

Burlington Planning Commission

149 Church Street
Burlington, VT 05401
Telephone: (802) 865-7188
(802) 865-7195 (FAX)
(802) 865-7142 (TTY)

Peter Potts, Chair
Ralph Montefusco, Vice Chair
Livia DeMarchis
Colin McNeil
Kathleen Ryan
Emily Stebbins
Norman Williams.



April 5, 2007

Mr. Gerry Ostrander
Velco
366 Pinnacle Ridge Road
Rutland, Vermont 05701

Dear Mr. Ostrander,

This correspondence is to provide comment from the City of Burlington's Planning Commission on the proposed Velco East Avenue Loop project. The Commission is very supportive of this project and of the resulting benefits. Such benefits include the reduction in unsightly overhead lines along Burlington's downtown waterfront and the abandoning of the BED ROW in the Centennial Woods natural area, as well as the improvement in the overall reliability for electric service for Burlington citizens and institutions.

Regarding impacts on historic resources, our staff provided assistance to your consultant Hugh Henry regarding identification of properties that may be affected by the utility upgrade project. There are some concerns that may require further evaluation of the potential for adverse affect on specific properties in Burlington.

Based on the inquiry two items became clear: The consultant's review was limited to properties that are currently designated as historic, and that the broader potential for adverse effect on historic properties was more substantial. As of this date, Burlington has entered a little more than 3,300 structures on Vermont's Historic Sites and Structures Survey (of Burlington's 10,600+ primary structures.) This is due to limited financial resources and narrow project timeframe and focus that have identified only a partial list of historic resources within the City. For that reason, *eligibility for listing* is an important criterion for review. This is significant given the path of the transmission line upgrade.

Specifically, the aerial line proposed for Intervale Road presents significant visual impact on both a modest colonial revival house at 44 Intervale as well as St. Joseph's Cemetery, Burlington's oldest Catholic burial ground (Part of the Vermont State Register Historic District known as the Cemetery District.) Consideration of a continuation of under grounding the line further down Intervale Road would mitigate these impacts.

44 Intervale Road
Note existing lines



Nash Place (located east of the project path) is a significant collection of early 20th century dwellings that are within the view shed of the transmission lines. The property line of 31

Nash Place appears to fall in close proximity if not within the transmission line path; but 15 Nash Place will see significant visual impact from the project. Although not yet designated, this small street may be considered eligible for historic listing and recognition.

The lines emerge on Colchester Avenue between 274 and 276 Colchester Avenue. Neither property is listed on the Vermont State Register of Historic Resources but both appear clearly eligible for designation. A support pole for the current line looks as if to be located within 20 feet of the redstone foundation of 276 Colchester Avenue. Any required excavation work to supplement the system of support should be attentive to the close proximity of these structures. The augmentation of the current lines, however, may simply present an undue and significant visual effect on both of these late 19th century homes.

Finally, the small neighborhoods of Thibault Parkway and Latham Court may be within the area of impact of the project. 56 and 57 Latham Court, both early 20th century Foursquare residences, will be within the view shed. Post war houses at the end of Thibault Parkway (51, 53, 65 and 69) are within feet of the current transmission lines, and will likely face adverse visual impact from the project due to their close proximity. Neither neighborhood has historic designation, but may be considered eligible for listing given the significance of their architecture, age and context.

This project is important and beneficial to Burlington's future, and we hope it can be successfully accomplished with minimal impact on city historic properties and individuals. Please let us know if any additional information is needed as we would be happy to continue to provide assistance on how Velco's East Avenue Loop Project may affect historic properties in Burlington.



