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SCOPING MEETING - 12-113 - HOLLYDALE
MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
ENERGY FACILITY PERMITTING
OCTOBER 25 AND 26, 2012

In the Matter of the Application for a Certificate of
Need for the Hollydale 115-Kilovolt Transmission Line
Project in the Cities of Plymouth and Medina

OAH Docket Number 8-2500-23147-2
MPUC Docket Number CN-12-113

Plymouth Creek Center
14800 34th Avenue
Plymouth, Minnesota

OCTOBER 25, 2012 - 6:00 P.M.
OCTOBER 26, 2012 - 1:00 P.M.

REPORTER: Janet Shaddix Elling, RPR

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OCTOBER 25, 2012 - 6:00 P.M.

MS. STEINHAUER: Good evening. Can people hear me? Can people hear me? Thank you.

I'd like to welcome you -- I'm trying to figure out a place to be where there isn't as much feedback. I'd like to welcome --

My name is Suzanne Steinhauer, I'm with the Minnesota Department of Commerce, Energy Facility Permitting Group. And I'd like to welcome you this evening to the environmental report scoping meeting for the proposed Hollydale 115 kV transmission line.

We'll go through the agenda real quickly.

Paul Lehman from Xcel Energy will be talking about the proposed project and then I'll talk a little bit about the process. With me here tonight is Mike Kaluzniak, he's on the staff of the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission. The Public Utilities Commission will be making the ultimate decision on both the need and, if necessary, the route for the project. Also, I think some of you met at the sign-in table this evening Ray Kirsch and Matt Langan and they're with me to help out also.

So I think we'll turn it over. We'll turn it over to Paul Lehman, he'll talk a little bit

1 about the project.

2 MR. LEHMAN: Good evening, everyone.
3 We'll try to find a spot that doesn't have too much
4 interference.

5 Before we get going, we do have a variety
6 of people here from Xcel Energy and Great River
7 Energy who are part of the project team, so I'm
8 going to have them just stand up and give you their
9 names and what they do so if you have a chance to
10 talk with them this evening you'll see who they are.
11 So I'll start with --

12 MS. ASAH: I'm RaeLynn Asah, the routing
13 or permitting lead.

14 MR. SPAULDING: Phillip Spaulding,
15 distribution planning engineer.

16 MR. WINKLEY: I am Justin Winkley, the
17 transmission planning engineer on the project.

18 MR. SMITH: Ed Smith, substation
19 engineer.

20 MR. ROGERS: Chris Rogers, Xcel Energy,
21 siting and land rights.

22 MR. COX: Gene Cox, Xcel Energy, project
23 manager.

24 MR. JOHNSON: Scott Johnson, community
25 relations manager.

1 MR. LAWLER: Steve Lawler, Great River
2 Energy, project manager.

3 MS. PARLOW: Marsha Parlow, Great River
4 Energy, transmission committee analyst.

5 MR. GRIGLESON: And I'm Jeff Grigleson
6 (phonetic), Xcel Energy, transmission engineer.

7 MR. LEHMAN: Just partly the reason to do
8 that is just so you see that it takes a pretty good
9 size team to work on these projects, get them to the
10 point where we're able to get them through all the
11 permitting process, so that is what it is.

12 Okay. So the project we're talking about
13 tonight is for this particular geographic area.
14 Most of you probably already figured out where the
15 project is because you've gotten information from us
16 or from the state describing where it is.

17 But we, as a company, both Great River
18 Energy and Xcel Energy, did some work to evaluate
19 what it takes to make sure we can maintain the safe,
20 reliable service for our customers.

21 And we focused or concentrated on what's
22 shown in orange here as the focus study area, the
23 area that was the most focused look in the analysis
24 of the needs of that area. A little bit bigger area
25 around that, kind of outlined in the light blue

1 color, is what we would call the greater study area.
2 So this is the area that we were looking at to make
3 sure that we would continue to maintain safe and
4 reliable service to our customers.

5 As we looked at this we saw that there's
6 a need. A need, in particular, for improvements to
7 address the way that the electric distribution
8 system serves our customers. In particular, we were
9 seeing that there was some problems in providing the
10 supply to the distribution lines that come through
11 this area to feed our customers.

12 We're also seeing that those feeder
13 circuits, those distribution wires that carry the
14 power to our customers, we're seeing some problems
15 where those could potentially overload. So we're
16 looking for ways to solve those problems.

17 Normally we try to take care of those
18 problems by working through a variety of tools we
19 have in our tool box of distribution solutions.
20 We've pretty much exhausted all those solutions at
21 this point in time so that's why we're proposing to
22 do something that's beyond taking care of it at the
23 distribution level.

24 So we have a project that we've proposed.
25 What we've proposed is to increase the reliability

1 of the quality of service to our customers. We're
2 going to rebuild approximately eight miles of an
3 existing 69 kV line and convert that to 115 kV.
4 We're going to take about 8/10ths of a mile of new
5 transmission to connect that existing line to a new
6 substation that we're going to construct, it's
7 called the Pomerleau Lake substation, and there will
8 be a few associated upgrades to go along with that.
9 So that's the project we're looking at developing.

10 And, again, if you look at this diagram
11 that shows the area of the study, there's a
12 green-dashed line that goes right through the middle
13 of that focus study area, that's the line that we're
14 talking about. And our intent is to basically turn
15 that line from green to blue, change its voltage
16 level that it operates from 69 kV to 115 kV. So
17 ideally there will be virtually no change in the
18 line, other than taking the existing line down and
19 putting the new line up that has a greater
20 capability to serve our customers.

21 What will be the benefits that comes
22 about from this? The distribution system, we'll
23 take care of those problems that I discussed before,
24 that will increase the supply to our distribution
25 system. We'll be able to get the power out on the

1 distribution networks to be able to supply our
2 customers, and we'll avoid any of those overloads
3 that I was describing that could take place on the
4 circuits that are serving our customers in the area.
5 It's an added benefit, is that it does help improve
6 the transmission system serving this area as well,
7 so there's a combined benefit of it as well.

8 Now, here's what we're looking at for a
9 schedule of activities. Back in the second quarter
10 of 2011 we began the route permitting process for
11 this. There were a variety of steps that have taken
12 place in that time period since then, including the
13 origination of the project -- or, excuse me, the
14 permitting activity that we're here for right now,
15 which is called a certificate of need, we're going
16 through a process where we demonstrate just what I
17 talked about, that we, in fact, need to do something
18 here. And those permitting processes we're
19 expecting now to complete sometime in the third
20 quarter of 2013.

21 So fall of next year is when we're
22 expecting to get through the permitting process.
23 And then if we do so, then we're expecting to, about
24 the same time, begin the process of doing final
25 design and getting ready to construct this facility

1 and we're hoping for an in-service date by second
2 quarter of 2015.

3 These are the contacts for the project
4 from Great River Energy and Xcel Energy, so those
5 are in your packet, the handout that was provided to
6 you. But one of the three of us would be able to
7 answer questions if you have some in the future.

8 MS. STEINHAEUER: Thank you.

9 So Mr. Lehman just spoke a little bit
10 about the process. Or, I'm sorry, about how we got
11 to where we are now.

12 I am presuming that many of you have
13 known about the project for awhile and may have been
14 involved in the routing of the project. And here's
15 some milestones to date.

16 As you're aware, the project started out
17 with the route permit application. That was because
18 the line as proposed by Xcel was a little bit under
19 nine miles. Under Minnesota statute, a transmission
20 line of greater than ten miles, with more than 100
21 kilovolts, requires a certificate of need. The
22 project as originally proposed was less than nine
23 miles and didn't meet that criteria.

24 After the project was converted to an
25 environmental impact statement, my colleague was out

1 here, we took some comments on the scoping, and
2 during the scoping process some of the routes that
3 emerged from that process were greater than ten
4 miles. So if the Commission selects one of those
5 routes, it would need to determine the need, the
6 Applicants applied for a certificate of need.

7 I'm sorry that I couldn't make this slide
8 any bigger.

9 Where we are now, the Commission has
10 accepted Xcel and Great River Energy's application
11 for need, we're out here for the environmental
12 report scoping meeting.

13 The CN process looks -- it's different
14 than the route process. It looks at issues of size,
15 type and timing. And the route permitting process
16 looks at where a route would be located and how it
17 should be constructed in a way that minimizes
18 impacts. The Commission will look at the merits of
19 the project, including the ability to meet the
20 stated need, as stated in the application, and also
21 the potential environmental impacts and how to
22 mitigate that when they make their final decision.

23 The Department is tasked with preparing
24 an environmental report for the project. The
25 environmental report examines the potential of human

1 and environmental impacts of a proposed project. It
2 looks at alternatives to the proposed project. And
3 I'll try to talk about that a little bit more and
4 that's one of the reasons we're out here tonight,
5 and potential mitigation measures that could be used
6 to minimize the impacts.

7 Unlike the environmental impact being
8 prepared for the route permit application, the ER,
9 which is prepared for the certificate of need, will
10 not provide a detailed assessment of the project.
11 After the ER is prepared, a public hearing will be
12 held in the project area. Because there's a need,
13 and because in this case the need for the project is
14 subject to contested case proceedings, there will
15 also be an evidentiary hearing.

16 Just a brief overview of how you can
17 participate. For the certificate of need, for the
18 environmental report scoping, tonight is your
19 opportunity to offer oral comments. We're accepting
20 written comments until November 16th. You can
21 certainly provide those now, if you have them. Even
22 after you leave the meeting tonight, you may have
23 spoken, you may have provided a written comment, but
24 other things come up, you have other questions, and
25 we're taking those comments until the 16th, but

1 after the close of the meeting tonight they do need
2 to be in writing.

3 As I mentioned earlier, the environmental
4 report looks at a very high level that looks at the
5 gen -- at the generalities of the proposed project.
6 You may have picked up this evening something called
7 the scoping document, a draft scoping document. And
8 I'd refer you to page 4 of that. You don't need to
9 look now. But that, in rule, in Minnesota rule
10 there's certain things that the environmental report
11 needs to look at and so we'll be looking at those.
12 On page 5 of the draft scoping document, that is
13 our -- you can view it as sort of the general table
14 of contents of things that we believe the
15 environmental report will be examining for the
16 project.

17 When I talk about high level and
18 generalities, what I mean is the ER doesn't look at,
19 for instance, house counts along this route or a
20 distribution route, it's not looking at routes.
21 It'll look at things like what types of impacts
22 would you expect from a transmission project or a
23 distribution project as opposed to demand-side
24 management or generation. Route specific issues,
25 like the acreage of trees cleared or how a

1 particular route might affect highway expansion
2 plans are addressed in the route permitting process.

3 As I mentioned and will keep mentioning,
4 this isn't your last chance for comments on the
5 scope, we're accepting written comments until the
6 16th of November.

7 There's information on the project
8 mailing list, where you can sign up, and there was
9 some sheets that you can sign up for. If you've --
10 I just want to reiterate that the Department of
11 Commerce is required to keep a project contact list.
12 That's different from the one that Xcel keeps of all
13 the landowners. So if you're not sure you're on the
14 project contact list, you can sign up either online,
15 and that information is provided in the materials
16 and in the notice, or you can sign up here and we'll
17 make sure that you get entered. My contact
18 information.

19 This might be a good time to turn it over
20 to my colleague, Mike Kaluzniak, and he can talk a
21 little bit about the Commission's role in this.

22 MR. KALUZNIAK: Thank you, Suzanne.
23 Excuse me.

24 As Suzanne mentioned, my name is Michael
25 Kaluzniak, I'm a staff member with the Minnesota

1 Public Utilities Commission. The Utilities
2 Commission is the body that determines the location
3 and approves the certificate of need, as well as the
4 route permit for high voltage lines in Minnesota.

5 You may recall from the diagram that
6 Suzanne had up earlier, there were two separate
7 tracks that were identified. One was the
8 environmental review, which is what we're talking
9 about now tonight, what information we would like to
10 see out of that, and the other portion is the need
11 review.

12 The Commission counts on the Department
13 of Commerce to do -- act as the local governments do
14 in a lot of environmental reviews as the responsible
15 governmental unit.

16 The environmental report is only a part
17 of the process for approval of the certificate of
18 need. As Suzanne mentioned, the application was
19 submitted by the Joint Applicants, both Xcel and
20 Great River Energy, to the Commission awhile back.
21 The Commission accepted the application as complete.
22 It doesn't evaluate the merits of the application,
23 but merely the contents of the application to see if
24 materials are there. During the need review process
25 that information is evaluated in greater detail.

1 Applicants and parties and the citizens
2 participate in an evidentiary proceeding, which is
3 kind of a mini administrative law proceeding. We
4 hire an administrative law judge from the Office of
5 Administrative Hearings to run the hearings, it's
6 done through briefing papers and they submit
7 testimony and evaluate the various items that are
8 raised as being in question during the procedure.

9 Part of that evaluation includes the
10 environmental review and the reports that are
11 developed with your input going forward.
12 Ultimately, those materials are formalized into a
13 summary document and forwarded to the Commission.
14 My duty is to take that and help our Commissioners,
15 the five members of the Public Utilities Commission,
16 to interpret those materials and make a decision
17 based on the record.

18 We try to keep these processes as open
19 and as transparent as possible. All the documents
20 that are submitted as part of the record are
21 maintained on our website, which you can find
22 through the notice, the meeting notice that's here
23 for you.

24 You should also know, as Suzanne
25 mentioned, that the comments on the scoping process

1 are open until November 16. And after that time
2 they'll begin undertaking their work and won't be
3 able to look at additional comments. So it's
4 important that we look towards the alternatives that
5 are raised here and we answer your questions for
6 those.

7 So we really appreciate you coming out
8 tonight. If you have questions about the process
9 itself, how the Commission works, what the statutes
10 say, what the rules are for administration of the
11 process, you're welcome to contact me.

12 I cannot speak to the merits of the
13 project itself, whether it's good, bad or
14 indifferent, or whether one location is preferable
15 to another, that's really something that the
16 Department can help you assess more fully. But if
17 you're having questions about how these processes
18 work, how the certificate of need relates to the
19 route proceeding, I'd be happy to help you with
20 those.

21 So I want to thank you all personally for
22 coming out tonight and hopefully we can answer your
23 questions.

24 Thank you.

25 MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you.

1 Applicant contacts, which you have in
2 several different locations.

3 And now we're going to get to the most
4 important part of the meeting, which is receiving
5 public comments on the scope for the environmental
6 report.

7 I failed to introduce this evening that
8 we also have a court reporter here. And the reason
9 that she's here is to take -- your comments are very
10 important, and I don't rely on my memory or perhaps
11 some rough scratch notes. So we want to get an
12 accurate recording of your comments.

13 To do that, we ask that one speaker at a
14 time come up to the podium. Please limit your
15 comments to five minutes per speaker. There will be
16 an opportunity for more at the end if time allows.
17 I also ask if you can please face the court
18 reporter, state and spell your name so that there's
19 an accurate record of your comments. Please
20 maintain respect for others. I realize that, as we
21 see with a lot of projects, it's a very emotional
22 issue because people -- it impacts you.

23 Please, to the extent possible, try to
24 focus your comments on the scoping issues and
25 alternatives. That's helpful to us so that we can

1 produce a report that is useful to you as we
2 evaluate the project and maybe come back out during
3 the public hearing comment, and it's important to
4 the Commission.

5 Some of you I know have filled out these
6 orange cards and I'll call on those people first and
7 then we'll kind of open it up to the floor.

8 Again, I ask that you can please come up
9 and face the court reporter, spell your name, and
10 make your comment.

11 The first person was Terri Bonoff.

12 SENATOR BONOFF: Well, good evening.

13 First of all, I would like to say a thank
14 you to everybody who is here, I thank the tremendous
15 turnout tonight, it shows just how deeply this
16 community is very concerned about this.

17 So, I'm State Senator Terri Bonoff and,
18 let's see, did I have to spell that? I think you've
19 got that. Thank you.

20 And I wanted to make some comments. And
21 for those of you who will be staying this evening,
22 both Representative Anderson and I are here,
23 although we have a debate or a forum at 7:00 so
24 we'll be leaving. But I did want to make sure that
25 you all know just how concerned this community is.

1 And I began understanding the impact of
2 this proposed line as I door knocked starting this
3 summer. And I would knock on door after door in
4 this proposed area and people would call me in, they
5 would open their door and have me stand in their
6 living room and look at just how close these brown
7 poles were to their living room and then they would
8 talk about their fear and concern with regard to
9 these very large proposed lines. And they weren't
10 concerned just about their property value, although,
11 of course, they were concerned about that, but more
12 importantly they were concerned about the
13 environmental and potential health risk that this
14 was going to have on their families.

15 And so in terms of my role as a state
16 senator representing this community, there's really
17 nothing more important to me as I look at this job
18 than protecting the health and well-being of my
19 community.

20 And so I did dive into this process and I
21 thank the PUC for being responsive and I thank the
22 Department of Commerce. Because as we first began
23 this process, I recall being at a hearing on
24 September 6th when it wasn't even decided whether or
25 not this process was going to exist, the certificate

1 of need was going to be uncontested, but because of
2 this neighborhood and this community was so
3 organized, they had even hired an attorney, there
4 are, you know, the City of Plymouth had formed an
5 advisory council, I know Council Member Judy Johnson
6 is here who was part of that, this community has
7 come together and spoken out.

8 So the main message that I would like to
9 leave on the record tonight is that this process
10 must exist separate from the routing. We must know
11 in no uncertain terms that this is actually the best
12 solution. Because to a bystander and somebody who
13 is not an expert, this doesn't look like the best
14 solution. And so I'm committed to turning over
15 every rock and allowing the experts to really
16 explore what else might be a possible alternative.
17 And only then talking about routes, because routes
18 should be after we have decided that this, in fact,
19 is the way to go.

20 So, again, I thank you for your
21 responsiveness. Xcel Energy had at first planned to
22 recommend that this was going to be uncontested, the
23 need, and they, after listening, also, it wasn't
24 just the PUC, Xcel Energy themselves recommended this
25 be a contested process so that everyone here could

1 have the chance to have their voices heard and this
2 work could be done with the kind of precision and
3 the kind of accountability that these folks in our
4 community deserve. Because it really is a
5 remarkable community, a community that is committed
6 to the health and well-being of not just their
7 families but families for generations to come.

8 So I thank you for giving me the
9 opportunity to speak and I will be at the hearing
10 tomorrow, too, as well, to participate and hear from
11 the citizens. So I'm sorry that I can't stay and
12 hear the testimony, but I'll be making sure that I
13 find out what happened.

14 Thank you very much.

15 (Clapping.)

16 MS. STEINHAEUER: Thank you. The next
17 person I have is Sarah Anderson.

18 MS. SARAH ANDERSON: Hi. My name is
19 Sarah Anderson, Sarah with an H, Anderson, S-O-N. I
20 am the state representative for this area, as Terri
21 had mentioned.

22 I appreciate all the feedback that I
23 received from the constituents. It started last
24 winter, I think February was the first e-mail I
25 received from a constituent about this issue. And,

1 of course, door knocking, going door to door in the
2 district I heard from many constituents that are
3 very worried about the impact that this is going to
4 have in the community overall.

5 Some of the feedback that I've received
6 from them has talked about what are the
7 alternatives, can this be put underground. I think
8 Terri and I probably knocked on the same door of
9 this fellow that on his porch you could literally
10 reach out and touch the pole line if that were to go
11 through. So there's a lot of deep and realistic
12 concerns about this and what this means for our
13 area.

14 And I don't want to take up the time of
15 the citizens 'cause I think each one of you can
16 speak more clearly of how this is truly going to
17 impact each of your neighborhoods. I live in
18 Plymouth so it impacts me as well, but I think it's
19 more important for you to hear from all the citizens
20 here tonight.

21 And I appreciate all of them keeping me
22 up to date, please feel free to e-mail at any time,
23 because your feedback has been wonderful in helping
24 me understand in particular how this is going to
25 impact everyone.

1 But I would like to see Xcel examine
2 other alternatives. Underground is one of the
3 things that has been mentioned to me, putting the
4 lines underground, as well as the different routes,
5 but I know that will be at a later time.

6 So I just want to thank everybody for
7 being here and I appreciate the time to speak.

8 (Clapping.)

9 MS. STEINHAEUER: Kate McBride.

10 MS. KATE McBRIDE: Kate McBride, K-A-T-E,
11 M-C-B-R-I-D-E. I'm a member of the Western Plymouth
12 Neighborhood Alliance. Excuse me.

13 A little over a year ago I and a group of
14 neighbors began to truly appreciate what the
15 Applicants were proposing for our neighborhood.
16 Life has not been the same since. We've put in
17 hundreds of hours educating ourselves about this
18 rather convoluted process, working to develop
19 alternatives to the installation of the high voltage
20 power line in our backyards. We know that it is
21 because of these efforts, in part, that we are now
22 here considering need.

23 As the Department is aware, and as was
24 stated here, the Applicants did not originally need
25 a certificate of need because, remarkably and

1 coincidentally, this project was less than ten miles
2 long.

3 Now that we have educated ourselves about
4 the process, we come to appreciate that the
5 Hollydale project is really part of a much bigger
6 plan to increase power in the western side of the
7 Twin Cities. Need must be seriously examined.

8 While the routing is already underway, it
9 seems counterintuitive to decide whether the route
10 should go -- where the route should be before
11 determining the best and least intrusive way to meet
12 need.

13 As the study for load growth indicates,
14 Xcel claims that a high voltage transmission line is
15 needed due to a distribution level deficiency. But
16 if there is any need, this type of deficiency must
17 be solved with a distribution power line. As a
18 distribution level solution, like alternative A-2
19 referred to in the appendix to the load growth
20 study, that would cause less harm to land use, the
21 residents' quality of life, property values, and the
22 environment than Xcel's Hollydale proposed
23 transmission line.

24 As such, the environmental report should
25 look at the forecast and analyze if there is any

1 real need for the Hollydale high voltage
2 transmission line. Alternative A-2, which Xcel's
3 own engineers say would solve any deficit in
4 electricity need, should be studied in detail as a
5 better alternative than building a 115 kilovolt line
6 in our neighborhood, in our backyards, near where we
7 live, where our children are, where they play.

8 Other lower voltage alternatives must be
9 evaluated in the environmental report. In the load
10 growth study it appears as though Interstate 494 and
11 Highway 55 corridors are the source of the projected
12 growth. The environmental report should study
13 alternatives such as feeder lines in the growth
14 areas which are better suited to match up with
15 projected growth. In other words, there needs to be
16 an answer why the neighborhoods on the west side of
17 Plymouth are being made to bear the burden for the
18 commercial growth on the east side.

19 In summary, the high voltage lines cause
20 harm to the environment, to residential
21 neighborhoods, and to local economies and should be
22 built only if there are no less harmful methods.

23 Thank you.

24 (Clapping.)

25 MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you.

1 The front desk staff noted that there's a
2 silver Scion SUV with the lights on, so if
3 somebody -- if that belongs to somebody in this room
4 you may want to go and turn those lights off.

5 The next person that I have preregistered
6 to talk is Jim Zook.

7 MR. JIM ZOOK: My name is Jim Zook,
8 J-I-M, Z-O-O-K.

9 And I do agree, I do have, as Terri
10 mentioned, both the health concerns, I know for a
11 fact that my wife is EMF sensitive, it makes her
12 tremendously ill when she's around high voltage
13 powers lines. I wouldn't be very unhappy if I have
14 to sell my house and move because she can't live in
15 her house anymore.

16 I also think, when it comes down to cost
17 questions, which it seems like it often does, that
18 I'm about to lose tens of thousands of dollars in
19 the value of my house, so rather than have it
20 evaporate, I can contribute part of that towards a
21 solution that might make more sense.

22 I have some written comments, bear with
23 me if I read through them.

24 The project resulting from the
25 certificate of need is being highly contested by

1 hundreds of Plymouth residents as demonstrated by
2 the number of attendees at the public hearings and
3 their comments, the large number of comments
4 submitted to the record of the routing process
5 docket, and the signatures on the petition to
6 convert to a full route permitting process.

7 When there is great disagreement there
8 should be great care in due process, open
9 discussion, and creative problem solving applied. I
10 am not convinced that adequate creativity, analysis,
11 and consideration have been taken by the Applicants
12 in their certificate of need application.

13 Point one to that. In their certificate
14 of need application they raised only two
15 alternatives to their preferred and proposed
16 conversion of low voltage lines to high voltage.
17 That conversion is an outrage to the residents of
18 Plymouth who bought and built homes along the
19 seldom-used low voltage power line, where many of
20 the right-of-ways grants specify low voltage lines,
21 not the currently proposed high voltage lines. I
22 would like the council to study whether or not they
23 have the legal right to use those low voltage
24 right-of-ways for high voltage lines.

25 I also request that more creativity and

1 more alternatives be required and considered by the
2 Applicants. The Applicants both propose and dismiss
3 the two alternatives to the two preferred high
4 voltage lines in three and a half pages of text out
5 of a 165-page document. This does not represent
6 sufficient due process in the generation of
7 potential options or in thorough consideration of
8 those options. It demonstrates a clear prejudice in
9 favor of their preferred solution and disregards the
10 outcry produced by their proposal. I request the
11 generation of additional options and thorough
12 analysis of those options by the Applicants and by
13 outside consultants.

14 The Applicants' immediate dismissal of
15 the two alternatives they propose make them appear
16 mere strawmen intended to meet the state
17 requirement, but not to provide a legitimate option
18 to their preferred solution. I do request that an
19 outside consultant be used to prepare realistic
20 alternative solutions.

21 I also ask whether parts of the existing
22 areas being serviced by the current Gleason Lake
23 substation, which is being deemed overloaded, can be
24 moved on to other existing distribution systems to
25 create more capacity at Gleason Lake. I request

1 this alternative be thoroughly analyzed and
2 considered by the Applicants and by outside
3 consultants.

4 The distribution system in the area
5 consists of many 13.8 kV and a few 34.5 kV feeder
6 circuits. Page 35 of Appendix B claims a decision
7 has been made to, quote, no longer expand the 34.5
8 kV system in this area, unquote. I ask would
9 converting the 34.8 kV feeder circuits to 34.5 kV
10 not solve the problem? Why was the decision made to
11 no longer expand the 34.5 kV system? I request this
12 alternative be thoroughly analyzed and considered by
13 the Applicants and by outside consultants.

14 I do ask that the Applicants not be
15 allowed to present abbreviated and incomplete
16 analysis of their alternatives. I ask that the
17 decisions being made would not be based solely on
18 their biased information provided by the Applicants
19 but would actually include analysis from outside
20 consultants.

21 I thank you for your work in this area
22 and I thank you for representing the citizens of
23 Plymouth.

24 (Clapping.)

