



**Hollydale
115 kV Transmission Line Project
Advisory Task Force**

**Hollydale Advisory Task Force
Second Meeting – November 1, 2011**

Meeting Notes

Welcome and Agenda Review

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

Charlie reviewed the task force charge and emphasized that the work of this day, the second meeting, was to discuss in greater detail: (1) the applicant's proposed route, (2) alternative routes evaluated but not proposed by the applicant, (3) alternative routes proposed by the task force at its first meeting, (4) any additional routes or route segments, and (5) discuss the process for developing the report of the task force. Questions by task force members were discussed and addressed.

Review and Approval of Meeting Notes

Task force members were asked to review the meeting notes from the October 18, 2011 meeting and respond with any questions, edits, changes, etc. No questions or edits were offered and the meeting notes were approved by the task force.

Review of Routes, Route Segments, and Substation Locations

Task force members were provided with maps of the various route and substation alternatives including those in the application and those developed by the task force at its initial meeting. The task force clarified that it would like the State of Minnesota to consider in its environmental review those routes evaluated but not proposed by the applicant (alternative route segments A, B, C, and D).

The task force reviewed the alternatives and identified pros and cons for each (see below). During this discussion, the task force removed two routes from consideration, both identified by the task force at its previous meeting (alternative routes B2 and F). These routes were removed because they substantially increased the difficulty of connecting to the existing Hollydale

substation and likely did not meet their intended goal of reducing impacts to residents. Maps of the routes and substations discussed are included in Appendix A.

Applicant's proposed route

Pros

- The route follows an existing transmission line right-of-way, it is an easy option for Xcel
- Funds have already been spent in preparation of right-of-way
- There has been thirty to forty years of tree growth to camouflage the line
- A transmission line already exists along the route; “got a pole, get a pole”
- Easier for Xcel to upgrade transmission line
- Significantly fewer new impacts
- Those impacted along the proposed route had greater notice of the new line and been most engaged

Cons

- Structures (buildings/homes) have been built in existing right-of-way since it was established
- Multiple homes impacted that are within the 20 to 30 foot right-of-way
- New/upgrade transmission line will have negative impacts on property values along right-of-way
- Route goes through and/or impacts parks and trails and crosses more open wetlands than other alternatives
- Health and safety concerns because of transmission line
- Significant increase of impact to homes along route
- Change in expectations (of homeowners in area) in higher voltage line and allowance of metal poles (current right-of-way does not permit metal poles)
- Right-of-way owners have not maintained open access to poles; brush has not been cleared under existing line
- Alternative routes presented do not impact as many homes as the proposed route; this route impacts the most homes within 200 feet of right-of-way center line
- Route goes on east side of Providence Academy and impacts future playfield and building expansion
- High voltage power line by school
- Increased impact on existing powerline (line has not operated since 2006/2007)
- Proposed substation A is close to homes
- Comments have been made by homeowner in the corridor that if the line is built, they will move
- For homeowners association in area: concern of foreclosure of homes and non-payment of dues to association; homeowners move; homeowners cannot sell home; and/or, homeowners sell home at a lower value

Alternative route segment A

Pros

- Impacts fewer homes and parks than proposed route
- Uses Interstate 494 corridor for about half of route
- Shorter than proposed route
- Avoids Providence Academy (school)
- Ties more directly to preferred substation site A
- Follows major roads (Rockford Road and I-494) rather than going through residential (homes) area
- Avoids Niagara Lane and Turtle Lake area (area amenities include parkland and natural amenities)

Cons

- Still goes through some residential areas
- Pits neighborhood against neighborhood
- Health and safety concern for residents in impacted neighborhood
- “Pile on” Rockford Road impact (a lot of infrastructure already along the road)
- Alternative route areas have had limited engagement from homeowners and business-owners impacted because these alternatives have surfaced more recently and may or may not be deemed feasible

Alternative route segments B and B-1

Pros

- Reduces some of the impact on residential areas (but includes others)
- Impacts fewer homes than the proposed route
- Follows existing right-of-way (railroad and streets) rather than through neighborhoods and between homes

Cons

- Transmission line becomes someone else’s problem
- Impact on greatest number of homes and businesses than any other alternative
- Pits neighborhood against neighborhood
- No shared sacrifice on transmission line placement; piles on right-of-ways for railroad, Old Rockford Road, and Peony Lane
- Goes by elementary school
- New/upgrade transmission line will have negative impacts on property values along right-of-way
- Route goes through and/or impacts parks and trails and crosses more open wetlands than other alternatives
- Health and safety concerns because of transmission line
- Significant increase of impact to homes along route
- High voltage power line by school

- Comments have been made by homeowner in the corridor that if the line is built, they will move
- For homeowners association in area: concern of foreclosure of homes and non-payment of dues to association; homeowners move; homeowners cannot sell home; and/or, homeowners sell home at a lower value
- Alternative route areas have had limited engagement from homeowners and business-owners impacted because these alternatives have surfaced more recently and may or may not be deemed feasible

Alternative route segment B-2

After brief discussion, this segment was removed from consideration by the task force.

