May 19, 2004

Ms. Pamela B. Katz
Chairman
Connecticut Siting Council
10 Franklin Square
New Britain, CT  06051

Re: Docket No. 272: The Connecticut Light and Power Company and The United Illuminating Company Application for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need for the construction of a new 345-kV electric transmission line and associated facilities between the Scovill Rock Switching Station in Middletown and the Norwalk Substation in Norwalk, including the reconstruction of portions of existing 115-kV and 345-kV electric transmission lines, the construction of Beseck Switching Station in Wallingford, East Devon Substation in Milford, and Singer Substation in Bridgeport, modifications at Scovill Rock Switching Station and Norwalk Substation, and the reconfiguration of certain interconnections

Dear Ms. Katz:

During the April hearings in this docket, the Council requested that The Connecticut Light and Power Company and The United Illuminating Company (collectively, “the Companies”) provide additional information as to whether it would be physically possible to construct an overhead line along Route 15 in New Haven County (the Wilbur Cross Parkway from point B to C) where constraints or potential impacts led the Companies to conclude that it would not be practical to construct the proposed Middletown-Norwalk Transmission Project (April 22, 2004 Hearing Transcript at p.96). In response to this request, enclosed are an original and 20 copies of the “Middletown-Norwalk 345-kV Transmission Project Supplemental Review of Crossing the West Rock Tunnel and Rock Cut by Amity Shopping Center”.
The Companies are providing electronic copies of the filing, excluding Figures 2 and 5 due to their size, to the electronic service list.

Sincerely,

Anne Bartosewicz  
Project Director  
The Connecticut Light & Power Company

John Prete  
Project Director  
The United Illuminating Company

cc: Service List
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345-kV Transmission Project

Supplemental Review of Crossing the West Rock Tunnel
and Rock Cut by Amity Shopping Center

The initial routing analysis of following Route 15 through New Haven County (the Wilbur Cross Parkway) identified several areas where constraints or potential impacts suggested that constructing the proposed Middletown to Norwalk 345-kV Transmission Project along this route would not be practical. At the request of the Connecticut Siting Council, Connecticut Light & Power and United Illuminating (the Companies) had their engineering consultants further review two areas; the West Rock Tunnel and a large rock cut south of the tunnel on Route 15 in the towns of New Haven and Woodbridge. This portion of the route was considered not practical in the initial review because of the steep terrain, adjacent commercial and residential development, the presence of a state park on the ridge that would need to be crossed, and the high visibility of the transmission line in this location. (See Figure 1-Aerial Overview.)

This report describes a potential 345-kV overhead line design through these areas, and a summary of the potential impacts. The areas in question are located between Woodin St. in Hamden and Fountain St. in New Haven. The length of line through both areas is approximately 1.5 miles. Figure 2 identifies the proposed route alignment. Figure 3 is a graphic simulation of the transmission line passing over the ridge looking south. Figure 4 is a graphic simulation looking north. Figure 5 shows the plan and profile for the route. Photos 1-6 illustrate the areas and approximate pole locations.

The potential design solution entails the use of vertical monopoles along the Parkway with the conductor arms facing the roadway. This design configuration is necessary to avoid clearance violations to the homes and businesses along the Parkway. The typical height of these monopoles is 130 feet on a 120-foot wide right of way (ROW). Because the line could use part of the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CDOT) ROW, only approximately 75 feet of clearing is required adjacent to the roadway for this type of construction. Compact delta structures are
proposed to cross West Rock Ridge because they are shorter and would therefore be less visible on the ridge. These structures range from 85 to 130 feet in height. Although shorter, these structures would require a wider ROW of approximately 135 feet. Since the route across the ridge is off of the highway, this portion would require clearing the full 135 feet of ROW. Starting at the south end of the West Rock Tunnel and continuing past the Amity Shopping Center, the structures would be vertical monopoles. The typical height of these monopoles is 150 feet and requires a compressed 80-foot wide ROW, instead of the 120-foot wide standard ROW. This compressed ROW is required to maintain clearances from existing buildings along the highway and at the Amity Shopping Center. The limited available ROW in this area, due to adjacent businesses, requires taller structures to meet design criteria. These structure heights are based on preliminary information and may vary. In addition, heavy angle structures would be required for the two line crossings over the Parkway.

Following is a list of significant features along this stretch of the Parkway:

- a radio tower on West Rock Ridge (see Photo 1)
- the West Rock Ridge State Park
- houses north of the West Rock tunnel (see Photo 2)
- CDOT maintenance yard southeast of the West Rock tunnel (see Photo 3)
- houses southwest of the West Rock tunnel
- the Amity Shopping Center south and west of the West Rock tunnel (see Photo 4)
- houses along the east side of the Parkway, between Fountain St. and Whalley Ave.
- a major rock cut and steep down-slope south of the shopping center (see Photos 5 and 6)

The proposed alignment for the crossing of West Rock Ridge begins by crossing over the Parkway near the north entrance of the tunnel (Photo 1). The line would angle up the ridge through the lowest point (‘the saddle’), pass by the microwave tower and descend over the CDOT maintenance yard. The conductors would pass over the maintenance building shown in Photo 3. The line would then cross back over the Parkway through the on/off ramps on the northwest side, and then follow the side entrance to the shopping center (Photo 4). The monopoles would be the vertical configuration to avoid some businesses next to the intersection. From the back of the shopping center, the line would go up to the top of the hill, deviating from the CDOT ROW, and then back down to the highway ROW (see Photos 4-6), a distance of approximately 2,000 feet.
Construction of the line along this portion would require the clearing of approximately 8.8 acres of trees. Most of the tree removals would be within the West Rock Ridge State Park or on private property next to the Parkway south of the shopping center. This alignment would require the acquisition of approximately 7.5 acres of ROW within the West Rock Ridge State Park and the CDOT maintenance yard near the tunnel, as well as approximately 3.0 acres of ROW along the Amity Shopping Center and the adjacent rock cut for a total of 10.5 acres. The line would be highly visible approaching the tunnel from either direction because it would have to cross the Parkway on each side of the tunnel and the need to site structures on both sides of the ridge. The crossing of the ridge would also cross over the park’s hiking trail. Construction would be difficult and could result in high impacts for businesses, local residents, and the traveling public. This route would also have impacts on the West Rock Ridge State Park and the CDOT maintenance area.
FIGURE 1
GRAPHIC SIMULATION
LOOKING SOUTH
PHOTO 1: Looking south at West Rock Tunnel from Woodin St. overpass (Wilbur Cross Parkway).

PHOTO 2: Homes northwest of West Rock Tunnel.
PHOTO 3: DOT Maintenance Yard south of West Rock Ridge, east side of Parkway.

PHOTO 4: Looking south at Amity Shopping Center.
PHOTO 5: Looking south at rock cut along Parkway.

PHOTO 6: Looking north at rock cut along Parkway.