



Stutsman County Tax Equalization

511 2nd Ave. S.E., Suite 102
Jamestown, ND 58401
Phone: 701-252-9035

August 15th, 2013

Public Service Commission
State of North Dakota
600 E Boulevard Ave, Dept 408
Bismarck, ND 58505-0480



Dear Commissioners of the Public Service Commission,

I am responding to the Notice of Filing and Notice of Opportunity for Hearing in regards to Case No. PU-13-103, ALLETE, Inc. 250kV DC Trans Line Reroute project in Kidder and Stutsman Counties.

Stutsman County has been aware of this potential project for some time and has researched the potential social, economic, and environmental impacts that may be present. A letter dated May 2, 2013 addressed to Barr Engineering Co. of Minneapolis Minnesota has outlined our concerns for this project that the county would like to see addressed. I encourage the PSC to take into consideration the information that was provided to Barr Engineering Co.

In regards to the waiver of procedures and time schedules I have no objections that the proposed facilities will produce minimal adverse effects and that adherence to applicable procedures and time schedules may be waved. The scope of the work in regards to this project is minimal in scale as compared to a full scale transmission line project yet it is vital to ensure the consistent and uninterrupted service of the line.

Consideration of the application for certificate of corridor compatibility and route permits are also smaller in scale and I have no objections provided a few safeguards are provided. The location, construction, and operation of the proposed facilities once completed will have a minimal adverse effect on the environment and the welfare of the citizens of the state however during the construction phase I have concerns.

There are two existing tower structures that are completely inundated with water as indicated by the full color aerial imagery I have provided. If these structures are allowed to remain standing they will pose a public safety hazard as well as a potential environmental hazard. After speaking with Mandy Bohnenblust of Barr Engineering Co. it was relayed to me that the existing structures will be removed to a height of approximately one foot above the current water line. I would find this solution acceptable as it reduces the potential for an existing structure to topple over in the event the base should give way under the surface of the water. I would however like to see additional measures taken to cap off the remaining portion of the tower structure at a height of two feet above the current water level. This should alleviate concerns that the remaining structure will become a hazard should the body of water rise above its current level in the future as well as protect against cuts, abrasions, impalement, property damage, and so on.

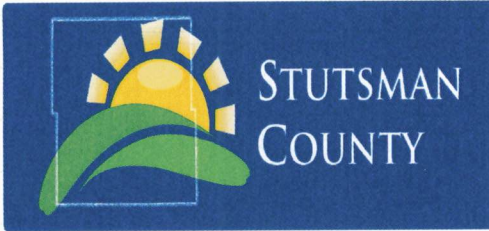
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I believe that after these measures are taken the compatibility with environmental preservation and the efficient use of resources will be satisfied. The precautionary measures will reduce the potential for a structure to contaminate the environment as well as provide for a low profile in the general landscape.

I also think that it goes without question the proposed facility locations are being selected due to the necessity to continue the system reliability and integrity and that energy needs are met and fulfilled in an orderly and timely fashion. The current line is being endangered due to the current wet cycle that we are experiencing and the hydrology in the area of the proposed project.

In closing, I would encourage the North Dakota Public Service Commission to consider the possible environmental impacts of the existing tower structures and possible remedies to reduce the environmental and potential public safety concerns these structures pose, just as Stutsman County has in its local permitting process and issuance of the building permits.

At this time, Stutsman County is not requesting a formal public hearing, we are only submitting information to be considered in ALLETE Inc.'s application. If there is additional information that is required of Stutsman County please feel free to contact me. Thank you for your consideration and efforts.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dustin Bakken".

Dustin Bakken
Stutsman County
Director of Tax Equalization/
Zoning Administrator

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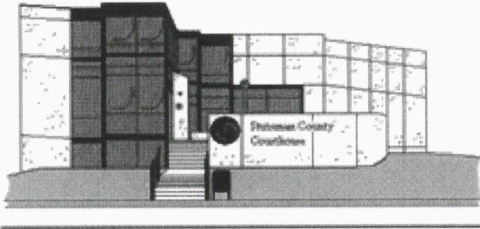
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JOSH SMAAGE, Dir. of Information Technology
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LINDSEY NOVAK, Extension Agent



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May 2, 2013

Barr Engineering Co.
Attn: Mandy Bohnenblust
4700 West 77th Street, Suite 200
Minneapolis, MN 55435

Dear Ms. Bohnenblust

I have received your letter dated April 18th, 2013 in regards to the Minnesota Power 250kV Overhead Line Reroute projects in Kidder and Stutsman Counties. I appreciate the forward thinking in seeking input from the local jurisdictions as your project makes its way through the permitting process.

The purpose and intent of the Stutsman County Zoning Ordinance states "It is intended that the establishment of this ordinance will promote orderly and non-conflicting uses of land and property, protect property rights, ensure the provisions of adequate public services, and to promote conservation of land, water, and other natural resources."

In your letter you state that your firm intends to ensure that all known social, economic, and environmental effects are considered in the development of the project. The area of the project located in a very rural portion of Stutsman County. The nearest residence to your proposed reroute project is approximately .85 miles away with the second nearest residence at approximately 1.35 miles away. It is in my opinion that there will be little, if any, social or economic impact resulting from this project.

Environmental concerns are not as transparent however. Obviously the cause of the project can ultimately be blamed on the hydrology in the area. I have researched the project using various forms of aerial images including Google Earth. From what I can gather from those images, I can identify two utility structures that are completely inundated with water that will be obsolete when the new path of the transmission line is in place. From a local zoning standpoint those structures that are now located in water pose a concern in regards to public and environmental safety if allowed to remain standing. Stutsman County would like to see documentation that would address how the structures are to be removed so as to minimize contamination of the surrounding waters and eliminate a potential public safety hazard.

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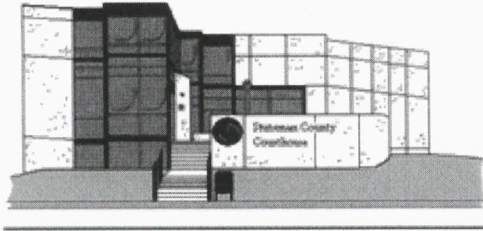
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Also, in regards to local zoning, this project is located in an area that is currently zoned as an Agricultural District. According to the Stutsman County Zoning Ordinance, communication towers, lines, and equipment are a permitted use in an Agricultural zone. Rezoning will not be required for this project however "no person, firm, or corporation shall erect, construct, make structural changes, or move any structure, excluding agricultural buildings without first obtaining a Building Permit." Stutsman County will require a separate permit in the amount of \$10 for each individual structure whether it be erected as new, moved to a new location, or removed permanently.

A copy of any available plans and/or documentation in regards to the project shall be submitted with the application for permit. Failure to provide this information may be grounds for a denial of a Building Permit.

If there are any further questions in regards to this project or a portion thereof that are within the jurisdiction of Stutsman County you may contact the office of the Zoning Administrator at 701-252-9035 or by email at dubakken@nd.gov.

Respectfully,

Dustin Bakken
Stutsman County
Director of Tax Equalization/
Zoning Administrator

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