

Albion Transmission Line Committee

Date: 8/17/2023

Time: 6:00 pm

Meeting called to order: 6:10 pm

Members present:

Paul Flynn
Tom Bolen
Lance Stewart

Support Group (non-Members) present:

Holly Noyes
Lincoln Sennett
Erin Wade from Palermo

Guests:

Jamie Huntsburger from Unity
Mark Gussey from Dixmont
Erin Wade from Palermo

Board Members absent:

Charlie Hall
Jon Shaw
Tracy Tuttle

Meeting Requirements:

This committee has been sanctioned by the Town of Albion select board. This committee will be using Robert's rules of order. This is an open meeting to the public and as such is subject to FOIA.

Goals and Objectives for the Committee:

- Work as a team to push back against/stop implementation of new transmission within the town of Albion.
- Work with other towns regionally impacted by the proposed transmission line to achieve the same.
- Work with the Town of Albion to put in place an ordinance which will mitigate the ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) impact of any transmission/utility corridors within the Town of Albion.
- Increase public awareness of the line and its potential impacts: Health, Environment, Land values, other alternatives to the proposed new line.

Formalization of meeting requirements now that we are a sanctioned committee of the town:

- Condensed Robert's Rules of Order
- Open meetings, publicized and open to the public with minutes/records.
- Updates to the Albion Select Board monthly
- Files Archive: use of google docs, drive. Align into a shared environment.

Sub Group Discussion:

- Community engagement (local and regional), marketing, landowner outreach, moratorium, etc. (Charlie and Holly)
- Environmental impacts (Lincoln)
- Alternatives to transmission line; Existing corridors, storage, etc (Tom and Lance)
- Town Selectmen updates, legal, planning board, etc (Paul, others and other town discussions).

Old Business

- Progress to Date:
 - Moratorium: Paul met with an attorney on 7/31 and discussed the moratorium.
 - Attorney drafted an ordinance, presented it to the Selectman and they approved. Paul reports that this will go to vote at a special town meeting on 8/28/23, "The Town of Albion is voting on a 6 month moratorium on all construction projects. The selectboard can extend another 6 months if they feel necessary. It can be extended another 6 months if they prove to LS power that there is work being done on the ordinance."
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Mark Gussey asked about the purpose behind moratorium effectiveness regarding a potential 1.5 year delay on a 5-6 year build project.

Tom: "it proves the town has performed it's due diligence"

Paul: "it provides the town the time to organize thoughtful and responsible/reasonable protection.

- Planning Board- Utility Corridor Ordinance -Tom met with the planning board to discuss the need.
- Tom and Kevin Morseley will move forward with the town attorney on this.

Holly reports that Andrew Ballantyne from Windsor has drafted an ordinance and will share that with various towns. Holly will forward that when she receives it.

Jamie reports that he is working on language to embrace a 700' setback rather than a 300' setback for Unity.

- PUC Preparation:
 - Tom met with a former member of the PUC to discuss the requirements.
 - LSPower is currently not on the docket for presentation.
 - LSPower needs to go through permitting processes. With their proposal of cutting new corridors it's doubtful that they will be on the docket soon.
 - Former member suggests we apply to become a "late intervener" which if accepted by PUC will allow us to gather data that the general public doesn't have access to.

Tom: Background information regarding inner workings of the PUC: some info is public and some is non public. If we can find an agent/entity someone to apply for and acquire have late intervener status we can have access to their non-public data to build our case. Requirements for applying as a late intervener- submit background and include history [financial statement/]. Tom shares that this should be done soon if we are going to do it.

- What is required to present to the PUC?

- Witness/ testimony discussion

Tom reports that LSPower will seek CCPN action from the PUC. CCPN will allow LSP to become a power company in the state of Maine which allows their ability to enact eminent domain.

Paul spoke to Aroostook county not being on a US power grid. Their power comes from Canada. This opens up the Canadian grid to come down through Maine.

