



## Town of Stow Conservation Commission

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June 7, 2007

Secretary Matthew A. Beaton  
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs  
Attn MEPA Office  
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900  
Cambridge, MA 02114

Stephen August Esq.  
Energy Facilities Siting Board  
One South Station  
Boston MA 02100

RE: Sudbury-Hudson Transmission Reliability Project/Eversource

Dear Sirs:

On behalf of the Stow Conservation Commission I want to thank you for the opportunity to submit comments regarding the proposed Sudbury-Hudson Transmission Reliability Project proposed by Eversource. The Commission voted unanimously at its meeting of June 6, 2017 to submit these comments both to MEPA and to the Energy Facility Siting Board (EFSB).

The proposed project will enhance the reliability of service to the Hudson Light and Power plant which serves the Towns of Stow and Hudson, and is anticipated to result in electricity cost reductions for residents. We have met with Eversource on a number of occasions as they have evaluated alternatives, and throughout that process have urged them to select a preferred alternative that would place the transmission lines underground within the MBTA right of way, rather than overhead or in roads. We are pleased that the Preferred Alternative that has been selected and proposed by Eversource in their filings with MEPA and the EFSB would bury the proposed transmission line within the MBTA Right of Way in a manner that offers the opportunity to advance the proposed Mass Central Rail Trail. This approach also reduces the visual and environmental impact of the project by reducing the amount of clearing that would need to occur relative to overhead lines and eliminating the need for tall transmission line towers.

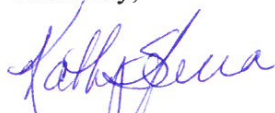
The Town of Stow recently completed an updated Open Space and Recreation Plan in 2016. One of the top recommendations of this plan is to increase the availability of opportunities for recreational walking and bicycling for Stow residents and visitors, a need that was identified in a townwide survey of residents. Even though only a small portion of this project and the rail trail would be located within the boundaries of the Town of Stow, the opportunity to connect with and benefit from this regional recreational resource is significant. In addition, the proposed rail trail would bring the towns in the region a step closer to linking with the Assabet River Rail Trail, now under construction in Maynard and

Acton. We believe that the underground option is far more compatible with this recreational use than an overhead transmission line as it will allow more shading of the corridor as a result of the narrower required width that would need to be cleared.

The proposed project will be subject to review by the Stow Conservation Commission, which will evaluate compliance with the Wetlands Protection Act and the Town of Stow Wetlands Bylaw. We note that no direct alteration of wetlands is proposed to occur in Stow (with the exception of a small amount of riverfront area alteration) nor will any direct or indirect impacts occur to protected Open Space/Article 97 lands in the Town of Stow. We are confident that we will be able to work with Eversource to review any wetlands issues and issue an Order of Conditions for this project.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on this project.

Sincerely,



Kathy Sferra  
Conservation Coordinator  
For the Stow Conservation Commission

Cc: Rep. Kate Hogan  
Sen. Jamie Eldridge  
Stow Board of Selectmen  
Stow Planning Board

**The Town of Sudbury, Protect Sudbury, many local, state and federal public officials and environmental organizations have expressed their concern with the impact of trenching for an underground utility line. We are disappointed that Stow Con Com is not more informed on the full environmental impact of any utility line on the Right of Way**