

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS

PROPONENT: Manitoba Hydro
PROPOSAL NAME: St. Vital - TCPL (Ile Des Chenes)
115 kV Transmission Line
CLASS OF DEVELOPMENT: 2
TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT: Transmission
CLIENT FILE NO.: 4212.00

OVERVIEW:

The Proposal was dated and received on October 22, 1996. The advertisement of the Proposal read as follows:

"A Proposal has been filed by Manitoba Hydro to construct and operate the St. Vital - TCPL 115 kV Transmission Line. This facility is required in order to serve the electrical load requested by TransCanada Pipelines to run two new electrical drive motors in their Ile des Chenes compressor station. The proposed 115 kV transmission line will be routed on a combination of existing Manitoba Hydro rights-of-way, between St. Vital Station and a take off point from an existing 115kV transmission line which is located a distance of 4.4 km. (2.7 mi.) to the north of TCPL's Ile des Chene compressor station. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) has been prepared by D.S. Lea Consultants Ltd. and filed by Manitoba Hydro in support of the proposal. The project's in-service date is mid-August 1997."

The Proposal was advertised in the Winnipeg Free Press on October 26, 1996 and in the Steinbach Carillon on October 30, 1996. It was placed in the Main Registry, the Manitoba Eco-Network, the Centennial Public Library, and the Steinbach Public Library. It was also distributed to the "Transportation" TAC members for comment by November 12, 1996.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:

Mr. Guy Hogue
Box 133
Ile Des Chenes, MB R0A 0T0

Letter dated November 11, 1996 - forwarded to Environment by Alain J. Hogue, Solicitor, with covering letter dated November 12, 1996.

Mr. Guy Hogue is vehemently opposed to any power lines crossing his property on the basis of the lines posing a serious health and safety hazard and also affecting the resale value of his property. Mr. Alain Hogue requests that a public hearing be held in order

to verbally present and expand on the concerns of his client.

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Patrick and Laura Hogue
Box 611
Ile Des Chenes, MB R0A 0T0

Letter dated October 29, 1996.

Opposed to the project on the basis of aesthetics, health risks, property values, noise. They request that Hydro select an alternate route along PTH #59 or alternatively they would consider a buy out or a relocation.

Noel and Doris Hogue
Box 539
Ile Des Chenes, MB R0A 0T0

Letter dated November 7, 1996

Oppose the preferred route on the basis of health effects from the line to themselves and their children who live on subdivided parcels on the same property. Concerned about the towers restricting the use of large equipment on their land, depreciated property values due to the project and restrictions on future subdivisions on the SW corner of 16-9-4 of their property. Note that a drainage ditch on the half mile line where the line is to be located would be eliminated. Request that an alternate route be chosen along PTH #59 or an underground cable be used.

Eileen Swerdyliak
Swerdyliak Stock Farms
Box 27, Group 125, R.R. #1
Vermette, MB R0G 2W0

Letter dated November 7, 1996 addressed to Wade Munro of Manitoba Hydro and forwarded to Environment by Alain J. Hogue, Solicitor, with covering letter dated November 8, 1996.

Concerns include difficulty in using farm machinery around towers, the potential for accidents with the towers and the lines, electromagnetic effects on themselves and their livestock, depreciated farmland values, subdivision restrictions, loss of productivity, and aesthetics. Suggest that there must be an alternate route with less affects such as PTH #59.

Vincent Swerdyliak

Swerdyliak Stock Farms
Box 27, Group 125, R.R. #1
Vermette, MB. R0G 2W0

Letter dated November 19, 1996 addressed to Alain J. Hogue, Solicitor, and copied to Environment which clarifies that they intend to represent themselves on this matter.

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Alain J. Hogue
Alain J. Hogue & Associates
Place Provencher
194 Provencher
St. Boniface, MB R2H 0G3

Letter dated November 8, 1996. Advise that they are the solicitors for the affected property owners, Patrick and Laura Hogue, Noel and Doris Hogue and Swerdyliak Stock Farms. Forward the objections and written submissions from their clients which are detailed above. Request that public hearings be held to expand on their clients concerns.

COMMENTS FROM THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

Manitoba Natural Resources Note that proposal references the old stream crossing guidelines and should reference the latest version dated May, 1996. Recommend that areas of habitat disturbance be kept to a minimum, particularly where the line crosses the Seine River and its two tributaries. Suggest that consideration be given to protect birds from electrocution along the line.

Disposition:

A recent avian monitoring program undertaken near Oak Hammock Marsh funded by Manitoba Hydro concluded that overall there is very little impact from transmission lines on migratory waterfowl attributable to either electrocution or strikes. As is noted in the EIS this impact is considered to minor due to the relatively limited proximity of the project to waterfowl habitat. In addition, the distance between the conductors on a 115 kV transmission line is sufficient to make mortalities from electrocution very remote. It is therefore recommended that no specific mitigation is required. The remaining comments can be accommodated as a licence conditions

Manitoba Environment - Water Quality Mention that the use of metal towers as indicated in the proposal will minimize the impact on wetlands and streams.