Lance questions if we have an ability to walk back a bid for LSPower with MEPCO.

Jamie: an intervener would be from the town of Albion or no? Tom states that would require further discussion and whoever is chosen would need to be able to budget their time to that.

Paul reports that the Morning Sentinel called and asked regarding the 8/28 special town meeting.

Tom on LSP Term Sheets:

- *Base Option: Double circuit line from Keene road to the new substation in Pittsfield. At that point they would be on ISO grid*
- *Base and N Segment option: They were going to build out to another wind farm.*
- *Base and S segment option: Build additional two single circuit lines to Coopers Mills and to Yankee in Wiscasset.*

Tom's thoughts- push LSPower back to base option from Keene road to Pittsfield. At that point if they need to connect to Yankee they can follow existing corridors and can work with Mepco to use their lines.

The Mepco proposal did not appear to cut new corridors - a late intervener could gather that information.

Tom: PUC doesn't take scenic view sheds or heritage lands into consideration. They will rule on the term sheets and legalities and not on the emotional needs/concerns.

It appears LSP and Mepco couldn't negotiate an agreement for use of current infrastructure. Interveners once accepted can gain access to better understand the details.

Mark: "Any thoughts regarding actions to delay the CCPN (final certificate that once issued gives them power access)

1. Intervener status would gain us access to ALL documents for discovery.
2. As LSP gets on docket for the CCPN there will be time for open public comment on their site. PUC will look at that commentary from a legal standpoint. Holly comments that PUC has to listen to all people that would like to make public comments and that is an important avenue along with a legal avenue. She also comments that LSP has to show public support.
3. LSP has to secure all the permits and every step produces one more hurdle.

Background: The PUC is appointed by the governor. There are 3 members, two are lawyers and 1 other that Tom cannot recall. They serve six year terms. These are people that have working knowledge of the industry.

Lincoln: Questions LSP ability to take Mepco line by eminent domain.

LIncoln: Companies that are supporting this did so on the guise that they were using eminent domain - if we created outreach to those groups would they change their minds.

Lance brings up groups such as Nature Conservancy and Audubon society as backing this project and questions whether it is worthwhile to go back to them. Mark brings up some recent conversations/text with Jason Nivens and that LSP is meeting with these organizations. He proposes that outreach with actual proposals and further education may be an avenue that gains some traction with these organizations.

Mark also brings up some outreach to his local farm market clientele to educate them on what is happening in our rural areas versus their more urban areas.

Perhaps a pamphlet or brochure to have at the ready would be of assistance.

New Business:

- Regionalization of message and partner towns
 - Western and Eastern routes engagement - need more research into the Western routes.

- PUC
 - Late Intervener discussion

- Charlie called John LaFontaine (Senator)- originally had voted for the project and wants to speak to the group on 8/29.
- Tom reports on a Minnesota Statute for an eminent domain case which allows the utility company to purchase the piece of property that they need or to purchase the entire property using pre and post project appraisals.
- Paul comments that the drop in PV is 40% near utility lines.

Next steps:

1. Discussion regarding Intervener
2. John LaFontaine wants to meet with the group on 8/29.
3. Open Letter to other towns:
 - Lance is drafting an open letter to the select boards of other towns to improve and/or create engagement from other towns regarding this committee here in Albion. A bullet point list of what the committee's goals are to share and begin networking across towns.

4. Rally in Augusta

Holly will write up an agenda or template to organize a rally and highlights a rally's ability to show opposition, to potentially ask LSPower go to back to the drawing board due to lack of public support, raise public awareness and gain critical mass. Holly requests the group think of specific people, legislators, key landowners, etc. and let Holly know who they are that we can reach out to.

Next Meeting date and time: 8/24/2023 at 6 pm 8/31/2023 at 6 pm. Special town meeting on 6/28. September meetings will move to Tuesdays.

Time of adjournment: 8:28 pm