Alternative route segment C

Pros

- No house impacts nearer than 50 feet
- Significantly fewer homes impacted within 200 feet
- Fewer wetlands impacted (some ATF members felt significantly fewer impacted)
- Wetlands that are impacted are primarily along the roadways and have already negatively been impacted by runoff and other pollutants
- Fewer aesthetic impacts, including wetland areas
- Easier access for mosquito control
- There is a precedent that metal transmission poles already exist on Rockford Road, extending from Vicksburg Lane N. to between Old Rockford Rd. and Minnesota Lane N. Easier to mitigate the visual impact of the line

Cons

- Pits neighborhood against neighborhood
- Of the homes impacted, 12 of 19 are within 100 feet with zero separation from road
- New impact to Sugarhills development
- Pile on County Road 9 corridor
- New/upgrade transmission line will have negative impacts on property values along right-of-way
- Health and safety concerns because of transmission line
- Significant increase of impact to homes along route
- Alternative route areas have had limited engagement from homeowners and business-owners impacted because these alternatives have surfaced more recently and may or may not be deemed feasible

Alternative route segment D

Pros

- Less complicated routing of line
- Does not use Cheshire Lane
- Uses Interstate 494 corridor

Cons

- Closer to residential area than proposed route

Alternative route segment E

Pros

- At the first task force meeting, the task force members broke into three groups to identify possible route alternatives. All three groups identified this alternative route segment.
- This route alternative was overwhelmingly endorsed by members of the public who attended the scoping meeting on October 26, 2011
- The Plymouth City Council has officially taken action in support of this route segment
- The route impacts the least number of homes of all routes
- It also impacts the least number of: parks, trails, schools, and wetlands
- Route segment uses existing right-of-way and easements: highways, interstates, transmission lines

Cons

- Impacts housing behind post office (Cavanaugh addition)
- Follows commercial corridor and have not heard from businesses that might be impacted
- This route is longer than proposed route
- Along west side of Interstate 494 there is a stand of trees that the City of Plymouth owns, negotiation of sale may be an issue
- Transmission line along roadways; potential MnDOT and Federal Highway Administration issues

Alternative route segment F

After reviewing the pros and cons of this segment, it was removed from consideration by the task force.

Pros

- Impacts fewer homes than proposed route
- Avoids Greenwood School complex

Cons

- May not impact fewer homes than the proposed route and alternative routes
- Longer than proposed route (almost twice as long)
- Impacts future planned development
- Impacts the west side of Bridlewood Farms neighborhood
- Impacts new neighborhood going in where building is already happening

- Creates a new right-of-way from proposed route to Medina Road; access issues to new right-of-way
- Skirts Medina’s largest park
- Impacts Medina’s historic town center
- Creates the negative perception that the ATF is “stacked against” Medina

Preferred substation site A

Pros

- Close to Interstate 494 and accessible
- Least impact to homes
- Close to existing power lines
- Interstate 494 “white noise” already exists therefore the noise from the substation will not be as noticeable
- Alternate substation site B impact future development in that area

Cons

- Impact on wetlands
- Question mark on funds to City of Plymouth for some of the land

Alternate substation site B

Pros

- (none identified)

Cons

- More lines from Interstate 494 into residential area
- Site would prevent Alternative route segment E from being viable
- Impact future development at location
- Impacts Providence Academy

Discussion of Alternatives and a Preferred Alternative

The task force was asked if any additional alternatives or ideas had been generated as the various routes options were discussed. No additional alternatives were raised. The task force did note that the option of burying the power line, where necessary, to reduce impacts to neighborhoods, should be evaluated in the environmental assessment for project. They also noted that the cost of burying the line was a competing concern.

The task force considered whether there were any route alternatives for which they would like to indicate a preference. After discussion, the task force voted unanimously to indicate a strong preference for alternative route segment E.

The task force noted that all other route and substation alternatives identified (and not removed from consideration by the task force) should be considered in the environmental assessment. These routes and substation locations include:

Routes

- Applicant's proposed route (automatically included in environmental assessment)
- Alternative route segment A
- Alternative route segment B and B-1
- Alternative route segment C
- Alternative route segment D
- Alternative route segment E

Substations

- Preferred substation site A
- Alternate substation site B

Report Process

Charlie will draft a report based on the two meetings of the task force, outlining the process and the action of the task force. The report will be e-mailed to task force members for review and comment. The comments will be reviewed and incorporated into the report as appropriate. If the comments are extensive or differ substantially from meeting notes, then a request may be made to have these comments submitted and referenced electronically.

Notes from the second meeting will be sent to task force members for review and comment prior to development of the final report.

The proposed timeframe for the review and edit of both the meeting notes and the report is as follows:

- Friday, November 4, 2011 – Nov. 1 meeting notes out to task force members for review and edit
- 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 9, 2011 – Nov 1 meeting notes edits back to Charlie
- Thursday, November 10, 2011 – Draft report out to task force members for review and edit
- 12:00 noon, November 17, 2011 – Report edits back to Charlie
- Wednesday, November 23, 2011 – Final task force report due to Department of Commerce and e-mailed to task force members

The task force was thanked for its good work, understanding this was a difficult issue to undertake.