

Advisory Task Forces...

The rest of the story...

... from Legalectric.org

There's something about a Citizen Advisory Task Force, and "that something" is that when people are "forced" to sit down and actually read a utility application for significant utility infrastructure, be it nuclear waste storage, transmission line, coal gasification plant or nuclear waste storage once again, they, and WE in the cosmic sense, all learn something.

- Task Forces have a way of recognizing the inconsistencies in an application, factual errors (remember "Lake Pepin was formed by Lock and Damn #3" from the Goodhue Co. Alternate Site application?) and "on the ground" information that only those in the community would know.
- Task Forces have a way of coming up with system and site/route alternatives to meet the need claimed by a utility in ways that they hadn't brought forth (didn't discover or don't want discovered).
- Task Forces have a way of finding a better way, or two, or three.
- Task Forces have a way of taking a disparate and diverse group of public officials and NGO representatives and citizens and jelling them into cohesive, informed and thoughtful questioners and advocates.

FYI - There are two task forces because NoCapX 2020 and U-CAN petitioned the PUC.

We are hoping that you will take the work of the Task Force seriously and put the time in. It's a lot of work and there's only a short time to do it!

The work of the Task Force is to review the application, suggest issues to be covered in the EIS (scoping) and to suggest alternate routes. Minn. R. 7850.2400.

NoCapX 2020 and U-CAN ask that if you suggest alternate routes, that you make the effort to contact the landowners and residents along your proposed alternative route and provide notice that their land is being considered — it's the right thing to do.

There's a wide range of issues here — the criteria for routing in the statute and rules are attached.

Suggestions for the scope of environmental review should encompass all that you can think of regarding these issues.

As you can see, there's a lot to cover.

For some background on "Citizen Advisory Task Forces through time" including CATF reports, go to legalelectric.org/weblog/2436/

To view the official PUC dockets, go to www.puc.state.mn.us and then "Search eDockets" and search for:

09-1448 for the Hampton-Alma routing
08-1474 for the Brookings-Hampton routing
09- 246 for the St. Cloud-Monticello routing
09-1056 for the Fargo-St. Cloud routing

06-1115 for the CapX Certificate of Need

For the rest of the story on CapX 2020:

www.nocapx2020.info

No CapX 2020 and United Citizens Action Network are represented by Carol A. Overland in the CapX 2020 Certificate of Need and appeal of CoN, the Brookings-Hampton route and the Hampton to Alma route. Overland has been working on nuclear waste, transmission, coal gasification and other energy infrastructure issues since 1995.

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216E.03 DESIGNATING SITES AND ROUTES.

Subd. 7. Considerations in designating sites and routes.

(a) The commission's site and route permit determinations must be guided by the state's goals to conserve resources, minimize environmental impacts, minimize human settlement and other land use conflicts, and ensure the state's electric energy security through efficient, cost-effective power supply and electric transmission infrastructure.

(b) To facilitate the study, research, evaluation, and designation of sites and routes, the commission shall be guided by, but not limited to, the following considerations:

(1) evaluation of research and investigations relating to the effects on land, water and air resources of large electric power generating plants and high-voltage transmission lines and the effects of water and air discharges and electric and magnetic fields resulting from such facilities on public health and welfare, vegetation, animals, materials and aesthetic values, including baseline studies, predictive modeling, and evaluation of new or improved methods for minimizing adverse impacts of water and air discharges and other matters pertaining to the effects of power plants on the water and air environment;

(2) environmental evaluation of sites and routes proposed for future development and expansion and their relationship to the land, water, air and human resources of the state;

(3) evaluation of the effects of new electric power generation and transmission technologies and systems related to power plants designed to minimize adverse environmental effects;

(4) evaluation of the potential for beneficial uses of waste energy from proposed large electric power generating plants;

(5) analysis of the direct and indirect economic impact of proposed sites and routes including, but not limited to, productive agricultural land lost or impaired;

(6) evaluation of adverse direct and indirect environmental effects that cannot be avoided should the proposed site and route be accepted;

(7) evaluation of alternatives to the applicant's proposed site or route proposed pursuant to subdivisions 1 and 2;

(8) evaluation of potential routes that would use or parallel existing railroad and highway rights-of-way;

(9) evaluation of governmental survey lines and other natural division lines of agricultural land so as to minimize interference with agricultural operations;

(10) evaluation of the future needs for additional high-voltage transmission lines in the same general area as any proposed route, and the advisability of ordering the construction of structures capable of expansion in transmission capacity through multiple circuiting or design modifications;

(11) evaluation of irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources should the proposed site or route be approved; and

(12) when appropriate, consideration of problems raised by other state and federal agencies and local entities.

(c) If the commission's rules are substantially similar to existing regulations of a federal agency to which the utility in the state is subject, the federal regulations must be applied by the commission.

(d) No site or route shall be designated which violates state agency rules.

7850.4100 FACTORS CONSIDERED.

In determining whether to issue a permit for a large electric power generating plant or a high voltage transmission line, the commission shall consider the following:

- A. effects on human settlement, including, but not limited to, displacement, noise, aesthetics, cultural values, recreation, and public services;
- B. effects on public health and safety;
- C. effects on land-based economies, including, but not limited to, agriculture, forestry, tourism, and mining;
- D. effects on archaeological and historic resources;
- E. effects on the natural environment, including effects on air and water quality resources and flora and fauna;
- F. effects on rare and unique natural resources;
- G. application of design options that maximize energy efficiencies, mitigate adverse environmental effects, and could accommodate expansion of transmission or generating capacity;
- H. use or paralleling of existing rights-of-way, survey lines, natural division lines, and agricultural field boundaries;
- I. use of existing large electric power generating plant sites;
- J. use of existing transportation, pipeline, and electrical transmission systems or rights-of-way;
- K. electrical system reliability;
- L. costs of constructing, operating, and maintaining the facility which are dependent on design and route;
- M. adverse human and natural environmental effects which cannot be avoided; and
- N. irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources.