

DORCHESTER CITIZENS FOR SAFE ENERGY

Libby Nagel, Chair
4762 Ravenwood Road
Vienna, Maryland 21869

410-221-1325
lnagel1930@hughes.net

April 12, 2009

Honorable Jay L. Newcomb, President
Dorchester County Council
County Office Building
Post Office Box 26
Cambridge, Maryland 21613

Dear Councilman Newcomb:

I understand that the County Council is considering the proposal by Pepco Holdings, Inc. to form a panel to address various issues resulting from the MAPP extra-high voltage transmission line. We believe that conditions for participating in this panel should include that Pepco fully respond to all past requests for further detail on the project.

Specifically, on February 9th I wrote to PHI Senior Vice-President William H. Gausman and requested answers to the following nine questions posed at the February 3rd County Council meeting.

- 1. We remain unconvinced that the 500 kilovolt transmission line must cross the Chesapeake Bay. We understand that more than 30 alternatives were considered for meeting the purpose of MAPP, some of which did not require an impact to the Chesapeake Bay. Please provide a description of these alternatives and why they were rejected in favor of impacting the Bay.*
- 2. We have seen a variety of credible reports showing wide variation in the cost to place a transmission line below ground. Some of these reports show that the cost differential between an above-ground and underground installation may be small for the DC current MAPP would carry on the lower Eastern Shore. Please address these cost differences and the factors affecting cost in detail. Also, please address how the cost difference compares to the far lower, long-term reduction in the costs of the increased harm caused by an overhead line.*
- 3. In addition to addressing installation cost, please present an assessment of the cumulative, long term cost of a 27-mile above-ground transmission line as compared to an underground line. This assessment should address: installation cost, maintenance cost as well as cost in terms of cropfields taken out of production, forests no longer available to support the commercial lumber industry, loss of tourism revenue, decline in property value, etc. With respect to maintenance please*

factor in the increases in sea-level and water table elevations predicted to occur over the next century due to climate change. For example, a recent article in the Choptank Electric Live Wire describes how a mile-long section of transmission line passed over an area that was dry 30 years ago but is now wetland. Choptank Electric had so much difficulty maintaining this section of line that they opted to bury the 5,200 feet of cable.

4. *We believe the cumulative environmental effects of running the line beneath the Nanticoke River will be less than that of an above-ground line slashing across 27-miles of our County. The Nanticoke River option eliminates adverse effects to the County's agriculture, forestry, and tourism industries while protecting people living in a fourth of Dorchester County from viewshed impacts, property value loss, adverse health effects, and other negative consequences. Please present your analysis of the pros and cons of the Nanticoke River alternative.*
5. *The County Council had previously asked Pepco to describe how the MAPP project would benefit Dorchester County. This question was not addressed last on February 3rd which prompted the Council to repeat their request. Please explain how the benefits of the MAPP project will outweigh the many negative effects of a 140-foot tall, above-ground transmission line slashing across 27 miles of Dorchester County.*
6. *On February 3rd Councilmember Elzey asked why Pepco literature says electromagnetic fields do not pose an adverse health effect yet various studies do show a negative effect. For example, the State of Maryland concluded in a study entitled Status Report on Investigations of Potential Human Health Effects Associated with Power Frequency Electric and Magnetic Fields (EMF) that:*

Research on ELF fields has been performed for more than two decades, and the methodology and quality of studies have improved over time. Studies have consistently shown increased risk for childhood leukemia associated with ELF magnetic fields, whereas ELF fields most likely are not a risk factor for breast cancer and cardiovascular disease. There are still inadequate data for other outcomes.

Please explain why the State of Maryland believes children are at risk but Pepco does not.

7. *The project poses some very significant impacts to the Harriet Tubman National Park, the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway, and the County's many other cultural resources. Please describe in detail how the various alternatives, including the Nanticoke River alignment, would impact these cultural resources.*
8. *The MAPP project poses some very substantial threats to minority and low-income populations in Dorchester County. Please describe in detail the environmental justice implications of the various alternatives, including the Nanticoke River alignment.*

9. *According to the Maryland Department of Natural Resources SmartSiting program, Dorchester County has an unusually high abundance of sensitive environmental areas. Your proposed transmission line clearly bisects one of the most environmentally sensitive and important areas in the State of Maryland yet Pepco has not indicated how this serious set of issues will be addressed.*

Environmentally sensitive forested wetlands, which are the habitat of many endangered species, make up a significant part of the area to be traversed by the transmission line in eastern Dorchester County.

How do you plan to avoid destruction of habitat of the Delmarva Fox Squirrel in these areas?

