

STATE OF NEW YORK

# Public Service Commission

William M. Flynn, Chairman

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<http://www.dps.state.ny.us>

FOR RELEASE: IMMEDIATELY

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## **PSC Seeks Public Comment on Changes to Niagara Mohawk Proposal to Construct and Operate a 345kV Electric Transmission Line in Rensselaer County**

Albany, NY – 6/15/04 – The New York State Public Service Commission has scheduled an informational forum and public statement hearing on June 29 to provide information about, and receive comments on, recent changes to a proposal from Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation (Niagara Mohawk) for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need to construct an electric transmission line in the City of Rensselaer and the Towns of East and North Greenbush, Rensselaer County. The eight-mile long, 345-kilovolt (kV) line would begin at the site of the proposed Besicorp-Empire Development Company's electric generation facility in Rensselaer and terminate at Niagara Mohawk's existing substation on Reynolds Road in the Town of North Greenbush.

Recently, Niagara Mohawk proposed re-routing the existing Circuit 17 away from the Reynolds Road Substation in North Greenbush to the Greenbush Substation in East Greenbush using existing right-of-ways. Other minor modifications to existing structures around the Greenbush Substation will be made to accommodate the new facilities. Moreover, the company has now proposed the use of towers that are about 30 feet shorter than the steel monopoles initially proposed on two of the three route segments. To accomplish this, the company would remove an existing row of wooden "H" frame structures between the vicinity of Stock Lane in East Greenbush and Reynolds Road Substation in North Greenbush and install steel "H" frame structures in their place.

Under New York State Public Service Law, the Commission may adopt, amend, or reject any of Niagara Mohawk's proposals, or may reject the application in favor of a solution not proposed by any party. To help guide its decision-making process, the Commission is seeking the views of the public and has scheduled an informational forum and a public statement hearing to be held as follows:

**Tuesday, June 29, 2004**  
**Informational Forum – 6:00 p.m.**  
**Public Statement Hearing – 7:15 p.m.**  
**Town Hall**  
**225 Columbia Turnpike**  
**East Greenbush, NY**

Please note that the public statement hearing is for the purpose of commenting on Niagara Mohawk's electric transmission line proposal and not on Besicorp-Empire Development Company's proposed electric generation facility. At the information session, New York State Department of Public Service staff will informally discuss, with interested persons, the proposed electric transmission line project and the Commission's public review process initiated to examine the proposal. Staff personnel will be available to answer questions during the information session.

Following the informal information and discussion portion of the meeting a more formal public statement hearing will be held. The public statement hearing will remain open for at least one hour or until all persons wishing to speak are heard or other reasonable arrangements are made. Speakers will be called after completing a card requesting time to speak at the hearing. It is not necessary to make an appointment in advance or to present written material in order to speak. All comments, oral and written, will be considered in the Commission's review process.

Disabled persons requiring special accommodations at the hearing should contact the New York State Department of Public Service's Compliance Officer at (518) 473-8869 (or, for a sign language interpreter, call (212) 290-4292) as soon as possible.

### **Description of Niagara Mohawk's Proposal**

In April 2003, Niagara Mohawk filed with the Commission a proposal to construct, operate and maintain a 345 kV transmission line from the site of the Besicorp-Empire Development Company's proposed electric generation facility in the City of Rensselaer to an existing substation on Reynolds Road in the Town of North Greenbush. The Besicorp-Empire facility would be a 505-megawatt cogeneration power plant. The proposed 345 kV transmission line facility would carry the output of the cogeneration facility to Niagara Mohawk's substation for its transmission and distribution on the electric grid serving New York State.

The proposed transmission facility would consist of a single circuit, 345 kV overhead transmission line located in existing Niagara Mohawk electric transmission rights-of-way. Its approximate length is 8.1 miles. The proposed facility would begin at the proposed electric generation facility's switchyard and proceed south on steel monopoles replacing existing wood monopoles for approximately 1.7 miles. At the intersection of the New Scotland-Reynolds Road right-of-way in the Town of East Greenbush, the transmission line would proceed in a northeasterly direction for about 2.3 miles on the right-of-way. At the intersection of the East Greenbush-Reynolds Road right-of-way the transmission line would run northerly for 4.1 miles, crossing into the Town of North Greenbush and terminating at the Reynolds Road substation. Maps showing the proposed location of the transmission line are included in the Niagara Mohawk application.

The Public Service Commission held a public statement hearing on Niagara Mohawk's original proposal on July 14, 2003, in the City of Rensselaer. The Commission is conducting the June 29 informational forum and public statement hearing to provide the public an opportunity to

address the changes described above that Niagara Mohawk has made to the proposed electric transmission line.

### **Other Ways to Comment**

Persons not wishing to speak at the public statement hearing, or who are unable to attend the hearing, may comment on Niagara Mohawk's proposal (in English or Spanish) by mailing their written statements to the Honorable Jaclyn A. Brillling, Secretary, New York State Public Service Commission, Three Empire State Plaza, Albany, New York 12223-1350. These letters should reference "Case 03-T-0664 – Niagara Mohawk's Application for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need for the Construction of a 345kV Electric Transmission Line in Rensselaer County" and should be mailed in as soon as possible.

Other alternatives are available for submitting comments for consideration by the Commission:

**Toll-free Opinion Line:** Interested persons may call a special toll-free Opinion Line at 1-800-335-2120 to voice their opinion. This phone line is set up to receive comments about the proceeding from in-state callers, 24 hours a day. Callers should press "1" for "electric and gas" to leave comments on Niagara Mohawk's application for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need.

**The Internet:** Comments also may be submitted via the "PSC Comment Form" in the "Consumer Assistance" file accessed through the homepage of the Commission's Website. Many libraries offer free Internet access. The Website address is <http://www.dps.state.ny.us/comment.html> and comments are downloaded regularly.

Niagara Mohawk's application may be viewed at the following locations:

East Greenbush Community Library  
10 Community Way  
East Greenbush, NY 12061

North Greenbush Public Library  
138 Main Avenue  
Wynantskill, NY 12198

Rensselaer Public Library  
810 Broadway  
Rensselaer, NY 12144

Troy Public Library  
100 Second Street  
Troy, NY 12180

Besicorp-Empire Development Company  
11 Second Avenue, Rensselaer  
Tuesdays and Thursdays  
11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Albany Public Library  
161 Washington Avenue  
Albany, NY 12210