25 MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you.

1 The next person that preregistered is
2 Craig Mattson. I'm not sure about the first name,
3 but I'm sure you can correct that for us. So this
4 is the last person that's preregistered. After
5 Mr. Mattson has spoken then we'll go by a show of
6 hands.

7 MR. CRAIG MATTSON: My name is Craig
8 Mattson, C-R-A-I-G, M-A-T-T-S-O-N.

9 So part of -- most of my questions have
10 been raised already, I just really want to echo
11 again the focus of this 165-page report was talking
12 about the increased needs around 494 and 55. I
13 wanted to just bring to a point that the
14 justification for the Hollydale to the Medina
15 substation expansion was not, in my mind, adequately
16 justified at all.

17 If that is on the far west side, the
18 expansion is to the north and east and is not
19 documented well within the certificate of need as to
20 why this line needs to be expanded.

21 That's all I have. Thank you.

22 (Clapping.)

23 MS. STEINHAEUER: Thank you.

24 I'd like to take this opportunity to make
25 a couple of clarifications. Well, some scheduling

1 clarifications. The first is, apparently, we need
2 to be out of the premises by 9:30, so we'll try
3 to -- we'll go until 9:00. And we will break at
4 7:30, just so that people know that, you can try to
5 anticipate that.

6 A couple of people have spoken tonight
7 about the information that's in the application and
8 your comments are taken. The application was
9 prepared by Xcel Energy and Great River Energy and
10 that is as it stands. We're moving forward now and
11 taking your comments on what should be looked at in
12 more detail. And I appreciate your comments and
13 they're well taken.

14 So I'll just go by a show of hands. Or
15 not a show of hands, but call on people. Yes, sir.

16 MR. PAUL WAARANIEMI: My name is Paul
17 Waaraniemi, W-A-A-R-A-N-I-E-M-I. And I'm a Plymouth
18 resident on the hiking trail between Minnesota Lane
19 and Orchid Lane and our home backs up onto the
20 existing power line.

21 And one of the questions I have that I
22 don't think is adequately addressed, I understand
23 that for a number of years, eight years or so, the
24 64 -- 69 kV power line has been little used or not
25 used. And so it seems that if that's sitting idle

1 it doesn't speak to need, otherwise that would be in
2 greater use.

3 And then I'm not sure if photos that I
4 took and submitted of spots in about a two-block
5 area between 46th and Providence Academy, if they
6 need to be resubmitted? I did that in the previous
7 public comment area or time frame. And when I did
8 that, in our little area there, there were many
9 homes that are very close to the current power line.
10 And from decks and from backyards there's very
11 little space. And so the environmental impact will
12 be greater with a bigger power line, larger poles.

13 And, also, just north of us is Providence
14 Academy, and it's alarming to me that the playground
15 that children are playing on, the soccer field, the
16 bleachers, and children are playing every day on
17 that playground and the power line runs right over
18 that playground and where they are for hours each
19 day.

20 The walking trail is another area where
21 people are walking under that power line on a daily
22 basis. Many people go for jogs, walks, et cetera,
23 and it seems like a least likely place for that to
24 be located.

25 Thank you.

1 (Clapping.)

2 MS. STEINHAEUER: Thank you.

3 I wrote down one question on that about
4 why can't -- if the 69 kV line is unused, how does
5 that speak to the need. And I'll defer that to the
6 Applicants in a moment.

7 And you also spoke about some information
8 and pictures that you submitted, it sounds like,
9 during the EIS scoping process. It's your judgment
10 as to whether to submit them again. But from what I
11 understood of your conversation, it sounds like
12 those issues are really related to where a line
13 would go, and for that reason that's -- I would, at
14 least as I understood it, say that that's a routing
15 issue, and the EIS that's being prepared for -- I
16 can't remember how many routes, ten routes or
17 something, will look at things like house counts and
18 how many of those are within certain distances from
19 proposed alignments.

20 MR. PAUL WAARANIEMI: It's also an
21 environmental impact, if you show the location.

22 UNIDENTIFIED: (Inaudible).

23 MS. STEINHAEUER: Okay. Just to reiterate
24 that the environmental report will look -- we don't
25 get down to the routing and house counts, we would

1 look at generally what are the environmental impacts
2 from the transmission line in this general area to
3 maybe in a slightly different area. Or how would
4 the impacts of a transmission line be different from
5 a distribution line.

6 So I'll refer the question about the
7 unused 69 kV line to the Applicants.

8 MR. LEHMAN: Thank you.

9 As part of the process of evaluating our
10 application for determination of need, as well as
11 the solutions that we've got presented, the process
12 involves one in which we are asked to look at both
13 solutions that involve higher voltage projects as
14 well as lower voltage projects. So consideration of
15 solving the problem by making use of the 69 kV line
16 is one of the things that will be looked at and
17 under consideration. So we will have to have a full
18 and thorough evaluation of that as one of the
19 options to consider in solving the problem. So it
20 is on the table so it's a good question to ask
21 because it is one that we will be looking at.

22 MS. STEINHAUER: Yes, the gentleman in
23 the yellow shirt.

24 MR. MANNY DAY: My name is Manny,
25 M-A-N-N-Y, Day, D-A-Y. And with Kate, I'm also a

1 member of the West Plymouth Alliance.

2 I live about four doors south of the
3 existing 69 kV line and I have very real concerns
4 about everything that's been talked about so far.
5 Property values, aesthetics, safety, effect on the
6 health of people that we really don't know about,
7 but there's all sorts of reports out there that
8 document these type of effects.

9 I read Xcel's load growth study,
10 specifically the A-1 and the A-2 alternatives. I
11 can understand your N and N plus one options where
12 you lose equipment, one piece of equipment, you lose
13 a line, you want to maintain voltages under worst
14 case conditions. And in reading this, I am not
15 convinced that upgrading the Hollydale substation,
16 especially putting it in the 115 kV line through the
17 west side of Plymouth, is absolutely needed.

18 I studied and I studied alternative A-2
19 and to me A-2 seems a technically viable option.
20 The land is available, 115 is already available, and
21 that provides 13.8 kV distribution alternatives to
22 supply the load growth on 494 and the load growth on
23 the north and east of Highway 55.

24 So I ask the Public Utilities Commission
25 to seriously consider that alternative, again, as a

1 means of supplying the load growth that Xcel
2 forecasts, and also to minimize the effect on
3 property owners on the west side of Plymouth.

4 Thank you.

5 (Clapping.)

6 MS. STEINHAUER: The gentleman in the
7 gray and green shirt, striped.

8 MR. PAUL BLACK: Hi. My name is Paul
9 Black, B-L-A-C-K. And I'm talking as a resident of
10 the Plymouth neighborhood, I'm also a member of the
11 Western Plymouth Neighborhood Alliance.

12 I guess one of the things I want the PUC
13 to look at is, in reading the documents, it's not
14 apparent to me that this really is a ten-mile
15 project. It feels like it's a bigger project that's
16 been sliced up into ten miles or sort of ten-mile
17 lengths so that we don't have to go through the
18 certificate of need process. And I'm hoping that
19 the PUC is actually looking at that.

20 You know, is this really a much larger
21 project that's been sliced into ten-mile segments so
22 that there's a procedural advantage to not having to
23 go through the certificate of need process. And I
24 really haven't seen any of that addressed anywhere.
25 And reading the documents, you know, from what I can

1 see right now, there's a lot of other things going
2 on outside of this ten-mile segment. So I would
3 like that to be addressed in the study, please.

4 Thanks.

5 (Clapping.)

6 MS. STEINHAUER: Yes, the gentleman in
7 the blue shirt, please.

8 MR. ALAN NAPIER: My name is Alan,
9 A-L-A-N, Napier, N-A-P-I-E-R. I live in the area
10 between route 55 as it goes east to -- toward
11 Vicksburg, and I guess it's at that point it's New
12 Rockford Road.

13 And my question is, the very basic
14 question that I would have is given the acceptance
15 of all of the application data as being specifically
16 correct, who is actually -- who can these people
17 rely on to trust that the information that we're
18 receiving and the information that you're
19 considering in the application is correct?

20 And Jim mentioned beforehand that he
21 would like to have consultants involved, independent
22 consultants involved so that we make sure that from
23 an honesty perspective that we're getting the right
24 picture.

25 And I can cite several examples that I've

1 written down to accent that. And first and foremost
2 that we've heard a couple of times in here, the WHO,
3 the World Health Organization, has stated that EMF
4 is a carcinogen. It's a class 2-B, which is
5 possibly carcinogens to humans, but it is a
6 carcinogen. If you read the reports of the
7 Applicants, you would not get that impression. You
8 would get the impression that EMF is like
9 lolly-pops. We can feed it to our kids, the
10 long-term exposure is zero, there is no bad effects
11 from EMF. The World Health Organization, which Xcel
12 and NSP cite as being an authority, recommends
13 avoiding exposure where possible to EMF. That is
14 not reflected in the application. And yet the PUC
15 accepted the application for the certificate of need
16 as being correct. And -- materially correct, and
17 that it's complete.

18 Now, my question is, number one, who do
19 we address the question as to what materially
20 correct means? Because clearly you can give an
21 impression that EMF is okay when it's not
22 necessarily okay. That's a shade of -- it's
23 definitely misleading, if not completely
24 contradictory to the facts. And what does the PUC
25 consider material?

1 Another example is in your -- in your own
2 definition of what's required for a certificate of
3 need, you address -- and these are the four
4 requirements for a certificate of need. ...by a
5 predominant -- it's required by a predominance of
6 the evidence the proposed facility or a suitable
7 modification of the facility will provide benefits
8 to society in a manner compatible with protecting
9 the natural socioeconomic environments, "including
10 human health". The response that you got back from
11 the Applicants deleted the words including human
12 health. That's not an accident. They had to go in
13 and make sure that they didn't say anything in there
14 about human health.

15 I think that's a very important factor
16 for myself and a bunch of the people in this room.
17 And to exclude that and still have that be accepted
18 by the PUC as materially correct and complete, we
19 need -- we need to have some sort of say in that.
20 And I think complete -- the impression of all of the
21 public meetings to date have been a concern around
22 that and to exclude it is wrong.

23 Now, who do we make that case to? We've
24 made it to the Department of Commerce, we're making
25 it tonight to the PUC, we've been making it since

1 2011. But if you look at the application that was
2 put forward in 2011, and now again that we're
3 considering a certificate of need and we'll go into
4 the routing discussions later on, that application
5 is exactly the same now as it was in 2011. So I ask
6 you, what -- there have been dozens of public
7 meetings and the change has been zero. What impact
8 is tonight's meeting or the meetings over in the
9 high school or the meetings in the western -- in the
10 Kelly Western Inn, what impact are they having?

11 I think that those questions, from a
12 perspective of who's representing who, are very
13 important to the people of the city of Plymouth.
14 And I ask you that when you're addressing the
15 situation as it comes about, including the results
16 of tonight's meeting, that somebody address that.

17 Who do we go to? We see a list of names,
18 it's a different cast of characters than the last
19 list of characters, but we haven't seen any
20 conciliatory actions out of Xcel that really do
21 represent any kind of conciliatory actions. So I'd
22 ask that.

23 Number two, once this is done and all of
24 this -- hopefully a solution has been made that
25 impacts the least number of people, and I think is

1 what, if you ask everybody in this room what would
2 be the best solution, from a strategic perspective
3 that impact would affect the least number of people
4 and still satisfy the needs. And once that's done,
5 I would ask that as part of the approval process to
6 move forward, that whatever remains of this
7 nine-mile line that's from the substation, the
8 Medina substation, be taken down, and the
9 right-of-ways that aren't currently being used, and
10 know that there's been some discussion around that.
11 But whatever is not being used for whatever solution
12 is put in place, as part of the final solution take
13 down the remainder of that line.

14 It's not being used. If you ask Great
15 River Energy is that line in use right now, the
16 answer is no, it was deactivated in 2005. It was
17 only used as a backup line between 1995 and 2005.
18 And when we moved in, I moved in in 1995, we were
19 told the status of the line. It's a standby line,
20 it was never used as a mainstream, it was always
21 standby, it was deactivated seven years ago.

22 So my question is, once the solution is
23 designed or developed or put in place, the remainder
24 of that line be taken down. I think that's a
25 reasonable request. I think if it's not put in

1 place at the time of what this solution is, like
2 Phoenix from the ashes, the remainder of that line
3 will come up three years from now, five years from
4 now, whatever. So I think that somewhere along the
5 line that has to be determined if it's not used, if
6 it's not used now, and whatever portions of it that
7 aren't used by this solution be taken down.

8 The final aspect of what I'd like to
9 address is not so much on our home value, and I
10 point to everybody in this room has an impact.
11 Those costs, number one, should be reflected in the
12 cost of the -- of the solution. In several pages,
13 then, in several aspects in the certificate of need
14 they discuss costs. Well, the cost is more than
15 just the cost of putting a wire from one end to the
16 other, the cost is what happens in between those two
17 points. And there's a lot of people who are going
18 to lose a lot of money based on the fact that they
19 now have a high voltage transmission line in their
20 backyard that's used on a daily basis and they can't
21 have, by buyers choice, their children grow up next
22 to a high voltage line that by definition is a
23 carcinogen.

24 It's associated with, though it's not a
25 cause of childhood leukemia, and I would suggest

1 that any buyer with children, and most of these
2 homes have three and four bedrooms, logically you
3 would assume that that's not to hold bowling
4 trophies, but to have children. To back up into a
5 carcinogen just doesn't make sense. So the value of
6 that real estate and the taxes that we pay based on
7 that real estate value should also be put into that
8 cost study. It's not hard to do.

9 We were at one of the meetings and one of
10 the representatives of the Department of Commerce
11 suggested that there was no way to associate a high
12 voltage line to a loss in real estate. I Googled
13 EMF impact on real estate values. 290,000 hits.
14 You can't tell me that somewhere in that 290,000
15 hits there isn't an authoritative way to figure out
16 what a high voltage line means to a home value.

17 So I would ask you, not just us, not just
18 the people in this room, but also the loss in real
19 estate value and the loss in communities that are
20 supported by those real estate market values be
21 considered.

22 That's all I have.

23 (Clapping.)

24 MR. KALUZNIAK: Thank you, Mr. Napier. I
25 just wanted to provide a couple points to clarify

1 the process.

2 I don't know if it was made clear
3 earlier, but the certificate of need process
4 essentially determines the need for the line itself,
5 and that's the subject of this proceeding that was
6 initiated as a result of an alternative being
7 identified greater than ten miles in the routing
8 proceeding.

9 As I mentioned, the size, type and timing
10 relate to the native voltage, the appropriate
11 voltage for delivery of reliable electrical service,
12 the type of line, whether it's AC, DC, how it's
13 configured, and the timing of its implementation to
14 assure reliability, which is one of the things that
15 the Commission is charged with. As you quoted, the
16 rules do relate to providing these lines in a manner
17 that's consistent and minimizes the effect of
18 potential socioeconomic and human factor impacts.

19 Your question as to where they can be
20 addressed is a very good one. Most of the health
21 effects type issues are looked at within the route
22 proceeding. Essentially, once the certificate of
23 need, which is typically done prior to a route
24 proceeding is undertaken, you look at a route, and
25 having determined its need, then try to locate a

1 line in a manner that's consistent with development
2 and minimizes its impacts. So within the routing
3 proceeding there's really two questions being asked.
4 One is where would the line go, where is it best
5 suited to be located. And, secondly, what are the
6 conditions of the installation, design and operation
7 of the line that would minimize the human impacts.

8 Where you can go into the record is very
9 complicated and I understand that. It's very
10 difficult to go through here and through these rules
11 and then try to evaluate an electrical engineer's
12 analysis. We understand that and we try to make
13 this as transparent and open and as public as
14 possible and we do understand this difficulty.

15 Upon completion of the environmental
16 impact statement, or in this case the environmental
17 review, there is an evidentiary hearing that's
18 conducted. The Western Plymouth Neighborhood
19 Alliance is a party to those proceedings. As part
20 of those proceedings the administrative law judge,
21 in this case Judge Eric Lipman from the Office of
22 Administrative Hearings, will be conducting an
23 administrative law hearing. Parties and
24 participants are entitled to submit written comment
25 testimony in response to this, these questions that

1 are raised as part of it.

2 I would note, again, that many of the
3 questions as it relates to minimizing the impact on
4 the health and natural environments are addressed
5 largely within the routing proceeding. And as part
6 of that evidentiary hearing process for the routing
7 proceeding, that's probably the best place to locate
8 those. And if you go to the Commission website you
9 can look up similar dockets in the past and see the
10 types of documents that have been used to analyze
11 these sort of things and the types of conclusions
12 that they've reached about them. Again, I don't
13 offer any evaluation about the merits and relative
14 strength of one line versus the other, the relative
15 effects of those things.

16 When we do accept an application as
17 complete, that does not mean we've vetted the
18 information and that we swear that whatever is in
19 there is accurate. That's what this process is
20 designed to do, we try to analyze the information
21 that's provided. We offer to parties to look at,
22 it's a matter of public record, it stays on our
23 website forever, so we would like to know if there's
24 a better alternative. If there's a better
25 alternative we would appreciate it being brought to

1 our attention. This is something that we don't --
2 we tend to be somewhat agnostic about and don't take
3 positions on.

4 We're not advocating for this line. I
5 just want to be very clear about that. But we do
6 have a responsibility to follow the legislative
7 mandate to provide safe, reliable and affordable
8 electricity to the citizens and customers in
9 Minnesota. And as part of that charge, the
10 Commission has to make some rather difficult
11 decisions at times and these can often be those
12 times. So I'd encourage you to participate.

13 If you would like direction about where
14 to locate this information, if you'd like similar
15 sorts of examples, I think Suzanne and Ray and their
16 staff can provide some of that information to help
17 locate similar sort of analyses and testimonies and
18 the like from other records and other similar
19 dockets.

20 So I'd encourage you to do that as well.
21 And we -- as part of the consideration of these
22 things, you mentioned four items, there's at least
23 four factors. Of that, there's additionally several
24 other items that are listed within rules that the
25 Commission has to balance. Many of these factors

1 are qualitative in nature, they're not counting
2 houses, they're not just counting numbers, they're
3 not counting dollars or distance. We look at many
4 other factors and have to weigh the relative value
5 of agricultural land versus built land and
6 industrial development versus residential
7 development and the like. And we have to consider
8 all of those things.

9 It's a very challenging thing for the
10 Commissioners to do and we try to do the best we can
11 and provide an open and honest record. And I think
12 that's the best I can offer you on that and so if
13 you have any questions I'd encourage you to make
14 them. Thank you.

15 MR. ALAN NAPIER: Can I ask one question
16 based on what you just said? You said that you're
17 not --

18 MS. STEINHAUER: Excuse me. Could you
19 come up and speak so we have an accurate record,
20 please?

21 MR. ALAN NAPIER: Alan Napier. You said
22 that you're not judging whether the information
23 contained within the certificate of need application
24 is correct?

25 MR. KALUZNIAK: The Commission bases its

1 determination for the need of a line based on the
2 official record as it's developed. The information
3 that's contained in that is vetted through several
4 processes, part of which is the environmental
5 review, part of which is through the evidentiary
6 hearings conducted by the administrative law judge.
7 We rely on the evaluation of the official record
8 that's brought to the Commission.

9 We don't go out with tape measures and
10 measure these things, we rely and, frankly, count on
11 public participants and federal, state, local
12 governments, public agencies, nonpublic agencies,
13 NGOs and the like to help us identify these areas.
14 So as part of the environmental review they would
15 contact, say, the Department of Natural Resources to
16 locate wetlands within a given area and those sort
17 of things and evaluate those as part of the
18 environmental review.

19 What we do, then, is bring that
20 information back to the Commission for a decision
21 and compare those based on recommendations from the
22 parties, often pro and con, and evaluate those and
23 make recommendations. We evaluate the
24 recommendations that are brought to the Commission,
25 so we don't actually vet factually whether a line is

1 in a particular location.

2 MR. ALAN NAPIER: I'm talking about the
3 certificate of need application. Isn't part of the
4 process that you vet, you vet the process so that
5 you're looking at whether the information contained
6 within that application is materially correct? I
7 believe materially accurate, I think, is the actual
8 words in your guidelines.

9 MR. KALUZNIAK: I'm sorry if I've been
10 confusing on that. What I stated earlier was --

11 MR. ALAN NAPIER: Let me ask --

12 MR. KALUZNIAK: Let me finish.

13 MR. ALAN NAPIER: Go ahead.

14 MR. KALUZNIAK: When the Commission
15 accepts an application as complete, is what I was
16 mentioning earlier, is the Commission is stating
17 that the information contained in the application
18 addresses the required elements that are identified
19 within the rules pertaining to the certificate of
20 need.

21 We don't go out and verify mailing
22 addresses, we don't go through -- and we're not
23 making an assessment about the truthfulness of that
24 information or its accuracy or whether it's the
25 preferred route. We're not making an evaluation of

1 the merits of that, we're not speaking to those.

2 We're simply saying they've provided an
3 application based on the recommendations of a
4 neutral party, in this case the Department of
5 Commerce is acting as an arbiter to evaluate this
6 independently and provide recommendations and
7 analysis based on what's in the record. That's
8 really something that's done by the Department of
9 Commerce, they're the folks who develop that, and
10 they do not act as an advocate for the applicant,
11 they evaluate the record as it's brought to them.

12 MR. ALAN NAPIER: Okay. Done?

13 MR. KALUZNIAK: Yes.

14 MR. ALAN NAPIER: Okay. The requirements
15 that the information be in the certificate of need
16 application, then, is not that that application
17 reflects -- let's refer specifically to the EMF
18 guidelines here, that that information as to whether
19 or not EMF is harmful is grossly misleading, totally
20 incorrect, absolutely on the spot, you don't make
21 any judgments at all on that?

22 MR. KALUZNIAK: No, the Commission is
23 asked to make these decisions all the time and, as
24 part of that, electromagnetic frequency exposures
25 are things that are included as part of the

1 environmental review record and that's part of the
2 total record that the Commission considers as it
3 makes its decisions.

4 MR. ALAN NAPIER: It's also in the
5 certificate of need.

6 MR. KALUZNIAK: I'll let Suzanne speak to
7 the content of her review.

8 MS. STEINHAUER: I'll just build on
9 Mike's comments.

10 The Applicants submit an application.
11 The Commission, based on comments that come in from
12 the public, from the DER, our counterparts also
13 within the Department of Commerce, they are
14 advocates for the ratepayers, they have submitted
15 comments. The Commission then accepts an
16 application as materially complete, which allows the
17 process to start and the record to be developed.

18 Xcel and GRE have provided information
19 on, as you said, EMF. Other people have also
20 provided information that doesn't necessarily agree
21 with that on EMF. And as part of the environmental
22 report and as part of the EIS prepared under the
23 routing procedure, our report will talk about EMF,
24 what it is, what the studies say.

25 At that point there is both a public and

1 an evidentiary hearing. Any member of the public
2 can still continue to present evidence if you don't
3 agree, if you'd like another study evaluated, to
4 present that evidence to the judge presiding over
5 the proceeding. All of that information is
6 evaluated by the judge in his report and findings to
7 the Commission. The Commission may agree or may not
8 agree, I can't speak to that. But where we are in
9 the certificate of need process is the Commission
10 has accepted it and allows it to go forward and the
11 record to be developed.

12 MR. ALAN NAPIER: I don't have the
13 documentation in front of me, obviously. But -- and
14 I don't want to beat a dead horse, and I'll just say
15 this and then I'll depart. But there is a clause
16 that says that what you've accepted in the
17 certificate of need is materially correct.

18 Now, I understand your position as to is
19 this the best solution or not, is, you know, that's
20 a question, a qualitative question that I can't
21 answer. But it seems to me, at least from a
22 perspective of having read the WHO report, it
23 doesn't state that a brochure is sufficient
24 protection against EMF. What it states specifically
25 is that you should avoid human exposure.

1 You also referred to house counts, that
2 you don't get into house counts. Well, to be very
3 specific about whether or not the information you're
4 being provided is accurate, is that the routing
5 application, I know, separate issues, but we'll get
6 into the qualitative is it good information or not.
7 There is two apartment complexes at the corner of
8 Vicksburg and Rockford Road. If you look at the
9 house count that came down from the Xcel Energy
10 submissions, of the 286 homes that are within that
11 range, the three apartment buildings that are within
12 200 feet of the power line at that point are counted
13 as one house per building. There's got to be 50
14 houses, 50 apartments in that complex. So 286 as a
15 house count is indicative of the quality information
16 that we're getting from the Applicant in this case,
17 and I would strongly encourage using a consultant
18 because 286 doesn't pass the smell test.

19 The cost issues that are being brought
20 up, and we've been talking about alternative H-1
21 or -- excuse me, A-2 or H-2, I forget which it's
22 called, you can't tell me that running a low voltage
23 line over a lesser distance costs more than running
24 a high voltage line over a longer distance. That
25 doesn't pass the smell test. And yet it's like 10

1 percent higher cost on the explanations that we're
2 getting from Xcel as to whether or not A-2 is a
3 suitable alternative or not.

4 And I just, please, please, and now I'll
5 leave, use independent sources, people who have read
6 the WHO report, and I forget what the other acronym
7 is for the definition of what's a carcinogen, please
8 use consultants that are versed in this technology
9 that we can count on from a homeowner's perspective
10 that we're getting the straight scoop.

11 We're ready to accept the fact to your
12 point that a tough decision is going to be -- in any
13 case, it's going to go by X number of houses, that's
14 going to be a tough decision for those people that
15 own those X houses and we're ready to accept that,
16 but we don't feel that we're getting the straight
17 scoop and we don't feel that the information that we
18 are getting fits the descriptions that are in your
19 own regulations as to what we should be getting and
20 what you should be certifying as being the case.

21 Now, if it means that we get down to an
22 evidentiary hearing, I would like that to be on the
23 same independent, our vote, our voice, our
24 consultants, our expertise is considered at the same
25 level as the Applicants' expertise. Again, to the

1 point of independence and to the point of tough
2 decisions, we're ready to accept that.

3 Thank you.

4 MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you.

5 (Clapping.)

6 MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you.

7 The gentleman in the checked shirt,
8 please.

9 MR. LEN VUSCH: My name is Len, L-E-N,
10 Vusch, V-U-S-C-H. And I've got the greenhouse that
11 glows in the morning when you see it down the road.
12 We're a very good customer of the power company and
13 we've been very happy with them.

14 I moved out here in 1965. That was the
15 year that 494 was still gravel. It was a
16 long-distance phone call on the west side of 101 to
17 Minneapolis. It was all agriculture. None of you
18 people were here. We got along just fine without
19 everybody.

