



# The Eversource Presentation Translation Guide

Eversource presentation to  
Sudbury Board of Selectmen, October 26th, 2016

---

## **SLIDE 2: Greater Boston Solution to Address Identified System Reliability Needs**

*A strong electrical transmission grid is vital to the safety, security and economic prosperity of the region. The transmission system serves a critical role to ensure that electricity flows with a high degree of reliability from wherever the power is generated to where power is needed. This is where they try and tell you how important the grid is, which it is, but leave out the fact that the data supporting the “need” for the project they will be proposing in the next few slides does not exist.*

*In a recent study, ISO-NE...concluded that there are inadequate transmission resources to serve the electricity needs. Not so fast Eversource - the “recent” study was in 2008. ISO-New England made their best guess in 2008 as to what the region would need in 2016. But the thing is, they were wrong. This project was devised in 2008 when ISO-NE took a stab at guessing the projected energy needs for 8 years hence. Not only were the projections wrong, **but the need that Eversource quotes as the reason for this project has not materialized.** Demand was forecasted to increase by 1% year over year. Instead, it has been on a downward slope largely due to the effect of energy conservation and demand resources and has decreased by 1% year over year. Indeed, according to the most recent ISO report of MA net energy load, Massachusetts load has declined to the same level as it was in 2002 and appears to be trending downwards.*

*To proactively address these deficiencies and the growing customer demands on the electric system, Eversource is implementing a series of transmission projects called the “Greater Boston and Southern New Hampshire Solution.” Again, this project is being proposed for a need that has not materialized (see previous point). Eversource claims they are being PROACTIVE, when in reality, they are simply stuck in an outdated plan based on a forecast that was made 8 years ago and which their corporation is too big to allow them to pivot based on current data.*

*One of the selected projects to solve the identified system reliability problems is a new 115-kV power line between existing substations in Sudbury and Hudson...Eversource fails to mention that one of the projects up for selection at the time these projects were bid was a proposal by National Grid which solved the “reliability problem” **by simply upgrading current infrastructure and required no new transmission lines.** That proposal was not the lowest cost at the time so it was not chosen by ISO-NE. Although cost estimates have changed since the National Grid project was evaluated, ISO-NE has so far refused to revisit the Grid project as an alternative.*

### **SLIDE 3: Review of Project Need and Benefits Project Need**

*The proposed 115-kV transmission line between Sudbury and Hudson will provide a new transmission path to supplement the existing system and address identified thermal and voltage problems in the area....ISO-NE has determined that certain contingency events, e.g., loss of line, piece of equipment, would result in voltage collapse and loss of nearly 550MW of "load" in the local area, resulting in the loss of power to customers in Berlin, Grafton, Hudson, Millbury, Marlborough, Northborough, Shrewsbury, Stow, Southborough, and Westborough, MA*

ISO-NE's assumptions are based upon unrealistic assumptions of load loss. Despite ISO studies that show thermal and voltage issues in the Sudbury/Marlboro areas, we have never experienced an outage or load loss as a result.

*Other Benefits.* Well this is optimistic! Since they haven't yet offered Sudbury any benefits yet.

*In aggregate, the GB-NH Solution is expected to save Greater Boston/Metro West and surrounding area consumers hundreds of millions of dollars per year in congestion costs.*

This is a misleading claim. According to the ISO NE, New England has historically had low and infrequent congestion costs. "Congestion" is the incremental cost associated with trying to get power through a transmission constrained area. That is - when the cheapest source of power cannot be transmitted due to physical limitations on transmission lines, it is necessary to find another source of power from the next least cost resource that can successfully get around the transmission constraint and satisfy the load (likely from another direction). The difference in cost between the least cost resource and the next least cost resource (that was used to avoid the transmission constrained area) is "congestion." Looking at the ISO NE Market Report for 2015 found here: (see p. 90-91) The Report says:

"Total day-ahead and real-time congestion revenue in 2015 was \$31.2 million. Day-ahead congestion revenue is much higher than real-time congestion revenue because approximately 98% of the energy transacted in New England is settled in the day-ahead market...As mentioned previously, congestion is relatively infrequent in New England. Day-ahead and real-time congestion revenue was only approximately 0.53% of the total cost of energy during 2015. This was only slightly higher than the average over the previous five years, 0.46%."

