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Public Service Commission of Wisconsin
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October 1, 2009

Ms. Sandra J. Paske
Secretary to the Commission
Public Service Commission of Wisconsin
610 N. Whitney Way
P. O. Box 7854
Madison, WI 53707-785

RE: Letter of Town of Pleasant Springs
Docket 137-CE-147

Dear Ms. Paske:

We have been asked to respond to a letter dated September 2, 2009 from Mr. Richard Green, Town Chairman of Pleasant Springs, regarding a change in the approved route for the Rockdale – West Middleton transmission line project in the vicinity of the intersection of Interstate 90 (I-90) and County Highway N. American Transmission Co. (ATC) offers the following information for consideration by the Commission.

At a Town Board meeting on August 18, 2009, I discussed with the town board and local residents their concerns relative to the neighborhood at the intersection of I-90 and County Highway N. At that time, I discussed which mitigation alternatives were within the authority of ATC and which were not. During the meeting, it was asked whether ATC could cross over I-90 and back to avoid the neighborhood. I informed the attendees that this request is outside of ATC's authority and would have to be authorized by the Commission. A request from the town to consider this alternative is now before the Commission.

During the extensive routing and siting process which took place prior to filing the application for this project with the Commission, ATC evaluated hundreds of potential route segments. In accordance with the siting priorities law (Wis. Stats. § 1.12(6)), this evaluation included a broad corridor surrounding I-90 which encompassed both sides of the I-90 roadway and adjacent properties.

While corridor sharing of highways is a priority under Wisconsin's siting priorities law, the crossing of an interstate highway by a high voltage electric transmission line is significant due to costs, construction challenges and impact on traffic for both construction and ongoing maintenance. For these reasons, ATC decided that the crossings along I-90 would be minimized

to the greatest extent that is reasonable, considering other economic, environmental and engineering factors. Balancing these various routing factors, ATC proposed and the Commission approved locating the transmission line on the east side of I-90 near the Highway N interchange and utilizing the wider highway right-of-way of the interchange to maintain what ATC believed to be an acceptable distance from nearby residential development.

The relocation of these transmission facilities to the other side of I-90 would require two new interstate crossings near County Highway N and would provide an additional 250-300 feet of separation between the transmission line and the neighborhood. However, it would add more than a million dollars to the cost of the project due to adding four angle structures and approximately 700 feet of new line. In addition, new impacts would be created that were not contemplated in the Environmental Impact Statement or by the Commission in its decision in this case. As the Commission is well aware, ATC must obtain a permit from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WDOT) in order to occupy a highway right-of-way and WDOT has not been consulted concerning its view of this possible relocation of facilities. Due to these additional impacts, this proposal does not appear to meet the criteria established in the Commission's order for consideration of a minor route adjustment.

As noted above, I did discuss with the town board and local residents alternative mitigation options that are within the authority of ATC to implement through design changes. These options include:

- 1) Locating transmission structures, within the Commission-approved route centerline, to minimize impacts to adjoining properties;
- 2) Utilizing a vertical configuration of the transmission line conductors on the transmission structures closest to residences, so all conductors would be located on the highway side of the transmission structures. This configuration would provide additional separation of the transmission facilities from homes in the residential development; and
- 3) Giving consideration to the town officials' aesthetic preference for the use of galvanized steel structures for poles in the town.

ATC will continue to work with Town of Pleasant Springs and the affected property owners to understand and respond to their questions and concerns.

Respectfully Submitted,



Sarah Justus
Manager Local Relations
ATC Management Inc.

Cc: Scot Cullen – PSC
Dan Sage – PSC