20 Now they've all moved in and we're
21 getting along just great except for someone wants to
22 keep fixing something. I believe it takes more
23 power now than it did 45 years ago. So let's
24 analyze it. How much more power does it need? Look
25 at the buildings. The city hall for Plymouth, they

1 had a house trailer on the east side of 494 and 55
2 and a small building. It's grown. And it's going
3 to continue to grow and we're going to need more
4 power.

5 I don't like power poles. They are never
6 going to add to the environment. They're never
7 going to be good as far as the environment goes.
8 It's going to be a detriment to the environment. So
9 what. So are roads. So are houses, so are --

10 MR. PAUL WAARANIEMI: Excuse me. That's
11 not -- we're following the rules here, this is like
12 a speech.

13 UNIDENTIFIED: Let him speak. That's why
14 we're here.

15 MR. PAUL WAARANIEMI: Well, I'm following
16 the rules. What does that have to do with the
17 actual application?

18 MR. LEN VUSCH: The application is that
19 this power line is in need or the power company
20 would not have done it.

21 MR. PAUL WAARANIEMI: But how do you know
22 that --

23 MS. STEINHAUER: Excuse me.

24 UNIDENTIFIED: Let him speak.

25 MR. PAUL WAARANIEMI: Is this a free

1 speech session now? If it is, then let's change the
2 rules and let everybody make their comment.

3 MS. STEINHAUER: We had asked people
4 to --

5 MR. PAUL WAARANIEMI: I'm just following
6 the rules, I'm --

7 COURT REPORTER: Excuse me, I can't take
8 two people at a time.

9 MR. PAUL WAARANIEMI: I don't care what
10 you can take. I'm telling you, I'm following the
11 rules, what are the rules on the screen? Is it a
12 free speech session, is it a soap box?

13 UNIDENTIFIED: This is the United States
14 of American, you've got the right to say whatever
15 you want, whether we like it or not. It's about a
16 record. You might not agree with his viewpoint and
17 it might not be the case, but he's got a right to
18 say whatever he wants to say.

19 MR. PAUL WAARANIEMI: I agree with that.
20 I've got the same --

21 UNIDENTIFIED: Then let him say it. And
22 you got your turn to speak, let him speak.

23 MS. STEINHAUER: Excuse me. We
24 anticipate that people have strong opinions, that's
25 why we've asked people to try to limit it to five

1 minutes. Thank you.

2 MR. LEN VUSCH: Each time I built another
3 greenhouse I went to the city council and each time
4 we had people up complaining about one thing or
5 another. And the city continued to grow.

6 We've got a power company that's been
7 doing a wonderful job in our area. I'd like to see
8 them continue. I cannot imagine putting in a power
9 line that's not needed. I can't imagine putting in
10 something that's detrimental to everyone.

11 I don't like power poles, but I sure do
12 like to use electricity. How are we going to get
13 it? I'd like people to stop and think. Not near
14 me. The low voltage power line goes right through
15 my property, and when that happened there was no
16 hearings. And I'm happy to have the strong -- the
17 higher voltage one go through my property. I don't
18 see any problem with it. I don't see how can we
19 just constantly, not near me.

20 One of the things that's happened, as
21 we've had more and more people here, we talk about
22 property values going down. More of you moved in,
23 my property value went up a tremendous amount and
24 property values will continue to go up if we have a
25 good power company, if we have a good city, if we

1 have a good government. How -- let's stop them, go
2 ahead. Keep fighting them. You're going to pay it
3 in your bill the more it costs them to put it in.

4 UNIDENTIFIED: Fine, we'll pay it in our
5 bill instead of our lives. You're not going to be
6 around when it all happens. What about our kids?
7 Huh? You're going to put high power lines in a
8 school? Are you insane, sir?

9 MS. STEINHAEUER: Thank you. Thank you
10 for your comment.

11 MR. LEN VUSCH: Thank you, that's all I
12 ask.

13 UNIDENTIFIED: What about six girls who
14 can't speak for themselves? We have to speak for
15 them. You're going to be long gone when they've got
16 a second head growing.

17 MS. STEINHAEUER: Excuse me, sir.

18 UNIDENTIFIED: You bring all children, we
19 speak for them.

20 UNIDENTIFIED: No, he just made it up.
21 Just so you know. He set it up to try to make it
22 ugly. May I speak, officially speak?

23 MS. STEINHAEUER: I believe that this
24 woman in the sweater had her hand up, and if you
25 would please address the court reporter or speak so

1 that she can get an accurate transcript.

2 DR. LAURIE AZINE: Can you put this slide
3 back up for me, please? My name is Dr. Laurie,
4 L-A-U-R-I-E, Azine, A-Z-I-N-E.

5 I actually wasn't going to speak this
6 evening, but I have been here since the very
7 beginning, almost a year and a half, almost, since
8 the very beginning. And can you guys hear me okay
9 if I walk up? Because I want to point something out
10 to you guys about this.

11 The focus study area is that orange box,
12 okay, but that bigger blue box is really what
13 they're looking at. And the people in that little
14 green line are the people who are going to bear the
15 brunt of the certificate of need for everybody in
16 that big blue box. How many people in this room, by
17 the show of hands, think that is fair? Court
18 reporter, what do you see? Any hands up? That's a
19 zero.

20 Okay. So all of us sitting in this room
21 who have been dealing with this for the last year
22 and a half now understand that the certificate of
23 need is much different than the routing permit
24 process.

25 By all means, I have gotten much more

1 well versed in this than I ever intended to be. And
2 the one thing I have learned is that this is much
3 bigger than sort of our little area. This has to do
4 with the continued growth from Plymouth to Medina
5 and further west.

6 And as the one other gentleman spoke
7 about the fact that this has gotten chopped up, if
8 you look at the other dockets, there's actually ones
9 going farther west than that. And I think it was a
10 conscious effort by Xcel and Great River to be very
11 dishonest in their sort of scheme to get high
12 voltage lines put up sort of down the line without
13 ever having to show need to any of the areas. And I
14 think it really doesn't put great faith in what you
15 guys are trying to do.

16 And I really hope the PUC actually sort
17 of sees and makes them really show their certificate
18 of need. That's the first thing I want done, to
19 show that that need is not just a focused area in
20 orange, that you need to look at that focused area
21 in blue, 'cause that's really what it was. That's
22 number one.

23 Number two, for the last year and a half
24 you have seen that there is a loud and boisterous
25 group of homeowners in the cities of Plymouth and

1 Medina. Especially in the city of Plymouth. We
2 have been here every time you ask us to show up and
3 be heard. And we are a very loud group of
4 homeowners.

5 And what I learned from those loud group
6 of homeowners is one thing that I found very sort of
7 humorous and ironic. On the day I received the
8 notice for this meeting I saw what happened in the
9 parallel loud voice group of homeowners who did
10 exactly what we have done this entire time. Those
11 loud voice group of homeowners who came before us
12 were the people who live on the Hiawatha line. And
13 on the day I received the notice, the Hiawatha line
14 was buried. That was the day that you guys were
15 burying the lines on Hiawatha and the street was
16 closed for the weekend.

17 So my point is, in all of this, that if
18 you want to do what's right, you'll bury the lines
19 on 494, 55, and actually look at where the need is.
20 If you really prove to us that there's need you will
21 do what's right and quit fighting all of us.

22 Because if we are such a loud voice, if
23 you have all these people standing up day after day,
24 time after time, don't you think maybe you're not
25 doing something right? And when your 156 or 7 page

1 document has so much more about what you guys think
2 is the right answer, and the other part is only
3 about this small, I didn't count the pages,
4 actually, there doesn't seem to be something right.
5 And that's what I got when I was reading the whole
6 thing. That you guys supported yours with about
7 this much, and what you guys defended as the other
8 options was about this much.

9 And in my world as a physician, when it
10 doesn't quite fit together, something isn't right.
11 And in my mind, when I got done reading the whole
12 thing, something wasn't right. And it didn't seem
13 like you guys were being above board. And that to
14 me makes me very angry. Because in all of this, all
15 of us have spent hundreds of hours, and I can see
16 people in this room that I have seen at every single
17 meeting, who have spent hundreds of hours learning
18 about something I never wish I ever heard of.

19 Okay. So my ask to the Commission is
20 that you listen to the homeowners. You have seen us
21 all show up every time you ask us to, every law
22 judge, every time that there is a meeting to speak.
23 We all want to know why they say that this has to
24 be, it has to go here, it has to go by the homes, it
25 can't go in the business areas, why is that the only

1 option?

2 Thank you.

3 (Clapping.)

4 MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you. It's 7:30
5 now, we'll take a 15-minute break and we will
6 reconvene at 7:45. Thank you.

7 (Break taken.)

8 MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you. Thank you
9 for being prompt. We're going to try to respect
10 people's time.

11 Mr. Kaluzniak and I were talking, and a
12 couple of commenters have addressed various west
13 metro projects and whether they are discrete or not.
14 So I would ask Xcel to provide their response to
15 that question.

16 MR. LEHMAN: Thank you, yes. This is a
17 question that has come up before so I'll answer as
18 best I can and if you have further questions we'll
19 be happy to try to answer it as well.

20 It is correct that Xcel Energy and Great
21 River Energy have looked at the needs of our
22 customers in a variety of communities to the south
23 and west of the Twin Cities. This covers the
24 distances from the Glencoe, Young America, Waconia
25 area, that's one group of communities that we've

1 analyzed and looked at their need. And we went
2 through the process of determining the proper
3 solution to solve those needs and the permitting
4 process on those. And we went through the
5 certificate of need process, as well as the route
6 permitting process on that, so that was one group of
7 communities all with local needs associated with
8 those communities.

9 Moving a little bit further east, we have
10 another project that's in and around the Chaska
11 area. In particular, as the load around Chaska
12 grows, there was a data center that's in the process
13 of being developed that caused a significant
14 increase of load requirements there. So, again,
15 there's a second project that's part of the western
16 suburbs, the western communities. That also is
17 proceeding through a certificate of need process as
18 well as a route permit process.

19 Moving a little bit north of there
20 there's another project that's in and around the
21 communities of Deephaven and Excelsior, Minnetonka,
22 that also is under consideration for a certificate
23 of need as well as a route permit process. So three
24 projects in the geographic subpockets, the
25 communities there each individually have localized

1 needs where we identified process of developing
2 solutions and going through the permitting process
3 for those.

4 We moved a little bit north of those
5 communities and we get to the project that we're
6 talking about here. So that's four projects, four
7 local need areas. Three of those four met the
8 criteria that required us to go through the
9 certificate of need process as well as the route
10 permitting process, so we weren't shortcutting any
11 permitting processes as a result of those three.

12 This fourth one, as was explained, this
13 one did not start out to look like it would need to
14 follow the certificate of need process. Not because
15 of any action we took on our part, but just simply
16 by the project that we've got under consideration.
17 As the process of going through the route permit
18 activities that took place last year and through the
19 beginning of this year we determined that it was
20 possible that a route permit -- excuse me, a route
21 would be approved or could be approved that would be
22 greater than ten miles and that brought it into that
23 same criteria that the first three had, so that's
24 the reason why we've got a certificate of need going
25 on here.

1 Now, the related question comes up as
2 well. And to the credit of the Department of Public
3 Commerce, they asked the very same question that I
4 think some of you have asked, which is should all
5 four of those areas be looked at together, is there
6 a solution that could satisfy all of those needs
7 through one big project as opposed to four little
8 projects. So as part of the certificate of need
9 filing we did an analysis of that and that analysis
10 is included in our certificate of need. So that
11 question was asked, we responded to it and we
12 provide some analysis on that.

13 So we've gone through four separate very
14 localized needs, we've gone through the process of
15 getting the need determination and the route permit
16 approvals for each of those four localized projects
17 and that's where we are today.

18 MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you.

19 During the break Jean Scheu asked to
20 speak, so I'd like to call on her, please.

21 MS. JEAN SCHEU: Jean, J-E-A-N, Scheu,
22 S-C-H-E-U. I just have one question. I was reading
23 through all this stuff on the scoping document, and
24 on the back under 3.6 it says underground
25 alternative. I'd like to know what is the

1 underground alternative.

2 MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you. Ms. Scheu
3 was, I believe, referring to this, the draft scoping
4 document. That's a heading. We will look at
5 underground to some degree. But to the extent that
6 you can provide some guidance to us, on looking at
7 would it be undergrounding distribution, the
8 project. So we'll look again, as the environmental
9 report we would look generally at what's entailed by
10 constructing transmission line underground versus
11 distribution underground. The environmental report
12 won't make a judgment or recommendation, but it will
13 provide that information to be used in evaluating
14 for the parties in the evidentiary and public
15 hearing. It'll be available to you. You can use
16 it, ask me questions about it at the hearing, and
17 then it will eventually be part of the base of
18 information that the Commission makes their decision
19 on.

20 MS. JEAN SCHEU: Well, I've been at
21 several meetings and underground keeps being
22 mentioned as a viable alternative and I would like
23 more information on if it is a viable alternative,
24 since so many people seem to want that.

25 MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you.

1 Again, we'll go by a show of hands. I
2 believe we have not heard from this gentleman here,
3 so if you would come up, please.

4 MR. YAN KRAVCHENKO: My name is Yan,
5 Y-A-N, last name, Kravchenko, K-R-A-V-C-H-E-N-K-O.
6 So I'm a resident in Plymouth and I have a couple of
7 questions that I would like to get some
8 clarification on.

9 First, and I don't mean to pick on a
10 name, but this exercise is called certificate of
11 need. Now, I have two small kids. One of my kids
12 is going to be six soon and she's finally getting to
13 that age where I have to start educating her on need
14 and want.

15 So I would like to be educated myself on
16 what are the criteria to call something a need
17 versus a want. What are some of the things that you
18 look for in your process when you're reviewing an
19 application to say that something is truly needed
20 versus something that's generally wanted. And I
21 think this is something that I would really
22 appreciate understanding.

23 The second thing that I would like to
24 bring up, and second thing I would like to ask for
25 your consideration in your review process, is one of

1 my evil hobbies is being an auditor, and being an
2 auditor I learned that it's not that I don't trust
3 Xcel Energy, after all, they do take my money, raise
4 my rates and clearly don't care what happens to my
5 family, but I don't trust anyone when it comes to
6 presenting factual information.

7 So with that in mind, I would like to ask
8 if there is such a notion as certified data or data
9 that has been validated by a third, independent, not
10 interested party that is a consideration within your
11 review process. So, in other words, when Xcel
12 Energy claims that they have so many breakdowns or
13 so many burnouts or certain voltage alternatives,
14 are there any independent studies that you generally
15 conduct that would review whether that information
16 is truly factually accurate or whether that
17 information has been presented in a most favorable
18 light to prove a point?

19 The last thing that I would like to ask
20 you for, and I appreciate that you cannot comment on
21 these proceedings because you have not begun your
22 analysis yet. But in your experience in conducting
23 this type of research and evaluating certificates of
24 need, can you give us some of the examples of
25 situations where a certificate of need was denied?

1 And what are some of the things that could lead you
2 to deny a certificate of need?

3 And, again, we don't have to talk
4 specifically about this process, but if you could
5 give us a couple of practical examples where a
6 certificate of need did not pass, I think it would
7 help us understand what impact our voices have in
8 this process and what type of feedback we may be
9 able to offer you to perhaps assist you in just
10 getting a list of various considerations.

11 So, thank you.

12 (Clapping.)

13 MR. KALUZNIAK: Thank you for your
14 question.

15 The criteria for the certificate of need
16 is contained in Minnesota rule 7849.0120. This is a
17 rule that the Utilities Commission administers. And
18 the laws on these things are very complex, as you
19 know, but it says that the certificate of need must
20 be granted to the applicant on a determination of
21 the four major criteria that are identified and then
22 13 subcriteria that are balanced on those sort of
23 things.

24 I think your question went more towards
25 the question of electrical need and the engineering

1 design, and that's probably something Mr. Lehman
2 could discuss as it relates to other planning
3 efforts.

4 Just as informational background, the
5 electrical system is not operated on a daily basis
6 strictly by the utilities. There is a regional
7 transmission operator known as MISO, M-I-S-O, that
8 acts as kind of a clearinghouse for that and they
9 administer some of the reliability requirements. So
10 there's several different programs that I think
11 Mr. Lehman knows a lot more about than I do,
12 probably. There's the NESC, the National Electric
13 Standards Committee requirements, there's
14 reliability requirements that the Commission works
15 on closely, that's one of the primary things that we
16 are responsible for, the Commission is responsible
17 for providing reliable electrical service.

18 Need is something that's defined broadly
19 here. And as I mentioned, it includes several
20 rather qualitative factors that have to be weighed.
21 There's no single metric that says this has to be
22 done. Electrically, the electrical engineers have a
23 different definition of it. We have to evaluate
24 these things on a broader level using the
25 environmental review to look at the socioeconomic

1 impacts and those sort of things and make a decision
2 based on the record.

3 Regarding the independent study, I think
4 I'll turn it over to Suzanne, or at least segue to
5 it, but the environmental review is an independent
6 evaluation of the project. And we do rely on input
7 from the public and the parties to challenge the
8 information, if you think it's not accurate we do
9 want to know. I look at these things with a
10 critical eye as well as I look at them and say does
11 it match what we know of these things, and I think
12 it's just important that you consider that as part
13 of the process as well. But we do rely on the
14 public and parties and neighborhood groups.

15 It seems adversarial, I understand this
16 is a very emotional thing for a lot of you and it's
17 not an easy decision for the Commission to make, I
18 hope you appreciate that. We do try to do things as
19 transparently and honestly as possible and we keep
20 these records available regarding previous dockets.
21 There have been some that have been denied, there is
22 some that have been withdrawn, there are others that
23 have been modified to accommodate others. And
24 there's often more than one solution to these
25 things, so we look at different criteria and ask for

1 input on ways to do that.

2 And just to bring it back around to why
3 we're here tonight, again, is we want to solicit
4 public comment on this. And if there are better
5 solutions to these things, if undergrounding is a
6 better option, we want to know about it. But as
7 Suzanne pointed out in one of her slides, we do try
8 to rely on information that is developed and that
9 the rules do ask that when you request something to
10 be considered in the environmental report, as she
11 mentioned, I think it was on the fourth slide, that
12 we ask you to identify the alternative or impact
13 you're talking about and provide an explanation or
14 alternative or impact and why it should be included
15 in the report and submit supporting information so
16 that they can make a determination on it.

17 The environmental report is not a
18 judgment on the relative merits. It doesn't include
19 recommendations as such. What it tries to do is
20 evaluate the various alternatives that are presented
21 in a very unbiased manner. So that is our
22 independent analysis. The Department of Commerce is
23 charged with providing the Commission technical
24 assistance and evaluating that, they also do some of
25 the administrative procedures for running these

1 processes going forward and we do rely on them just
2 as we rely on the public.

3 The administrative law judge evaluates
4 the merits of parties' positions and allows parties
5 to cross-examine, submit contrary evidence,
6 conflicting evidence, things such as EMF where there
7 is no definitive conclusion reached on those sorts
8 of things. And they do make findings of fact and
9 conclusions. The Commission may or may not accept
10 those based on what they know in their experience.
11 Sometimes they do, sometimes they don't. There have
12 been cases where we've denied certificate of needs.
13 Today I was working on the Prairie Island extended
14 power uprate which is being reconsidered down near
15 Red Wing. So those things are in the record and
16 they are there for you to see.

17 So I'll just leave it at that. Do you
18 have something to add? I'd ask Paul to briefly
19 touch on, if you could, some of the planning issues
20 of how need is determined and established from an
21 electrical engineering perspective.

22 MR. LEHMAN: The question was asked of
23 the difference between wanting to build a project
24 and needing to build a project.

25 First, we wouldn't be able to build a

1 project if it was just something we wanted to do.
2 What we tried to explain is that there are criteria
3 within the statutes that define what we have to do
4 to prove that a project is needed, and we have to
5 meet that burden of proof to demonstrate that that
6 project is needed.

7 When we come to the conclusion that a
8 project is needed it's for a variety of reasons.
9 And they relate to the two things that I've tried to
10 explain or mention a number of times. That is,
11 we're trying to maintain safe and reliable service
12 to our customers. I think safety you can
13 understand, it's fairly straightforward, and we have
14 to design our systems so that no one, either
15 customers or businesses or homes are at risk of
16 being in danger from the facilities that we have in
17 operation. So we have to make sure that the lines
18 are safe. And part of that is making sure they
19 don't carry any more power than they're designed to,
20 making sure that the quality of the power that's on
21 those lines is adequate so that customers' equipment
22 won't be damaged. And then the second part of that
23 is reliability. And the industry has set up
24 standards to measure reliability and the criteria
25 that utility -- the utility industry is required to

1 adhere to in order to make sure that the electric
2 transmission system operates in that reliable
3 fashion.

4 You may be aware that over the years
5 there have been experiences where parts of the
6 electric transmission system have gone out of
7 service over a wide area of the country. And those
8 events provide information as to what went wrong
9 that didn't allow that electric transmission system
10 to continue to operate. Nothing is ever considered
11 perfect, but on an evaluation of how to keep the
12 transmission system reliable so that every time a
13 customer flipped the switch you don't have to say
14 will the power come on, you know the power is going
15 to come on because the reliability of the system is
16 being maintained.

17 So as an industry we have standards that
18 we have to adhere to that demonstrate that we are
19 maintaining a reliable electric system, and then we
20 also have to design the characteristics of that
21 transmission system is safe. So we're looking to
22 make sure it's safe and reliable service, and when
23 we determine in our studies and our analysis that
24 something has to be done to be able to maintain that
25 safe and reliable service, we have to come before

1 the regulators and demonstrate and bear the burden
2 of proof that we, in fact, do need to do that. We
3 don't bring projects forward because we want to
4 build them, we bring it forward because we need to
5 build them.

6 MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you.

7 The woman in the purple scarf.

8 MS. LYNN ZOOK: My name is Lynn Zook, Z
9 like in zebra, two Os and a K.

10 And I just wanted to say that as a mom of
11 seven kids I wanted to always learn with my kids
12 whether they were telling me the truth when they
13 were talking with me. Because that was really
14 important to be a good mom to them. And one of the
15 things I always shared with them is that it wasn't
16 okay with me if they left out facts to try to
17 deceive me into thinking that something was
18 happening that really wasn't just by telling me a
19 portion of the facts.

20 It's been very disturbing to me to find
21 out tonight that high density housing is being
22 counted as one housing unit in your statistics. I
23 don't feel tonight that I am feeling that the truth
24 and the integrity of what we're doing here is being
25 well represented when people who are saying that

1 they want the best for their constituencies in the
2 way that they handle things would accept that high
3 density housing unit is represented as one unit.

4 So I would like to ask that that be gone
5 over very carefully. Because it appears that the
6 amount of difficulty that's happening to homeowners
7 is actually much less of an impact. So to find out,
8 for instance, in a housing unit that may be, you
9 know, 500 people are being affected as opposed to
10 what appeared to be like one is just not dealing
11 with this issue with integrity. And I would like to
12 respectfully request that these numbers be changed
13 to accurately represent the amount of housing units
14 that are represented on this line and that those
15 statistics be changed from here on out so that we
16 will be able to understand the total impact to
17 individual households that are represented within
18 those high density housing units.

19 Thank you so much.

20 (Clapping.)

21 MS. STEINHAUER: Yes, the gentleman in
22 the green plaid shirt.

23 MR. DOUG HAUGEN: Hi. Doug, D-O-U-G,
24 Haugen, H-A-U-G-E-N. And I guess thank you both for
25 being here and hosting this together, perceptions

1 and evidence.

2 It was earlier brought up by a couple of
3 people saying that they didn't, you know, know about
4 the costs as far as property values. I am
5 practicing real estate, to a lesser and lesser
6 degree every year just because it takes up so much
7 time -- I digress, I'm sorry.

8 There has not been a case where I've
9 shown a property that was overlooking a high voltage
10 transmission line where I have not brought up the
11 fact that you need to do some research on this if
12 you like this property. That would be a dereliction
13 of my duties as a realtor to show a buyer and not
14 bring up the fact that there might be some contrary
15 evidence to this matter.

16 Also, Xcel Energy does put in a brochure
17 that they will come out for any prospective buyer of
18 a property and do an EMF count. And so if I'm a
19 savvy buyer agent, I might ask Xcel to do that at no
20 cost, and see if I can't get the price down for my
21 buyer even more, even if they don't have any health
22 concerns.

23 The next point is that I did submit to --
24 I always forget now -- Mr. Ek, is he with the Public
25 Utilities Commission? 'Cause he was kind of the

1 gathering point for the information that we had
2 during the prior comment periods and he's been
3 wonderful.

4 And I did submit a literature review, so
5 it was a review of university studies that did show
6 that residential properties where a high voltage
7 power line is built into an existing neighborhood
8 that property values dropped from 10 to 40 percent.
9 So those are real numbers. And so we can start, you
10 know, putting them into the equation. Again, that's
11 of high voltage.

12 There's no colloquial or statistical
13 information where just distribution lines affect
14 property values. I would have no reservation about
15 showing any buyer a property that had just a
16 distribution line in the backyard. In fact, my
17 current home does back up onto this particular
18 preferred line, but, you know, I'm just saying that
19 this should be -- high voltage should be the last
20 resort for backing up onto anyone's home.

21 Because at 40 percent that homeowner
22 might never be able to dig themselves out of that
23 hole, and it's going to continue to not only affect
24 their direct neighbors, but anywhere in the near
25 area because of comps. If you happen to sell your

1 home that backs up to this and your house now took a
2 40 percent hit, well, it's going to affect everybody
3 in the northwest Plymouth area and Medina, their
4 property values as well. So we do need to look at
5 the high voltage transmission versus distribution
6 model and discuss residential costs in that.

7 And it's not just single-family homes.
8 There are condos, townhomes, and apartment buildings
9 that all back up to that. So it seems like, you
10 know, we need to really look for low impact, and I'm
11 not the first to bring that up tonight, but I guess
12 those are the comments and I don't have any
13 questions.

14 So thank you again.

15 (Clapping.)

16 MS. STEINHAEUER: Thank you. And just to
17 provide some context, when Mr. Kaluzniak and I were
18 looking at each other and smiling when Mr. Haugen
19 asked who Scott Ek worked for, he worked for the
20 Department of Commerce until Tuesday and as of
21 yesterday now works for the Commission. So there's
22 no conspiracy there, but that's the context. So
23 thank you. And we do have that information on the
24 record for the EIS.

25 There was a -- the gentleman in the tan

1 coat back there.