*The Project will also create economic benefit in the area during construction: direct (construction jobs) and indirect (hotels, restaurants, etc.) and produce significant new property tax revenue for the municipalities in which the new facilities are located.* Will the Eversource construction crews be staying at the Arabian Horse Inn or the Wayside Inn? No. This project brings only harm to our community. It will not produce tax revenue - it will decrease our property values, once thousands of homes are worth less than they used to be, and this is our tax base. Our economy will suffer. It does not bring economic benefit - it is a high voltage transmission line hovering over our town for miles. It degrades the beauty and character of Sudbury, devastates our conservation areas and threatens our drinking water.

#### **SLIDE 4: Summary of Community Outreach Activities to Date**

*Since the start of community outreach in November 2015, Eversource has...sought input and feedback on the ... routes/designs through meetings with municipal officials, public Board of Selectmen meetings, and public open houses (two regional open houses held in March 2016). The ONLY reason Eversource came to Sudbury to speak to our community in March of 2016 is because Bob Haarde, member of the BOS, told them they needed to when it was clear that Eversource had no intention of holding an open house in Sudbury. You can see this exchange on Sudbury TV's recording of the February 2, 2016 Board of Selectmen's meeting. Beverly Schultz explains, "we are not going to do an open house in Sudbury." Later in the meeting, Bob Haarde circles back saying "...with 4.3 out of 8.9 miles in Sudbury, it might make sense to do an open house here in Sudbury as well." After a long pause, Beverly Schultz hides behind "I'll go back to management." They did, we had our open house, and here we are now.*

*We received helpful feedback from the communities, listened to their comments and concerns, and took that feedback into account as we further refined and re-evaluated our route and design options. From February to now, there is no significant change to the route design nor options. Eversource did not listen to anyone. Their plan is to forge ahead with a project that the community does not want, that environmental agencies say is alarming for the damage it will cause, and our water department says is a very real threat to our water supply.*

#### **SLIDE 5: Routing and Design Re-Evaluation Process**

*The routing and design re-evaluations were performed using established guidelines to identify a comprehensive set of feasible routes between the Sudbury and Hudson substations. Public input has been considered and incorporated, where feasible, into the analysis. This is laughable. Public input was neither considered nor incorporated, as we see the same routes offered as the preferred and alternative routes. Current data which calls into question the very need for this project was not even considered. Nor were the cries of alarm from a dozen environmental agencies and letters of opposition from our elected officials at every level. Eversource is deaf to the public outcry and professional and expert opinion that agree this project is a bad idea.*

*To date, the Company has considered a total of 30 project options (including design options) along 22 different routes. These include routing options which have been suggested by the public. Ask Eversource about these routes, and which ones they say "the Public" recommended. Ask Eversource about their response to the Sudbury Community's offer of at least 5 alternate routes and the offer to start a dialog about those routes?*

*All potential routes were screened and obviously flawed routes were eliminated from further consideration. **Obviously flawed** routes would include routes such as the one they currently propose which goes through conservation land, threatens wildlife and protected species of plants and animals, and routes that threaten contamination of our sole source of drinking water for our 18,000 residents. These are obvious flaws, so why is this project still on the table?*

*The remaining candidate routes were re-evaluated by applying detailed reliability benefits, environmental, constructability, operational flexibility, social (community) impact, and cost estimate criteria. This is disingenuous as the real cost of the project was never considered. Environmental factors and social impacts were ignored, including harm to sensitive areas, potential loss of potable water, industrialization of town character, lower property values, damage to our tax base and therefore our town services and school budgets. These should rank very high as costs suffered to our community.*

*Eversource used this re-evaluation to select a Preferred Route with two potential designs, and a geographically distinct alternative in-street route as requested by some communities and municipal officials. It was in fact a Sudbury resident, Bill Schineller, who exposed that Eversource attempted to offer only two routes, one above and below the MBTA rail bed. Bill rightly called them out on the fact that they had not offered the town a “geographically diverse route” so they were forced to go back and re-evaluate. Eversource did not re-evaluate anything. They were caught red-handed and were forced to do what they were required to do by law.*

**SLIDES 6 & 7: Routing and Design Re-Evaluation Results; Routing and Design in**

**Sudbury:** *These two slides are intended to make you think that the ONLY non-MBTA route that works is the longest under street route which is false. The fact is that Eversource has discarded many routes based on “obvious flaws” but won’t reveal what those flaws were and won’t share its scoring methodology.*

**SLIDE 8: Routing and Design Re-Evaluation Results, cont.**

*The weighting on this scoring system is misleading at best. Social impact of under street options is weighted the same as social impact of overhead MBTA right of way option - that’s outrageous! Short term temporary construction impact is not even close to comparable to having permanent 100 foot monopoles, high voltage wires, and a 12 foot gravel road plowed through back yards and conservation lands. And how environmental impact of overhead option gets half a circle - that’s just laughable. Did we mention the multiple highly regarded environmental organizations who have gone on record opposing building this project on the MBTA right of way? Eversource wants you to think that their rating makes sense. It does not. It is arbitrary and does not reflect the real cost to our town.*

**SLIDE 9: Proposed Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) Mass Central Rail Trail - Wayside Branch (MCRT-WB)**

*Eversource intends to coordinate with MCRT-WB on the proposed “rail trail” project along the MBTA corridor. Eversource is building a utility corridor for their own use and trying to entice the town into accepting an unneeded project (the reliability need is based on projections from 2008 that have not come to fruition - see above) by dangling the carrot of a rail trail that it doesn’t even intend to build. “Intends to coordinate with MCT-WB” is a long way from building a rail trail. Eversource, you forgot to mention that you won’t rebuild bridges, that your access road is gravel, that your clear cut is at least twice as wide as a rail trail needs. We can plan a rail trail without Eversource’s “coordination” and transmission line.*

*Our intent is to provide a safe, reliable transmission system which preserves the natural environment to the greatest extent practicable, while simultaneously promoting the recreational and educational benefits of the property via the rail trail. The only educational benefit is showing our kids that big corporations can run roughshod over a community despite local conservation and wetlands laws. Our woods are plenty fun recreation as they are now. No thanks to a utility corridor dressed up as something it's not.*

*All cleared areas will be re-seeded with natural grasses/meadow seed mixes appropriate to the particular growing conditions, with the expectation of natural succession to reestablish shrubs and compatible trees. Mechanical equipment will be used in the construction of the Project. No herbicides will be used during Project construction. Whoops, **Eversource you forgot to mention the herbicides you use for vegetation management after construction.** We know you use herbicides to control vegetation along your rights of way - it's in your vegetation management plan for anyone to see. We know that you're a bad neighbor in your spraying habits because we've seen it in your operations on the Cape. We know that your expectation of natural succession is a pipe dream because we've seen the brown out after your herbicide treatment; it's not pretty.*

*In some locations along the MBTA property, there may be specific areas of concern by abutting property owners for safety, security, privacy, or visual impacts. In such locations, Eversource will work with the abutting property owners, MBTA and DCR to implement screening options. Such options may be in "soft" form (i.e., vegetation) or "hard" form (i.e., fencing), or a combination of the two. We can't wait to see the fence that shields the visual impact of the 100 foot monopoles.*

*Utilizing the MBTA property for the Project facilitates the development of the missing link in the regional Mass Central Rail Trail system, from downtown Historic Sudbury to Assabet River Rail Trail in Hudson and the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail (Lowell to Sudbury). Eversource's gravel access road, necessary for construction of the new transmission line, would serve as the foundation for the DCR-managed rail trail. Using the MBTA property for the Project allows Eversource to submit a lowball bid against NGrid which got them awarded the project. It also means needlessly removing 60 acres of forest in sensitive conservation land. It means you no longer enjoy shaded New England forest canopy on your walks or rides in the woods because Eversource is not clearing for a bike path, it's clearing for a utility corridor which is considerably wider and more damaging to the environment.*

