PUC for a final decision, you will again have an
15 opportunity to speak before the PUC and state your
16 concerns on the record.

17 I do appreciate you all coming. The
18 process doesn't work unless people participate, and
19 I'm glad that people came. We'll be here again
20 tonight at 6, if you think of something and you want
21 to come back and add another comment. Otherwise,
22 thank you.

23 There are poster boards, there are Xcel
24 people here, I'm here, if you want to ask us for a
25 clarification of something informally, I would

1 encourage you to do so.

2 Thank you and have a good evening.

3 (Meeting concluded at 3:45 p.m.)

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