2 MR. GERALD CULLINAN: My name is Gerald
3 Cullinan, G-E-R-A-L-D, C-U-L-L-I-N-A-N. My wife and
4 I live in the Conor Meadows Coach Homes Complex,
5 which is located about three blocks east of Wayzata
6 High School and just south of Schmidt Lake Road.
7 It's a small complex of about 43 homes. Everybody
8 who lives in those homes is buying them.

9 We're fortunate enough to have railroad
10 tracks right behind us, which we knew they were
11 there when we moved, so... But one of the things
12 that really makes me wonder is the amount that the
13 possible sale of one of our homes would face if
14 those power lines go right in back of us.

15 My understanding is that there are two
16 alternate routes that would have the high voltage
17 line going right down the railroad tracks from Peony
18 Lane behind our complex and I'm not sure where it
19 goes from there. But as far as I know, the plan
20 would be that those power lines would be above
21 ground.

22 In my opinion, that is not a good idea.
23 It's not a good idea in lieu of -- or in view of the
24 fact that property values are going to go down.
25 That's the first thing you would see driving into

1 our complex is the power lines. There is a wooded
2 area there, it's not very big, it's scenic most of
3 the time. But in the event there was a derailment
4 of a train, not only would you have the damage to
5 that woods, there's a good chance of fire. And when
6 we first moved in there, as a matter of fact, there
7 was a fire back there and it was started by a hot
8 spot on one of the wheels of one of the train cars
9 and luckily somebody called that in before it
10 spread. But that's a possibility. Fire is a
11 possibility.

12 The other thing that I have some concern
13 over is I have a heart pacemaker and defibrillator.
14 We are the closest unit to the railroad tracks and
15 as such we would probably be the closest unit to any
16 high voltage power line. And I'm concerned about
17 that.

18 The other thing that concerns me is that
19 I've heard a few people mention burying power lines.
20 If I had to try to figure out what's the best of all
21 these 14 possibilities, I get lost in the
22 complexities of that. But to me it doesn't seem too
23 complex to bury the power line. If you come down
24 those railroad tracks from Peony Lane, bury those
25 lines. That would solve a fire possibility, it

1 would hopefully result in less interference from the
2 power lines, be they with a pacemaker or electrical
3 equipment in your home.

4 So I'm -- I remember one of our meetings
5 that we had somebody from Xcel who was asked a
6 question. If power lines are buried, who has to
7 accept the cost of that and how is it determined?
8 And my understanding from the answer was that the
9 cost of any of that expensive type of solution is
10 spread amongst all of the customers in Xcel's
11 network, not just the neighborhood. And the fellow
12 that gave us that information said that they've had
13 some where it's cost as little as a nickel a month
14 to the people, to the customers.

15 So I've heard enough people concerned
16 about undergrounding things that believe that that
17 could be a solution in a lot of these areas where
18 two or three homes are worried about power lines
19 coming behind their backyard, close to the house,
20 and were they able to be buried, I think it would
21 solve a lot of people's issues. And the expense I
22 don't think is that difficult for customers to bear.

23 So thank you.

24 MS. STEINHAEUER: Thank you.

25 (Clapping.)

1 MS. STEINHAUER: I thought I saw a hand.
2 The gentleman in the jacket there, and I do see you
3 in the back.

4 MR. BOB ONKEN: What have I got, an hour
5 and ten minutes? My name is Bob Onken, O-N-K-E-N.

6 Just kind of talk, 'cause we're always
7 going routes, you know, 'cause that's what we're
8 always thinking about. But I guess the part that
9 really threw me off tonight, I guess I didn't pick
10 up on it until today, that there's really no second
11 party other than us, you know, looking at any of
12 this information for need. And it just kind of
13 throws me for a loop, 'cause we're just people that
14 live in the west metro and we don't know anything
15 about this kind of stuff.

16 So I guess I would ask that if there's
17 some kind of third party to look at this
18 information, you know, for need, and that's why
19 we're here, some people that are much smarter than
20 me looked at some of this information and, you know,
21 myself looking, too, looking at the documents, it
22 looked like Xcel's studies say that alternate route
23 A-2, with the new substations and two underground
24 distribution level 13.8 kV feeder lines is feasible
25 and would meet the reliability requirements and that

1 would impact a lot less homes.

2 I guess then another point was the
3 environmental report should also look at other lower
4 voltage 13.8 kV, 34 kV and 69 kV alternatives for
5 the alternative route for the 115 transmission lines
6 going south instead of west on option H-2 that Xcel
7 rejected, although it met all the conditions
8 required by the engineers.

9 Again, this is just us looking at that,
10 and if there's somebody that had more education and
11 was more relevant in this whole industry looking at
12 that maybe there's other routes. And I think it's
13 basically kind of ridiculous for us to say maybe you
14 should bury it here, when it looks pretty obvious
15 you should bury it there.

16 I don't know why -- I guess my concern is
17 if we don't mention something it's not even
18 considered. You know, like it seems obvious that
19 you should probably bury it here 'cause it's close
20 to maybe three homes and then this thing is free and
21 clear, but we have to suggest that. That doesn't
22 seem really a good way to do business, it seems
23 somebody else should be looking at this on the
24 public's behalf. I think you're reviewing it, but I
25 don't think anybody is looking at it from an

1 engineering standpoint for other options.

2 I mean, they've got all their reasons to
3 do what they got to do, that makes sense, it's a
4 business and they're solving their problems, but
5 there should be another party looking at it from
6 another angle other than a bunch of citizens and
7 residences that really don't know what we're looking
8 at.

9 Thanks.

10 (Clapping.)

11 MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you. I'll just
12 provide a brief response to Mr. Onken's point about
13 who else looks at need besides the Applicants and
14 then members of the public. And there is another
15 division in the Department of Commerce that does
16 evaluate some of the forecasting and will probably
17 make some recommendation or evaluation. So just to
18 provide some context.

19 The gentleman in back.

20 MR. MYKOLA SARAZHYMSKY: Hello. My name
21 is Mykola Sarazhymsky, M-Y -- so sorry,
22 M-Y-K-O-L-A, first name, S-A-R-A-Z-H-Y-M-S-K-Y-Y, so
23 it's a long name. And I probably got a prize for it
24 at this meeting today.

25 I spoke probably, I guess, about half a

1 year ago, and I looked at the documents and I see
2 this environmental review document, it says it's
3 sort of three points here that says analysis of
4 human and environmental impacts of project of the
5 type proposed and identifies kind of what should be
6 looked at. And last time I had the question and I
7 have the same question, I was not able to get the
8 answer, and my question was, and I still have it,
9 how weight is placed on qualitative issues, such as
10 health, that we currently don't have health or even
11 real estate value. I understand there is
12 quantitative issue for financial impact of solution
13 proposed, but there is no, from my perspective, no
14 clear definition on how weight is placed in
15 qualitative issues, such as health, cultural impact,
16 and other things like that mentioned in this
17 document and you can read more about it.

18 So I teach and work at the one of the
19 main local universities here and I teach market
20 research. And to me there is a clear distinction
21 between qualitative and quantitative either research
22 or issues. And it seems like in human nature we
23 understand numbers better, they mean something and
24 we can agree on those numbers. But what it looks to
25 me, from a perspective of all those meetings that I

1 participated, that people get emotional about
2 qualitative issues, quality of life, quality of
3 environment. But we cannot -- and they have --
4 people place different value on those. I mean, it
5 seems to me we might not agree on those values who
6 live closer to the line have better affinity and can
7 feel more strongly about it than people who live two
8 miles from the line.

9 So what I would like to ask and also
10 propose is that I want to ask a question of who in
11 the process of this review provides calculation of
12 health impact of people who live in the area and
13 real estate value and loss of tax revenue and who
14 makes determination which study is correct and which
15 is not. I think you mentioned that you take every
16 study into consideration, but if you are not
17 employing any experts in that area, how do you
18 determine which -- and I don't think a judge is
19 knowledgeable about all of those areas either, and
20 they seem to be qualitative and emotional about it,
21 but who determines if one study is correct and what
22 one is not. Because we talked about even today
23 about EMF impact. But people say it's kind of a
24 gray area, but there are studies that show that kind
25 of great impact on health and some studies that

1 dismiss impact on health. But so who would kind of
2 make the determination which one is correct or which
3 one is more correct?

4 So from that perspective I would like to
5 request that the certificate of opinion of qualified
6 independent expert in the field of EMF impact on
7 health, and high voltage line impact on real estate
8 value and taxes to be included. And I also would
9 like to request that procedurally those two areas
10 should be appropriately quantified, if possible.

11 So we can, for instance, from a health
12 perspective that we can say, okay, people health
13 deteriorates at a certain rate, and so we can look
14 into poor health, loss of productivity, the health
15 care costs, somebody prematurely dying and a
16 funeral, things like that, that should have real
17 monetary impact on the economy, as well as kind of
18 newer voltage lines as we can see immediately.

19 So I would like, when possible, can the
20 branches of those qualitative impacts were
21 quantified and in financial terms from long-term
22 perspective and added to cost-benefit analysis. So
23 I would like if possible if you could answer the
24 question about how weight displays on qualitative
25 issues in your decision making and who in the

1 process provides it and who says that one research
2 is kind of more truthful than another.

3 Thank you.

4 (Clapping.)

5 MR. KALUZNIAK: Thank you, Mr. -- let me
6 see if I can try to get this right. Let me know if
7 I get it wrong. Sarazhymkyy?

8 MR. MYKOLA SARAZHYMSKYY: Sarazhymkyy.

9 MR. KALUZNIAK: Kaluzniak is a name I've
10 had to spell a couple times, too.

11 Regarding the evaluation of the
12 qualitative variables in these things, you're
13 correct, I mean, things can be quite emotional.
14 During the evidentiary process the administrative
15 law judge is asked to write a findings of fact,
16 conclusions and recommendations. And those are
17 three separate items. The findings of facts are the
18 things that he's established to be facts of law that
19 have been demonstrated to his satisfaction as being
20 truthful. The conclusions of that are analytical
21 pieces saying that this comports with a particular
22 law or relates to a particular piece of a
23 proceeding. And then the recommendations are his or
24 her evaluation of the case as it relates to the
25 requirements requisite to granting a certificate of

1 need. That document is public record and available
2 for comment as well.

3 But it comes to the Commission to make
4 that ultimate determination and there are five
5 individuals there, I work with them individually to
6 brief them on the record as it's brought before
7 them. I don't think we actually do determine yea or
8 nay or which is the best research on a particular
9 topic. The Commissioners act in what we refer to as
10 a quasi judicial function. They act somewhat like a
11 judge, they can pronounce somebody guilty or not,
12 they don't necessarily need to document their
13 reasoning. We try to include as much information as
14 we can. But I don't think that there is necessarily
15 concurrence on their behalf either. I mean, we find
16 often that they don't agree on a particular item and
17 we do hope that in vetting the process that way and
18 doing it publicly with a record that's online and
19 available for people to look at we provide some
20 assurance, at least, that we do make an honest
21 effort to evaluate these things. And I really can't
22 say much more than that. There's lots of opinions
23 on these sorts of things.

24 I would refer you to the Brookings
25 transmission line proceeding that was concluded

1 awhile back, I think it's docket 08-1474, where
2 there was a robust discussion during the evidentiary
3 hearings about EMFs and the effects on home values.
4 If you're looking for some research materials to
5 read, there's volumes of materials that were
6 evaluated and looked at. We don't reach conclusions
7 on those things. We don't evaluate and determine
8 exactly what the appropriate level of EMF exposure
9 is, frankly, on those sort of things. Those aren't
10 the conclusions that we reach. The Commissioners
11 are asked on the basis of the record and the law
12 before them to make a judgment to the best of their
13 abilities to weigh these factors. And there's no
14 hard and fast rules on how we do those things.
15 Whether it's 100 feet away from a line is not equal
16 to a house two houses away from the line. There's
17 no easy metric for these things and we realize that
18 so we ask a lot of them in doing the work, and I can
19 tell you that honestly we approach it very seriously
20 and I've never seen them shirk their
21 responsibilities on these matters. So we don't
22 reach conclusions on those necessarily, but we do
23 try to rely on scientific consensus, we try to enter
24 a robust record and make the evaluations on that
25 basis. So I'll just leave it at that.

1 MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you.

2 The woman in pink.

3 MS. KRISTINE ERICKSON: I just have to
4 grab this map. That will be helpful, too, because I
5 couldn't find my help.

6 I'm Kristine Erickson, K-R-I-S-T-I-N-E,
7 Erickson, E-R-I-C-K-S-O-N. I live at 4815 Cheshire
8 Lane North.

9 I've been tempted not to say anything
10 because I've been to the other meetings and I've
11 spoken and I didn't feel like I had anything to add.
12 And I know it's not a routing discussion, which I've
13 been involved in all of those, too. But at the
14 break I took a look at this map, which is a little
15 bit different of a map than we've seen on the
16 routing discussions, and my neighbors and I were
17 trying to find where we live on it because we
18 couldn't find it on there.

19 We live right off here, in this area
20 that's marked Great River Energy. We're Xcel
21 customers. And the proposed substation, and I'm
22 trying not to get on the routing thing, is right
23 behind our neighborhood. So the map is not
24 accurate. So you might want to change your map for
25 tomorrow's discussion because it's a little

1 disappointing, when we lived in our house and built
2 it 17 years ago, and we're here and it says we're
3 not even serviced by Xcel Energy any longer, which
4 we've been paying our bills for 17 years to Xcel
5 Energy. So that was the point I wanted to make with
6 the map. So thank you for holding it.

7 And I'm not going to say everything that
8 everybody else has said, although I'm in full
9 agreement. But mainly when I see things like this
10 it does call into question accuracy and who is
11 checking things. Because there was three of us from
12 our neighborhood tonight, we looked at the map
13 during the break, and if nobody else said anything
14 you'd be working with a bad map still.

15 I'm concerned about the accuracy of
16 people counting. I know that another of my
17 neighbors did make -- did write a written comment
18 during the commenting time on the routing process,
19 and he's a very techie IT person who did take a look
20 at where the proposed substations were to figure out
21 the population density of those areas. And he
22 didn't want me to share it with everybody, he was
23 kind of shy about it, but I do worry about accuracy.
24 And when I hear that single dwellings of apartments,
25 'cause that particular area that we're in, although

1 we're in a single-family housing area, there is
2 impacted very definitely townhomes, apartments up in
3 that area, and I don't think they were probably
4 counted correctly either.

5 Another quality of life issue, which does
6 go more to environmental impact, is in addition to
7 the EMFs, I'm concerned about the noise, the
8 buzzing, the potential of that, and I think burying
9 the lines would probably be a really nice solution
10 for taking away some of the noise impact also.

11 And those are my comments. Thank you.

12 MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you.

13 (Clapping.)

14 MR. LEHMAN: First I'll -- I just thought
15 I'd comment about the question just raised about the
16 service territory.

17 You're right, this is a need proceeding,
18 so it wasn't our intent to try to be overly precise
19 on the maps. We were trying to show general areas.
20 If you look at the very precise and detailed ways in
21 which the different service territories of different
22 utilities mesh up with each other, what we've shown
23 here is sort of a smooth, crisp line. They're not
24 that way in reality. Those are very jagged lines.
25 So your observation that you may, in actuality, be

1 an Xcel customer, and if we were to have provided a
2 more refined diagram of where the exact service
3 territory changed, you wouldn't have seen this nice
4 smooth line. So it wasn't our intent to accurately
5 represent where each individual household sat, we
6 were trying to show generically or generally where
7 part of the study area we were looking at
8 represented Xcel Energy's service territory versus
9 Great River Energy, or their service co-op's service
10 territory in that area.

11 MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you.

12 The woman in white, please.

13 MS. JUDY JOHNSON: Thank you very much.

14 I'm Judy Johnson, I am the ward one city council
15 member for this part of Plymouth, actually on one of
16 the alternate routes, too. And I thank you for the
17 opportunity tonight.

18 My question, I think, is just reflective
19 of a lot of the comments you've heard tonight. And,
20 again, we're talking about the certificate of need.
21 A lot of discussions have been raised about property
22 values, health concerns, environmental concerns and
23 all of that, we know that.

24 I will just talk about, again, making
25 sure that the process has high integrity. I served

1 on the advisory task force and had a role on that
2 with citizens and city members and one of the first
3 things I said to the facilitator, and Scott Ek was
4 part of that, I said, you know, I really want to
5 make sure that this process is going to be fair and
6 complete and thorough, with the highest integrity
7 there is. And that's important to me because I've
8 been in elected office for a long time and I have
9 represented people through many public processes,
10 whether it's development or land acquisitions for
11 roads or right-of-way or what have you. And I know
12 that when people come up and have concerns, you
13 know, we're all concerned about outcomes, but the
14 process itself is as important or more important
15 than even the outcome, because if you don't trust
16 the process and it's not complete and it's not
17 checked and checked again and checked again, all the
18 right players involved, the outcomes then to me are
19 skewed and they're not real.

20 And this process, I'm grateful, because I
21 know when I've had questions for Xcel they've
22 answered my questions. When I had questions of
23 Scott Ek he's got back to me right away. And one of
24 the questions I have, since I didn't know Scott has
25 now moved to the PUC, is who is going to take his

1 place? Because I think I've heard a couple comments
2 tonight, and I know for my own self and for the
3 city, when the City of Plymouth has had questions
4 regarding this, Scott has been so good and he's
5 really, I think, built a lot of trust in this
6 process. And so he's still in the process but he's
7 now coming at it from a different point of view. So
8 I guess I would also like to know if you could send
9 to me and make it available on the website or
10 whatever who that new contact will be and also how
11 that institutional knowledge that he's gained
12 throughout this specific process from beginning to
13 date will be transferred to somebody else. Maybe
14 somebody else has been working alongside of him and
15 that's great, but that to me is really critical.

16 I know that when we have public process
17 at the city and an employee leaves, you know, you
18 can't control it, if people want to do things with
19 their lives you can't lock them into those things,
20 but you have to also have succession to make sure
21 that the integrity is there for people. So I
22 personally would like to know who that contact
23 person will be because he's been wonderful to deal
24 with.

25 And I guess I just want to also emphasize

1 that the City of Plymouth does not have an official
2 role in this, we don't have any of our own hearings,
3 it doesn't go through our planning, it doesn't come
4 to the city council. We are a player in this
5 because we are a stakeholder for the preferred
6 option for the substation, which I know we had a
7 question earlier from a citizen, we had not agreed
8 to sell it, so there are rumors floating out there.
9 There's a process going on that we're involved in,
10 but in case anybody thought we had sold that
11 property, we have not.

12 But I guess for the city's role in this,
13 too, the very limited role that we have, if we can
14 be a resource to validate any information, if we can
15 help with PIDs versus number of units in households,
16 I mean, usually that's a county function, you can
17 pull those numbers up, but I will tell you, we have
18 been caught in that, too. Just recently, on a
19 reconstruction issue, where we were going to go back
20 and assess some properties and we had to double
21 check our PIDs, were they units, were they single
22 counted, double counted, whatever. It's just that
23 whenever we can be in that function to help our
24 citizens know that there's another set of eyes. I
25 know there's no official role in that, but our

1 engineers have been involved in this to some degree
2 anyway, and if there's something on the ground
3 through our comp plan or whatever, as far as
4 expected growth in the area, you know, I would
5 imagine we'd stand ready for that as well.

6 So just on behalf of the citizens, thank
7 you for the process, but there's a lot of anxiety
8 out there, and it's real anxiety. I know you deal
9 with this every day. We do not, however. So I just
10 appreciate the attention to detail and bringing in
11 any kind of, you know, double checking, fact
12 checking. When I get information brought to me and
13 I have to make a decision, I work very hard at
14 drilling our staff and drilling the consultants and
15 drilling everybody involved to make sure that we've
16 dotted the i's and crossed the t's and that it is
17 verified and good information because I can't make a
18 decision without that and I trust the PUC will do
19 the same thing.

20 So thank you for allowing us to be part
21 of this. I know tomorrow at 1:00 there's another
22 hearing here, I believe, or information meeting.
23 And I appreciate this -- if people can come, if they
24 can coming during the day, I understand why you
25 would do that, and hopefully with the media's help,

1 everything, though, that people have learned here
2 tonight, everybody coming in tomorrow won't have
3 heard any of it so they will be starting fresh. So
4 anything that you can share with them that might
5 have been ah-hah moments or some people can come
6 back again, I think that's important, too, for the
7 people of Plymouth. I know this is supposed to feed
8 information through the process so ultimately the
9 PUC has a broad range of input, but this is how our
10 citizens learn things as well. And I think
11 tomorrow's group that comes in hopefully will be up
12 to speed with everything we've learned tonight. So
13 thank you very much for your time and attention.

14 (Clapping.)

15 MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you. Just to
16 speak to your point about who is Scott Ek's
17 successor, we haven't identified that yet. So in
18 the interim, my contact information is available and
19 I'm happy to serve as the central contact point.
20 Some of my other projects are winding up so I have a
21 lot more time to spend on this. And then once we
22 determine who is going to be staffing that and kind
23 of moving that EIS forward, we'll update you with
24 that information and the web page will be updated.
25 But in the interim, just so things don't languish,

1 contact me and we'll make sure we can get you the
2 information. Anybody here, the information that
3 they need.

4 MS. JUDY JOHNSON: If you wouldn't mind,
5 I appreciate that, but could you contact the city so
6 that all of our staff knows that we should be
7 dealing with you, and neighborhood associations and
8 whoever? I could take it back, too, but it would be
9 nice if you could reach out to us and make that
10 available to people from the city hall and give that
11 to them.

12 MS. STEINHAUER: I can certainly do that.
13 Thank you.

14 Yes, Mr. Zeroni.

15 MR. ILAN ZERONI: Good evening and thank
16 you for the opportunity to talk.

17 I'd like to start by stating that this
18 project is highly contested.

19 MS. STEINHAUER: Excuse me.

20 MR. ILAN ZERONI: My name?

21 MS. STEINHAUER: Could you, just so the
22 court reporter has it.

23 MR. ILAN ZERONI: Certainly. Sorry about
24 that. My name is Ilan, I-L-A-N, last name, Z as in
25 zebra, E-R-O-N-I. Any other formalities or I'm

1 good? All right.

2 I'd like to start by stating that this
3 project is highly contested as evidenced by the
4 large number of potentially affected properties.
5 The body of comments that have been submitted to the
6 record --

7 COURT REPORTER: Excuse me. When you
8 read, everybody reads fast, and if you could slow it
9 down a little bit.

10 MR. ILAN ZERONI: Certainly.

11 COURT REPORTER: Thank you.

12 MR. ILAN ZERONI: Thank you. I'll start
13 again.

14 The project is highly contested, as
15 evidenced by the large number of potentially
16 affected properties, the body of comments that has
17 been submitted to the record of the routing process
18 docket, 11-152, the 763 signatures on the petition
19 to convert to the full routing permitting process,
20 and the 428 signatures on the petition to utilize a
21 contested case hearing for the certificate of need
22 process.

23 My next comments will have to do with the
24 proposed system alternatives. I believe that the
25 Applicants in their application for a certificate of

1 need indicate that they have considered various
2 system alternatives, including generation,
3 distributed generation, lower voltage, 69 kilovolt,
4 higher voltage, 345 kilovolt alternatives, as well
5 as direct current lines and distribution
6 alternatives.

7 It is my feeling that these system
8 alternatives have been summarily dismissed. Some
9 alternatives appear to be dismissed mostly based on
10 technical issues, others appear to be dismissed
11 mostly due to cost and/or logistical considerations.
12 I would like to state at this point to the DOC, the
13 cost considerations in determining system
14 alternatives should be the lowest priority. Either
15 cost or logistical. The technical considerations
16 should be primary. If we manage to find a system
17 solution that solves the need, that solves the
18 problem, the consideration should be lowest impact,
19 that should be the first consideration. Cost to the
20 Applicants, in my mind, should be the very last
21 consideration.

22 Mr. Lehman this evening, and I'm sorry if
23 I'm mispronouncing your name, there was a comment
24 that regarded the existing 69 kilovolt line, and
25 Mr. Lehman indicated to the crowd that this option

1 will be looked at as part of the project. Again, I
2 don't understand much about it, but it seems to me
3 that the line is there, I don't understand why you
4 can't flick the switch, why you have to get the
5 project going, it is there. I understand there may
6 be startup considerations and things you need to do,
7 and Mr. Kaluzniak talked about MIS0, the ISO or RT0,
8 whichever one it is. I understand there are these
9 considerations, but as far as I understand, the
10 hardware is there. If it is not in use, why do we
11 require a project for it, why can't we, so to speak,
12 flip the switch and turn it on? One thing that I
13 don't understand.

14 My next comments will have to do with
15 generation versus transmission. I would like to
16 start by clarifying that I'm not advocating for
17 generation. I'm repeating myself, I am not
18 advocating for generation.

19 In the application for certificate of
20 need, section 4.2.1.1 on page 85, the Applicants
21 claim that peaking generation is not a suitable
22 alternative to the proposed project because, quote,
23 adding additional generation would not correct the,
24 and I state and I stress, geographically diverse
25 distribution feeder circuit overloads. And the

1 quote goes on after a while to say this means the
2 generation would need to be sized specifically to
3 each feeder and need to be flexible enough to allow
4 reconfiguration of feeders due to load growth or
5 operational issues, end of quote.

6 It appears to me that the problem is, and
7 I quote again, geographically diverse. That is the
8 quote from the application of the certificate of
9 need as the Applicants state. I wonder how adding
10 capacity to the Hollydale substation by means of
11 transmission defers from adding capacity to the
12 substation via generation. If generation is not a
13 suitable solution, why is transmission suitable?
14 Doesn't a transmission line simply carry power from
15 an existing plant? If generation -- and, again, I'm
16 not advocating for that, I just don't understand, if
17 generation isn't a suitable alternative, why is
18 transmission suitable?

19 What is it that generation will not
20 solve -- why is it, excuse me, why is it that
21 generation will not solve the geographically diverse
22 distribution feeder circuit overloads but
23 transmission will.

24 My next comments will have to do with
25 forecasting. On the application, Figure 12 on page

1 44 projects a load growth of about 20 megawatts
2 between 2011 and 2030 for both forecasts of the 13.8
3 kilovolt distribution circuits. Just to be clear,
4 there are two lines, but their slope is exactly the
5 same. It's only their intercept that is different.
6 Their slope means that between 2011 and 2030, both
7 of them forecast about a 20 megawatt addition to
8 demand.

9 Figure 13 on page 45 shows approximately
10 an eight megawatt load growth on the 35 -- 34 and a
11 half kilovolt circuits. I realize that these are
12 not additive, so it's probably not 28 in the
13 overall, so I will assume an understated overall
14 demand growth. And it's not clear to me from the
15 application what the overall load growth projection
16 is, but I'm assuming it's 20. And I believe it's an
17 understated growth as projected by the Applicants.