274, 276 and 278 Colchester Avenue
Note existing aerial lines between 274 and 276

Respectfully,

Peter Potts, Chair,
Burlington Planning Commission

- Cc: Eric Gilberton, Vermont Division for Historic Preservation
- Barbara Grimes, Burlington Electric Department
- Thomas Buckley, Burlington Electric Department
- David Ertz, Project Engineer
- Dottie Schnur, Green Mountain Power
- Hugh Henry, Consultant and Architectural Historian



SGC ENGINEERING, LLC

- Civil Design & Survey Engineering
- Environmental & Regulatory Permitting
- Electrical Power Systems Engineering

Offices - Westbrook & Orono, Maine
South Burlington, Vermont

April 27, 2007

Mary O'Neil
Planning & Zoning Department
City of Burlington
149 Church Street
Burlington, VT 05401

RE: VT Transco East Avenue Loop Project
Historic Properties

Dear Mary:

Enclosed is a copy of the Meeting Report that covers our April 12 meeting with you and Ken Lerner. As I previously mentioned to you, I believe we had a productive meeting and put to rest most of the issues that were raised in the letter from the Burlington Planning Commission of April 5, 2007.

At this point, I will summarize what we discussed for each of the issues to reinforce and supplement the contents of the Meeting Report.

Our consultant, Hugh H. Henry, did assess numerous properties that are currently designated as historic and ones that are eligible for listing. All of the historic properties and Mr. Henry's findings are summarized in his joint report with Michael Buscher of T. J. Boyle & Associates that is included as an exhibit for the Petition for Certificate of Public Good.

With respect to Nash Place, Mr. Henry assessed the visual impact of the 34.5kV line. Ultimately, Mr. Henry did not assess 15 Nash Place and 31 Nash Place because they were not in the viewshed of the overhead line. This is due to the transmission line being extended underground halfway down the ravine below the house of 43 Nash Place.

For 274 and 276 Colchester Avenue, the line will run underground from UVM property, across Colchester Avenue between these two houses. With the line underground and given the distance and elevation of the riser pole from these properties, there will be no visual impact for these two properties. Recognizing the close proximity of the two houses to the proposed underground line, care will be taken while excavating between the two houses for placement of the conduits. Typically, the excavation is shallow -- around four feet deep.

Mr. Henry individually assessed the historic properties located on Thibault Parkway and Latham Court, as noted in the Commission's letter, and the findings of "not adverse" are presented in the joint testimony and report. These conclusions follow from the fact that the transmission line is being installed underground through this area and across Colchester Avenue.

501 County Road, Westbrook, Maine 04092 - Office: 207-347-8100 • Fax: 207-347-8101

69 Swift Street, Suite 305, South Burlington, VT 05403 - Office: 802-863-1530 Fax: 802-862-1718

Target Technology Center, 20 Godfrey Drive, Suite 200, Orono, Maine 04473 - Office: 207-866-6571 • Fax: 207-866-6501

www.sgceng.com • E-mail: sgc@sgceng.com

M. O'Neil
April 27, 2007
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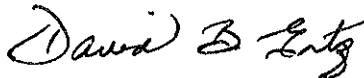
As we discussed during our meeting, the transmission line will be installed overhead along Intervale Road as it proceeds from the northeast corner of Riverside Avenue. The first two poles, including the riser pole for the 34.5kV line, were installed during the Riverside Avenue Improvement project. The line will cross the intersection below ground through existing conduits and surface at the riser pole. The visual impact on St. Joseph's Cemetery and 44 Interval Road is considered by Mr. Henry and Mr. Buscher to be adverse, but not undue. In essence, the new 34.5kV line and new poles will not constitute a substantial change to the existing adverse effects on the views from these historic properties, keeping in mind the overall context of the landscape. Mitigation with vegetative screening is not viable for either location.

Again, we are pleased to have the opportunity to address the City's concerns with respect to historic properties. We encourage you to read the Petition for Certificate of Public Good, and in particular, the Historical Analysis Report prepared by Hugh H. Henry and T.J Boyle & Associates, as well as the joint testimony.

If you have any questions regarding the project or the Historical Analysis Report, please feel free to contact me at (207) 347-8131.

Sincerely,

SGC ENGINEERING, LLC



David B. Ertz, P.E.
Senior Project Manager

Enclosure

cc. G. Ostrander (VT Transco)
M. Kasti (BED)
W. Dodge (DRM)

BTV.562985.01

