

BEFORE THE POWER SITING BOARD OF THE STATE OF OHIO

In the Matter of the Letter of Notification Application)
of AEP Ohio Transmission Company for the Babbitt) **Case No. 17-1325-EL-BLN**
Station 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 (Board) rules. The accelerated certificate application in this case is subject to an automatic approval process as required by Section 4906.03 of the Ohio Revised Code.

The application will be recommended for automatic approval on July 3, 2017, unless suspended by the Board's chairperson or an administrative law judge. If suspended, the Board must render a decision on the application within 90 days from the date of suspension.

Please present any concerns you or your designee may have with this case to my office at least four business days prior to July 3, 2017, which is the automatic approval date.

Sincerely,



Patrick Donlon
Director, Rates and Analysis
Public Utilities Commission of Ohio
180 East Broad Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215
(614) 644-8932

OPSB STAFF REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

Case Number: 17-1325-EL-BLN
Project Name: Babbitt Station Project
Project Location: Licking County
Applicant: AEP Ohio Transmission Company
Application Filing Date: June 2, 2017
Filing Type: Expedited Letter of Notification
Inspection Date: June 22, 2017
Report Date: June 26, 2017
Recommended Automatic Approval Date: July 3, 2017
Applicant's Waiver Requests: none
Staff Assigned: J. Pawley

Summary of Staff Recommendations (see discussion below):

Application: ☐ Approval ☐ Disapproval ☒ Approval with Condition

Waiver: ☐ Approval ☐ Disapproval ☒ Not Applicable

Project Description

The purpose of this project is to construct a new substation for a specific customer in New Albany, Ohio, along with a new 1,100 foot transmission line loop to the new substation. The AEP Ohio Transmission Company (AEP or Applicant) would construct a new breaker and a half substation (Babbitt Station), which would tap the Jug Street-Kirk 138 kilovolt (kV) circuit in order to serve five transformers needed by the customer. The Applicant states that it currently has a letter of commitment for engineering design work from the customer for the substation and transmission line loop, and that a full letter of commitment for the construction and finance of the facility would be executed prior to commencement of construction.

The proposed project would be constructed on property currently owned by the New Albany Company. The 18 acre Babbitt Station site would be transferred to AEP upon completion. The transmission line loop would extend from the existing adjacent Jug Street-Kirk transmission line to the Babbitt Station site. After transfer of the Babbitt Station property, the Applicant states that no additional easements, options, and/or land use agreements would be necessary to construct and operate the facility.

The Babbitt Station would consist of surrounding fence, twenty six 138 kV circuit breakers and foundations, fifty two 138 kV disconnect switches mounted on tubular structures, a 16 foot by 120 foot metal control building (no plumbing necessary), lighting, surge arrestors and other equipment necessary to operate the switching station. No transformers would be needed at the Babbitt Station.

The transmission line loop would consist of 138 kV double circuit transmission line on steel two-pole structures.

The cost of the project is estimated at \$9.9 million, with \$8.0 million allotted for the Babbitt Substation, and \$1.9 million for the transmission line loop. The Applicant would like to commence construction of the project in August 2017 and place the facility in service by December 2018.

Socioeconomic Impacts

The project site is approximately 18 acres and is presently used for agricultural purposes. The Applicant indicates that the site is not registered as agricultural district land with Licking County. No occupied residences are located within 100 feet of the site, and no churches, schools, parks, preserves, or wildlife management areas are located within 1,000 feet of the project.

Cultural Resources

The Applicant's cultural resources consultant performed a literature review and Phase I cultural resource management investigation for the project in May 2017. Field studies revealed one archaeological site (Site 33LI2245) on the western portion of the new station site, however this site was not considered to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The consultant determined that the project would not involve or impact any significant cultural resources or landmarks, and that no further cultural resource management work is necessary. On June 14, 2017, the Ohio History Connection issued a concurrence letter agreeing with these findings.

Surface Waters

The project site does not contain any streams or wetlands. No in-water work is planned in any streams, and no impacts are anticipated.

The Applicant would submit a Notice of Intent for coverage under the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency General National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit. The project does not cross a 100-year floodplain and no floodplain permit would be required.

Threatened and Endangered Species

The project lies within the range of the federal and state endangered Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*) and the federal threatened northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*). Indiana bat presence in the vicinity of the project has been confirmed. As tree roosting species, these species may be impacted by tree clearing during the summer months. The Applicant asserts that tree clearing will not be necessary for this project.

Due to no in-water work and a lack of suitable habitat, impacts to state and federal listed species are not anticipated.

Conclusion

Staff's review of the application included consideration of the requirements listed in Ohio Revised Code Section 4906.10. Based on Staff's review, the application meets the necessary criteria for granting a certificate. Staff recommends automatic approval of this case on July 3, 2017, provided that the following condition is satisfied:

Condition:

- (1) Prior to commencement of construction, the Applicant shall provide for Staff review a copy of the executed financial letter of commitment for the construction of the project.

This foregoing document was electronically filed with the Public Utilities

Commission of Ohio Docketing Information System on

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in

Case No(s). 17-1325-EL-BLN

Summary: Staff Report of Investigation electronically filed by Adam Bargar on behalf of Staff of OPSB