

**STATE OF VERMONT
PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION**

Case No. 24-_____

Petition of Vermont Transco LLC and Vermont Electric Power Company, Inc. for a certificate of public good, pursuant to 30 V.S.A. § 248, for the replacement and removal of structures on the VELCO K24-5 Line in Waterbury, Vermont	
---	--

**PETITION OF VERMONT ELECTRIC POWER COMPANY, INC. AND
VERMONT TRANSCO LLC
FOR A CERTIFICATE OF PUBLIC GOOD PURSUANT TO 30 V.S.A. § 248**

By this Petition, Vermont Electric Power Company, Inc. and Vermont Transco LLC (collectively “VELCO” or “Petitioner”) request that the Vermont Public Utility Commission (“Commission”) issue a Certificate of Public Good (“CPG”), pursuant to 30 V.S.A. § 248, authorizing the replacement of Structure LCP-020 and removal of temporary Structures LCP-020 and LCP-021 on the VELCO K24-5 Duxbury Tap-Stowe Line in Waterbury, Vermont (the “Project”). In support of this Petition, VELCO states the following based on the prefiled testimony and exhibits submitted by VELCO in this Case:

I. DESCRIPTION OF THE PETITIONER

1. VELCO is a company as defined by 30 V.S.A. § 201, and as such is subject to the Commission’s jurisdiction pursuant to 30 V.S.A. § 203. VELCO’s office is located at 366 Pinnacle Ridge Road in Rutland, Vermont.
2. VELCO owns, operates, and plans for Vermont’s high voltage electric transmission system.
3. Construction of the Project requires a CPG pursuant to 30 V.S.A. § 248.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

4. The Project is further detailed in the Petitioner’s prefiled testimony. This Project involves the permanent replacement of Structure LCP-020 on the VELCO K24-5 Duxbury Tap-Stowe Line in Waterbury, Vermont, and the removal of temporary Structures LCP-020 and LCP-021. These two temporary structures were installed in July and August 2024 in accordance with the Order Granting Waiver Pursuant to 30 V.S.A. § 248(k) (the “Waiver Order”) issued by the Commission on July 24, 2024, in Case No. 24-2234-PET.

5. As detailed more in the July 24, 2024 Order, the original laminate pole Structure LCP-020 was deemed unsafe after core testing was performed in mid-July 2024. It was removed and temporary structures LCP-020 and LCP-021 were installed.

6. The Commission’s Order in Case No. 24-2234-PET specifically requires that, “[o]n or before February 3, 2025, VELCO must file a petition for a CPG under 30 V.S.A. § 248 to install a permanent replacement of Structure LCP-020 with a steel pole and the removal of Structure LCP-021.” In accordance with the Commission’s Order, through this Project, VELCO is proposing a permanent replacement for Structure LCP-020 and the removal of LCP-021.

7. The original Structure LCP-020 was a self-supported laminate pole angle structure, meaning it did not use guy wires for support. Prefiled Testimony of Ryan Johnson (“Johnson pf.”) at 5.

8. New Structure LCP-020 is proposed to be a self-supporting steel, single pole dead-end structure on a concrete foundation. Prefiled Testimony of William F. McNamara (“McNamara pf.”) at 4.

9. VELCO’s geotechnical and engineering design consultants have recommended that the new foundation be placed at least 20 feet horizontally from the existing retaining wall supporting the upslope soils above the access road to the adjacent development, to minimize

transferring soil loads resulting from the foundation to the existing retaining wall. Another structure location design criteria is that LCP-020 be located such that no angle be applied to the adjacent structure LCP-022, because an angle would produce different loads on LCP-022 for which it was not designed. McNamara pf. at 4.

10. In order to meet these two criteria, VELCO has proposed to locate new Structure LCP-020 approximately 23' north of the original LCP-020 conductor attachment location, in line with the original conductor alignment. McNamara pf. at 4.

11. For new LCP-020, VELCO proposes an approximately six-foot diameter by 30-foot-deep concrete drilled pier foundation with internal steel anchor bolts and secondary steel rebar cage. McNamara pf. at 5.

12. The proposed location of LCP-020 provides other design benefits due to its higher base grade, and the shorter span in the direction (to the north) where the ground clearance is controlling the height of the structure. The original above-grade height of LCP-020 was approximately 90 feet; the proposed replacement structure is 72 feet above-grade height. The original top of pole elevation was approximately six feet higher than the proposed replacement pole top elevation. McNamara pf. at 4.

13. VELCO is also proposing to run new conductor between existing structure LCP-019 and permanent Structure LCP-020 to avoid having mid-span splices in this section of conductor. Johnson pf. at 5.

14. The Project site preparation will include reestablishing the access routes used to construct temporary Structures LCP-020 and LCP-021. A work pad will be constructed at the new Structure LCP-020 suitable to support heavy equipment necessary to drill the foundation, set the replacement pole, and frame the structure. A work pad will also be reconstructed at the temporary LCP-021 location to facilitate the removal of that structure. A small, matted pad will

be installed adjacent to Kimberly Lane, near structure LCP-019, to allow equipment to be set up for terminating the new span of conductor. Johnson pf. at 5-6.

15. This Project also includes removing temporary Structures LCP-020 and LCP-021 and associated guy anchors. The areas where the two structures were installed will be graded and restored to a similar condition that existed before the temporary installation. Vegetation plantings will be installed in areas where removal of vegetation was required for the installation of the temporary structures. VELCO has proposed an Aesthetic Mitigation Plan for this Project. Johnson pf. at 6, 18.

