



**Western Massachusetts  
Electric**

The Northeast Utilities System



Greater Springfield  
Reliability Project

June 16, 2008

Mayor Susan R. Dawson  
Agawam Town Hall  
36 Main Street  
Agawam, MA 01001

Mayor Edward J. Gibson  
Town of West Springfield  
26 Central Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor  
West Springfield, MA 01089

Mayor Michael Bissonnette  
Chicopee City Hall  
17 Springfield Street  
Chicopee, MA 01013

Mr. Antonio E. Dos Santos  
Chairman, Board of Selectmen  
Town Hall, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor  
488 Chapin Street  
Ludlow, MA 01056

Mayor Domenic J. Sarno  
City of Springfield  
36 Court Street  
Springfield, MA 01103

Mr. Hal Haberman  
c/o Robin Crosbie  
Longmeadow Town Offices  
20 Williams Street  
Longmeadow, MA 01106

Mr. James Driscoll  
Chairman, Board of Selectmen  
c/o Nick Breault  
Town of East Longmeadow  
60 Center Square  
East Longmeadow, MA 01028

Mr. Richard Green  
Chairman, Board of Selectman  
c/o Pam Courtney  
Town of Hampden  
625 Main Street  
Hampden, MA 01036

Mr. James E. Thompson  
Chairman, Board of Selectmen  
Town of Wilbraham  
240 Springfield Street  
Wilbraham, MA 01095

**Re: Proposal of the Western Massachusetts Electric Company ("WMECO") for the Approval and Construction of the Greater Springfield Reliability Project**

Dear Town Leader:

Recently, representatives of WMECO had the opportunity to meet with many local officials like you to talk about the Commonwealth's future energy needs, and in particular, about the role electric transmission system improvements will play in that future. During your briefing, you heard that WMECO is planning in the near future to seek approval for the construction of Massachusetts portions of the Greater Springfield Reliability Project ("Project"), a New England electric transmission system project, under applicable local and state laws in Massachusetts.

This letter and the attached documents initiate a voluntary process that we are using to help you and your community familiarize yourselves with the Project. By way of background, this process is being modeled after Connecticut's more formal process called a Municipal Consultation Filing, which will apply to the Connecticut segments of the Project. It is our desire to have comparable processes, where appropriate, in the two states for the Project. You are receiving this



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information because 1) the proposed transmission project on WMECO's preferred route passes through portions of the Towns of Agawam, West Springfield, Chicopee, Springfield and Ludlow; or 2) an alternative route for the proposed transmission project passes through the Towns of Agawam, Longmeadow, East Longmeadow, Hampden, Wilbraham and Ludlow.

In addition to informing the community, municipal consultation is designed to help us respond to and better understand questions and comments members of your community may have about the Project. WMECO intends to take public comments into account early in the overall process, making changes, where we can, in the petitions for state and local approvals.

The Project is an indivisible two-state improvement to critical transmission facilities in the greater Springfield and north-central Connecticut areas. As a result, and at approximately the same time that WMECO files a petition for approval of the Massachusetts portion of the Project with the Massachusetts Energy Facilities Siting Board ("EFSB"), WMECO's affiliate, The Connecticut Light and Power Company ("CL&P"), is planning to file an application with the Connecticut Siting Council ("CT Siting Council") for approval of the Connecticut portion of the Project. The proposed Massachusetts facilities consist of a 23-mile, 345-kilovolt (kV) overhead electric transmission line between WMECO's Ludlow, Massachusetts Substation and the Massachusetts/Connecticut border in Agawam, Massachusetts, including a new 345-kV interconnection at WMECO's Agawam Substation. The new line would be built along an existing electric transmission line right-of-way running for 23 miles through Ludlow, Chicopee, West Springfield and Agawam. The right-of-way is presently occupied by one or more 115-kV overhead transmission lines which will be upgraded and re-constructed on new structures as a part of the Project. About four (4) miles of existing 115-kV overhead transmission lines on short branches (or "spurs") from the primary right-of-way, intersecting that right-of-way in Chicopee, Springfield and Ludlow, will also be upgraded as a part of the Project.