Disposition: The comments can be accommodated as a general condition of the licence by requiring that the proponent construct the development in accordance with the Proposal which documents the proposed environmental management practices.

Manitoba Environment - Winnipeg Region No concerns

Mines Branch No concerns

Historic Resources Request that Manitoba Hydro have its consultant contact the Historic Resources Branch as soon as detailed plans and schedules are available so that two areas of concern to the Historic Branch, namely the crossing of the Seine River in NW 21-9-4- EPM and the crossing of a tributary of the Seine in 1/2 21-9-4 EPM may be inspected in advance at those locations. Note that anyone conducting the assessment is required to obtain a Heritage Permit authorizing the assessment. A written report summarizing the assessment and identifying any finds is a condition of the permit.

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Disposition: The requirement to have a heritage impact assessment carried out at the two locations identified can be included as a condition of the Environment Act Licence.

Mines Branch No concerns.

Rural Development No concerns

Highways Comment that the level of detail in the EIS does not allow conclusive assessment of the following areas:

- tower locations south of the floodway where PTH 59S is proposed to be relocated to the east towards the proposed transmission line;
- where the proposed line crosses the Perimeter Highway (PTH 100);
- where the proposed line crosses Prairie Grove Road (existing and proposed relocation) on the south side of the floodway;
- where the proposed line crosses and parallels PR 405 (Van Gorp Road)

In addition, the Highways preference would be to site towers 30-50 meters away from existing ROW on PR 405 in order to accommodate any required upgrading of PR 405 when the PTH 59S improvements are undertaken. Request that Hydro contact L.R. Vigusson, Highways Regional Technical Engineer in Steinbach and D. McRitchie, Highways Senior Detailed Design Engineer in Winnipeg to ensure that efficient coordination of both projects is undertaken.

Disposition: Highways comments relate to engineering and design considerations of the proposal within existing Hydro and Highways rights-of-way and therefore fall outside the scope of the Environment Act review of the Proposal. Environmental Approvals have advised Hydro of these comments and have requested Hydro to pursue this matter directly with Highways.

Agriculture Note that the preferred route along the half mile line generally causes concerns relative to crop tillage operations. However, this impact would be minimized in many situations where field splits occur along the half mile line, particularly where an in-field routing along a mile line occurs. Based on this consideration, the compensation provided to affected landowners, and the proposed mitigative measures near residences and involving shelterbelts, the proposed routing appears to be an acceptable option which minimizes impacts relative to other routing alternatives.

Canadian Environmental Assessment and Review Agency Based on responses received on the proposal from federal reviewing departments, an application under the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act will not be required.

PUBLIC HEARING

A public hearing is not recommended for this project on the basis of the minimal environmental impact associated with the preferred route as documented in the Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposal and the commitment and ongoing effort by the proponent to resolve the concerns raised by the affected landowners. It is recommended that the affected landowners be notified of the decision not to recommend a public hearing for the reason stated and to advise them that this decision can be appealed to the Minister of Environment within 30 days.

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CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION:

The Director of Environmental approvals wrote to all intervenors on November 20, 1996, advising them that on the basis of the minimal environmental impact associated with the preferred route as documented in the EIS and the ongoing commitment and effort by Manitoba Hydro to resolve the concerns raised by the affected landowners, public hearings on the Proposal will not be recommended. At the same time the intervenors were advised that the decision not to recommend public hearings is appealable to the Minister of Environment within 30 days under section 11(10) of The Environment Act.

Mr. Alain J. Hogue, Solicitor, filed a letter of appeal, on behalf of his clients Patrick and Laura Hogue, and Noel and Doris Hogue with the Minister of Environment on December 3, 1996. In support of the appeal Mr. Alain Hogue enclosed copies of his clients previous letters to the Department of Environment which documents their concerns. His clients letters are summarized in the "Comments from the Public" section of this Project Review Summary. No new evidence was presented in support of the appeal.

Options

1. Uphold the Appeal and request a public hearing.

The Department is satisfied that the EIA process and the EIS has met the requirements of The Environment Act. No additional information would be required from Manitoba Hydro prior to scheduling a hearing. Manitoba Hydro has stressed the urgency of adhering to their proposed construction schedule to meet contractual arrangements with TCPL. A delay could result in significant revenue implications for Manitoba Hydro.

2. Dismiss the Appeal and Licence the Proposal as filed by Manitoba Hydro

The Department would adhere to its position that the EIS satisfactorily documents the minimal environmental impact of the preferred route. Dismissing the appeal would allow Manitoba Hydro to maintain its construction schedule and obligations to service TCPL by the proposed in-service date. As a result of the ongoing commitment to resolve the concerns raised by the affected landowners, Manitoba Hydro has, since the Environment Act Proposal was filed and reviewed, recommended minor center line changes in Sections 9 & 16-9-4E to mitigate the impact on the property of one of the appellants.

PREPARED BY:

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November 27, 1996

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