#### **SLIDE 10: Sudbury to Hudson Area Bike Trail System**

*This map is misleading; the MCRT in Wayland doesn't already exist – it's "planned." This might seem picky, but it's just the sort of misleading information Eversource relies on. What else have they presented here that's misleading? And it's worth asking "How is Eversource's relationship with the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail folks?"*

### **SLIDE 11: Environmental Permitting**

It may look nice that Eversource intends to talk to all these agencies about environmental permitting. News flash - they are already expressing their thoughts on the devastating effects of this project on Sudbury's environment. In March, Sudbury's Conservation Commission wrote to Eversource, saying *"We believe that the preferred alternative within the MBTA rail line property is a significantly flawed alternative regardless of whether or not the transmission line is above or below ground."* So did Sudbury's Historic Districts Commission: *"The proposed route would irreparably damage or destroy protected and unprotected historic Sudbury."*

As for the other Environmental Agencies listed, they will be reviewing the project in the shadow of opposition from **Sudbury Valley Trustees**, the **Sudbury Water District**, the **US Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service**, the **Friends of the Assabet River Wildlife Refuge**, **OARS** for the Assabet, Sudbury, and Concord Rivers, the **Mass Audubon Society**, and the **Massachusetts Sierra Club**. But what do they know? You can find all these letters in full on Protect Sudbury's website at <http://www.protectsudbury.org/official-support/>

So here's a question for Eversource: Assuming no agency outright denies a permit, **are there any conditions that would convince Eversource that building this new transmission line through wetlands, conservation land, water supply, rare species habitats, is a BAD IDEA?**

### **SLIDE 12: Alternative Route In-Street Construction Process**

Where are the pictures of the preferred route down the MBTA right of way? Where are the pictures of the tree cutting, the wetlands destruction, the trenching, the railbed removal, the filling for the MBTA Right of Way option, *their preferred route option*. Eversource is deliberately misleading by presenting alarming photos of temporary construction disruption on the streets, but not addressing the permanent destruction and their preferred route will have on our neighborhoods and environment. What they should show is pictures of the transmission corridor clearing and their wholesale removal of trees and other vegetation in a swath 82 feet wide along the entire right of way. These photos below are from Eversource's own site of their Northern Pass Project.



Transmission Corridor Clearing



Structure Foundation Installation

### **SLIDE 13: Managing Impacts During Construction**

Where are the pictures of managing the impact of cutting down 27,000 trees, digging up people's back yards, working with large construction equipment in wetlands. Where are the pictures of managing fill to make the construction work on the steep rail banks and managing run off into our wetlands and managing the disruption to the lives of the residents whose houses are right along the railbed?

### **SLIDE 14: Eversource's Next Steps**

*Eversource is seeking feedback from stakeholders on the proposed Project's re-evaluated routing and design options, and integrate that feedback where technically feasible and practicable into our siting Petition to be filed with the EFSB in Q4, 2016. Eversource says it is seeking feedback from stakeholders. Now is the time to make your voice heard. "Integrate feedback where technically feasible and practicable" sure sounds like code for "we'll do what we were planning anyway, but we need to be seen to be listening."*

*Continue discussions with Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) on alignment of our respective trail efforts. "Our respective trail efforts" is a bit rich - since they aren't building a trail, they are building a 12 foot gravel utility construction and maintenance access road for their own vehicles.*

*Begin discussions with the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA), DCR and municipal officials, and then engage abutting property owners on the development of a landscaping plan proposal for the MBTA property. No amount of landscaping in the world is going to shield a 100 foot monopole and high voltage wires in your backyard.*

**SLIDE 15: Project Schedule:** It's up to us to make sure this never comes to fruition!

### **SLIDE 16: Proactive Municipal and Community Outreach Throughout Project Duration**

Eversource says it intends to be proactive, so that's exactly what we need to do. Reach out! Call the hotline, email them. Better yet, continue emailing our Board of Selectmen and your state and federal elected officials to let them know of your opposition to this project.

If you're pro-rail trail, don't be fooled by Eversource's false promises. Get involved with your local rail trail group and make sure to let them know that you want a beautiful Sudbury-designed bike path, not a utility corridor where someone, sometime, might slap down a bit of pavement underneath some 115 kilovolt high voltage transmission lines.