The Connecticut portion consists of a new 345-kV electric transmission line between the CL&P North Bloomfield, Connecticut Substation and the Massachusetts/Connecticut border where it will meet the Massachusetts line. The Connecticut portion would also be built along an existing electric transmission line right-of-way for a distance of approximately 12 miles. Like Massachusetts, related improvements to the existing 115-kV transmission system would be needed for approximately two (2) miles of existing transmission line in Manchester, Connecticut.

In both states, certain substations along the route will be re-built or modified as a part of the Project, and in Massachusetts, a new 115-kV switching station will be constructed in Springfield and an existing switching station will be re-built in Chicopee.

The Project is one of four related projects in Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island that are designed to work together in the decade ahead to improve electric transmission service in



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Southern New England. The four projects are needed to address transmission system limitations and to comply with mandatory national and regional electric reliability standards.

Similar to the municipal consultation in Connecticut, the Massachusetts voluntary consultation process will occur before formal approval is sought from the EFSB in Massachusetts. The attached Municipal Consultation Report (“MCR”) provides technical information concerning the Project in the same manner and to the same extent as municipalities in Connecticut are required by law to receive. The MCR also includes large appendices containing, among other things, maps and drawings of the Project, studies and reports on the need for the Project, the electrical alternatives considered and the impacts of the Project after mitigation measures are taken.

Members of your community can review the MCR at any of the libraries listed at the end of this letter and via the Internet at [www.NEEWSprojects.com](http://www.NEEWSprojects.com). As you know, WMECO is also planning to hold a series of “Open Houses” in communities along the Project route to provide an opportunity for members of the public to review the project, meet Project Team members and ask questions.

Comments on this MCR can be delivered to WMECO’s affiliated company, Northeast Utilities Service Company, preferably within 60 days of the date on this letter, addressed as follows:

Attention: Mr. Jeffrey M. Towle  
GSRP Project Manager  
NUSCO – NUE2  
P.O. Box 270  
Hartford, CT 06141-0270

In addition to the EFSB approval process, the Project will be reviewed under the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (“MEPA”), which is implemented by the MEPA Unit within the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (“EOEEA”). In regard to environmental concerns, this MCR and this municipal consultation process will be a supplement to, and not a replacement for, the extensive MEPA process. Under MEPA, an Expanded Environmental Notification Form (“EENF”) will be filed and distributed widely; MEPA will hold a scoping meeting to receive public comments; written comments will be received during formal comment periods, and, after the Secretary of EOEEA issues his Certificate on the EENF, an extensive environmental impact report (“EIR”) will be prepared for review and further comment by the public. Comments received under the MCR process, and during the earlier parts of the MEPA process, can be taken into account in preparing both the EIR and the EFSB petition.

In Massachusetts, a companion agency to the EFSB, the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities (“DPU”), will also be required to issue related approvals for the 115-kV and 345-kV transmission lines. The DPU could also be asked to address zoning matters or grant eminent



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domain authority to enable construction of the Project. Finally, the Project will also be subject to other state and local reviews, which depend upon each community's local requirements, the impacts of the Project in each locale and the state's oversight of regulated utilities.

Both the MEPA and MCR process are starting at the same time. Ultimately, WMECO will submit its petition for approval to the EFSB one or two months after issuance of the Secretary's Certificate on the EENF. WMECO expects to file the EFSB petition in September.

We look forward to working with you during this process. A WMECO representative will contact you soon to set up a meeting to discuss the enclosed materials and to answer any initial questions you may have.

Very truly yours,

Robert E. Carberry, Manager  
NEEWS Project Siting and Permitting

Copies to Local Libraries:

Agawam Public Library  
750 Cooper Street  
Agawam, MA 01001

West Springfield Public  
Library  
200 Park Street  
West Springfield, MA 01089

Springfield City Library, East  
Springfield Branch  
21 Osborne Terrace  
Springfield, MA 01103

Chicopee Public Library  
31 Springfield Street  
Chicopee, MA 01013

Hubbard Memorial Library  
24 Center Street  
Ludlow, MA 01056

Storrs Library  
693 Longmeadow Street  
Longmeadow, MA 01106

East Longmeadow Public  
Library  
60 Center Square  
East Longmeadow, MA 01028

Hampden Public Library  
625 Main Street  
Hampden, MA 01036

Wilbraham Public Library  
25 Crane Park Drive  
Wilbraham, MA 01095