Loudoun Reliability Engagement Group

Fourth Meeting Executive Summary Report

The fourth meeting of the Loudoun Reliability Engagement Group was held on November 15, 2022, from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM at Founders Hall in Ashburn, VA.

Member Organizations in Attendance

- League of Women Voters of Loudoun County
- Loudoun Coalition of Homeowners and Condominium Associations
- Loudoun County Department of Economic Development
- Loudoun County Department of Equity & Inclusion
- Loudoun County Preservation and Conservation Coalition
- Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy
- NAIOP – Commercial Developers
- VA Asian Chamber of Commerce

Absent Organizations

- Black History Committee (Friends of Thomas Balch Library)
- Fire Chief (Combined Fire & Rescue System)
- NAACP Loudoun Branch
- Piedmont Environmental Council
- Rotary Club of Ashburn

Dominion Energy Team

- Greg Mathe, Manager, Electric Transmission Communications
- Greg Vozza, Power Engineer at MPR Associates
- Rob Richardson, Electric Transmission Communications Consultant
- Carrie Rose Pace, Electric Transmission Communications Specialist
- Kristi Moore, ERM
- Liz Valsamidis, ERM
- Jake Rosenberg, ERM
- Carter Jones, ERM
- Bryce Gatling, ERM

Meeting Summary

1. Wishing Star to Mars SCC Application Debrief

The State Corporation Commission (SCC) Final Order is the primary permit for this project. It confirms the needs of the project and determines the final route.

The next step in the SCC permitting process is issuing the procedural order, which sets the schedule for the procedure.

Preferred Route

The preferred route is route five from the SCC application. The SCC asks that the company submit a preferred route from all the route alternatives presented in the application.

There is no science to weighting impacts – the SCC reviews each route and determines weighting on a case-by-case basis. SCC staff and the hearing examiner review conduct an independent review, which may or may not agree with how Dominion has presented potential impacts. There are times when the SCC approves an alternative vs. the preferred route. Dominion is then obligated to build the route selected by SCC.

Jake Rosenberg, ERM, stated how much the current routes have evolved in the last few months. Community feedback was critical for this project to find preferred routing alternatives. He highlighted that stakeholders (developers, NOVEC) look at impacts and routes differently. Ultimately, route 5 became the preferred route based on the simulations, analysis, and the ability to limit the mitigate impacts.

Project Need

In the application, Dominion demonstrated the need for the project. PJM, the independent electric transmission planning agency, classified this project as an "immediate need." PJM classifies projects based on different levels of need. This project was prioritized in a way that allowed Dominion to plan and move forward with associated planning.

Key Dates & Project Cost

Greg Mathe stated Dominion Energy had requested an expedited timeline to meet the "immediate need" of the project. However, Dominion can only make requests of the SCC as far as the timeline is concerned. Due to the large project size, Dominion asked for an 8-month turnaround to meet a target completion date of December 2025.

This project's combined transmission and substation work will have an estimated cost of $715 million. Ratepayers throughout the state cover the project's cost through their bills in proportion to the rate tier and classification.

Routing Study Overview

Jake Rosenberg described the study area and the amount of work involved in the review. The environmental resource table inside the application quantifies the potential project impacts on cultural resources, viewsheds, archeological sites, wetlands, and waterbodies.

He highlighted previous routing options and noted the narrowing of the corridor for proposed routes and alternatives. LREG members have been critical in identifying cultural and historic resources in the project area.

2. PJM Load Forecasting

PJM's load forecasts are a five-year rolling forecast; however, Dominion is working on expanding these forecasts beyond five years.

The forecast adjustment process takes inputs from member utilities and releases them in January. The 2022 load forecast was a significant jump in expected growth, setting the environment for the current transmission constraint in eastern Loudoun County.

Dominion is accelerating new transmission projects, upgrading existing lines, and expanding substations to mitigate the impact of the forecasted transmission constraints.

3. Study Area Map Exercise

LREG members broke into individual table groups to discuss the newly released project area study maps. These maps combined publicly available data of the project area, and members were asked to identify routing opportunities and constraints. After the table discussions, individual members reported their conversations to the whole group.

Below are some of the topics of note from the discussion:

- Can the project use the W & OD Trail?
- Route 7 seems to be the preferred option.
    - Can it be placed underground along Route 7?
    - It's known that the [Loudoun County] Board of Supervisors does not want towers along Route 7.
- Preference for going along built infrastructure by collocating along Route 7, Loudoun County Parkway, etc.
- Can the lines come from the south and eliminate this project?
- Going through residential areas would be "beyond traumatic."
- Doesn't see the value in the data center industry.
- Undergrounding the line would be 10x the cost

- Power considerations are not included in county-level data center discussions.
- How does the project intend to cross Goose Creek?

4. Key Takeaways

- Could we get a heat map of demand to make it clear why the need for redundancy and location is required - this would allow the group to bring solutions
- We would also like to have clear communication as to why we need this in a specific location and understand the full scope of the projects.
- Dominion would like the LREG members to prioritize impacts (visual v. environmental v. Route 7, etc.).

5. Question and Answer Session

QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
What is the difference between commenting on the SCC application and being named a participant?	Anyone can submit comments to the SCC about a project application. Individuals and organizations must apply to be formal participants, a legal process.
Is this Public engagement only at phase 1? Other community members are concerned that they haven't been engaged yet, but I want to tell them that there will be many more opportunities to participate.	Yes, there will be many opportunities for community members to be engaged in the SCC process, including submitting comments on the application directly to the SCC.
What is PJM?	PJM is a regional transmission organization (RTO) that coordinates the movement of wholesale (transmission) electricity in all or parts of 13 states and the District of Columbia. They direct the operation and coordinate maintenance of the transmission system.
What is the height of the structures?	The structures would be 150ft on average.
Could the northern Loudoun project be built underground?	It could be, but underground transmission lines come with tradeoffs, including increased environmental impacts, more extended construction, more expensive construction t, and reduced transmission capacity.
Under state law/reg, is it possible that unique customers could bear some of the cost?	They do bear some of it based on being a customer. Dominion also has to distinguish project drivers from project beneficiaries; the grid is for everyone's utility. Grid reliability, lower cost of service, and other considerations must be considered.
Wasn't Wishing Star to Mars initially scheduled for completion in 2026?	Yes, but Dominion was asked to move it up to meet growing energy demands for the area.
Does upgrading (reconductoring) a line involve more tree clearing?	Reconductoring projects are a good time for forestry crews to evaluate the need for tree clearing and removing invasive species.