18 What I do not understand is why that
19 slope. What I have done is I have performed a
20 simple linear extrapolation of historical overall
21 demand data. Overall demand. I've taken all data
22 that has been supplied as part of the load study and
23 simply performed a linear extrapolation. Lo and
24 behold, the difference is about 8.8 megawatt
25 difference between 2011 and 2030, not the

1 understated 20. It is unclear to me why the
2 Applicants are using 6.1 percent average growth rate
3 for the 34 and a half kilovolt lines and .8 percent
4 for the 13.8 kilovolt lines. It appears that
5 they're taking into consideration only peak trends.
6 That is to say, taking historical data, taking the
7 peak points, and then extrapolating those rather
8 than extrapolating the entirety. I do not know if
9 that's what the Applicants have done, I'm not
10 stating that, but that's what it appears like to me.

11 What I would like to have is a much
12 clearer understanding of the drivers of growth and
13 the assumptions that have gone to come up with these
14 numbers, with the 6.1 average growth rate for the 34
15 and a half kilovolt line and a .8 percent for the
16 13.8 kilovolt line. To me at this point, these are
17 numbers and I don't know where they come from. I
18 hope that when you go on with your study that you
19 ask those difficult questions as well, how did you
20 come up with these numbers, and think independently
21 and critically, are the growth assumptions, are the
22 growth drivers correct. I believe -- I do not at
23 this point believe that they are. I am not
24 convinced. I simply do not know what the growth
25 drivers are, they have not been at all, in my mind,

1 laid out.

2 The Applicants' forecasts do not seem to
3 account for conservation and demand-side management.
4 In short, I strongly challenge the Applicants'
5 forecasts, which is the basis for need. I would
6 like to gain a much more in-depth understanding of
7 the assumptions and growth drivers used in
8 generating this forecast. The permit granting body
9 would do well to challenge these forecasts as well.

10 My next comments have to do with
11 undergrounding. As part of their application the
12 Applicants also considered undergrounding the
13 transmission lines as a system alternative. I'm
14 very happy that the DOC will be looking at
15 undergrounding. I would like to stress,
16 undergrounding is not a system alternative.
17 Undergrounding is an impact mitigation measure.
18 What I mean by that is it seems to me that if we do
19 consider it as a system alternative and then a
20 transmission line system solution is chosen, then by
21 that we will have simply taken off the table
22 undergrounding because we have considered it a
23 system alternative. I would like to be very clear.
24 I request, I demand that undergrounding not be
25 considered a system solution. It is not. It is an

1 impact mitigation measure.

2 The DOC itself comments on the
3 application that it is extremely premature and does
4 not belong in this docket. This has to do with
5 docket 12-113, document 20127-7778-01, comments and
6 recommendations. Page 4 of the DOC comments state
7 that, and I quote, it is extremely premature to
8 conclude that site specific mitigative measures are
9 not warranted prior to the preferred and alternative
10 route full evaluation in the high voltage
11 transmission line route permitting process, end
12 quote.

13 Again, I would like to say I'm very happy
14 that you will be looking at undergrounding as part
15 of this process. However, I would like to again
16 reiterate that it is not a system alternative. I
17 absolutely -- it cannot be that if a transmission
18 line is seen at the end of the day as the right
19 system solution that undergrounding is taken off the
20 table, it's not a system solution, it is, again, an
21 impact mitigative measure.

22 I would like to read, by the way, the
23 quote regarding undergrounding in the application.
24 The Applicants state no circumstance warrants
25 underground construction based on Applicants'

1 examination of the environmental and land use
2 setting associated with the proposed project. So it
3 seems as if the Applicants at this time have already
4 gone through the entire study of environmental and
5 land use setting and they have come to the
6 conclusion that no circumstance warrants underground
7 construction. This to me is and the DOC itself is
8 extremely premature and understates my feelings
9 regarding this immensely.

10 My next comments will have to do with the
11 higher voltage alternative. Mr. Lehman, again, you
12 have explained I think to a certain extent, but it
13 was not clear to me before. I would like to state
14 that it is clear to me that the application states
15 and restates that such a solution, that is to say
16 345 kilovolt, is not prudent. They do not -- and
17 they state and restate that. However, at the end of
18 the day, they do present a clearly thought-out map,
19 and I will refer you to Figure 25 on page 80, of the
20 conceptual 345 kilovolt configuration. I have never
21 seen such a detailed map for anything that is at a
22 conceptual stage. If you look at that map you'll
23 see that this thing has been thought out in detail.

24 Now, I understand -- I think I have a
25 better understanding today, but I would like to say

1 that not what we have on the land today is an
2 easement, what we have is a nonfunctioning low
3 voltage transmission line. Once we get a high
4 voltage transmission line going on there, that is to
5 say above 100 kilovolts, the next step, in order to
6 get that high voltage alternative, is much easier.
7 There is very little that we can do about this.

8 While the Applicants seem very clear on
9 how the solution is not relevant, there appears to
10 me to be some ground laying for some future project
11 and now I believe that I do have a clear
12 understanding of why the map was so detailed,
13 however, I would like again to say the thinking is
14 there. And all I'm doing is referring to that very,
15 very detailed map.

16 My next comments will have to do with
17 distribution system alternatives. In section
18 4.1.1.1 on page 72, the Applicants claim that, and I
19 quote, the 345 kilovolt system has sufficient
20 capacity to feed the lower voltage system, 69
21 kilovolt and 35.4 -- 34.5, excuse me. I'll re-read
22 that. 69 kilovolt and 34.5 kilovolt in this case,
23 but the existing 34.5 or 69 kilovolt system cannot
24 deliver enough power to meet customer demands, I end
25 the quote.

1 It is unclear to me where the problem is.
2 69 kilovolt is a transmission line. 34.5 kilovolt
3 is a distribution line. Is the problem one of
4 transmission or one of distribution? I will re-read
5 this. The existing 34.5 or 69 kilovolt system
6 cannot deliver enough power to meet customer
7 demands. Again, I'm just a citizen, I'm not a power
8 engineer, I do this in my free time late at night
9 after the kids have gone to bed. When I read this
10 it is unclear to me what the problem is.

11 If you can, please, Xcel has shown
12 several slides at the beginning, if you can please
13 go to slide 3 of their presentation. Thank you.
14 And -- no -- there you go. And the word
15 distribution is right there. Improvements are
16 needed to address electric distribution concerns,
17 distribution supply feeder circuit overloads,
18 distribution levels have been exhausted, but the
19 word distribution is all over this slide so to me it
20 seems very unclear.

21 Throughout this document it appears that
22 the problem is one of distribution. The term feeder
23 circuit overload is repeated throughout the
24 document. Why are the Applicants trying to solve a
25 distribution problem via a transmission solution?

1 Something that is very -- I just simply
2 cannot understand it, I would definitely like an
3 answer to that. The distribution system in the area
4 consists of 11 13.8 kilovolt and two 34 and a half
5 kilovolt feeder circuit -- page 33 of Appendix B
6 claims that a decision has been made to, and I
7 quote, no longer expand the 34.5 kilovolt system in
8 this area, end quote. Would converting the 13.8
9 kilovolt feeder circuit to 34 and a half not solve
10 the problem? Why was the decision made to no longer
11 expand the 34.5 kilovolt system? I would like to
12 understand whether this decision was arbitrary, cost
13 related, logistics related, or is it something
14 technical? If it was just arbitrary, it should not
15 be presented as a constraint on system alternatives
16 that cannot be reconsidered. This should be
17 considered again if this is the case. This option
18 should be very much open to debate and hold public
19 scrutiny.

20 Tables 2 and 3 in the application on
21 pages 48 and 49 clearly show that the problem is
22 mostly limited to the 11 13.8 kilovolt distribution
23 lines. These are the lines that have had almost all
24 of the overload incidents. Why not turn the 13.8
25 kilovolt lines into 34.5 kilovolt lines and solve

1 the problem?

2 The main certificate of need application
3 document, pages 57 through 63, excuse me, discusses
4 two distribution alternatives to the project.
5 Alternative A-2 is described on pages 60 to 62 of
6 the application. The alternative suggests that new
7 distribution lines run through Vicksburg Lane North,
8 which currently does not have a distribution line
9 running through it as far as I could see while
10 driving there.

11 MS. STEINHAUER: Excuse me, Mr. Zeroni.
12 I had said earlier that we would end the meeting at
13 9:00 and it's five after.

14 MR. ILAN ZERONI: We are supposed to
15 clear the building by 9:30, right?

16 MS. STEINHAUER: By 9:30.

17 UNIDENTIFIED: I'd like to hear his
18 comments.

19 MS. STEINHAUER: Okay.

20 MR. ILAN ZERONI: I mean, we don't need
21 25 minutes to clear the building, I believe.

22 MS. STEINHAUER: Okay. But people have
23 to understand that after Mr. Zeroni we will close
24 the oral comment period. We're going to be here
25 tomorrow. And I just want to reiterate that written

1 comments are accepted through November 16th.

2 MR. ILAN ZERONI: Is there anyone who
3 wants to make a comment and I'm taking up your time?

4 UNIDENTIFIED: No, go for it.

5 UNIDENTIFIED: Agreed.

6 MR. ILAN ZERONI: Thank you. I'm sorry.

7 I was talking about the fact that A-2
8 suggests that the new distribution line would run
9 through Vicksburg Lane North. I request that
10 distribution system alternatives be analyzed in a
11 way that is independent of the exact routing of the
12 distribution lines. I realize that the length of
13 the distribution lines is a significant engineering
14 factor. Yes, you're nodding, I absolutely
15 understand that, but Vicksburg Lane, for example, is
16 exactly parallel to Fernbrook Lane North, which
17 already has a distribution line running through it
18 when I drove through, or at least through part of
19 it.

20 To be clear, I'm not advocating one route
21 versus the other. I am not advocating one route
22 versus the other. What I am requesting is that the
23 routing of any distribution line be discussed
24 separately from the solution in principle. If we
25 can, if solution A-2 is technically viable, the

1 exact specifics of where the lines would run, if
2 it's Vicksburg, if it's Fernbrook, versus any other
3 route, which, again, abides by the technical
4 limitations, should be considered separately from
5 the solution in principle.

6 In case the routing of the distribution
7 lines must be considered as a part of the principle
8 system alternative discussion, alternative routes
9 should be discussed following public commentary on
10 the matter. That is to say, to this point we have
11 not received any -- well, because this is supposed
12 to be certificate of need and not routing; however,
13 when we are discussing a distribution line, there is
14 a routing element of a distribution line. What I am
15 trying to say is if we do find a distribution line
16 is the viable system solution, we cannot discuss the
17 routing at that very same setting because the public
18 will then not have any input into that, and to this
19 point nobody has commented about that.

20 In summary, Minnesota rule, I would like
21 to address here the fact that many people feel that
22 information may not have been -- has been presented
23 maybe piecemeal. Perhaps this project is part of a
24 broader view and maybe a longer term view that
25 either or both of the Applicants have and have not

1 been shared with the public. This is a sentiment
2 expressed during this meeting.

3 I would like to state in addition to the
4 sentiment that Minnesota rule 4410.2000, called
5 Projects Requiring an EIS, and I am aware that an
6 EIS pertains to routing and not to need, subpart 4
7 states that, and I quote, connected actions and
8 phased actions, multiple projects and multiple
9 stages of a single project that are connected
10 actions or phased actions must be considered in
11 total when determining the need for an EIS and in
12 preparing the EIS, end quote. Again, I do realize
13 an EIS is pertinent to a routing process; however,
14 I'd like to state that the intent of the law -- I'm
15 not a lawyer either, I've had to be a little bit of
16 a lawyer and little bit of a power engineer in this
17 whole thing and some other things as well, but it
18 seems to me the intent here is connected actions and
19 phased actions overall be considered in total. That
20 is the rule. I request that if this project is
21 indeed only a portion of one or more larger projects
22 and/or part of a broader plan for the area, that the
23 Applicants and our Department of Commerce come forth
24 with all information relating to any such projects
25 or plans at this time so the project may be

1 evaluated in its entirety as required by law.

2 This project potentially impacts hundreds
3 of households through Plymouth and Medina. This
4 should be taken into consideration when
5 contemplating need and which system solution is
6 granted a permit. The system that is granted a
7 permit should solve the feeder circuit overload
8 problem in a way that is least impactful on the
9 population, regardless of cost to the Applicants.
10 Cost appears to be the Applicants' main concern.
11 The fact that the Applicants have summarily, in my
12 mind, dismissed system alternatives is of grave
13 concern to hundreds of residents and evidenced by
14 the petitions that have been filed so far.

15 My request -- I would like to summarize
16 my request so you can understand what I'm looking
17 for. It seems to me here that it says in the draft
18 scoping document that the EFP staff anticipates that
19 the ER will address the following matters, and then
20 there are various matters that it addresses. Since
21 this is a scoping public meeting and we are here to
22 discuss scope, I would like to request, then, that
23 the following topics be included in the scope for
24 the ER.

25 Alternatives to the proposed high voltage

1 transmission line, the no-build alternative. I
2 absolutely request that it be considered as well.
3 I'd like to learn what the load has been this
4 summer. This summer, for example, has been very
5 warm, very hot, and that air conditioners have been
6 working full time. I would like to know what the
7 load was and how many contingencies there were. I
8 know that it was not there, it was not available
9 when the application was submitted. I would
10 definitely like to have this data because that would
11 help me understand. If, at the elevated demand it
12 was all seen this summer, I'm sure there was
13 significant elevated demand, if there were not too
14 many contingencies, or there were many, that would
15 help us all in understanding need.

16 Demand-side management, purchase power,
17 generation alternatives, specifically renewable
18 resource, system alternatives, specifically
19 distribution system alternatives, the
20 undergrounding, I would definitely love to have that
21 in the scope. But, again, not as a system
22 alternative, upgrading the existing facilities and
23 forecasts. I would definitely like to have
24 something that was not seen in what the EFP
25 anticipates, which is the drivers of load growth. I

1 would absolutely expect the DOC to, again,
2 critically review the drivers and the assumptions
3 made in forecasting growth.

4 As far as environmental effects, air
5 quality, biological resources, cultural resources,
6 geology and soils, health and safety, including EMF.
7 It absolutely has to be in scope. Land use, and
8 specifically residential zoning and the impact on
9 residential households. Noise, socioeconomics,
10 specifically including property valuation, taxes
11 lost, property comparables that account for
12 devaluation domino effect, that is further
13 devaluation of properties, transportation, visual
14 impacts and aesthetics, water resources, waste
15 management and disposal.

16 And I will take one more minute, I
17 apologize for the prolonged speech here.

18 I respectfully request that a truly
19 independent party analyze system alternatives in
20 ways that are purely technical and divorced from
21 cost and other arbitrary considerations. That the
22 public gain access to assumptions in growth drivers
23 used in generating the forecast, the load growth
24 forecast. That the public gain access to material
25 regarding the decision to no longer expand to 34.5

1 kilovolt. That it is made clear that the
2 undergrounding issue is to be resolved as part of
3 the routing docket as an impact mitigation measure
4 following substantial public involvement. I request
5 that even if the application is accepted and said
6 acceptance not constitute a resolution of the
7 underground issue, undergrounding still has to be
8 debated and discussed as part of the routing
9 process.

10 An in-depth analysis of my proposed
11 system alternative. I'm proposing a system
12 alternative here, in case it was not clear before.
13 That several or all of the 13.8 kilovolt
14 distribution feeder circuits and all related
15 infrastructure are upgraded to 34.5 kilovolt. That
16 is my proposed system alternative.

17 I would like to understand any technical
18 limitations that would negate it. Such
19 considerations should be divorced from cost related,
20 logistical, or any other arbitrary consideration.
21 The only question is would such a system alternative
22 solve the circuit feeder overload problem. That
23 distribution system alternatives be analyzed in a
24 way that is independent of the exact routing of the
25 distribution lines. For example, the new

1 distribution line at alternate A-2 could run through
2 either Fernbrook Lane North or Vicksburg or any
3 other route. I'm not advocating for either, it's
4 just an example, but it has to be divorced from the
5 system solution in general.

6 Thank you. Those are my comments.

7 (Clapping.)

8 MS. STEINHAEUER: Thank you.

9 I'd like to thank you again for coming
10 out tonight, we do very much appreciate your time.

11 For those who are interested, we'll be
12 back tomorrow at 1:00. I don't think we'll go any
13 later than 5:00 tomorrow, but we'll be here to take
14 oral comments. You can comment again tomorrow
15 orally, after that it does need to be in writing.
16 And if you commented tonight, if something you heard
17 tonight makes you want to follow that up with a
18 written comment, if you think of something sometime
19 between now and then, please provide your comments.

20 I do also want to stress that there are a
21 lot of things open with this right now. The
22 comments due by the 16th need to come to me. We
23 need to take those and propose a scope of the
24 environmental report to our commissioner, and that
25 has to be, by statute, go out ten working days after

1 the close of the comment period. So I am concerned
2 that if you provide comments to the ALJ in the
3 routing matter, I'll get those eventually, but that
4 might not be in time to include that in the scope.

5 So I just want to reiterate to make sure
6 that those comments come to me. If they're more
7 related to routing or something I'll make sure they
8 get to where they need to go, but I'll compile them,
9 they'll be submitted to eDockets and they will be
10 available on our website. Again, November 16th.

11 This concludes the oral portion for
12 today's meeting, we'll reconvene tomorrow at 1:00.

13 Thank you.

14 * * *

15 **OCTOBER 26, 2012 - 1:00 P.M.**

16 MS. STEINHAUER: Good afternoon. My name
17 is Suzanne Steinhauer, I'm with the Minnesota
18 Department of Commerce, Energy Facility Permitting
19 division. And I'm here this afternoon, as I was
20 last evening, to welcome you to the environmental
21 report public information scoping meeting for the
22 proposed Hollydale 115 kV transmission line that has
23 been proposed by Xcel Energy and Great River Energy
24 in this area.

25 I'll go through the agenda real briefly.

1 I'm going to soon turn it over to Paul Lehman from
2 Xcel Energy, he'll talk a little bit about the
3 project and what Xcel's -- why Xcel has proposed
4 that. I know that -- well, I don't know, but I am
5 assuming that many of you have been involved in the
6 routing process, and we'll talk a little bit about
7 how we got to this process now, the determination of
8 need or the certificate of need process.

9 So after Mr. Lehman's done talking about
10 the need, what Xcel Energy and GRE proposed, the
11 need they propose to fill, I'll talk a little bit
12 about the state process.

13 With me tonight, or this afternoon, is
14 Mike Kaluzniak. He is with the staff from the
15 Minnesota Public Utilities Commission. Also, out in
16 the hallway I think you met my colleagues, Ray
17 Kirsch and Matt Langan, they are with me at the
18 Department of Commerce staff. Ray is the public
19 advisor for the project and he and I are available
20 to try to answer questions you may have about the
21 process for the certificate of need process. We do
22 a small portion of it, we can try to answer your
23 questions. Mike is also, Mike Kaluzniak, is also
24 available to answer questions about the how the
25 Commission looks at the need. And then we'll turn

1 the bulk of the afternoon over to receiving your
2 comments and questions, which is the main reason
3 we're here this afternoon.

4 So thank you again and --

5 MR. LEHMAN: Good afternoon. My name is
6 Paul Lehman, I'm a regulatory manager for Xcel
7 Energy. With me today are a variety of team members
8 for this project from Xcel Energy and Great River
9 Energy. So most of them have a name tag on, so if
10 you have questions during a break or I notice there
11 are a lot of people talking to them beforehand, so
12 we're here to answer questions of yours
13 individually. You will have the opportunity, of
14 course, as Suzanne said, to speak to the crowd here.

15 What I'm here to talk to you about right
16 now is to give you an idea what this project is
17 about and why we're proposing to develop this
18 project.

19 Xcel Energy and Great River Energy have
20 been looking at how we can maintain safe and
21 reliable service to our customers in this area.
22 We've been looking at what we call a focus study
23 area, and this area that's hashed or hashed in
24 orange is the general outline of the study area that
25 we focused in on and it gives you an idea of the top

1 part of it, roughly, is where the Great River Energy
2 supplied customers are and the bottom half of that
3 is where the Xcel Energy supplied customers are.
4 But it's an area of both our organizations. So
5 we're looking specifically at what the needs are
6 within that focus study area.

7 As part of that, though, we also want to
8 make sure we understood the impacts anything we had
9 to do in this area might have on a little bit
10 broader area, so we also looked at what we called a
11 greater study area. So, again, the focus study area
12 is where the specific need is we've been trying to
13 identify and make sure we're able to take care of
14 and making sure we can take care of or not adversely
15 impact on a broader scale this greater study area.

16 So as we looked at this we came across
17 what we define as a need. A need to make sure we
18 take care of our ability to serve our electric
19 utility customers. The need that we're talking
20 about now is what we call a distribution need, a
21 need to be able to distribute the power to our
22 customers.

23 And as we looked at that we came across
24 some problems. One problem being the ability to
25 make sure we have enough supply that feeds into that

1 distribution system that serves our customers in
2 this area. And as part of that we also saw that the
3 distribution wires themselves were susceptible to
4 some overloads. Now, those are the kinds of needs
5 that we look at across our system on a regular basis
6 and we do everything we can to make sure we've got
7 an adequate and safe and reliable electric
8 distribution system to meet those needs. So we have
9 a variety of tools we make use of, but we pretty
10 much exhausted all of those tools, from our
11 perspective, that we have in our tool box to take
12 care of those distribution needs.

13 So we've got a project that we've
14 proposed to take care of this area. And what we've
15 proposed to do is to increase the reliability and
16 the quality of service to our customers in the
17 Plymouth and Medina area. We're going to be
18 rebuilding about eight miles of existing
19 transmission line, an existing 69 kV transmission
20 line. And we're going to be building just a little
21 bit under a mile of new transformation line, new 115
22 kV transmission line that we'll use to connect that
23 existing 69 kV line into the 115 kV transmission
24 system at a substation we call our Pomerleau Lake
25 substation. So we've got this proposal that we've

1 got before us this afternoon.

2 And so we go back to a picture I showed
3 earlier of the system that we're looking at there,
4 where we're looking to make sure we can maintain
5 safe and reliable service to our customers. And in
6 here we see this green line, this green-hashed line
7 that goes right through the middle of this focus
8 study area, what we're intending to do is to change
9 that line from a 69 kV line to a 115 kV line. So as
10 far as the color coding goes on this map, we'll be
11 changing it from a green to a blue line because
12 those are the colors that represent the next higher
13 voltage of the transmission lines in the area.

14 So here's the benefits that we see by
15 doing this proposed project. We'll take care of
16 those distribution needs that we identified, the
17 ability to get adequate supply to the distribution
18 lines that feed our customers, as well as to relieve
19 those potential overloads of the distribution wires
20 that go out and serve the customers. And it'll
21 maintain a good supply of electricity to our
22 Plymouth area, Medina area, Plymouth area customers.
23 It also has the benefit that there will be some
24 long-term benefits to the transmission system by
25 adding some new transmission lines to the

1 transmission system so that you are a little bit
2 better off.

3 This is the schedule that we are on right
4 now. Back in July of the second quarter of 2011, we
5 began the process of seeking the permits that are
6 necessary for us to be able to build this
7 transmission line. Between that time and now we've
8 gone through a variety of steps in the regulatory
9 process, including beginning what's referred to as a
10 certificate of need process. That's what we are
11 here talking about right now, is the certificate of
12 need process. And we are expecting that we will
13 complete those processes, both the certificate of
14 need and the determination of the route through a
15 route permit process, sometime in the third quarter
16 of next year, about a year from now, in that
17 neighborhood. Assuming we complete those at that
18 time, that will allow us to begin the design and
19 engineering and construction of the project with an
20 objective of having it in service ready to serve our
21 customers by the second quarter of 2015.

22 As you go forward, as we go forward and
23 we become involved in the process here, these are
24 the individuals that you'll have available to you to
25 contact from the project. Myself, as the person

1 responsible for the certificate of need, we have
2 someone who's in charge of our permitting, RaeLynn,
3 and then we have a Great River Energy
4 representative, Marsha.

5 And that covers my part.

6 MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you.

7 So I think Paul talked a little bit, and
8 I'm sure you're familiar with the process up to now,
9 the route permitting process. The Applicants
10 requested to convert what they had applied for under
11 the alternate process to a full permitting process
12 in February of this year, and the Commission ordered
13 the conversion to a full process in May. And the
14 Department was out here again for project meetings
15 and came out with an EIS scope, which is
16 available -- which identifies the routes that will
17 be reevaluated for the route permitting process and
18 the impacts that'll be evaluated. The scope,
19 including larger maps of the routes, are available
20 on the back table, that came out in July.

21 At the time that the Applicants applied
22 for the route permit, those under the alternative
23 and then under the full process, the route they were
24 proposing was, just as Paul said, just under nine
25 miles. Under statute there is something called a

1 certificate of need, whereby the applicant needs to
2 demonstrate a need for the project is required for
3 transmission lines over 100 kilovolts or more than
4 ten miles in length. That wasn't true of the route
5 permit application. However, as part of the
6 scoping, the scope that was issued, there were a
7 couple of routes that are over ten miles, and
8 because it's conceivable that the -- that the
9 Commission may permit a route that's over ten miles,
10 the Applicants applied for a certificate of need.

11 And I'll turn it over to Mike and he'll
12 talk a little bit about what the Commission looks at
13 in their certificate of need process.

14 MR. KALUZNIAK: Thank you. As Suzanne
15 mentioned, my name is Mike Kaluzniak, I'm a staff
16 member with the Minnesota Public Utilities
17 Commission.

18 Many of you have been through several of
19 these meetings before and I just want to thank you
20 personally for coming out. We realize it's a
21 commitment on your part and takes a lot of time out
22 of your day to learn about a subject that most
23 people would rather not learn a great deal about.

24 As was mentioned, the certificate of need
25 for the power line was filed after the routing

1 proceeding. Typically, for larger projects, the
2 Commission would be required to grant the
3 certificate of need prior to considering a route
4 permit. And in this case, when it became apparent
5 that the Commission may approve a route greater than
6 ten miles in length, it was determined that a
7 certificate of need was appropriate and the
8 Applicants undertook to file that this year.

9 I just wanted to take a moment to kind of
10 discuss some of the parties to the proceeding and
11 what our respective roles are, because it becomes
12 really confusing with all of these hearings and all
13 these different faces that you see to direct traffic
14 and know who you should speak to about things.

