



April 18, 2017

Andrew Greene, Director
Energy Facilities Siting Board
One South Station
Boston, MA 02110

Re: NSTAR Electric Company d/b/a Eversource Energy, EFSB 17-02

Dear Mr. Greene:

This letter is sent in support of NSTAR Electric Company d/b/a Eversource Energy's ("Eversource") proposal to construct, operate and maintain an approximately 9-mile, 115-kV underground transmission line (the "New Line"), 7.6 miles of which will be located on an inactive Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority ("MBTA") railroad property passing through the municipalities of Sudbury, Hudson, Stow and Marlborough. The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) understands that, while Eversource has proposed constructing the New Line underground, Eversource was required to, and did, identify and evaluate alternative routes, including the construction of an overhead transmission line along the same MBTA corridor.

The DCR fully supports Eversource's construction of the New Line *underground* because it will best facilitate DCR's plans to develop a multi-use rail trail along that portion of the MBTA property. In 2010, DCR obtained a lease from the MBTA along 23 miles of the MBTA's corridor to develop the Mass Central Rail Trail ("MCRT") through the Towns of Sudbury, Wayland, Weston and Waltham. It is DCR's understanding that Eversource holds an existing easement and will obtain other rights from the MBTA to allow for the underground construction of the New Line and project-related work along a portion of the same corridor. To that end, DCR and Eversource are engaged in conversations about partnering for the development of the rail trail in this overlapping area.

DCR understands the electric need for the New Line. Importantly, though, DCR understands and appreciates the benefits to the public that will be realized if the New Line is constructed underground along the MBTA corridor. The development of a multi-use rail trail in this area will provide the missing link in the regional MCRT, from downtown Sudbury, past New England farmland and forests, to the Assabet River Rail Trail in Hudson, and the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail (Lowell to Sudbury). This rail trail is a unique opportunity to provide public open space, promote regional connectivity and local commerce, encourage outdoor recreation and the health benefits derived therefrom, and inspire environmental and historic appreciation.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS · EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

Department of Conservation and Recreation
251 Causeway Street, Suite 600
Boston MA 02114-2119
617-626-1250 617-626-1351 Fax
www.mass.gov/dcr



Charles D. Baker
Governor

Karyn E. Polito
Lt. Governor

Matthew A. Beaton, Secretary, Executive
Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs

Leo P. Roy, Commissioner
Department of Conservation & Recreation

We have been working cooperatively with Eversource and expect to soon finalize a Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU"), pursuant to which Eversource will construct the gravel base of the MCRT in conjunction with the construction of the New Line. The base will conform to DCR standards for construction of a rail trail. The underground construction will also require Eversource to reinforce bridges along the corridor, which will further support the development of the rail trail. Coupling construction of the New Line with a portion of the MCRT in this manner will result in a substantial cost savings to the Commonwealth.

DCR is excited to partner with Eversource to allow for the construction of the MCRT and public multi-use by pedestrians and non-motorized bicycles. For this reason, DCR expresses support for the Energy Facilities Siting Board's approval of the underground construction of the New Line along the MBTA corridor.

We are confident that DCR and Eversource will finalize a MOU as described above and that Eversource will continue to work cooperatively with DCR and other stakeholders throughout the permitting and construction of the project.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Very truly yours,



Leo P. Roy
Commissioner

cc: Janelle Chan, MBTA Manager of Real Estate