

**STATE OF NEW YORK
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

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In the Matter of the Application of :
Vermont Green Line Devco, LLC for a :
Certificate of Environmental Compatibility :
and Public Need Pursuant to Article VII of :
the Public Service Law :
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This document has been redacted for Critical Energy Infrastructure Information (CEII). 4/28/16

Case 16-T-

APPLICATION

Vermont Green Line Devco, LLC (the “Applicant”) submits this application (“Application”), pursuant to Article VII of the Public Service Law (“PSL”) and the Public Service Commission’s (“Commission”) regulations thereunder, for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need (“Certificate”) authorizing it to construct and operate the New York State portion of the Vermont Green Line Project (“Project”). The requested Certificate would permit the construction and operation of certain facilities to be owned by the Applicant, as more fully detailed herein.

Pursuant to Section 401 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, 33 U.S.C.A. § 1341, the Applicant also respectfully requests that the Commission issue a Water Quality Certification for the Project.

As specified in Section 122 of the PSL and Section 85-2.8 of the Commission’s Regulations, this Application contains the following information:

- (a) Description of the Project;
- (b) Project Location;
- (c) Description of Reasonable Alternative Routes and Technology;
- (d) Summary of Environmental Studies and Environmental Impact;
- (e) Need for the Project; and
- (f) Other relevant information.

A. Description of the Project

The Project would allow for the transfer of up to 400 megawatts (“MW”) of power from New York to Vermont. The portion of the Project proposed to be sited in New York includes the following four primary components: (i) a new high voltage direct

current (“HVDC”) converter station, located in the Town of Beekmantown, (ii) a new approximately 0.7 mile underground 230 kilovolt (“kV”) alternating current (“AC”) electric transmission line that would connect existing New York Power Authority (“NYPA”) 230 kV transmission lines to the proposed new HVDC electric converter station, (iii) a new upland underground ± 150 kV direct current (“DC”) electric transmission line, approximately 6.7 miles long, that would extend between the new HVDC converter station in Beekmantown to the shoreline of Lake Champlain at Point Au Roche State Park, and (iv) a new underwater ± 150 kV DC electric transmission line, extending from the shoreline of Lake Champlain in Beekmantown toward the shoreline in Ferrisburgh, VT, approximately 4.9 miles of which would be in NY waters.

B. Project Location

Exhibit 2 of the Application describes the Project location in detail. The HVDC electric converter station is proposed to be sited on a vacant parcel located off of Jersey Swamp Road in the Town of Beekmantown, approximately 0.7 miles northwest of the existing NYPA Plattsburgh Substation. The converter station would connect to existing NYPA 230 kV lines RYP1 (Ryan to Plattsburgh) and DP1 (Duley to Plattsburgh) through a switchyard that would be constructed by NYPA adjacent to its Plattsburgh Substation.¹ The Applicant proposes to construct an approximately 0.7 mile underground 230 kV AC transmission line on an approximately 30-foot wide right-of-way (“ROW”), adjacent to an existing transmission ROW, between the new NYPA switchyard and the new converter station.

The majority of the upland ± 150 kV DC electric transmission line route is proposed to be installed in a trench within or along existing roadway ROWs in the Town of Beekmantown. Those portions of the DC line not installed within a trench will be installed using horizontal directional drilling (“HDD”) or jack and bore (“J&B”) methods. The Applicant would require a 30-foot wide permanent ROW for the portions of the DC line installed in a trench and a 50-foot wide permanent ROW for the portions of the DC line installed by HDD or J&B methods. The upland portion of the HVDC line is proposed to connect with the HVDC underwater cables at a joint bay to be located

¹ The Applicant understands that NYPA, in order to be allowed to construct and operate the proposed switchyard, intends in the near future to file with the New York Public Service Commission an application to amend NYPA’s Article VII Certificate for its existing 230 kV lines RYP1 (Ryan to Plattsburgh) and DP1 (Duley to Plattsburgh).

within Point Au Roche State Park. HDD would be utilized to install the HVDC line from Point Au Roche State Park to the lakebed of Lake Champlain.

