



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL

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**CERTIFIED MAIL
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED**

July 22, 2009

John R. Morissette
Manager – Transmission Siting and Permitting
Northeast Utilities Service Company
P.O. Box 270
Hartford, CT 06141-0270

RE: **PETITION NO. 906** - The Connecticut Light and Power Company petition for a declaratory ruling that no Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need is required for the proposed modifications of an existing 0.8 mile single-circuit 345-kV transmission line (circuit #353) segment between the CL&P Middletown Junction and Kleen Energy in Middletown, Connecticut.

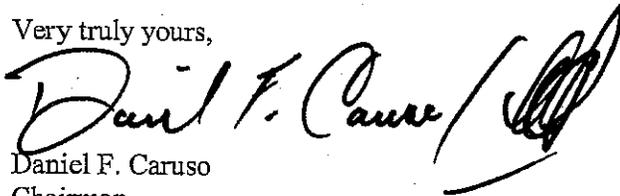
Dear Mr. Morissette:

At a public meeting held on July 16, 2009, the Connecticut Siting Council (Council) considered and ruled that this proposal would not have a substantial adverse environmental effect, and pursuant to General Statutes § 16-50k would not require a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need.

This decision is under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Council and is not applicable to any other modification or construction. All work is to be implemented as specified in the petition, dated June 12, 2009.

Enclosed for your information is a copy of the staff report on this project.

Very truly yours,



Daniel F. Caruso
Chairman

DFC/RDM/jb

Enclosure: Staff Report dated July 15, 2009

c: The Honorable Sebastian N. Giuliano, Mayor, City of Middletown
William Warner, AICP Director, City of Middletown

Petition 906
The Connecticut Light and Power Company
345-kV Middletown Rebuild Project
Staff Report
July 15, 2009

On June 12, 2009, Northeast Utilities Service Company, as agent for The Connecticut Light and Power Company (CL&P), submitted a petition to the Connecticut Siting Council (Council) for a determination that no Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need would be required for the rebuild of a 345-kV transmission line between the Kleen Energy facility and Middletown Junction in the City of Middletown. On July 8, 2009, Council member Philip Ashton and Robert Mercier of Council staff met CL&P representative Helen Taylor, and other CL&P staff, to review the proposed project

CL&P proposes to rebuild a 0.8-mile section of a 345-kV transmission line between the Kleen Energy facility and CL&P's Middletown Junction. The purpose of the rebuild is to incorporate the Kleen Energy facility into the Middletown to Manchester circuit. The affected portion of the existing transmission line corridor, designated as the #353 circuit, contains eight H-frame structures supporting three 2156-kcmil ACSR conductors. This section of transmission line would be abandoned upon completion of the project.

CL&P proposes to expand the transmission corridor to the south by 85 feet and install eight new laminated-wood or steel direct embedded H-frame structures, ranging in height from 65 to 95 feet. Six 1590-kcmil ACSS conductors in a two-conductor bundle configuration would be installed. The rebuilt segment would be designated as the #3533 circuit. Once the #3533 circuit is in operation, CL&P would remove the components of the abandoned #353 circuit.

All work would be conducted on CL&P property. The existing 150-foot wide transmission line corridor traverses rocky hillsides interspersed with small watercourses and wetlands. An existing access road serves the existing structures and crosses wetland/watercourse areas in existing culverts. CL&P would construct six new spur roads off existing road to access the proposed structures. Each proposed structure would require a pad area to support cranes and other construction equipment.

CL&P would clear all vegetation south of the existing corridor to a distance of 85 feet using mechanized methods and chainsaws, where necessary, expanding the right-of-way from approximately 150 feet to 235 feet. Approximately seven acres of woodland would be cleared to accommodate the expanded corridor. An effort would be made to preserve trees that do not reach substantial heights (dogwood, red cedar) in riparian areas. The entire corridor would be maintained in a shrub state, providing habitat for shrub land dependent species.

One wooded wetland in an old quarry and five wooded riparian areas with associated wetlands would be converted into shrub scrub wetland/watercourse areas. Although clearing would be required in various wetland areas, the proposed transmission structures and associated spur access roads would be located in upland areas

CL&P consulted with the Connecticut State Historic Preservation Officer and modified the project prior to the filing of the petition with the Council to avoid direct impacts to two historic quarry operations within the expanded right-of-way.

The project area is located within the range of the eastern box turtle. Upon consultation with the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, CL&P intends to perform the following mitigation methods: limiting clearing and construction activities to the turtles active season of April 1 to November 1; employee training; use of construction mats in sensitive areas; daily sweeps for turtles prior to any clearing, construction, and rehabilitation activities; and the removal of any turtles encountered away from the work areas. Staff recommends that CL&P identify the personnel responsible for the daily sweeps and submit post construction correspondence indicating the date and general location where eastern box turtles encountered during clearing and construction activities.

Visibility impacts of the project would be minimal given the isolated nature of the area and that the project replaces existing infrastructure within an existing right-of-way. Although the new structures may be visible from the river area and points west, views would be from some distance and not noticeable among other existing infrastructure in the area.