

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MARCH 22, 2018

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL
MARK B. JINKS, CITY MANAGER

FROM: JAY NESTLERODE, CHAIR, TRANSMISSION LINE WORKING GROUP

SUBJECT: DOMINION 230kV TRANSMISSION LINE PROJECT – UPDATE AND
RECOMMENDATION FROM RECONVENED WORKING GROUP IN
SUPPORT OF RECONSIDERING POTOMAC AVENUE

ISSUE: The purpose of this memorandum is to provide an update and recommendation from the reconvened 230 kV Underground Transmission Line Working Group meetings from January-March 2018. It reflects the Working Group finding on proposed next steps for the City after considering new information provided by Dominion Energy (Dominion) in December 2017.

RECOMMENDATION: The Working Group recommends that City Council reconsider Potomac Avenue as a least objectionable alternative alignment for the proposed underground 230kV transmission line from the Glebe Substation in Arlington County to the Potomac River Substation in Alexandria.

BACKGROUND: As City Council is aware, Dominion requested the City reconsider Potomac Avenue as a “least objectionable” alternative for its proposed 230kV underground transmission line. A December 7, 2017 memorandum (Attachment 1) reflects the background and summarizes the reasoning for Dominion’s request. Based on this information, the City Manager reconvened the Working Group to assess the Dominion request and recommend next steps.

At January and February 2018 meetings of the Working Group, Dominion outlined the status of its preferred project alignment as well as the recent changes that led to its request. In the meetings and a series of question/response documents, Dominion provided information about the potential impacts, costs and benefits to residents and businesses. The Working Group understood it had an option to reconsider the route alternative or reject it entirely. Dominion has indicated that it still intends to file the project with the State Corporation Commission (SCC) in the third quarter of calendar year 2018. On March 22, 2018, the Working Group met a final time to review the revised route and finalize a recommendation to City Council and City Staff.

DISCUSSION: An alignment on Potomac Avenue route was initially deemed by the Working Group to be one of the “least objectionable” routes for the New Line Solution by the Working Group. However, a Potomac Avenue alignment was later determined to be “most objectionable” in a City Council resolution in May 2016.

As it reassessed the request by Dominion, the primary concerns of the Working Group were loss of trees, short and long-term impacts to recreational facilities, traffic, construction schedule and methods, and health concerns related to electromagnetic fields (EMF). Dominion provided responses to the Working Group in response to each concern. The information is catalogued on the city project website and has contributed to the Working Group's understanding of how the project, if proposed, would move forward.

Additionally, while the issue of compensation is outside the purview of this memo, the Working Group understands that a new route along or near Potomac Avenue would increase compensation to the City significantly above the approximately \$15 million for real estate right-of-way and other considerations previously negotiated. The Working Group also understands that additional compensation, yet to be determined and commensurate with the fair market value of the additional City right-of-way, would be included as part of any City reconsideration of a Potomac Avenue route. Finally, the Working Group understands that City Council will have the final decision on the disposition of real property, total compensation and how such compensation would be spent by the City.

Considering these points, the Working Group recommends that City Council reconsider Potomac Avenue as a least objectionable alternative alignment for the proposed underground 230kV transmission line from the Glebe Substation in Arlington County to the Potomac River Substation in Alexandria. The Working Group understands that its charge is to make recommendations to staff, City Manager & City Council about quality of life, economic, electric reliability, environmental and transportation impacts from proposed project and that City Council will ultimately consider this information and determine whether Potomac Avenue should be reconsidered.

Attachment: December 7, 2017 memorandum and update



Jay Nestlerode
Chair -
Transmission Line Working Group