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10-T-0080 - Niagara Mohawk - 12-19-2016

STATE OF NEW YORK  
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

IN THE MATTER OF

10-T-0080 APPLICATION OF NIAGARA MOHAWK POWER CORPORATION  
d/b/a/ NATIONAL GRID FOR A CERTIFICATE OF  
ENVIRONMENTAL COMPATIBILITY AND PUBLIC NEED  
PURSUANT TO ARTICLE VII FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF  
A NEW 115 kV ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION LINE FROM  
SPIER FALLS, SARATOGA COUNTY TO ROTTERDAM,  
SCHENECTADY COUNTY

Monday, December 19, 2016  
Town of Milton Community Center  
310 Northline Road  
Ballston Spa, New York 12020-2491

A.L.J. MICHELLE PHILLIPS  
Three Empire State Plaza  
Albany, New York

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2 A.L.J. PHILLIPS: Good afternoon again. I'd like to go on  
3 the record with the formal portion of this evening.

4 Good evening. This is a Public Statement  
5 Hearing to accept the public comments on issues pending in  
6 Case 10-T-0080.

7 In this portion of that case, National Grid  
8 seeks approval to construct and operate a proposed  
9 substation and associated connections, and to construct an  
10 associated access road near the intersection of Lasher  
11 Road, Randall Road, and the former Finley Road in Ballston  
12 Spa, New York.

13 If the request is approved, National Grid  
14 would be authorized to construct and operate a 115 kV/13.2  
15 kV transmission switching and distribution substation, to  
16 be known as the Lasher Road Substation, along with the  
17 associated 115 kV tap line that would tie into their  
18 existing Line 1, Line 2 and Line 302. They would -- the  
19 company would also be authorized to construct a gravel  
20 access road to that substation. The proposed size of the  
21 substation is about 400 by 450 feet or 2.4 -- or I'm  
22 sorry, 4.2 acres.

23 Again, my name is Michelle Phillips. I'm  
24 an Administrative Law Judge and I'm currently assigned to  
25 this case. And my primary role will be conducting the

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2 Public Statement Hearing. And if we do end up having the  
3 more formal process that Ms. Cerbin described, where we  
4 have to address any disputed issue of fact, I would then  
5 also be managing the case schedule and ensuring the  
6 development of a full record.

7                   This case will ultimately be decided by the  
8 Public Service Commission. Currently the Public Service  
9 Commission consists of four members. There's one  
10 chairperson, and three commissioners, and they will  
11 ultimately decide whether or not to grant the request.

12                   So again, what we're doing here today is  
13 allowing the public the opportunity to be heard with  
14 regard to any issues concerning this proposal.

15                   And basically, I use the cards that you  
16 filled out to call you up to speak and I'm going to ask  
17 that you use the microphone so the court reporter can  
18 capture your comments accurately. We'll create what's  
19 called a transcript, and then that will be available on  
20 our Document Matter Management System under this case  
21 number, should you wish to look at it.

22                   If you do not wish to make a comment, but  
23 you have a comment and you're just either shy or you  
24 haven't formulated what you want to say yet, you have  
25 until January 19th, and you can submit your comments

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2 either in e-mail, snail mail as Ms. Cerbin called it, or  
3 telephone. But we do ask that you do that by or before  
4 January 19th. And that's more so that we know whether or  
5 not there are any issues that need to be addressed and  
6 that require further development.

7 So does anyone have any questions about the  
8 process that I just outlined? Okay. So we have two cards  
9 and I left them over there, so I'll go get them.

10 F. Michael Tucker do you -- do you like --  
11 like to come up?

12 MR. TUCKER: Good evening Judge Phillips,  
13 and thank you very much for holding this hearing on this  
14 project.

15 My name is Mike Tucker, I'm the President  
16 of Tucker Strategies. I've spent -- prior to setting up  
17 my new firm, I spent eight years as the President and  
18 C.E.O. of the Center for Economic Growth, our regions  
19 Eleven County Economic Development Organization.

20 This power line and this substation  
21 addition is an incredible asset needed in this community.  
22 And I commend National Grid for undertaking the initiative  
23 to expand and improve their system.

24 What we find here in our region is the  
25 opportunity of a lifetime to continue to grow and expand

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2 in advanced technology manufacturing. The jobs that have  
3 been created by the over one-billion-dollar investment by  
4 General Electric in Schenectady and Niskayuna, as well as  
5 the fifteen billion dollar investment by Global Foundries  
6 in the town of Malta, will only continue to drive supply-  
7 chain companies and additional advanced manufacturing.

8 Right now, the region has over five hundred  
9 manufacturers, many of whom are manufacturing component  
10 parts, parts for someone else. Or they buy parts from  
11 other companies and assemble them to sell their product to  
12 a third party. In order for us as a region to continue to  
13 grow and expand, we need to have additional  
14 infrastructure. Both electric, gas, water, sewer and  
15 broadband.

16 And as we continue as a region to work  
17 together in partnership with our local town and city and  
18 county officials, as well as planning boards throughout  
19 the region, it is important to have hearings like this to  
20 have these projects vetted and discussed. I had serve --  
21 many years ago I built hydroelectric projects and we found  
22 that public hearings made our projects better because of  
23 the input that we received from the community.

