

TOWN OF CHATHAM
MARCH 24, 2011

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
FINAL COPY

Members Present:

David Everett, Chairman
Mitchell Khosrova
JP Henkel
Bob Leary
Adrian Ooms
Kary Jablonka

Members Absent:

Jeff Lick

Public Present:

Chris Simonsen Robert Raziano
Robert Worsted Joseph Robidoux
Cynthia K Elliot Dennis Bender
Fran Heany Dusty Werth
Sarah Gilstrap

Chairman David Everett called the meeting to order at 7:00PM. Mitchell Khosrova moved and David Everett seconded that the minutes from the previous meeting be adopted. This carried. Chairman Everett introduced Dennis Bender who will be making presentation for NYSEG's Columbia County Transmission Project. Mr. Bender introduced other members of the team- all from the firm of Burns & McDonnell: Ryan Cross, Project Manager, who was not present, Dusty Werth and Sarah Gilstrap.

Mr. Bender explained that the need for this is due to the loss of lines between Churchville and Craryville, which has created a reliability issue. The next closest line is in Stephentown. Mr. Everett asked if this new line will be an additional line, to which Mr. Bender responded that it is. The purpose will be to enhance reliability with a redundant feed to the Klinekill substation in the Town of Chatham. Chairman Everett asked if there would be an increase in capacity. There will be and the actual numbers can be provided. Kary Jablonka noted that the only portion being considered for Chatham is from the Ghent town border to the substation on 203. Mr. Bender pointed out different lines on the maps indicating proposed routes. This is the beginning of the process of seeking the best way to coordinate between Chatham, Ghent and Stockport. A new substation is proposed for the town of Ghent. There will be a new overhead line. Questions were posed regarding the need for approval by the army corps of engineers. Mr. Bender stated that they are trying to avoid all wetlands and avoid mitigation. Nationwide 12 is low impact on the environment.

Mr. Everett asked what mileage is being looked at for the Town. Mr. Bender responded that it is on the cusp of 10 miles-various route lengths are being considered. Any identified resources would be provided as part of the SEQRA filing. Mr. Everett pointed out that if the line is over 10 miles, according to Article 7, the town has no jurisdiction and is handled by the PSC (Public Service Commission). If the line is below 10 miles, according to

Article 102 the town has jurisdiction and local approvals are necessary. Mr. Bender stated that one town must claim lead agency status, but any party (town) can reject it. The PSC can act as lead agency under 10 miles, but will act in that capacity if it is over 10 miles. Currently there are two possible locations for the substation. The first is in the Town of Ghent along 9H on the South side, while the other is along the Stockport Rd. Mr. Everett wondered why it will be so far away. Mr. Bender stated that NYSEG has no franchise in Stockport. There would be an access road, a gravel pad and a 30x50 control house. Minor modifications would be made to the existing Klinekill station, but there would be no expansion of the current footprint.

A discussion ensued regarding potential routes to the Klinekill station. Some rights of ways will be needed—they will require about 150 additional feet through an easement process. There was a question posed as to how this area gets power currently. There are 34-50 existing lines, which would need to be expanded. Mr. Everett stated that keeping the existing the right-of-way would be most desirable. Mr. Bender said that other towns might object to this and they would have the right to say no. Primarily wood poles would be used, 65' tall, similar to existing distribution poles. For larger spans a steel pole would be utilized. For reference, wood poles along the roadway are about 35 feet. The desire is to keep a low profile. The town of Ghent is forming a committee to explore this proposal. Mr. Everett felt that the likely lead agency would be the Town of Ghent. Mr. Leary wanted to know when they would know the exact area involved. Mr. Bender said that they would be meeting with the towns to coordinate the best route. The target date is June 1. Adrian Ooms asked about the feasibility of burying the lines. Mr. Bender said this is cost prohibitive. Currently the only buried lines are under highways. Mr. Khosrova stated that he would like to see a cost comparison over the life of the lines, assuming there would be less maintenance due to downed lines. He specifically would like NYSEG to provide the cost differential of overhead lines vs. underground lines over a 50-year period provided to the Board. This request is based on Mr. Bender's comments that the poles last 40 years.

Mr. Wirth said that they are hoping to set up a meeting with Ghent within the next week or so.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Chris Simonsen wondered if the PSC is mandating this project. Mr. Bender replied that the PSC has identified this as a funded line item, which means it is significant. There was a question as to why we can't be fed through

Stephentown. A line would need to be built between Stephentown and the Klinekill requiring several local permits: zoning, site plan and building permits for the substation. Tim Schools asked what the minimum distance from a residence would be. This is unknown. Mr. Schools asked if the value of the properties affected are taken into consideration. Mr. Wirth said that land values are not placed in site studies. Mr. Schools said that he is concerned about the affected value of the view shed on the town of Stockport. Cindy Elliot expressed appreciation for being permitted to speak at a non-Public Hearing meeting. She wondered why the Churchville line was placed underground when it was repaired. Mr. Bender will find out that answer and send it to the clerk. Ms. Elliot shares her concern regarding assessment impacts. She wondered if funding is tied to the stimulus and timeframe constrained. Mr. Bender said it is not tied to the stimulus and does not know if it is time constrained. In response to a final question as to whether some lines could be overhead and others underground, Mr. Bender said that this was not typical.

Mitch Khosrova moved to adjourn the meeting. This was seconded by Dave Everett. The meeting ended at 8:10PM.

David Everett, Chairman

Respectfully submitted,

JP Henkel
Marilyn Cohen