In New York, approximately 4.9 miles of the Project's HVDC line is proposed to be located within the lakebed of Lake Champlain. There would be two segments of the underwater portion of the HVDC line in New York. The northern underwater segment extends from the shoreline of Point Au Roche State Park a distance of approximately 3.7 miles, within the jurisdictions of the Town of Beekmantown and Plattsburgh, to the New York - Vermont state border. The HVDC line continues in a southerly direction within Vermont until it nears Colchester Shoals, where it would cross back into New York waters, within the jurisdictions of the Towns of Au Sable and Chesterfield, for a distance of approximately 1.2 miles, before reentering Vermont waters.

C. Description of Reasonable Alternative Routes and Technology

Exhibit 3 of the Application provides a description of the evaluation of alternative technologies, alternative interconnection substation locations, alternative converter station locations, above ground alternative, and alternative transmission line upland and underwater routes. The evaluation includes a description of the comparative merits and detriments of each alternative as well as an explanation of why the proposed Project is the Applicant's preferred alternative.

D. Summary of Environmental Studies and Environmental Impact

The environmental studies and environmental impact assessment for the Project were conducted by the Applicant and its consultant TRC Environmental Corporation. The information used to prepare the environmental studies and environmental impact assessment includes extensive field investigations, literature reviews, and agency consultations. A detailed description of these studies and the potential environmental impacts of the Project are set forth in the resource specific sections of Exhibit 4.

In sum, these studies concluded that the construction and operation of the Project will result in limited, temporary adverse environmental effects, which will occur primarily during the construction phase. The Applicant has designed the Project to be

largely constructed and operated on previously cleared land, within or along existing roadway ROW, and within the lakebed of Lake Champlain to avoid potential significant adverse impacts to environmental resources. The use of HDD transmission line installation methods beneath traversed wetlands, streams and at the shoreline of Lake Champlain, along with the implementation of numerous best management practices and mitigation measures will minimize the potential for the Project to result in adverse impacts to the following: Topography, Geology and Soils, Wetlands and Waterbodies, Aquatic Wildlife, Terrestrial Vegetation and Wildlife, Important Habitat and Protected Species, Land Use, Cultural Resources, Visual Resources, Sound and Electric Magnetic Field.

Nearby residences may experience short term disturbance and traffic inconvenience associated with Project construction activities. To minimize potential construction effects to adjacent landowners, the Applicant will provide timely information to adjacent property owners and tenants regarding the planned construction activities and schedules, and will coordinate with NYSDOT, county officials, and local police departments to develop and implement traffic control measures.

E. Need for the Project

Exhibit E-4 of the Application explains how this Project is needed and how it would enhance the reliability of the existing NYISO electric system at the point of interconnection, provide reactive power or maintain a desired voltage level on the AC network, and provide voltage stability and voltage control during faults on the AC network. [REDACTED]

The Project will provide an “energy bridge,” allowing additional development of new wind energy in upstate New York that would otherwise be constrained and uneconomic given the existing delivery infrastructure to load centers in New York. The Project will allow incremental deliveries of hydroelectricity from Canada across existing transmission facilities into New York and, thus, is consistent with the State’s proposed Clean Energy Standard of supplying 50% of its energy needs from renewable sources by 2030.

Additionally, preliminary studies strongly suggest that the Project will allow for an increase of the currently de-rated operability of Chateaugay, which the Applicant is currently discussing with NYISO and which would be subject to NYISO approval.

F. Other Relevant Information

The Applicant is a Delaware limited liability company formed to develop the Project. Exhibit 1 provides the name, address and phone number of the Applicant; the name and address of the principal officer of the Applicant; and the names and addresses of those persons upon whom documents and correspondence are to be served.

G. Conclusion

The Applicant respectfully requests that the Commission issue an order pursuant to Article VII of the Public Service Law granting the following:

- 1) A Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need to the Applicant authorizing the construction and operation of the New York portion of the Project; and
- 2) Such other and further authorizations, consents, permissions, approvals, waivers and permits, as may be necessary for the construction, operation and maintenance of the Project described herein, including but not limited to issuance of a Water Quality Certification pursuant to Section 401 of the Water Pollution Control Act (33 USCA § 1341).

Dated: May 3, 2016