15 The Commission typically relies on the
16 Department of Commerce to do several things. In
17 developing these dockets, the Commission itself is a
18 five-member board that makes these decisions
19 independently based on the record that we develop,
20 including all the documents and your input into the
21 scoping process.

22 The Department develops an environmental
23 review document that evaluates the impacts of the
24 project. The Department is not an advocate for the
25 project, we don't advocate for the project. I try

1 not to make any sort of opinion about the merit of a
2 project. We rely strictly on the record and I try
3 to relay that as fairly and objectively to the
4 Commission as possible to help them make their
5 decision. All of the documents that are developed
6 as part of this process are maintained on our
7 website that is referenced in the meeting notice
8 documents.

9 In addition to the environmental review
10 track, after that's developed there will be a
11 comment period and a hearing out here to discuss the
12 contents of that. And you can review the content or
13 the document itself, and if you have questions about
14 that the Department will run that meeting as well.

15 At the same time there's an additional
16 series of review that goes on kind of in a parallel
17 track to this. And a question came up last night
18 about who is the objective party in this. And while
19 it sometimes appears as though the Department is
20 actually advocating for the project, they're trying
21 to provide an honest, thorough, objective evaluation
22 for it.

23 But in addition to that process the
24 environmental review document is forwarded to an
25 administrative law judge through the Office of

1 Administrative Hearings and the judge's job is to
2 conduct what we refer to as evidentiary hearings.
3 These are administrative law proceedings where the
4 Applicants will file testimony, other parties are
5 invited to file testimony, public participants can
6 file testimony. They have an opportunity to meet,
7 question, review, discuss and submit follow-up
8 information for that. Then there's kind of an
9 evidentiary hearing where the parties actually get
10 together and do actual testimony and answer
11 questions directly in front of the judge. That
12 typically is not a public hearing. You're welcome
13 to attend, but typically during those hearings it's
14 restricted to parties for participation. You are
15 entitled to ask questions, of course, but typically
16 those proceedings are directed towards the parties
17 to deal with the docket to date.

18 The administrative law judge then takes
19 all of these materials, the environmental documents,
20 the testimony, rebuttals, surrebuttals, and all the
21 record evidence, the public comments that we have to
22 date, and makes an evaluation of that. Typically
23 he'll write a document we call the ALJ report. The
24 administrative law judge develops findings,
25 conclusions of law, and then recommendations.

1 Yes, Paula.

2 MS. PAULA MACCABEE: Mr. Kaluzniak, I
3 don't think you mentioned, this administrative law
4 judge is going to hold public hearings on both the
5 issue of certificate of need and the issue of the
6 routing. And those public hearings are going to be
7 the week before the evidentiary hearing that
8 Mr. Kaluzniak mentioned.

9 MR. KALUZNIAK: That's correct. I'm
10 speaking directly towards just the certificate of
11 need process right now.

12 MS. MACCABEE: The certificate of need
13 will also have a public meeting with the
14 administrative law judge.

15 MR. KALUZNIAK: Correct. And technically
16 that will probably be in early March, if all goes
17 well, I'm not sure what the exact date is. So when
18 the administrative law judge develops his
19 recommendations that's forwarded to the Commission
20 for its decisions. There is a period when parties
21 can reply to the administrative law judge's report.
22 He makes findings, conclusions and evaluates the
23 record whether it meets the legal requirements for
24 issuing a permit and forwards that to the Commission
25 for its decision.

1 My job is to help the Commissioners
2 interpret the record. They do read these materials,
3 we do read your comments, we take them very
4 seriously, and we evaluate on a house by house basis
5 the situation of where the lines are. And they're a
6 very shrewd bunch of folks, I'm continually amazed
7 at how thorough they understand these dockets and
8 they do pay very close attention to them.

9 At any rate, they make their findings in
10 a public meeting, you are welcome to attend. We
11 don't typically take public comments, sometimes we
12 elect to if there's a great concern. And the
13 Commission makes its determination based on the
14 record that's developed. We try to keep our
15 meetings and our documents very transparent, these
16 things are filed online and those things are
17 maintained permanently for public viewing. We
18 conduct our meetings openly and we do try to
19 maintain a very strong sense of neutrality in these
20 processes. It's often a very difficult decision to
21 make on these things, we don't find many people that
22 want power lines in their backyard, so it's not
23 unusual and we understand that it's a very emotional
24 thing for a lot of you and we appreciate you for
25 coming out.

1 Thank you.

2 MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you. I had heard
3 that the volume was needed to be turned up. Is this
4 better? Can people hear me? I'll try to speak
5 directly into it. Can people hear me?

6 This slide kind of puts some dates on it,
7 the slide that was available previously. Kind of
8 bringing us up to date, we're here for the
9 environmental report scoping meetings. The scoping
10 comments are due on November 16th. So that is three
11 weeks from today. Your opportunity for oral
12 comments on scoping is at this meeting and then
13 afterwards they need to be in writing. And we'll go
14 over the way that you can submit them either
15 directly through our website, through e-mail, by fax
16 or letter, but I do need to receive them by the end
17 of the day on the 16th.

18 As Mike mentioned, the future dates get a
19 little bit hazier. There will be -- my commissioner
20 will issue a scoping decision on what alternatives
21 and impacts will be covered in the environmental
22 report in probably early December. We anticipate
23 issuing an ER in early February, that's the latest I
24 heard about that. There will be both public and
25 evidentiary hearings in the spring. And then after

1 that the schedule gets even more fuzzy, but right
2 now we would anticipate that the Commission would
3 make a decision on the certificate of need sometime
4 in the summer or fall of this -- of next year.

5 So, as I mentioned earlier, and I think
6 Mike spoke a little bit about ways that you can
7 participate in the project, but that we'll be back
8 here again for a public hearing convened by the
9 administrative law judge, that'll be in this project
10 area, I don't know if it will be in this facility,
11 but it will be in the project area. And then I
12 believe it's the week following will be the
13 evidentiary hearings in St. Paul and then there will
14 be a comment period on that where you can submit
15 comments in writing.

16 Going back a slide, as you can see there
17 are two columns here and I couldn't make this any
18 bigger. There's a need review, which looks at the
19 merits of the project. It also looks at the
20 environmental impacts of different alternatives to
21 meeting that need.

22 What the Department is tasked with in the
23 certificate of need process, or I should say what
24 the environmental facility planning group that I
25 work for is tasked for is preparing an environmental

1 report and that is the column on your right. So
2 we're out here with a scoping meeting for that.

3 I just want to try and make sure that
4 this is covered. The environmental report, and I
5 realize that probably many of you have been here,
6 either here or commented in writing on what was a
7 scoping decision for the environmental impact study,
8 which is the route. That was issued in July. The
9 environmental report is a higher level overview that
10 looks at generally what are the types of
11 environmental impacts -- the human and environmental
12 impacts and how would they vary if you met that need
13 in different ways. How would the impact of a 115
14 kilovolt transmission line, how would that be
15 different, generally speaking, than a more robust
16 distribution system alternative or demand-side
17 management or other ways to meet the need that has
18 been presented.

19 I've prepared, and is available in the
20 back, a draft scoping document. This is for your
21 information. It's not the same as the scoping
22 decision that will come out. But the intent here is
23 to try to orient people to what we think we'll
24 probably be looking at based on what we know about
25 this project and environmental reports that we've

1 done for other transmission projects.

2 When I talk about general and high level
3 environmental assessment, I just want to try to make
4 clear, I know it's difficult to understand for
5 people, or it may be difficult to understand, that
6 the environmental report does not look at, for
7 instance, the location of different routes relative
8 to proximity to homes or the amount of tree clearing
9 or commercial or the type of land use. But it would
10 look, again, at how a transmission alternative would
11 sit on the landscape compared to demand-side
12 management, some sort of alternative generation.
13 Route specific issues, like the acreage of trees
14 cleared or how a particular route might affect
15 highway expansion projects are addressed in the
16 route permitting process for the project. Again,
17 the scoping that is underway, the scoping decision
18 is available in the back, so you can look at that
19 either now or during the break.

20 On page 5 and 6 of this draft scoping
21 document, that looks at -- again, knowing what we
22 know about this project and knowing the
23 environmental reports that we prepared for other
24 transmission projects, this is what we right now
25 anticipate would be covered in some fashion in an

1 environmental report. I can't tell you what the
2 sources for that information are or what, for
3 instance, a distribution system alternative might
4 look like, but that's what honestly we would hope to
5 get some idea from you guys if you have input to
6 that.

7 I want to reiterate that the scoping
8 comment deadline is three weeks from today, Friday,
9 November 16th. And I do want to reiterate, and I
10 may have left this until too late last night, but
11 the scoping comments need to come to me. By rule
12 our department needs to issue a scoping decision ten
13 working days after the close of the comment period.
14 So, at some point we'll have the transcript for this
15 to look at, but I need to get any written comments
16 and make sure that those come to me. Those comments
17 will both be eFiled in the official record and then
18 available on our website. But if you could please
19 address them to me. I'm a little bit nervous
20 because there have been so many contact people. So
21 if they're addressed to the judge or to the
22 Commission, I'm sure I'll get them eventually, but
23 there may be a lag time.

24 You can sign up for the project mailing
25 list on the website for this project. And then you

1 can also submit your comment directly. There were
2 sign-in sheets -- they're not sign-in sheets, but to
3 make sure that you're on the Department's contact
4 list for the project so you can receive notice of
5 availability of the ER or any future meetings or
6 hearing dates. And my contact information, which is
7 available in a couple of places. Mr. Kaluzniak's
8 contact information. The Applicants'.

9 And now I'm sure you noticed the court
10 reporter who is over here, and she's here to keep,
11 less a record of what I say, perhaps, but more
12 importantly a record of the comments and the
13 questions that we get. So in order to facilitate
14 and make sure that we have an accurate record and so
15 everybody has an accurate record to review, I would
16 ask that you limit yourself to one speaker at a
17 time. That's generally not a problem. Things got a
18 little bit heated at some points last night and we
19 understand that, but please just wait for one person
20 at a time. Please come up to the microphone. We
21 will ask that you limit your time to five minutes
22 per speaker.

23 We'll try to -- I'll try to get through
24 everyone at least once and then if you have more to
25 say or if other questions come up, then we'll start

1 cycling through again. I ask that you can please
2 face the court reporter, state and spell your name,
3 and speak -- sometimes people are reading from a
4 written statement and that's fine, but speak slowly
5 enough so that she can get an accurate record of
6 that.

7 Please do maintain respect for others.
8 We realize this project and a lot of projects that
9 we're out here for engender very strong feelings.
10 And we respect that, the Commission respects that.
11 Please respect others, let them speak, you may not
12 agree with them, that way everybody can have a
13 chance to speak and to ask questions. And then to
14 the extent possible, please focus your comments on
15 the environmental report scoping issues and
16 alternatives.

17 There are a couple people who
18 preregistered to speak and I'll go through those
19 first.

20 Let's see. I think Terri Bonoff is the
21 first one.

22 SENATOR BONOFF: Okay. Very good. I'm
23 State Senator Terri Bonoff. I can spell it for you,
24 B-O-N-O-F-F.

25 All right. I was here last night and so

1 I have made my comments on the record but I wanted
2 to again go through just a few things for the people
3 who are here.

4 First of all, I would just like to thank
5 all of the people who are here. And I have been so
6 proud and impressed with the level of engaged,
7 active and informed support that this community has
8 rallied around in this process. And so when I first
9 became aware of the nature of this was when I was
10 knocking on doors and home after home people would
11 express such grave and serious concern about what
12 they believed was going to happen in their
13 backyards. And I will always remember being invited
14 into a home, going into the living room, and looking
15 through a window and seeing a brown pole that
16 literally you could practically touch it and them
17 saying that they were afraid that this was going to
18 become one of those very large metal poles.

19 And so I began to investigate that. And
20 what I wanted to say about that is that when I first
21 was involved in this process, this part of it, the
22 certification of need was not even going to be
23 contested. And so I want to thank Xcel Energy and
24 the Neighborhood Alliance, I know their
25 representation, Paula Maccabee, who is an attorney,

1 is here today. But it wasn't just a lawyer and it
2 wasn't just one group, it was literally an entire
3 coordinated effort to say, no, before we talk about
4 routes we need to say whether or not this is
5 actually necessary. And so Xcel Energy had proposed
6 that this be uncontested and in a blink they changed
7 that and so here we are in this process.

8 So one of the things that I've been most
9 concerned about, and I have expressed this to the
10 administrative law judge as well as the PUC
11 Commissioners, is that I still see these two
12 processes going on a parallel path. Where we say,
13 okay, the final decision is going to be made about
14 need and the final decision is going to be made
15 about route and they're literally in the same month.
16 And so that says to me that there's a foregone
17 conclusion and I don't think that that's
18 appropriate. I think that we ought to make sure,
19 and I would call on, you know, Xcel Energy to do
20 their part, because they ultimately will decide how
21 this goes in terms of a sequential process. So I
22 would ask those who are the decision-makers to make
23 sure that we, you know, look under every rock, that
24 we allow the experts to fully vet whether or not
25 this is the best solution, or whether, in fact,

1 there could be an alternative approach to, in fact,
2 putting in these high voltage towers.

3 And then we all know that if, in fact,
4 this is the decision, then there are more questions,
5 like could some part of it be undergrounded and
6 could that happen without inordinate costs and all
7 those questions would have to be answered. But
8 before any of that can be answered and should be
9 answered I would still maintain that the most
10 important thing that we ought to be taking our due
11 diligent time with is is this, in fact, a true need.

12 So, I appreciate hearing from the
13 citizens who are here today and I would ask all
14 experts to use every available resource they have to
15 make sure that we're doing the right thing before we
16 embark on this. And the reason why I have taken
17 this on personally is because as a state senator I
18 know there's nothing more important in my role than
19 making sure we're protecting the health and
20 well-being of our families. So while I often hear
21 about property values, I know what people are most
22 concerned about, is the environmental impact and the
23 health impact among those they love. So that is why
24 I've chosen to use the power of this office that I
25 hold, and hold it with appreciation and honor, that

1 is why I'm here today speaking out on this subject.

2 So thank you very much and thank you to
3 the Department of Commerce and to Mike for his work
4 at the PUC, and I've watched that firsthand, and
5 thank you to the folks from Xcel and, mostly, thank
6 you to those who are here.

7 (Clapping.)

8 MS. STEINHAUER: I have Karen Cieminski.
9 I'm sure you can correct that pronunciation.

10 MS. KAREN CIEMINSKI: There's a million
11 ways to pronounce it.

12 Hi. I'm Karen Cieminski, that's
13 C-I-E-M-I-N-S-K-I. And I guess I just have two
14 things. One that I want to clarify.

15 Paul, when you did your presentation, I
16 see the wording as a bit different in the draft
17 scoping document on page 4. But I want to clarify
18 to make sure. My understanding is the 69 kilovolt
19 line owned by Great River Energy that you said was
20 just redone is a dead line, is it not? Is there
21 someone from Great River Energy that could say so?
22 Is that line -- from the previous meetings that line
23 is not currently provided with power, from my
24 understanding.

25 MS. PARLOW: Marsha Parlow with Great

1 River Energy. Part of that line is an active line
2 running from Medina to Hollydale. That has a
3 capability of having a switch to just turn on and
4 have electricity and there has been some usage on it
5 the past year. The other part from Hollydale to the
6 to end of the project closer to 494, that has been
7 de-energized. It has been maintained. It's
8 probably due for tree trimming now. But that has
9 been maintained in case we need it for any
10 emergencies. It's not really part of the system
11 right now so we've have to do some, like, mobile
12 units, something in the area to kind of use the
13 line, but right now it's de-energized.

14 MS. KAREN CIEMINSKI: So a more accurate
15 description of the miles that are energized versus
16 de-energized currently is what?

17 MS. PARLOW: I don't know that, I haven't
18 measured the miles. It's probably about 50 percent,
19 four miles in each section, yeah.

20 MS. KAREN CIEMINSKI: I would request
21 that it be more accurate in the scoping document on
22 what is energized and what is not. Because, in
23 essence, for those who it is a de-energized line for
24 the entire thing, it's really a complete rebuild of,
25 you know, a 115 kilovolt line. But you're making it

1 seem like, oh, gee, less than a mile of it is new to
2 people to having to have that energy. I understand
3 the easements are in place, but it's really not been
4 used, a great portion of it, so I would not consider
5 the eight miles to be a very accurate statement as
6 far as the scoping and what's being done.

7 My second statement, a little bit has to
8 do more with the scoping and the routing of it. It
9 now makes a little more sense to me as to why the
10 fast track was in place, and I appreciate Senator
11 Bonoff being very diplomatic and thanking Xcel
12 Energy for changing their timing at the drop of a
13 hat to the full scoping project. But having been to
14 several of the meetings prior to this, I would say,
15 I'm sorry, Xcel Energy, but we were constantly
16 requesting a routing going down Highway 55, which
17 now I understand, if you'd had that in there, it's
18 probably the one that's over ten miles that would
19 have automatically required you to just go through
20 the full process in the first place. And so a bit
21 disappointed that you weren't up front with how
22 things were going, that you kept the routes that
23 were over ten miles kind of on to the side, even
24 though the neighborhoods were requiring it, or
25 requesting that we look at something that had less

1 impact on the homes and the residents of Plymouth.
2 Which in your original documents you'd stated was,
3 you know, the impact on the residents was going to
4 be your highest priority, and yet you kind of were
5 going the opposite direction because the routes that
6 you were taking has more exposure to the residents
7 of Plymouth and very close to their homes.

8 So I'm glad that we are at the point that
9 we are now. I wish that it had come through in a
10 little different fashion and not required such a
11 push. I'm glad that we did the push and have put
12 you there, but it wasn't very honest, in my opinion.

13 Thank you.

14 (Clapping.)

15 MS. STEINHAUER: Tim Dunnigan.

16 MR. TIM DUNNIGAN: My name is Tim
17 Dunnigan, D-U-N-N-I-G-A-N.

18 I had a nice conversation with Suzanne
19 Steinhauer before this meeting commenced and she
20 answered some of my questions.

21 But my wife and I live down in the Shiloh
22 area, which is just south of 55 and east of County
23 Road 24 and Highway 101. We're not going to be
24 negatively impacted if this transmission line is
25 constructed, but I feel that those who might be

1 affected are our neighbors and I'm concerned for
2 them.

3 First of all, this may not be germane to
4 this meeting, but I would recommend that in the
5 future a better job be done about publicizing these
6 meetings. We're not really very far away, but other
7 than there being a newspaper notice, which we were
8 out of town and we didn't see, we received no
9 notification of these meetings except out of Senator
10 Bonoff's office to a friend, to another friend, and
11 finally to us. The mailing of cards is probably the
12 best way and I'm sure everybody who receives such
13 cards were in the know. But we didn't and we're
14 certainly within the focus area and very close by.
15 So I think in the future greater reliance on those
16 mailing cards would be appreciated.

17 Last night it was -- it did get kind of
18 testy, and I'm kind of worn out from the political
19 season, and my wife and I left. So what I'm going
20 to bring up may be repetitive. But what I heard at
21 the beginning of the meeting, that the neighbors who
22 were going to be most affected were most worried
23 about health effects to their family. And I am not
24 an expert so I can't go on either side of that, I
25 really don't know what's going to be the impact, but

1 I'm a little worried about the process, particularly
2 the writing of the environmental report. I'm still
3 a little bit unclear as to what kind of expert
4 opinion will help form that report. I hope it isn't
5 just -- and the same, I guess, applies to what's
6 going to happen in the public hearings. I hope it
7 doesn't come down to Xcel versus the neighborhood
8 association.

9 There was a plea the other night for
10 paying close attention to independent sources of
11 information, whatever that would be, someone who
12 neither profits nor suffers from the construction of
13 this line. There is a lot of expert information out
14 there which has to be evaluated, you can't just take
15 a completely neutral stance. I mean, you have to
16 write some sources as being more reliable than
17 others. And so it wasn't clear to me how the EFP
18 was going to gather or bundle this information up,
19 put it in the form of a report and pass it on. And
20 maybe a little bit more could be said about that by
21 Ms. Steinhauer.

22 There's going to be some outlier opinions
23 that really don't bear being included in the report
24 and there is some that are very germane and they
25 should be in there. So you're going to have to make

1 judgments. This can't be completely -- you may not
2 say whether, therefore, the project is justified or
3 not, but you're going to -- there's going to be a
4 weight of opinion in one direction or another. So I
5 think that these neighbors really deserve assurance
6 that it isn't just going to be Goliath against
7 David, and David doesn't have a slingshot or a stone
8 to put up it, I just don't want heavyweights against
9 lightweights in it, I want other people weighing in
10 who can be regarded as reliable, independent
11 authorities.

12 And I think it would be a good idea that
13 something be presented having to do with economic
14 effects to the person, to the neighbors who are most
15 directly affected. It may not be the plan of the
16 Commission to consider real estate depreciation and
17 other factors that place the monetary burden mostly
18 on the affected neighbors, but that's got to be in
19 there somewhere. There has to be some kind of
20 metric for having it in there and having it weighed.
21 If this decision is going to be for Minnesota in
22 general and the local community in specific, I think
23 who pays most dearly has to be right out there and
24 stated and not just kind of ignored.

25 With that said, I'm just going to leave

1 it to you experienced people to do your best on this
2 and make it an even contest.

3 Okay. Thank you.

4 (Clapping.)

5 MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you. As
6 Mr. Dunnigan talked about, we did talk about this
7 earlier. EMF in particular is something that comes
8 up with every transmission line. And he had a
9 question for me about where we're going to get our
10 information from. And just to be clear, I can't
11 answer, I can't provide you with the sources right
12 now, and I think we understand that. I can tell you
13 where we'll start looking and we'll start looking at
14 some of the published studies, both academic and
15 then by health organizations, the World Health
16 Organization, NIEHS, the National Institute for
17 Environmental Health Sciences. And we will also
18 have the benefit of two relatively recent route
19 proceedings where there were expert witnesses
20 provided on EMF. And we'll start with that and kind
21 of see where that leads us.

22 I know that I'll probably start pulling
23 that from the EIS that's being prepared, that's
24 where I'll start. And I think Scott had gotten a
25 fair ways in that. So that's where I'll start,

1 without being able to answer, this is where it's
2 coming from. So I'm sorry I can't provide a
3 complete answer, but that's where we'll start.

4 Thank you.

5 MR. KALUZNIAK: Thank you. Pardon me. I
6 just wanted to follow up on Mr. Dunnigan's comments
7 and just reference that there is, in fact, as part
8 of the process for the certificate of need, the
9 Applicants are required to file a notice plan with
10 the Commission that identifies the likely affected
11 parties and who will receive mailings. We do also
12 keep a separate attachment list and certification of
13 mailings for notices and the like and those are part
14 of the official record.

15 It is often difficult, we've experienced
16 this on virtually every case we handle in routing
17 and siting, a challenge to learn about the process.
18 And we understand it's a very technical process and
19 there's a lot of things that particularly aren't
20 intuitive about electrical engineering. But in
21 relation to having a spokesperson, there's another
22 division within the Department of Commerce that acts
23 as a consumer advocate, an ombudsman, for evaluating
24 the merits of the application. And they help us in
25 our determination of what we call completeness of

1 the application, whether the contents meet the
2 requirements or the rule, not weighing the veracity
3 or the truthfulness of those contents per se, that's
4 part of the hearings that we're here for, as well as
5 the evidentiary hearings, but they do an evaluation
6 of what the rules state and what is required to be
7 there, they assess whether the contents of the
8 applications are there and so forth. And they
9 participate in these proceedings in several other
10 ways. And that's the Division of Energy Resources
11 unit, and they also have an ERP designation. And so
12 they do file as part of that on behalf of the
13 Minnesota customers and ratepayers and the state as
14 a whole, so they're participating as well and I just
15 wanted to point that out.

16 Thank you.

17 MS. STEINHAUER: Deborah Price.

18 MS. DEBORAH PRICE: Hi, I'm Deborah
19 Price, D-E-B-O-R-A-H, P-R-I-C-E.

20 MS. STEINHAUER: Could you --

21 UNIDENTIFIED: We can't hear you.

22 MS. DEBORAH PRICE: I'm Deborah Price,
23 D-E-B-O-R-A-H, P-R-I-C-E. I live on Zircon Lane in
24 Plymouth and I'm also a Western Plymouth
25 Neighborhood Alliance member.

1 My husband and I live about 40 feet from
2 the line. The Hollydale 115 kilovolt high voltage
3 power line is not needed. Xcel claims a high
4 voltage line is needed due to a distribution level
5 deficiency. If there is any need, this type of
6 deficiency should be solved with distribution power
7 lines, low voltage, rather than the high voltage
8 power line proposed.

9 Xcel's own studies say that the
10 alternative A-2 plan, with the new substation and
11 two underground distribution level 13.8 kilovolt
12 feeder lines, is feasible and would meet reliability
13 requirements without any new overhead high voltage
14 line.

15 A distribution level solution like
16 alternative A-2 would cause harm to land use,
17 residential -- would cause less harm to land use,
18 residential quality of life, property values and the
19 environment than Xcel's proposed Hollydale high
20 voltage power line project.

21 Please compare the impact of A-2 with the
22 Hollydale 115 kilovolt monster.

23 Thank you.

24 (Clapping.)

25 MS. STEINHAUER: Barry Altman.

1 MR. BARRY ALTMAN: Is it going to stay up
2 here? Would it be possible to get a couple of
3 PowerPoint maps up?

4 MR. LEHMAN: What format are they in?

5 MR. BARRY ALTMAN: It's PowerPoint. Just
6 click on the files, they should open.

7 (Audience Discussion.)

8 MR. BARRY ALTMAN: Technology strikes
9 again.

10 My name is Barry Altman. Can you hear me
11 okay?

12 UNIDENTIFIED: Yes.

13 MR. BARRY ALTMAN: All right, we'll give
14 it a whirl. B-A-R-R-Y, A-L-T-M-A-N. I live in
15 Walnut Creek Pond.

16 I've spent a considerable amount of time
17 over the past year trying to understand all these
18 notices and proposals regarding the Hollydale
19 project. Xcel Energy has stated they need eight
20 miles of 115 kV line between the Medina substation
21 and the proposed Pomerleau Lake substation. The
22 proposal is concerning because the proposed route
23 passes within 27.5 feet of my home. And that is
24 documented right here on this note from Xcel Energy.

25 I'm asking that the environmental report

1 for the Hollydale certificate of need research Xcel
2 Energy's alternative A-2 in detail due to my
3 concerns about the Hollydale project as proposed by
4 Xcel. In the certificate of need application Xcel
5 Energy has discussed several alternatives. These
6 are identified in their certificate of need
7 documents as alternative A-1 -- if I could have the
8 next slide, please -- which is a 115 kV and 13.8 kV
9 distribution lines between Hollydale, which is
10 existing, to the Medina substation and the new
11 Pomerleau Lake substation.

