

**Town of Eldorado
Plan Commission
Public Hearing Minutes**

**Tracking # CUP-Ext-2023-09-18-WP&L
(Conditional Use Permit Extension Re: CUP #ELD-20-001)**

Date: November 14, 2023

Plan Commission Member Attendees (5):

	Jeremy Brenner, Chairperson	x	Jenna Borski, Secretary	x	Aaron Rickert, Town Board Liaison
x	Jeff White, Vice Chairperson	x	Dennis Yoder, Member		

Public Hearing – Application for Conditional Use Permit Extension – Jessica Bahr for Wisconsin Power & Light Company (WP&L):

Conditional Use Permit #ELD-20-001, signed March 22, 2021, expired March 22, 2023

Location/Description of Property: N7872 Townline Rd / T07-16-16-25-13-003-00

Parcel acres: 5.68 +/-

Current zoning: A-1

Proposal: extension to complete final landscaping by July 2024

Attendance for the application: None

Meeting called to order by White at 7:05 p.m.

White read the legal notice published October 29 and November 5, 2023.

Presentation of application:

White presented the September 18, 2023 letter from Jessica Bahr, Senior Real Estate Representative for Alliant Energy, submitted on behalf of WP&L, "...requesting an extension of the Conditional Use permit granted on March 22, 2021. WP&L is waiting to install the final landscaping at the substation site until after American Transmission Company [ATC] installs the transmission line into the substation. Therefore, WP&L would like to request an extension to allow for the final landscaping to be completed by July of 2024."

Borski also provided EPC members with the following:

- a copy of CUP # ELD-20-001,
- the October 4, 2022 EPC meeting notes where the final landscape plan was approved,
- the approved final landscape plan,
- a November 12, 2023 email with photos from Katie Hari, N7845 Townline Rd outlining many concerns with the project

Cheryl Pionke, Town Clerk, verbally summarized emails between her and Jessica Bahr regarding the progress of the substation.

Questions / comments from members of the public:

Jenny Reinhold, N7837 Townline Rd, provided an account of her concerns regarding this project. Alliant approached property owners to sign an easement that they did not sign. The landscaper showed up with a plan last year (2022) with no notice or appointment. On May 15, 2023, the landscaper showed up unannounced at Katie Hari's property at N7845 Townline Rd to perform landscaping but did not do Reinhold's property. The landscaper later returned to Reinhold's property but only installed landscaping on the south side of the front yard, not the north side closest to the substation. Landscaping has yet to be completed and no information was given as to why this was not done in 2023. Alliant added a

second driveway to the substation property and cut down trees along Anderson Creek for ATC to install pillars. The Reinhold and Hari families have received no notices, calls, emails or fliers from Alliant or ATC. The Public Service Commission (PSC) application requires outreach to the community. There are ledgers from ATC dated 2018 that clearly show the plan included overhead lines which is not what Greg Ardrey and Tom Erstad of Alliant communicated to EPC during the public hearing for the initial CUP application where they clearly stated the lines would be underground and trees up to 8 feet tall could be planted. Reinhold purchased her home in 2019, renovated and added on to her home. This would not have been done if they knew ATC intended to bring high voltage overhead power lines to the property across the street. There is also no infiltration basin or stormwater retention pond constructed which was part of the approved design of the substation. A temporary driveway made of timbers was constructed to install the pilings. Reinhold has concerns with changes being made to Anderson Creek, Alliant's disrespect and disregard for neighbors, lack of compliance with PSC requirements for outreach to the community and distance of the high voltage overhead lines from her residence. Reinhold also sent video to Jeremy Brenner via Facebook prior to the meeting. However, Brenner was unable to attend and the information was unable to be shared at the meeting.

Kari Hari joined the hearing after her job and supported information provided by Reinhold. Hari communicated that this project has created a lot of stress on both families. EPC reviewed Hari's November 12, 2023, email and photos that outline concerns from her perspective including the lack of communication from the landscaper and Alliant and inadequate/incomplete landscaping in 2023. Hari stated some nights all the lights are on at the substation as photographed and some nights just the single overhead light is on. Hari shared that Greg Ardrey is listed as the contact for the property, but Hari and Reinhold have been unable to reach him. Their properties are within 100 feet of the substation, and both are concerned with the voltage coming to the substation based on the size of the pillars going in for the ATC overhead lines.

Discussion by EPC:

EPC is unable to continue review of this application without a representative present to provide additional information and address concerns raised. EPC will need to work with the Town Attorney on the CUP and application for extension to complete the landscaping. EPC does not have sufficient information to approve or deny the application at this time.

Motion:

Motion made by Yoder/Rickert to table further review of the application pending receipt of additional information from WP&L to be requested by our Town Attorney, and until the applicant can be present.

Borski, Rickert, White & Yoder voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

Future actions:

The EPC will work with the Town Attorney to draft a letter requesting additional information and to schedule continuation of the hearing, with a proposed date of January 9, 2024.

White adjourned the hearing at 8:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jenna Borski
Secretary
Town of Eldorado Plan Commission