How do you plan to avoid clearing forested wetlands in Natural Heritage Areas which are mapped and identified by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources? A good example of this is Natural Heritage Area # 23 which is referred to by DNR as "one of the best examples of a complex of tidal freshwater wetlands."

As of this date we have not received a detailed response to the nine questions posed above.

On February 3rd our consultant, Richard Klein of Community & Environmental Defense Services, sent an e-mail to Mr. Gausman which contained the following request:

Thank you for asking Mark Okonowicz to speak with me about the statement made at the Maryland Conservation Council meeting regarding the relative ecological impacts of an overhead and underground transmission line.

Mr. Okonowicz said there is a report containing the data supporting the statement.

Could you forward a copy of this report to me?

As of this date Mr. Klein has not received a response to this request.

On March 8th Mr. Klein sent another e-mail to Mr. Gausman which contained the following request:

I see from the Needs Determination documents that PHI presently plans to run two DC circuits from Calvert Cliffs to the Eastern Shore. One circuit would end at the Vienna substation and the other would continue on to Indian River. The Vienna circuit would deliver up to 1,000 MW of electricity to the substation.

Do you have a feel for how much of this 1,000 MW would be available for new industrial development on the lower Eastern Shore?

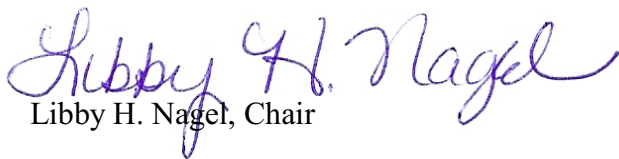
As you can imagine this has piqued the interest of more than a few folks who worry about the future of the lower Eastern Shore economy.

As of this date Mr. Klein has not received a response to this second request.

Again, I respectfully request that the Council insist that PHI satisfy these requests as a demonstration that the applicant intends to be fully responsive and cooperative.

Additionally, PHI has stated that they intend to give full consideration to the Nanticoke River alternative we and others have suggested. However, the Spring 2009 issue of the MAPP *Power Pathway Press* newsletter makes only passing reference to unnamed water-based routes. Instead, the three land-based routes are emphasized. This raises concerns that the applicant is not giving serious consideration to alternatives suggested by others.

Sincerely,



Libby H. Nagel, Chair

cc: Honorable William V. Nichols, Dorchester County Council
 Honorable Ricky Travers, Dorchester County Council
 Honorable Rick Price, Dorchester County Council
 Honorable Effie M. Elzey, Dorchester County Council
 Honorable Martin O'Malley
 Honorable Richard F. Colburn, Maryland Senate
 Honorable Rudolph C. Cane, Maryland House of Delegates
 Honorable Adelaide C. Eckardt, Maryland House of Delegates
 Honorable Jeanne Haddaway, Maryland House of Delegates
 Honorable Barbara Mikulski, U.S. Senate
 Honorable Benjamin Cardin, U.S. Senate
 Honorable Frank Kratochvil, U.S. House of Representatives
 Honorable John R. Griffin, Secretary - Maryland Department of Natural Resources
 Honorable Roger L. Richardson, Secretary - Maryland Department of Agriculture
 Honorable Malcolm D. Woolf, Maryland Energy Administration
 Honorable Douglas R.M. Nazarian, Chairman - Maryland Public Service Commission
 Honorable Russell Brinsfield, Mayor - Town of Vienna
 Honorable Bobby Herbert, Mayor - Town of Church Creek
 Honorable Caroline Cline, Mayor - East New Market
 Ms. Sandra Patty, Maryland Department of Natural Resources
 Ms. Amanda Fenstermaker, Director - Department of Tourism
 Mr. Allen Nelson, Dorchester Chamber of Commerce
 Mr. John W.S. Foster, President - Maryland Forests Association
 Mr. Bill Miles, Association of Forest Industries
 Mr. Jeff Crane, President - Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation
 Mr. William R. Miles, Vice-Chair - Maryland Legislative Sportsmen's Foundation
 Ms. Kim Coble, Chesapeake Bay Foundation
 Mr. Rob Etgen, Eastern Shore Land Conservancy

Mr. N. Wesley Messick, Dorchester County Soil Conservation District
Mr. Vincent O. Leggett, African-American Land Trust
Ms. Diana Y. Thompson, Harriett Tubman Underground Railroad Byway
Ms. Paulette Hammond, Maryland Conservation Council
Mr. Fred Pomeroy, Dorchester Citizens for Planned Growth
Mr. David O'Leary, Maryland Chapter Sierra Club
Ms. Susan Baird, Manager - Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge
Mr. William H. Gausman, Pepco Holdings, Inc.