

BEFORE THE POWER SITING BOARD OF THE STATE OF OHIO

**In the Matter of the Application of AEP Ohio** )  
**Transmission Company for an Amendment to the** )  
**Ginger Switch-Vigo 138 kV Transmission Line Rebuild** ) **Case No. 19-1866-EL-BTA**  
**Project** )

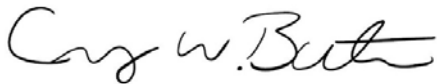
Members of the Board:

Chairman, Public Utilities Commission	Ohio House of Representatives
Director, Development Services Agency	Ohio Senate
Director, Department of Health	
Director, Department of Agriculture	
Director, Environmental Protection Agency	
Director, Department of Natural Resources	
Public Member	

To the Honorable Power Siting Board:

Please review the attached Staff Report of Investigation, which has been filed in accordance with Ohio Power Siting Board rules. The application in this case is subject to an approval process as required by Section 4906.03 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Respectfully submitted,



Craig Butler  
Executive Director  
Ohio Power Siting Board

## OPSB STAFF REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

**Project Name:** Amendment to the Ginger Switch-Vigo 138 kV  
Transmission Line Rebuild Project

**Case Number:** 19-1866-EL-BTA

**Project Location:** Ross County

**Applicant:** AEP Ohio Transmission Company

**Application Filing Date:** October 28, 2019

**Inspection Date:** January 24, 2020

**Report Date:** February 14, 2020

**Applicant's Waiver Requests:** None

**Staff Assigned:** J. Pawley, G. Zeto

### Summary of Staff Recommendations (see discussion below):

Application: ☐ Approval ☐ Disapproval ☒ Approval with Condition

Waiver: ☐ Approval ☐ Disapproval ☒ Not Applicable

### Application Description and Need

AEP Ohio Transmission Company (Applicant or AEP Ohio Transco) is proposing an amendment to the Ginger Switch-Vigo 138 kilovolt (kV) Transmission Line Rebuild Project, which was approved by the Ohio Power Siting Board on November 15, 2018, in Case No. 17-0638-EL-BTX. Proposed adjustments are proffered following final detailed engineering and property owner discussions for placement of structures to accommodate the approved route. The transmission line would remain at 138 kV as originally approved. The Applicant states that the economic impact would not change as a result of these adjustments. The need for the facility and grid impacts associated with the facility remain the same as was approved in Case No. 17-0638-EL-BTX.

Revisions requested in this amendment were placed by the Applicant into the category of engineering adjustments within the right-of-way. Construction has not yet begun on this project.

### *Engineering Adjustments*

There are six segments of proposed engineering adjustments to the approved route. The proposed engineering adjustments occur between structures 35-37, 43-47, 66-67, 72-77, 79-85, and structure 88. The structure location shifts range from 5 to a maximum 48 feet away from the previously approved preferred centerline. The Applicant states that all engineering adjustments would occur within the 100-foot right-of-way of the approved alignment.

Structures 35-37: The Applicant is proposing a shift of structure 35 approximately 6 feet to the south of the originally approved centerline in order to avoid an access road for a farm field. This shift would allow large farming equipment to access the field without obstruction. Structures 36 and 37 were changed from guyed structures to custom dead-end structures with concrete

foundations in order to improve the functionality of the farm field. These structures shifted slightly to the south (within 7 feet) in order to align with the shift to structure 35 and to avoid terrain which would make the installation of the structures more difficult. The Applicant indicates that all necessary easements for this section have been acquired.

Structures 42-43 and 46-47: The Applicant is proposing a slight shift of structure 42 along the centerline, and a shift to structure 43 approximately 6 feet to the south of the originally approved centerline. Structures 46 and 47 would shift approximately 7 feet to the north of the centerline. These shifts would allow the structures to avoid sloped terrain which would make the installation of the structures more difficult. The Applicant indicates that all necessary easements for this section have been acquired.

Structures 66 and 67: The Applicant is proposing a shift of structure 66 approximately 48 feet to the northeast of the originally approved centerline, and structure 67 approximately 28 feet to the southwest of the centerline. These shifts were the result of final surveying, which included more accurate boundaries of parcels. The Applicant states that these shifts would serve to avoid impacts to additional property owners. The Applicant indicates that right-of-way negotiations for this section are still occurring.