16. VELCO is planning two line outages for the Project. The first outage will be necessary for drilling and installing the concrete pier foundation. The second outage will be required for the installation of new Structure LCP-020, transfer and installation of conductors, transfer of optical ground wire, and the removal of temporary Structures LCP-020 and LCP-021. Johnson pf. at 7.

17. The K24-5 outages will be coordinated with the interconnecting distribution utilities to assure there are no overlapping outages with the local sub-transmission system that could impact the ability to support load served in the area. Johnson pf. at 7.

III. PROJECT COST AND SCHEDULE

18. The total cost of the Project, including the emergency work that was allowed under a waiver in Case No. 24-2234-PET, is estimated at \$1,211,146 (with contingency for future work), which is not eligible for regionalized cost recovery. Johnson pf. at 10.

19. VELCO is proposing to begin Project construction as soon as possible upon receiving the required permits, approvals, and materials. Since new LCP-020 is a unique steel pole structure and not a standard type of pole that is regularly and more commonly used on other

parts of the VELCO system, material procurement will not occur until after the required CPG is received. Johnson pf. at 10-11.

20. VELCO estimates that once Structure LCP-020 is ordered, it will take approximately five months for the pole to be delivered to VELCO. Johnson pf. at 11.

21. Currently, the estimated construction schedule is planned from August through October 2025, which assumes receipt of a CPG by April 2025. Johnson pf. at 11.

22. As discussed in more detail in the prefiled testimony, VELCO is planning to complete construction before the end of October to avoid impacts to local load requirements, which typically increase significantly around the beginning of November. If construction cannot be completed before the end of October 2025, VELCO would need to push construction out to start in the spring of 2026, after the local load requirements reduce. Johnson pf. at 11.

23. Construction is planned to take place between the hours of 7:00 A.M. and 7:00 P.M. Monday through Friday, and between 8:00 A.M. and 5:00 P.M. on Saturdays. No construction will take place on Sundays, federal holidays, and state holidays with the exception of Bennington Battle Day in August. VELCO requests, however, that these restrictions not apply to construction activities that VELCO must perform during any required transmission outages that may be needed to maintain system reliability. VELCO respectfully requests that it be allowed to perform construction activities on Bennington Battle Day given (i) the short summer construction season, and (ii) that the holiday is not widely granted as a paid day off for the workers on this Project. Johnson pf. at 11.

IV. NOTICE REQUIREMENTS

24. Pursuant to 30 V.S.A. § 248(f) and Rule 5.402, on October 29, 2024, VELCO issued a 45-day advance notice describing the Project, which was provided to the Town of Waterbury select board and planning commission, along with the regional planning commission,

adjoining landowners (which include those landowners who intervened in the Section 248(k) proceeding), the Department of Public Service, the Agency of Natural Resources, and other state agencies pursuant to Commission rules on service of advance notices.

25. Once the Petition is deemed complete by the Commission, service of copies of the Petition filing will be made on the parties specified in 30 V.S.A. § 248(a)(4)(C) by the Commission through ePUC and by VELCO via U.S. mail, and email where authorized. Pursuant to Commission Rule 5.407(B), VELCO will also serve the required notices of the Petition filing.

26. Consistent with the Commission's direction in the Waiver Order, VELCO has had regular pre-filing communications with the landowners participating in Case No. 24-2234-PET. VELCO began outreach on this Project with the landowners who obtained party status during the emergency hearings in Case No. 24-2234-PET, immediately after the July 24, 2024 Waiver Order was granted. At that time, communications were provided on the plans for the installation of the temporary structures and the progress of construction. Since completion of construction in August, regular communications have been provided to the landowners on the progress towards filing this Petition and of the Project design, including sharing an example photo of a structure similar to the proposed permanent Structure LCP-020. Johnson pf. at 12.

27. On December 3, 2024, a site visit was conducted with the landowners to review and discuss the design of the Project and planned aesthetic mitigation plantings. Johnson pf. at 12.

V. COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 248 CRITERIA

28. As summarized below (and in the filed Rule 5.403(A)(16) Filing Index) and demonstrated in the prefiled testimony and exhibits and submitted by VELCO, the Project meets all Section 248 criteria:

<u>Witness</u>	<u>Subject</u>
Ryan Johnson	Ryan Johnson provides an overview of the proposed Project, estimated cost and proposed schedule, and explains how the Project complies with Sections 248(b)(1), (b)(2), (b)(3), (b)(4), (b)(5) (aesthetics, public health and safety, noise, transportation, education and municipal services, development affecting public investments), (b)(6), (b)(7), and (b)(10).
Jason W. Smith	Provides testimony demonstrating that the Project will not have undue adverse effects on historic sites, air and water purity, or the natural environment under 30 V.S.A. §§ 248(b)(5) and (b)(8).
William F. McNamara	Describes the proposed engineering and design details for the Project.

VI. CONCLUSION

WHEREFORE, VELCO respectfully requests that the Commission:

- (1) Hold a scheduling conference, establish a schedule for this case, and issue an Order approving the Project under 30 V.S.A. § 248 and preferably, by the end of April 2025 to allow for construction in 2025.
- (2) Find that the proposed Project will promote the general good of the State of Vermont, and authorize VELCO to undertake the actions as described here and in its testimony and exhibits, and issue a Certificate of Public Good to that effect.
- (3) Issue any further relief as the Commission deems just and proper.

DATED at Burlington, Vermont this 20th day of December 2024

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

VERMONT ELECTRIC POWER COMPANY,
INC. and VERMONT TRANSCO LLC

By: /s/ Debra L. Bouffard

Debra L. Bouffard

SHEEHEY FURLONG & BEHM P.C.

30 Main Street

P.O. Box 66

Burlington, VT 05402-0066

(802) 864-9891

dbouffard@sheeheyvt.com