12 Alternative 2, on the next slide, please,
13 is a 113 kV distribution from the Hollydale station
14 to the new Pomerleau substation. Alternative A-3 is
15 an upgrade of the Gleason Lake and Parker's Lake
16 substations with additional low voltage feeder
17 lines. If we could back up to slide A-2.

18 Xcel Energy has stated that alternative
19 A-1, which is the Hollydale project, best meets
20 their needs. Based on this assumption they have
21 requested approval of the route to run the 115 kV
22 line adjacent to my property. To me this certainly
23 places the proverbial cart before the horse. How
24 can Xcel possibly be granted a route before a final
25 decision is made on certificate of need? Suppose

1 alternative A-2 is better suited to meet the
2 electricity needs in the community or is just as
3 effective as alternative A-1? Wouldn't there be a
4 lot less impact not only on my home but on the
5 entire neighborhood?

6 Alternative A-2 adds capacity from the
7 existing Hollydale substation to the new Pomerleau
8 Lake substation. As Xcel states on page 61 of their
9 application, with respect to operability, similar to
10 the Hollydale project, alternative A-2 is an
11 extension of the existing distribution system and
12 provides for a large number of standard options that
13 could be quickly implemented under contingency
14 conditions. It appears that Xcel wishes to run
15 their own 115 kV line rather than paying GRE \$47,000
16 per megawatt per year. The environmental report
17 should analyze all the financial issues for
18 alternative A-1, the Hollydale project, and
19 alternative A-2, and determine what the costs really
20 are and whether Xcel's calculation is different from
21 what benefits the community.

22 At this point I'm totally confused. If
23 alternative A-2 meets the requirements of Xcel
24 Energy why is a 115 kV line required to the GRE
25 Medina substation? The Medina substation is not

1 even mentioned in alternative A-2. The certificate
2 of need, appendix A, B studies refers to options
3 H-1, H-2 and H-3. And I do apologize, in my rush to
4 put these slides together I did not bring that map
5 up.

6 Option H-1 is the Hollydale project.
7 This connection brings a new 115 kV line from the
8 Great River Energy's Medina substation to a new 115
9 kV switching substation near Great River Energy's
10 Plymouth and Bass Lake substations. The proposed
11 name for this substation is Pomerleau Lake and that
12 comes directly out of the certificate of need.

13 Option H-2 and H-3 also have 115 kV power lines.
14 These alternatives could create different impact
15 areas for other neighborhoods. It seems that from
16 Xcel Energy studies they have excluded option H-2
17 due to routing concerns. The environmental report
18 should investigate the other 115 kV options put
19 forward by Xcel Energy in these studies and see if
20 Xcel chose the Hollydale project because they
21 assumed that option H-1 would have no opposition.

22 Also, it seems that Xcel ruled out
23 alternative 2 because they didn't want to pay Great
24 River Energy for power from the Parker's Lake
25 substation. But the Hollydale project they are

1 proposing seems to require Xcel to pay for power
2 from the GRE's Medina substation. The environmental
3 report should evaluate the financial assumptions
4 that Xcel is making and see if these facts have been
5 misused to support a de facto conclusion.

6 As stated at the scoping meeting on
7 June 8th, my family, along with my neighbors, have
8 expressed our concerns regarding proximity to the
9 line, EMF, and other environmental issues, so I will
10 not repeat them here.

11 I will close by stating that alternative
12 A-2 will meet the needs of Xcel Energy, will remove
13 the objection from myself and many of our neighbors.
14 This alternative needs to be seriously considered by
15 the Department of Commerce in their environmental
16 report.

17 Further, I believe it essential to
18 approve an alternate and/or option from the
19 certificate of need process before any Hollydale
20 route can be analyzed or approved.

21 Thank you very much.

22 (Clapping.)

23 MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you, Mr. Altman.
24 I just have a question for you.

25 MR. BARRY ALTMAN: Sure.

1 MS. STEINHAUER: So just to make sure I
2 have this, I'll look at the transcript, you are
3 requesting that alternative A-2, H-2 and H-3 be
4 evaluated?

5 MR. BARRY ALTMAN: Just alternative H-2.

6 MS. STEINHAUER: H-2, okay.

7 MR. BARRY ALTMAN: And the applicable
8 parts of the other options that would be
9 automatically included as part of A-2.

10 MS. STEINHAUER: I conferred with the
11 court reporter before we convened and I think we'll
12 try to break around 2:30 so -- sorry.

13 MR. BARRY ALTMAN: Excuse me. They had
14 some questions. I was saying alternative A-2, not
15 option H-2.

16 MS. STEINHAUER: Just alternative A-2.

17 MR. BARRY ALTMAN: Right.

18 MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you.

19 The next person who is preregistered is
20 Maraline Slovut. Thank you.

21 MS. MARALINE SLOVUT: Slovut.

22 MS. STEINHAUER: Slovut, I see that now.

23 MS. MARALINE SLOVUT: Thank you.

24 M-A-R-A-L-I-N-E, S-L-O-V-U-T.

25 I think so much of what I was going to

1 say has been covered. My concerns are mainly with
2 not emotional but health issues. And we are not
3 that close to the power line, but we did not buy
4 because of the closeness of a power line. And I
5 would like to know who actually makes the decision
6 on the studies that are used for health and safety?
7 Because there's a wide range of studies available
8 and I would like to know how that is decided and
9 whether there are independent studies done on the
10 health situation for people who live close to the
11 power lines when there's over 100 kilowatts.

12 MS. STEINHAEUER: I will try to answer
13 that. I guess the short answer to that would be
14 that I would confer with my colleagues and, as I
15 mentioned in response to an earlier comment, we look
16 and see, we look at academic studies and try to
17 provide a range of studies that present -- a range
18 of conclusions that have some level of professional
19 acceptance.

20 MS. MARALINE SLOVUT: So is that
21 actually -- when you say academic, that also has a
22 wide range. Are you talking about doctors who have
23 conducted studies in the past that show the possible
24 safety issues involved? And is that information
25 going to be given to the residents or is it going to

1 be part of just a packet that kind of skims it?

2 MS. STEINHAUER: The environmental report
3 and also the EIS will summarize the state of the
4 information as we know it now.

5 MS. MARALINE SLOVUT: Thank you.

6 (Clapping.)

7 MS. STEINHAUER: Lynn Zook.

8 MS. LYNN ZOOK: My name is Lynn Zook,
9 spelled Z as in zebra, two Os and a K.

10 Last evening my husband and I attended
11 the three-hour meeting held here and I realized upon
12 leaving that I just needed to return to make several
13 further comments.

14 First of all, I would like to say that
15 during the course of this meeting today we will all
16 hear comments about the impact that each of my
17 neighbors in Plymouth will be experiencing if high
18 voltage power lines are put in our backyards.

19 It has been stated at each meeting that
20 we attend that you plan to study all of the impacts
21 that people submit to you for your consideration.
22 Some of these impacts are very concrete and easy to
23 qualify and quantify statistically and some of them
24 are a bit more nebulous, such as years of future
25 health repercussions to young children and adults in

1 homes and schools that would now be exposed to high
2 EMFs.

3 But it occurred to me yesterday from an
4 economic perspective, it really doesn't matter what
5 the studies say or whether they are conclusive. You
6 see, every single one of the impacts that are
7 represented by my neighbors here are ultimately
8 reflected in home values. When a high voltage power
9 line is running through the backyard of a homeowner,
10 it impacts aesthetics, home value, ability to sell
11 the property, wildlife, future health, and many
12 other things. But ultimately the real value of
13 anything in our society is in its perceived value to
14 the homeowner or potential buyer. This perceived
15 value is represented in the price. If it is not
16 perceived as valuable, the price will be low. If it
17 is perceived as highly sought after and valuable,
18 the price will be high. What this tells me and
19 should tell all of you as well is that whether a
20 future buyer is devaluing a property because of EMF
21 health concerns, aesthetics, environmental impact,
22 or whatever, the end result is the same, the price
23 of the home will go down. People vote with their
24 pocket books, in this case reflected in the lower
25 price of our homes after high voltage power lines

1 are erected in our backyards.

2 The point I am making is that the impact
3 of all of the concerns that we are expressing will
4 be empirically assessed in the free market. All of
5 the concerns being expressed today, even the ones
6 with inconclusive studies are ultimately
7 collectively and accurately assessed in the new
8 lower home values that are given after high voltage
9 power lines are run through our properties.

10 Since we're not the first ones to
11 experience this, studies have been conducted and
12 submitted to the docket demonstrating that when new
13 high voltage power lines are constructed home values
14 decrease by 10 to 40 percent.

15 What we are discussing today are new high
16 voltage power lines so these studies apply. The
17 existing lines are not currently in use or are in
18 nominal use and are currently low voltage. So these
19 are really new high voltage power lines, therefore,
20 the 10 to 40 percent statistics apply.

21 I've heard multiple realtors testify at
22 multiple meetings during the course of this process
23 and they all agree with the statistics and the
24 studies. Our home values will be decreased by 10 to
25 40 percent. These statistics are proven in multiple

1 studies. The impact will be massive, destructive
2 and destabilizing to the economic viability of
3 hundreds of Plymouth families.

4 To my family this will be a loss of
5 45,000 to 180,000. And this will impact every home
6 in Plymouth regardless of whether they are on the
7 road or not because those devalued properties on the
8 line will be the comps that are now used in all of
9 our appraisals. Please hear me clearly. I am not
10 discounting any of the noneconomic issues like
11 health or environment, I am simply saying that the
12 drop in real estate value tells us all that those
13 issues are real and they will have a huge impact on
14 the city of Plymouth.

15 We would not even be in this room or
16 having this discussion today if it were economically
17 in interest of a utility company to bury power lines
18 or run them down major highway corridors. They are
19 a for-profit company seeking to protect their
20 profits and we are in this room simply for one
21 reason and one reason alone, money. Will a big
22 for-profit utility company win the economic battle
23 at the expense of a community, of schools,
24 businesses, and hard working families? That is the
25 question we are asking today. We have only one

1 potential advocate and that is the PUC to think
2 better of the proposed financial destruction of our
3 community.

4 A second point I would like to make is
5 this. There are certain things that society has
6 always agreed on. For instance, it has never been
7 acceptable the world over to murder. It has never
8 been acceptable the world over to lie. And I would
9 like to submit that it has never been acceptable in
10 this world to steal. Why do I use the word steal in
11 the context of this forum? Because I can buy
12 insurance to cover theft for articles that are taken
13 out of my home, or for fire in case my home burns
14 down, and I can even buy flood insurance in case the
15 100-year rain hits, but there is no way that I can
16 buy insurance against a utility company and perhaps
17 even a government agency that would sanction a 10 to
18 40 percent loss of value on my home.

19 None of my other neighbors in Plymouth
20 can buy this insurance either because it doesn't
21 exist and it never will. Why? Because the kind of
22 loss we're talking about should never happen to
23 anyone and for any reason. Insurance companies
24 don't insure loss due to immoral behavior by
25 for-profit utility companies against communities.

1 If this property value is taken against
2 our will it is absolutely no different than
3 stealing. It would represent to the government and
4 the utility company choosing to select a specific
5 group of citizens, in this case Plymouth families,
6 to bear the entire burden of power line costs for
7 the western suburbs rather than passing that
8 collective responsibility to all those in its
9 jurisdiction. This is unjust and immoral. Stealing
10 value from those who have earned and paid for an
11 item honestly, in this case their home, is wrong no
12 matter how it's done.

13 Last evening it was mentioned that this
14 is an emotional issue and I would agree with you on
15 that. But that is not the root cause of the
16 emotions that I think you're hearing about today.
17 The root cause of the anger and emotion that you are
18 hearing in this room is because no one likes to be
19 stolen from. And I would simply say this: That if
20 somebody, for instance, due to identity theft, took
21 between 45,000 to 180,000 of your net worth
22 tomorrow, by a decision that they made to steal from
23 you, you would feel angry. Anger is a natural
24 emotion to feel when decency and healthy boundaries
25 have been crossed.

1 The feeling of being violated would be
2 twice as painful if the person who stole from your
3 network was even sanctioned by the government that
4 you trusted. Throw into the mix a privately held
5 company getting to build their net worth on the
6 backs of your hard earned but now stolen money. In
7 other words, how would you feel if a government
8 agency sanctioned a privately held company to steal
9 between 45,000 and 180,000 of your net worth?
10 Ultimately it really doesn't matter who takes it,
11 all you know is you don't have it to spend anymore.
12 And for many property owners here, I think that
13 number that I'm using that just represents my family
14 is even higher.

15 The horrible scenario would be three
16 times as painful to bear if you had absolutely no
17 way to receive restitution for the money you lost.
18 In other words, you would not be allowed to sue to
19 get it back, you can't prosecute to have it returned
20 to you by a court order, and you can't receive any
21 protection through insurance for losses you've
22 incurred.

23 Lives are going to be changed forever by
24 the decisions you make because money ultimately
25 represents a tool. It's a tool in our society to

1 get things done. Money represents a tool so that my
2 55 year old husband and the father of my seven
3 children can someday retire. Money is a tool to
4 allow me to pay for the weddings of my six daughters
5 and a son. Money is a tool to allow me to pay to
6 educate my children in higher education. This is
7 not about effort, this is about hours spent clipping
8 food coupons to use at the grocery store and
9 handling money wisely so we could afford to raise
10 our children in this community.

11 For six years I battled a very rare blood
12 disorder and was given a terminal diagnosis. In
13 fact, for two years I was completely bedridden while
14 my husband worked to raise the six children who were
15 still in our home. Later my husband had a stroke
16 due to a congenital hole in his heart. We suffered
17 financial stress due to these life altering events,
18 but at least we still had our home. But then the
19 economy turned bad and now even those values are
20 severely compromised.

21 Life is not always fair, but there is
22 some things that can be paid for with money that
23 makes sense in our life. Let's agree on something
24 here. We are discussing a for-profit utility
25 company in this meeting. They are regulated, sure,

1 but they have stockholders and are in business to
2 take and make money. I beg you PUC, please do not
3 lose track of this. Yes, they do serve the public,
4 but they are also in the business of making money.

5 There is absolutely no way that my family
6 and all the families in Plymouth should be
7 shouldering a financial burden in the tens of
8 thousands of dollars per family to help a for-profit
9 utility company continue to make more money. There
10 is no way a government should sanction stealing
11 money from a specific group of citizens while they
12 are receiving absolutely no direct benefit for the
13 losses they are incurring, but are simply
14 shouldering this burden directly to help power
15 suburbs further west of us.

16 Would you ever pay for something that
17 gave you no direct benefit, especially if the
18 purchase involved was 10 to 40 percent of your
19 entire home? Of course not, you would never do
20 that. But in this case we don't get to make a
21 choice. Please, I implore you, do not get bogged
22 down in all the details and lose sight of the very
23 big picture here. The city of Plymouth is being
24 robbed blind to benefit a privately held utility
25 company.

1 At the expense of our health,
2 environmental beauty, peace of mind, property values
3 and so much more, PUC, I really believe that you
4 have a moral obligation to stop this company from
5 choosing to do anything but the right thing. What
6 is the right thing? Please make sure that there is
7 truly a need and that there is absolutely no other
8 solution.

9 Which, by the way, their own application
10 indicates that there are other solutions but they've
11 chosen against them. Why? Because they're not
12 efficient and will cost them money. But their
13 preferred solution is only cheaper for them. It is
14 going to cost the citizens of Plymouth most of our
15 life savings by devaluing our homes.

16 Please go down a major corridor such as
17 494 and 55 and please bury these power lines for all
18 future generations and pass through the cost of this
19 to all utility customers. It will be pennies on the
20 dollar times all the households that that
21 represents.

22 The Minneapolis area is a great area to
23 live in and all of us need to bear the burden
24 collectively for the expansion of progress requiring
25 greater power, water, and other necessities. If a

1 certificate of need is indeed established, and I do
2 question that, then at least we should be
3 responsible to share this burden of a larger
4 expansion westward with the entire community of
5 utility customers.

6 Thank you.

7 (Clapping.)

8 MS. STEINHAEUER: Thank you.

9 I have one more person who has
10 preregistered and then I think we'll probably take a
11 break after that and we'll come back and reconvene.

12 Elizabeth Weir.

13 MS. ELIZABETH WEIR: I'm Elizabeth Weir,
14 W-E-I-R, I'm on the Medina City Council, and like
15 Terri Bonoff I've been doing some door knocking and
16 talking to businesses.

17 In Medina we have an 87-unit -- I need to
18 talk about need, simply, and I won't take very long.
19 We have an 87-unit cooperative for retired people,
20 some of them in wheelchairs, some of them with
21 health issues. And the elevators are unreliable.
22 On several occasions people have been stuck in the
23 elevators. And that's a very frightening
24 experience. It's three stories high, not everybody
25 can take the alternative and walk up stairs because

1 they fear the elevator. So we gather that this
2 upgrade could help alleviate that unreliable
3 elevator problem.

4 I also had talked to the manager of
5 Target in Medina. Both are at 101 and 55, both
6 Gramercy, the cooperative, and Target. And Target
7 has opened some groceries in their one end of the
8 store. When the electricity goes out and it's out
9 long enough that the refrigeration is not sufficient
10 to keep their produce or if they lose even the stuff
11 in the freezers, they have to dump all that and
12 that's a considerable cost, it's a hard way to
13 conduct business when you can't rely upon a reliable
14 electricity source.

15 Thank you.

16 MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you. And that
17 brings us to about 2:30, and I think this is a good
18 time to take a break. We'll take 15 minutes and
19 we'll reconvene at a quarter to 3:00. Thank you.

20 (Break taken.)

21 MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you. I'd like to
22 reconvene now. I apologize, I didn't make clear
23 when we broke that there would be an opportunity for
24 more comments after that. And you don't have to
25 fill out the yellow comment card, but people have,

1 and so I'll call on those people first. Again, I'll
2 ask people to try to keep their comments to five
3 minutes. I really appreciate that the audience has
4 been respectful and let people make statements that
5 they may not agree with. So please try to keep that
6 up.

7 There were three people who filled out
8 the comment cards, I'll call on those people first
9 and then we'll go by a show of hands and call on
10 those people.

11 We didn't publicize an end time, we'll
12 try to take everybody's comments. The facility
13 closes at 7:00. I honestly would -- I would have to
14 take a break by quarter to 6:00 to arrange for
15 somebody else to pick my kids up if we go that late,
16 so let's reevaluate maybe around 4:00 or 4:30.

17 The first preregistered is Patricia
18 Zalaznik. I apologize.

19 MS. PATRICIA ZALAZNIK: I'm Patricia
20 Zalaznik, Z-A-L-A-Z-N-I-K. Can you hear me?

21 Okay. I want to respond to a couple of
22 things, one prior to the meeting and one during the
23 meeting. First of all, I saw the article or the ad
24 or the announcement in the newspaper and I was
25 perplexed by it because it doesn't make it all clear

1 what the streets are. And I had to get my own map
2 out and try and figure out where I was in
3 relationship to the project.

4 Now, I don't think you owe me a red star
5 that says you are here, but I do think it could have
6 been more clear for the people whose properties are
7 going to be impacted by that. I thought that was
8 not exactly a masterful illustration.

9 First of all, I own a townhome in
10 Plymouth Creek on 40th Avenue North. And my
11 property, which I have lived in for almost 25 years,
12 will be impacted. And I think the previous speaker,
13 Mrs. Zook, talked about some of the impacts, the
14 environmental, the financial, and the health. I was
15 quite dismayed at the 10 to 40 percent drop in
16 property values to which she referred.

17 I only want to make one particular and
18 precise request. And that is, you referred to doing
19 research about impact and so forth, and research can
20 be all the way from reading a neighborhood newspaper
21 to reading a juried professional journal. And while
22 everybody's opinion is valuable and warranted, the
23 opinions are not nearly as well thought out as
24 scientific articles from what are called juried
25 journals, the American Medical Association, the

1 American Sociological Association, these are put out
2 where each article that's accepted for publication
3 has been reviewed for its accuracy and its
4 statistics by a panel of peers so that it is a
5 valuable source of information. And I would request
6 that if you are considering doing something that
7 impacts Plymouth residents to the degree to which
8 you are, then you owe us to only make your decisions
9 based on articles that are from responsible
10 journals. Okay?

11 Thank you.

12 (Clapping.)

13 MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you.

14 Ron Mielke.

15 MR. RON MIELKE: My name is Ron Mielke,
16 M-I-E-L-K-E, and I live in the Wyndemere Farms
17 neighborhood.

18 And I'd just like to highlight things
19 that other speakers have said before me. But some
20 real things that concern me was the health, of
21 course. And I would like to know what these power
22 poles look like if they are put in. I'd just like
23 to -- is there a picture of them that we could know
24 what they look like 'cause really they're ugly.
25 And, you know, they can be very ugly.

1 And I know when I retired 17 years ago
2 with my wife, we chose the Wyndemere Farms area
3 because of a few things, no high line wires, no busy
4 streets, a nice, peaceful place to live, good
5 schools, good recreation areas, good everything.
6 And, I don't know, I'm concerned of things being
7 stepped on on our toes. And I'm concerned about
8 that.

9 Now, I'm told -- I'm sure everyone that's
10 here wouldn't like something in their backyard when
11 it's going to affect your property value. I know
12 when we were looking for a place, the first things
13 we looked at was for those busy roads, ugly high
14 line wires and stuff like that, we would never buy
15 in a place like that. Now we live there, I'm sure
16 other people are going to be the same way, it's
17 going to affect our selling potential. Like the
18 person ahead of me said, it's going to decrease
19 their property value and everything we worked for.

20 I also talked to one of the fellows here.
21 I worked for the City of Minneapolis for 35 years
22 and back in the '60s we had a project of, before
23 you'd pave the streets, we'd put all the underground
24 utilities under ground, separated storm and sanitary
25 sewers before we paved, and we got rid of all the

1 wires and everything like that ugliness and then we
2 paved the streets with curb and gutter. And I'm
3 proud to say we did it right. This is like 40 years
4 ago, over 40 years ago. And if you go up into the
5 Waite Park area in Minneapolis, where our first
6 project was that we constructed up there, if you go
7 up there you can see how great it's still working.
8 We had concrete streets, and we did it right, we did
9 a good job and they've held up for all these years
10 and you don't have the ugliness of these wires.

11 It took a lot of work, but you kept as
12 many trees, you didn't have to cut down many trees.
13 Put the underground wires in. And I think there's a
14 better way to do it than putting these ugly things
15 up there and making people upset.

16 That's all I have to say.

17 (Clapping.)

18 MS. ASAH: We do have pictures of the
19 structures that are being proposed and if you'd give
20 me your name and address I'll be happy to send them
21 to you, or I can --

22 UNIDENTIFIED: Could we get them on the
23 screen?

24 MS. ASAH: I don't have them handy, no,
25 because it was for the routings. But if you'd get

1 me your information, I'll come around to you with a
2 pad of paper, and that's for anybody in the crowd,
3 we can do the same thing.

4 MS. STEINHAUER: So as RaeLynn said,
5 she'll provide that to you. I just want to make
6 sure that you know that we will also have
7 illustrations in the -- certainly in the
8 environmental impact statement, and then I would
9 presume also in the environmental report, a sample,
10 of what kind of structures are proposed because it
11 will talk again generally about aesthetics.

12 MR. RON MIELKE: Really, there's no
13 structure that's up in the air that's better if it's
14 underground, and then it's out of sight.

15 SENATOR BONOFF: I agree.

16 MS. ASAH: And one more thing I wanted to
17 say. You can go to www.xcelenergy/hollydaleproject,
18 or Google Hollydale Project, Xcel Energy, and it'll
19 be the first one that comes up.

20 MR. HAL BIEL: Could I tag onto that
21 comment? Could we also get a comment or a
22 comparison of the 69 kV poles and the 345 kV poles,
23 all three of them side by side?

24 MS. STEINHAUER: Excuse me. Can you
25 identify yourself for the court reporter, please?

1 MR. HAL BIEL: I have some other
2 questions, I'll do it at that time, if that's okay.
3 My name is Hal Biel, B-I-E-L.

4 MS. STEINHAUER: There is one more person
5 before you. Thank you, Mr. Biel.

6 Audrey Britton.

7 MS. AUDREY BRITTON: Hi. My name is
8 Audrey Britton, B-R-I-T-T-O-N. I am a state
9 representative candidate and my team and I have been
10 to doors about 14,000 times in the last six months.
11 And I feel like I have walked the entire power line,
12 and I have been so surprised at what I have seen.

13 Now, I got a call about this many months
14 ago before we even started going to the doors,
15 people were already alerting me to this situation,
16 but there is nothing like going out there and seeing
17 it for yourself and it's nothing you haven't already
18 heard. And I hope you've seen it for yourself as
19 well, because you've got power lines going through
20 parks, you've got power lines going through
21 tree-lined neighborhoods and right out their front
22 door that is no further than that screen. I've had
23 people invite me into their homes, I go to their
24 backyard and they show me that there's a power line
25 right out there where they've built a deck. One

1 person built a very small, modest deck and actually
2 accidentally went into the easement. So people are
3 very concerned about this.

4 I think it's very real, I think there's a
5 good alternative to this. I'm a little concerned --
6 well, let me tell you something, the things they
7 talked to me about are the health concerns, the
8 property value, the quality of life and safety. And
9 these things are already ugly, and I can only
10 imagine, we know they're going to be even more of an
11 eyesore.

12 But I was a little concerned today when I
13 was standing back at the table where some new people
14 came in and they wanted information, they hadn't
15 really heard about this project, so I thought I'm
16 going to stand there and hear what they were told.
17 So what they were told, in my opinion, was we
18 already have the right-of-way, we were there first,
19 and it's going to cost a lot of money to do anything
20 else.

21 I don't think this is about, you know,
22 who's got the most power, I don't think this is
23 about doing what's cheapest, I think this is about
24 fixing what was planned in the first place and doing
25 what's right. And I think the public has made it

1 adequately and abundantly clear that we need an
2 alternative to what's being proposed by Xcel Energy
3 Center.

4 So, thank you.

5 (Clapping.)

6 MS. STEINHAUER: Mr. Biel.

7 MR. HAL BIEL: Thank you. I really don't
8 have any comments -- oh, my name is Hal Biel,
9 B-I-E-L. I live in one of the townhomes in the
10 little cul-de-sac just off from Turtle Lake Park,
11 and the power line currently goes right through our
12 development. We have four buildings in a cul-de-sac
13 and the power line goes right next to it and also
14 through the park.

