

SUDBURY, MASSACHUSETTS 1970 TOWN REPORT



“A WISE OLD TOWN”

POWER AND LIGHT COMMITTEE

Sudbury citizens can take immense pride in the final results of a ten year long struggle to prevent Boston Edison from constructing a overhead transmission line through the Sudbury River Valley. This line has been totally and permanently abandoned, a line whose construction would have ruined the beauty of this lovely valley forever. Townspeople have maintained an interest in opposing this overhead construction, both financially and otherwise, since the line was originally proposed in 1960, and this committee is glad to report the success of these efforts.

Expressed several times over the past years has been the willingness of the town to assist the Edison Co. in putting this line underground through the streets of the town. We are delighted to report that this fall Edison announced plans to install two 115 KV transmission lines along our public ways. This line will run from the Sudbury sub-station to a new sub-station to be built in Maynard, some 6.7 miles. We urge town officials and boards to work closely and cooperatively with the utility company.

The Power and Light Committee's primary objective has been to prevent the construction of the overhead transmission lines on 90 foot wooden H-frames through the Sudbury River Valley and the Sudbury countryside, but a further concern has been with Edison's plan to construct another transmission line on its existing right of way from Medway to its sub-station in South Sudbury. Of great interest was the fact that in the end these two issues were resolved at the same time.

This Medway high tension line was to be carried on steel towers up to 160 feet high. The Selectmen and the Power and Light Committee recognized that this line was needed to take care of the growing demand for power throughout Edison's territory, but were strongly opposed to those steel towers rising far above the wooden H-frames carrying the existing transmission lines. The Committee and the Selectmen, with the coopera-

tion of the Selectmen of Wayland, Framingham and Sherborn, advocated the undergrounding of the proposed line at hearings before the Department of Public Utilities and the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts. However, it became evident that because of lack of technical research undergrounding such a long high voltage line is impractical at this time.

At this point efforts of the four towns had to be directed toward getting an agreement for an overhead line constructed in the least objectionable manner.

An agreement was reached between Edison and the four towns which provides, among other things, that Edison will construct a single circuit 230 KV line from the Framingham-Natick town line to the Sudbury sub-station erected on wooden H-frames similar to those presently located on the right of way (except on steel towers at the crossings of Landham Brook and the Sudbury River) which H-frames shall be kept at heights as low as reasonably possible. It was also agreed that the Company will cooperate with the tree wardens of the four towns in screening the lines at street crossings and will undertake a three year program of removal, relocation or other changes of some of the 13.8 KV lines presently located on the right of way which will lessen aesthetic objections to the use of part of the way. Most important to Sudbury residents, Edison agreed not to construct the transmission facilities known as the Sudbury Valley line. We don't have to be ugly!

It is expected that the future activities of the Power and Light Committee will include cooperation with other towns to obtain legislation to prevent the proliferation of overhead transmission lines particularly across conservation land, to obtain the undergrounding of existing distribution lines, particularly around the Common, and in general to see that future Edison construction in Sudbury shall be as unobjectionable as possible.

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