24 And, so, I think that what we need to  
25 realize is that our region is at a tipping point. With

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2 the fifteen-year investment by New York State, and with  
3 the governor's REV proceeding underway to continue to grow  
4 and expand our green economy using renewables and other  
5 modern and new ideas with respect to rate-making and  
6 electric generation, we believe that companies who are  
7 here continue to grow. And there are companies as we  
8 continue to grow as a region who will need to be here.  
9 Not because they want to be here, but because they have to  
10 be here. And unless we have the infrastructure,  
11 particularly the electric that's needed and that's part of  
12 this project, but also the other infrastructure components  
13 that I mentioned, and also work for us in education.

14 So it's great to see so many students here,  
15 I assume. And it's important to work hard, study hard  
16 because this is a great place to live and continuing to  
17 grow our advanced manufacturing and technology economy is  
18 critical to the region's future.

19 Thank you very much, Judge.

20 A.L.J. PHILLIPS: Thank you. The next  
21 speaker is Ronald Malloch. Do you want me to bring the  
22 mic to you, or --?

23 MR. MALLOCH: Needless to say, this is  
24 being conducted on my farm. And you know, location,  
25 location, location. For the economic growth of this

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2 community it's absolutely a necessity.

3 And I've lived where I am right now for  
4 seventy-six years and I need to retire. My only  
5 retirement is the value of the farm. And I think that you  
6 noticed in some of the material that came by mail, they've  
7 been five years trying to get this thing accomplished.  
8 This is five years too many. It takes approximately six  
9 months to do a closing. You know, and I'm being held at  
10 bay by New York State for what they want. They have been  
11 rejecting farm land, stony farm land. They've never taken  
12 a tour of the Midwest, or up in the Champlain Valley, or  
13 the western part of the New York State to know what real  
14 farmland is. And they're worried about a rock pasture  
15 that is all grown up now because we've gotten rid of the  
16 dairy cows, as being wetlands. And I don't know what kind  
17 of pollywogs their trying to do something with out there,  
18 so you know we need to look forward. We need to look for  
19 the -- the -- the -- the outstanding things that can  
20 happen with this, such as the chip plant and everything  
21 else that's going to go on over in Malta.

22 You know, I've had power lines across the  
23 backside of my house all my life. I've never feared about  
24 it. And a lot of people have had a lot of problems. I  
25 mean, I remember back one time when there was supposed to

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2 be cell towers. Cell One wanted to put a cell tower on my  
3 property.

4 I had neighbors that was afraid they were  
5 going to have cancer from it. I had neighbors that they  
6 just didn't want it there. But you know something, I  
7 missed out on a 120 thousand dollars because I had  
8 neighbors that didn't want it. And now it sits over in  
9 the Curtis Lumber Company park over there, it doesn't even  
10 meet the top of the land level where I live.

11 But that give -- goes to show you that it's  
12 not always who you know, but who you kind of get in good  
13 buddy buddy-ship with that counts.

14 I'm here to say we need this. We need to  
15 be actively attuned to be able to take care of this  
16 situation expeditiously. It is not good.

17 My -- my ancestors helped settle Saratoga  
18 County and I even early '80s I was President of Saratoga  
19 County Farm Bureau for two years. So I know what it's all  
20 about. I know what -- what it is to go out in the field  
21 and work. What it is to go out in the field and pick rock  
22 in a bad, bad situation on ninety-degree days. You know,  
23 a lot of people don't know what it is to work these days.  
24 They just need to kind of forget about the bike trails  
25 that we had to pay the taxes for. Forget about all the --

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2 the other fancy stuff that we had to pay taxes for. You  
3 know, after that deal with the cell tower, you know I had  
4 absolutely not one person in my neighborhood want to pay  
5 my taxes for me. You know, that is just bad news.

6 They can tell me what I can do in my  
7 backyard. And their nose is always in my backyard not  
8 their own backyard. It's time to take care of their own  
9 business.

10 A.L.J. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Malloch.  
11 At this time I don't have anymore cards, so I will  
12 adjourn. But I'll stay here until seven o'clock in case  
13 anyone else shows up and would like to make a comment.  
14 And if people would like to while we're adjourned, ask  
15 additional questions of the company, I think they'll be  
16 here for a little while longer. So you are welcome to do  
17 that. If you do change your mind and you want to make a  
18 comment, just speak to Andrew, fill out a card and I'll go  
19 back on the record.

20 Thank you so much for everyone who came  
21 out.

22 (Off the record)

23 A.L.J. PHILLIPS: Hello, I'm just going to  
24 go back on the record and very quickly confirm, is there  
25 anyone who wishes to make a statement before we close the

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2 Public Statement Hearing record? Okay.

3 Hearing nothing it is now seven o'clock and  
4 we're going be ending this portion of the hearing. Thank  
5 you to the public for coming out and thank you to the town  
6 for the use of the facility. Good night.

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2 STATE OF NEW YORK

3 I, JANET AXTON, do hereby certify that the foregoing was  
4 reported by me, in the cause, at the time and place, as  
5 stated in the caption hereto, at Page 1 hereof; that the  
6 foregoing typewritten transcription consisting of pages 1  
7 through 10, is a true record of all proceedings had at the  
8 hearing.

9 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto  
10 subscribed my name, this the 27th day of December, 2016.

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13 JANET AXTON, Reporter

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