15 I was the one who asked for a comparison
16 of the existing 69 kV poles picture and the 115 kV
17 poles, which I have seen, and I was envisioning the
18 poles that we seen, like if you've driven between
19 the -- up to St. Cloud along 94, I was afraid those
20 were going to be in my backyard. I'm not quite as
21 close as a couple of the other previous speakers,
22 they were like 15 and 27 feet from the power line,
23 we're probably 50 feet from the power line.

24 But I do have a couple of other questions
25 that I came with that haven't been answered. One

1 is, we all know who Xcel Energy is, I know in my
2 house I enjoy flipping the light switch and getting
3 lights to come on and pushing the button on the
4 computer and the screen lights up. I also like your
5 energy center over in St. Paul and enjoy the ice
6 skating there. And I think even Big Bird likes to
7 ice skate there. But I don't know anything about
8 Great River Energy. Before this project came up, I
9 never heard of Great River Energy. I notice that
10 part of the project is serviced by Wright-Hennepin
11 Electric, is that one in the same?

12 MS. STEINHAUER: I'm just trying to
13 figure out -- yeah, why don't we answer that and
14 then it sounds like you have some follow-up
15 questions.

16 MR. HAL BIEL: Okay.

17 MS. PARLOW: Great River Energy is a
18 transmission company that serves 28 co-ops
19 throughout the state of Minnesota. And
20 Wright-Hennepin is one of our co-ops. We also serve
21 other co-ops, Connexus Energy, and then a lot of our
22 co-ops are more in the out-state area. So we have
23 everything from Duluth running down kind of like a
24 circle around the Twin Cities down to the southern
25 parts of the state of Minnesota. We do have some

1 co-ops in Wisconsin, just a few of them, and in the
2 northern and the Arrowhead region, and then we also
3 have our generation facilities, most of them are in
4 the North Dakota area.

5 MR. HAL BIEL: Thank you. The only other
6 question that I have is what happens if the project
7 is not built?

8 MS. STEINHAUER: I'll hand that over to
9 Xcel Energy. But there are two ways that that could
10 happen. First of all, the Commission could not
11 grant a certificate of need or the Applicants could
12 withdraw their petition. But I will let Mr. Lehman
13 talk.

14 MR. LEHMAN: The question is what would
15 happen if the project isn't built. So let's start
16 with if the project that we proposed is not built.
17 That means we have to come up with a different
18 solution for the problems that we've identified.
19 And the problems we have identified are real
20 problems and we need to solve them in some fashion
21 or another.

22 If this project that we've proposed, or
23 one of the variations in the way we get from point A
24 to point B aren't built, we'd have to place some
25 alternatives into the record and we'll have to look

1 at can we make another alternative work.

2 MR. HAL BIEL: Okay. Assume if, for
3 whatever reason, the project is not built, either
4 the Commission denies the certificate of need or you
5 and Great River decide that, no, we're just not
6 going to put up with all these crazy homeowners
7 anymore and we're just going to back off, what would
8 happen? Would I not be able to turn on my light
9 switch and get lights anymore?

10 MR. LEHMAN: No, because we wouldn't
11 permit that level of service for our customers. We
12 would find a way to make service for our customers
13 to continue. If you take the premise that we did
14 absolutely nothing, investing any money in this
15 area, then as we've defined it, yes, the quality of
16 the service to our customers would be degraded,
17 there would be less reliability. So the ability to
18 flip that switch and be assured that the lights come
19 on would not be the same standard that we are
20 charged with maintaining, that's not our intention,
21 we just do not stop taking care of our customers.
22 So we would absolutely have to find another way to
23 come up with another solution for this project.
24 Now, we've suggested that this is the best solution,
25 but it's not the only solution.

1 MR. HAL BIEL: Thank you.

2 MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you. The
3 gentleman in the coat there.

4 MR. DAVID GAITHER: Hello. I'm David
5 Gaither, D-A-V-I-D, G-A-I-T-H-E-R.

6 I want to thank you for the opportunity
7 to speak here tonight. I'm a long-time Plymouth
8 resident and I've had the opportunity to serve on
9 the Commerce Committee in the Senate and regulated
10 industry, so I'm a little bit familiar with the
11 process by which we're going through here.

12 And I'm hopeful that the ALJ and the PUC
13 will do their jobs. And what I suspect is their
14 strength is also their weakness in that regard. The
15 fact that they are appointed by the governor and
16 confirmed by the senate implies that they're immune
17 from political influence, aren't up for election,
18 and can make objective, well-informed decisions for
19 the greater good. And I hope that to be true.

20 It's also, I think, the source of much of
21 the concern you're hearing from the citizens in this
22 area. I don't think you're hearing as much nimby as
23 you are legitimate concerns on certificate of need,
24 routing, as well as property values, as well as
25 aesthetics. And so the fact that they are insulated

1 from political influence, ex parte conversations, I
2 think is a very valuable tool to have in this
3 process, but it also leads to concern.

4 And I think we got off on the wrong foot
5 with Xcel trying to expedite the process. As you
6 can tell by the number of people in the audience and
7 the concern that they voiced that we've made a
8 course correction. And I'm hoping that the PUC will
9 listen to what's going on here and not just a tone
10 deaf environment.

11 I have seen firsthand what happens when
12 good public input is brought to a public process.
13 It's as simple as burying a water tower on Vicksburg
14 and Schmidt Lake Road for the aesthetics and the
15 functionality of this area was the result of input
16 from the citizenry.

17 I think what you're hearing here are a
18 couple different levels of conversation. One level
19 of conversation is is there really a certificate of
20 need, and if there is a demand and a need, it better
21 be transparent and understandable and explainable to
22 the citizens of the area.

23 This is an informed, educated, passionate
24 group of people who are well meaning, well informed,
25 and well mannered in their approach to this process.

1 If there is a need that's been demonstrated, I think
2 the Public Utilities Commission owes it not just to
3 the people in this room, but the collective good to
4 take a look at what good is going to be served by
5 putting power lines in or potentially routing them
6 in the proper direction or burying them.

7 As I said earlier, serving on the
8 Commerce Committee, Xcel Energy operates its P&L in
9 reverse, they're obligated to try to find the least
10 cost routing, but they're guaranteed a return on
11 investment. It's the PUC that will allow them to
12 have a rate increase to offset whatever costs might
13 incur, to spread that rate increase across the
14 greater good, the greater population.

15 So I invite and encourage the PUC to take
16 a critical examination of, A, the need, and B, the
17 routing, and C, allow Xcel to spread this cost
18 across the greatest population that they can and
19 provide the greatest service to the residents of
20 this area and the region by the very least putting
21 this along existing thoroughfares and highways or
22 potentially burying most if not some or not all of
23 the construction and allowing Xcel Energy to spread
24 that cost across the largest possible base that they
25 can.

1 Thank you for your time.

2 (Clapping.)

3 MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you.

4 A show of hands?

5 Ms. Maccabee.

6 MS. PAULA MACCABEE: I'm Paula Maccabee,
7 I live in St. Paul, but I represent the Western
8 Plymouth Neighborhood Alliance. And I have a few
9 requests to make.

10 I think it's incredibly important what
11 citizen after citizen has been mentioning about
12 accurately reflecting the data on magnetic fields.
13 I've now been a part of several proceedings and I'll
14 have to say that it is often David and Goliath, and
15 in only one case did David have a slingshot. And
16 that was the CapX case on the Hampton where we had
17 testimony from Dr. David Carpenter and were able to
18 put in the record evidence of consolidated studies
19 showing an increase of childhood leukemia above a
20 certain level of magnetic fields, and also cities
21 across the world that have actually regulated the
22 level of chronic magnetic fields especially for
23 children.

24 And also we were able to clarify that
25 some the data used in prior environmental analyses

1 that supposedly for the chronic limits on magnetic
2 fields are actually according to the documents that
3 derive from acute limits. So there are no
4 international limits on what a child sleeping in a
5 bedroom on the second floor is going to be exposed
6 to day after day. There are international limits
7 for short-term exposures. And in document after
8 document the state of Minnesota has inaccurately
9 represented acute limits, which is a relatively high
10 limit that none of these power lines come anywhere
11 close to, for temporary exposure, and have
12 characterized that as chronic. And that needs to be
13 corrected in this record.

14 I have to tell you, for a 115 kV line it
15 is nowhere near the level of risk for some of those
16 huge 394 kV lines, but still, in this power line
17 across the entire rebuild area, there would be 289
18 people within 200 feet of the power line. So it is
19 important to get good data on electromagnetic
20 fields, and especially for the people who live 20 to
21 30 feet away.

22 I'm also going to ask -- this is an
23 unusual situation. Unlike many cases where a need
24 is identified, this is just a distribution need. It
25 is an unusual situation to be looking at a

1 transmission solution for a distribution problem.
2 What is even more unusual is that the studies in
3 this certificate of need application conclusively
4 show that there is a feasible and prudent
5 alternative that would cause less environmental harm
6 and less harm to the human environment. And that is
7 alternative A-2, which is not merely a feeder
8 alternative, because it does require construction of
9 a substation, the same substation as the Hollydale.
10 And then instead of having any overhead power lines,
11 it has two feeder lines, one of which would go up
12 Highway 55 and hopefully solve the problem at
13 Gramercy and Target that was mentioned before, and I
14 think it would go down Vicksburg.

15 It seems from the application, though, I
16 haven't done discovery yet, that the power lines,
17 the feeder lines, the 13.8 low voltage lines are
18 also underground. Now, that would make sense to
19 have an ordinance requiring distribution lines to be
20 underground. But perhaps we could confirm, in
21 alternative A-2, are the 13.8 kilovolt feeder lines
22 above ground or underground? The word does suggest
23 underground, but I'm not positive that's correct.

24 MR. LEHMAN: That conclusion, exactly, is
25 yet to be determined. Wherever possible we would

1 construct them overhead. Wherever necessary we
2 would construct them underground. If it was in
3 response to a request of the city, that would be
4 covered by our underground facilities tariff. So it
5 could be underground, it could also be overhead, but
6 it isn't conclusive as to what it would be at this
7 point.

8 MS. PAULA MACCABEE: So the City of
9 Plymouth, either if they have an ordinance or they
10 make a request to put low voltage lines, the 13.8 kV
11 lines underground, they could make that request and
12 then it would be distributed among the local people,
13 that's what you're saying?

14 MR. LEHMAN: The additional cost to place
15 them underground would be part of the cost assigned
16 to the citizens of the community, correct.

17 MS. MACCABEE: But in the studies, in the
18 studies in the appendices of the application, wasn't
19 it assumed that those would be underground based on
20 the cost figures in the cost studies?

21 MR. LEHMAN: No.

22 MS. MACCABEE: So what's before us today
23 is sort of an unusual situation, because there are
24 two concrete alternatives. There's an alternative
25 to have the substation and two relatively short low

1 voltage lines, and there's an alternative that has a
2 substation and two 115 kilovolt lines that are
3 anywhere between eight and ten or 11 miles in
4 length.

5 So I heard several times in response to
6 citizen questions that there would be generic
7 comparisons, and on behalf of the Western Plymouth
8 Neighborhood Alliance, in addition to that generic
9 discussion of low voltage, high voltage, we are
10 asking that there be an actual comparison. How many
11 people would be impacted by what level of power
12 line, what level of electromagnetic field, and what
13 level of tree cutting. Because trees are required
14 to be trimmed under national standards for 115 kV
15 lines, they're not required to be trimmed to that
16 level -- actually, there's no standard at all under
17 national regulations for 69 kV lines so trees
18 wouldn't be cut down. But going through each of the
19 impacts that people have brought up and making an
20 actual comparison. For example, the proposed line
21 crosses 11,000 linear feet of wetlands. Compare
22 that environmental impact to what the impact would
23 be to alternative A-2.

24 So we're asking that this be a much more
25 robust and detailed analysis than is usually

1 required in an environmental report, because at
2 least from all appearances in the application and
3 the studies, there is a feasible and prudent
4 alternative which would cause less impact to the
5 people and the environment, and according to
6 Minnesota statutes and rules that alternative should
7 be implemented.

8 Thank you very much.

9 (Clapping.)

10 MS. STEINHAEUER: Thank you.

11 And we'll go by a show of hands. Yes.

12 MS. AUDREY BRITTON: Can I ask a couple
13 questions? Audrey Britton, B-R-I-T-T-O-N.

14 And bear with me, because I'm kind of new
15 to all of this. But one of the things I also
16 thought was interesting when the public was being
17 spoken to at the table back there is I kind of put
18 my two cents in because I felt like the public
19 opinion and the alternatives weren't being presented
20 at all.

21 One of the things I said, well, isn't it
22 true that you can run this along the thoroughfares
23 of 55 and 494? And they said, yeah, but that's
24 going to be hard, you gotta work with MnDOT. You
25 know, love or hate MnDOT, which people do, I don't

1 understand why that's a reason to not be expressing
2 those alternatives to the public and I would like
3 someone to help me to understand that. Because
4 everyone eventually, when they do anything along the
5 freeways, brings MnDOT in, and have we had
6 discussions with MnDOT? Do we know if there's a
7 feasibility of the 55, 494 alternative.

8 MS. ASAH: Let me make sure I understand
9 your question first. I think you're asking why we
10 didn't talk about -- I think it's the route E
11 alternative, 494 and 55, back at the table today?

12 MS. AUDREY BRITTON: Sure. That's fine,
13 you can answer that.

14 MS. ASAH: Okay. Today is focused on
15 certificate of need, and so most of the questions
16 that I received, I can't speak for all of my
17 colleagues, were based on, you know, how do routes
18 play into this, how does the map that the Department
19 of Commerce put out come to your routes, I'm not
20 sure what my colleagues answered about that. But
21 since this is about need most of us were talking
22 about need. In terms of what route alternatives are
23 feasible or what we can build, we can certainly talk
24 about that individually with people and I'm happy
25 to, but that's not the focus of today's meeting.

1 MS. AUDREY BRITTON: I understand that,
2 but that was the focus that I saw being discussed at
3 the table. We have right-of-way, this will be the
4 cheapest option, this is easiest. And when you
5 don't talk about the other alternatives, you know, a
6 lot of people see this as a public hearing, we're
7 all coming here to get unbiased information and we
8 all know it's not unbiased.

9 I guess more than anything, I just think
10 it's a pretty poor excuse to say MnDOT is difficult
11 to work with. That's what I thought I heard. And I
12 thought it was a bit unfair, shortsighted, and,
13 quite frankly, I thought it was very, very
14 one-sided. It unfortunately could give some people
15 the impression that the decision has already been
16 made.

17 And I certainly hope that the PUC here,
18 that the decision has not been made, they are here
19 to represent the people, the people have spoken loud
20 and clearly and I hope the right decision is made.

21 Thank you.

22 MS. ASAH: Thank you.

23 (Clapping.)

24 MS. STEINHAEUER: Yes, the woman.

25 MS. KAREN PARKS: Karen Parks, K-A-R-E-N,

1 P-A-R-K-S.

2 In the same tone of that question, I was
3 of the opinion that we were going to hear about a
4 bunch of different things -- I am so sorry (cell
5 phone ringing). And then when I was asking
6 questions, what I heard is that the decision hasn't
7 been made, or that we don't even know if there's a
8 need.

9 Now, as I've been sitting here I'm
10 hearing there is a need, we will figure out a way to
11 do it. If the need doesn't come out as this is a
12 need now, we'll go back and do another study so that
13 something else was going to come out. And if you do
14 have that, what are those other options? Like right
15 now this is what you're saying and this is what
16 you're presenting to us. We're saying we've got
17 some concerns. If the need comes back and says,
18 well, there isn't the need for this, you're saying
19 there is a need, so what is your other options? I
20 thought I heard you do have other options, or you
21 will prepare new options.

22 MS. STEINHAUER: I'll let Xcel answer
23 that as to what else they may propose. But to your
24 question about need, Xcel has proposed something,
25 it's proposed -- it's identified, generally

1 speaking, a need, there are some reliability
2 concerns in the general Plymouth-Medina area. They
3 are proposing that that need can best be met by the
4 Hollydale project. That's their proposal, that's
5 what they are advocating. The Commission will make
6 that ultimate determination and so I just want to be
7 clear that there has been no determination of the
8 need.

9 MS. KAREN PARKS: Okay. So they're
10 proposing that there's this need and then the
11 Commission is going to decide if there's the need?

12 MS. STEINHAEUER: I shouldn't speak for
13 the Commission.

14 MR. KALUZNIAK: That's somewhat correct,
15 I guess. The Commission is required to grant a
16 certificate of need upon a showing by the Applicants
17 that they have met the requirements that are
18 outlined in rule and statute. And so during the
19 certificate of need process, which addresses size,
20 type and timing, the Applicants are required to
21 affirmatively show that they've met the requirements
22 or rules before proceeding.

23 MS. KAREN PARKS: Okay. And so, go
24 ahead, tell me what your other options are.

25 MR. LEHMAN: What you just heard is we

1 made an application and it's our burden to
2 demonstrate that there, in fact, is a problem and
3 therefore a need to solve that problem. So that
4 would be one threshold that has to be reviewed. Is
5 there, in fact, a need, is there a problem, and is
6 there therefore a need to solve that problem.

7 The second threshold question is is the
8 solution that we have presented the correct
9 solution. And, in general terms, we've said we
10 believe we need to build a transmission line from
11 Medina, Hollydale, and up into Plymouth. There are
12 alternatives to that, we presented some alternatives
13 in our application.

14 MS. KAREN PARKS: To the Commission?

15 MR. LEHMAN: To the Commission, that's
16 part of the application we made to the Commission.
17 So we have presented what we believe is the
18 preferred solution as part of the process that we're
19 going through here. Additional solutions may be
20 brought forward by the public. So all of those
21 solutions will be evaluated.

22 Earlier there was some hypothetical
23 questioning going on so we were trying to address
24 the hypothetical presented. So it's possible that
25 we're wrong, that, in fact, there are no problems in

1 this area and, in fact, there is no need. If that
2 happens, then we will figure out what we will do
3 because we feel we have a problem.

4 MS. KAREN PARKS: That's where my
5 question is. So if Xcel Energy is saying that there
6 is and you are going to solve what it is is your
7 problems, what you feel is the need, what are you
8 proposing if, in fact, we don't go forward with the
9 need? The Commission decides that there isn't the
10 need and we brought out facts that we don't think
11 there is, whatever, and you say there is a need, so
12 what is your -- what are the other alternatives that
13 you're proposing?

14 MR. LEHMAN: A conclusion of there is not
15 a need would most directly mean that we don't have a
16 need to build a transmission facility. So if that
17 is the case, then our only choice left, then, is
18 probably to look at different solutions from the
19 distribution perspective.

20 So we have to first address the question
21 of do we still believe there is a need, and if the
22 need we believe is still there, but we've got a
23 conclusion from the Commission that our solutions
24 from a transmission standpoint are not acceptable
25 and that leaves us with the requirement to deal it

1 with from a distribution side. So we've got
2 distribution planners who have looked at what
3 solutions can be used from a distribution
4 standpoint.

5 The voltage of distribution in the area,
6 the 13.8 kV, the 34.5 kV, those will have to be
7 utilized. And we do have alternatives, and we'll
8 have to look at additional solutions at a
9 distribution level to continue to meet the level of
10 service that we require for our customers, at least
11 that's what we see right now, that we can't provide
12 that without doing something beyond what's in
13 existence at this point in time.

14 MS. KAREN PARKS: Is that the A-2?

15 MR. LEHMAN: A-2 would be one of those,
16 but that isn't the only solution at the distribution
17 level that might be able to work. Again, our
18 understanding is that the public is going to bring
19 forward additional distribution solutions,
20 potentially, and we'll have to go back and look at
21 other distribution solutions, if there are other
22 distribution solutions.

23 MS. KAREN PARKS: I guess I want to go on
24 record as also saying that I think it is a poor
25 choice to go through neighborhoods versus coming

1 forth originally and going along a freeway where
2 there already are power lines, where there are
3 already -- someone said about businesses not wanting
4 it, I think that's a whole lot different than
5 homeowners in their backyards. We all are going to
6 be going to these businesses, we will all be going
7 to places, and we will continue to go to places
8 whether we go by a power line. But having it in
9 your backyard or having it in your child's bedroom
10 window is a totally different thing.

11 And it appalls me that as governmental
12 agencies or as big companies, that to follow
13 something that is simpler so that you don't have to
14 do things, i.e., go through the Department of
15 Transportation or deal with those kind of things, to
16 try to railroad it through neighborhoods versus
17 going along big freeways where we all are living and
18 all are working and all are driving and all are
19 using just -- well, it just doesn't seem right and
20 the other just isn't logical. And logic is true for
21 everybody, but I would really encourage making use
22 of big freeway lines and the highway lines spaces
23 versus backyards and neighborhoods.

24 (Clapping.)

25 MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you.

1 Yes. I can't remember your name.

2 MR. RON MIELKE: I'm Ron Mielke,
3 M-I-E-L-K-E.

4 And I spent 35 years working for the City
5 of Minneapolis, and I had to work with MnDOT, which
6 is wonderful to work with. I know I did two
7 different sections of Highway 55, one through Olson
8 Highway, the north part, and then the Hiawatha
9 corridor. And they're great. They were very fussy,
10 and we had to make a lot of different plans and, in
11 fact, drawers of the various plans of the one that
12 they decided on. But there was no problem working
13 with them and they were very, you know, acceptable
14 and we worked together and it all got done.

15 And I heard before that, you know, they
16 have the power lines already up and down 494, you
17 know, and the land is there, they could use it, they
18 wouldn't have to bother us residential people. And
19 I think that's a wonderful idea, to use those things
20 that are already in place. And they might have to
21 go a few miles out of the way, but it sure would
22 save a lot of anguish among the residents, who we
23 invested our future into living here, you know, and
24 would be happy about it.

25 So that's all I got to say. I think you

1 can work with MnDOT on that.

2 (Clapping.)

3 MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you.

4 Show of hands? Did you want to say
5 something?

6 MS. ASAH: One statement. I just wanted
7 to get up and say that as a utility we work with
8 MnDOT every day. And we enjoy working with them.
9 Certainly they have their requirements, we have our
10 requirements. We work together daily. So we look
11 forward to working with them if needed on this
12 project.

13 MS. STEINHAUER: Yes, the gentleman in
14 back.

15 MR. DOUG HAUGEN: Hi, my name is Doug,
16 D-O-U-G, Haugen, H-A-U-G-E-N.

17 And, again, thank you to Public Utilities
18 Commission and the Commerce Department for hosting
19 this and letting all parties speak.

20 Just a follow-up on the eloquent
21 Mrs. Zook. She quoted the studies and I do believe
22 those are accurate. And from a practicality
23 standpoint, if I am showing a house, I'm a realtor,
24 if I'm showing a house to a buyer and there's a view
25 of a high voltage power line, if the buyer would not

1 bring that out as an objection, I would certainly
2 point them to, you know, some research that needs to
3 be done. So you need to be comfortable with that
4 decision, being, actually, grounds for malpractice
5 if I didn't bring that up.

6 So it does have very real repercussions,
7 if it does back up onto that, and I do remember that
8 the rule of using those home sales when they do
9 sell, that cuts a swath through Plymouth forever. I
10 mean, it's like having vacant houses there forever
11 that you can't tear down. And it just does not make
12 any sense to have a transmission line being part of
13 any solution.

14 That's been stated by Xcel in their own
15 documents and restated by many people here, it's a
16 distribution problem, they need to spend a little
17 bit more money and they'll raise rates on us and
18 we'll pay for it all, but it forever will impact the
19 property values.

20 But the City of Plymouth has gone on
21 record saying that they don't like the preferred
22 route, and I would ask them, hopefully, to even take
23 a look at any route with a transmission line.
24 Because, again, that's the trigger point that lowers
25 property values. And so any plan that puts

1 distribution but not transmission lines coming that
2 close to property is paramount.

3 And then the gentleman that was spoken of
4 very well last night, and I concur, Mr. Scott Ek, he
5 was on the shortened route to have this project be
6 approved, as Xcel originally proposed it, he was
7 asked a question once, is he familiar with any other
8 project that impacted so many homes to such a degree
9 and he said no. So, I mean, not only with this
10 distinction, would this project have the distinction
11 of being an aberration in Plymouth, but an
12 aberration in Minnesota. So this makes no sense to
13 me why, you know, transmission lines close to any
14 residential properties would be looked at. Plymouth
15 would not let a developer come in and allow for a
16 development that close to the high voltage power
17 lines.

18 So, I think, you know, your statewide
19 organizations, think like a city for a short while
20 while you're looking at this. And look out for the
21 best interest of the people. When you do recognize
22 that everybody loves electricity, but sometimes it's
23 going to have to be a cost shared by many because a
24 few will never be able to, you know, be able to
25 afford that cost.

1 Thank you very much again for the
2 opportunity.

3 (Clapping.)

4 MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you.

5 Any more hands? I want to allow people
6 to comment, but I also want to respect your time on
7 your Friday afternoon. So I don't see any hands, so
8 typically what I do now is continue scanning. It's
9 going once -- yes.

10 UNIDENTIFIED: The transcript of this
11 afternoon, is that available for us or not?

12 MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you for the
13 question. The question was whether the transcript
14 will be available. The transcript, Xcel Energy will
15 make a transcript available at the libraries, the
16 same ones where the applications are available.

17 I was speaking with the court reporter
18 earlier, that probably -- I would not anticipate
19 that it is available before the scoping comment
20 deadline. She has some other obligations that she
21 needs to meet. But it should be available either on
22 or shortly after the 16th, I believe.

23 She'll also provide that to me and I will
24 make that available on our website. But, again, I
25 wouldn't count on it before the scoping comment

1 deadline of the 16th.

2 COURT REPORTER: Maybe. Maybe. Whatever
3 is humanly possible.

4 MS. STEINHAUER: But just to provide some
5 warning if you're relying on that for your comments.

6 And then, again, to reiterate, the
7 comment deadline, after I close the oral portion of
8 the comments, we'll be available to answer
9 questions, but any comments that you want on the
10 record need to be submitted in writing to me by the
11 end of the day on Friday, November 16th.

12 Please, you can give me a call if you
13 have any questions, but the comments to be part of
14 the record need to be in writing. They can be
15 submitted directly to the website, you can e-mail
16 them directly to me, the fax number is on there, or
17 you can mail them. And that information is on the
18 notice. Also, my cards, I think, are available on
19 the table outside.

20 So I'm not seeing any hands. So I'll say
21 it again. Going once. Going twice. Going three
22 times.

23 I very much appreciate your coming out
24 and taking time today. I hope this has been helpful
25 to you and, please, we'll be around to answer any

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questions.

Thank you.

(Matter concluded.)