Structures 72-85: The Applicant is proposing a shift of structure 72 approximately 22 feet to the northeast of the originally approved centerline, and structures 74 through 77 between 5 and 12 feet west of the approved centerline. The Applicant states that Structure 72 is proposed to be moved at the request of the landowner who is seeking better access for heavy farm equipment between structure 72 and Hanna Lane. Structure 74 is proposed to be shifted based on a landowner request to move this structure out of an agricultural field. This shift would prompt minor changes to the location of structures 73, 75, 76, and 77 in order to maintain a tangent structure alignment. The Applicant is proposing a shift of structure 81 of approximately 25 feet to the east of the originally approved centerline in order to avoid unfavorable terrain at this location. This proposed shift would necessitate a 6-foot shift to structure 79 and 19-foot shift to structure 80, both to the east, in order to maintain tangent with structure 81. Structures 83-85 are proposed by the Applicant to be shifted between 6 and 11 feet to the west in order to provide a greater offset to an existing 69 kV line. While some easements for these sections have been acquired, the Applicant indicates that right-of-way negotiations for portions of this section are still occurring.

Structure 88: The Applicant is proposing a shift of structure 88 of approximately 10 feet to the southeast of the originally approved centerline in order to allow the line to properly enter the Vigo Station at the correct bay location. This shift would also allow the Applicant to remove structure 89 at the substation entrance. The Applicant indicates that all necessary easements for this section have been acquired.

Staff finds the purpose of the proposed alignment shifts reasonable after final engineering and land surveying and property owner discussions.

## **Application Review**

### *Social Impacts*

Staff finds that the proposed adjustments are not expected to significantly alter existing land uses, including agricultural land, or to increase the estimated capital costs for the project. The adjustments are proposed in order to provide appropriate clear distance between the existing 69

kV line and this proposed line, and as a result of property owner preference and engineering adjustments to the approved preferred route. With the proposed adjustments, the number of residential structures identified within 51-100 feet of the right-of-way would drop from ten to eight. One additional property would be crossed by right-of-way for these adjustments. The Applicant has not yet secured all new right-of-way needed for these adjustments.

These revised alignment sections have been studied for the presence of archaeological resources and historic impacts and no significant adverse impacts on cultural resources are expected. The State Historic Preservation Office concurs that the amended alignments would not be expected to impact cultural resources.

The proposed structure and alignment shifts average approximately 13 feet in distance from the approved centerline in Case No. 17-0638-EL-BTX. Staff finds that the purposes of these adjustments and reroutes to align with final engineering and surveying of the line, landowner preferences, and to provide better separation and clearance from the existing 69 kV line during construction are reasonable. The amended alignments would not significantly alter the percentage of agricultural or residential land being crossed.

#### *Surface Waters*

The route adjustments would not cross additional streams or wetlands and would not result in increased impacts to surface water resources. Adherence to the conditions of the original certificate as well as implementation of the storm water pollution prevention plan would minimize impacts to surface water resources that could occur as a result of the proposed adjustments.

#### *Threatened and Endangered Species*

The proposed adjustments would not result in increased impacts to listed wildlife species. Adherence to the conditions of the original certificate would minimize impacts to listed species.

### **Recommended Findings**

Staff recommends approval of this amendment provided that the following condition is satisfied. Staff notes that its recommendation for approval of this amendment should not be construed as a recommendation for approval of cost recovery in any ratemaking proceeding.

#### **Condition:**

- (1) The Applicant shall continue to adhere to all conditions of the Opinion, Order, and Certificate for the Ginger Switch-Vigo 138 kilovolt rebuild project in Case No. 17-0638-EL-BTX, following the route as amended through this application.

**This foregoing document was electronically filed with the Public Utilities**

**Commission of Ohio Docketing Information System on**

**2/14/2020 10:06:35 AM**

**in**

**Case No(s). 19-1866-EL-BTA**

Summary: Staff Report of Investigation electronically filed by Mr. Matt Butler on behalf of Staff of OPSB