

Testimony of Karen Sheehan
SCC Local Public Hearing
Battlefield High School – Haymarket, VA
May 2, 2016
Haymarket Transmission Line and Substation Project
PUE-2015-00107

My name is Karen Sheehan. I have lived at xxxx in Haymarket for almost 20 years now. I know that you want to know which of the 5 proposed routes, in the Haymarket transmission line and substation project application, impact my home. My home will be impacted by any route that is selected. My home will be impacted if any aspect of this project is approved. My home is the Rural Crescent, my home is Haymarket, my home is Prince William County.

I oppose the entire project. I, and the rest in my community, are not benefitting from any aspect of this proposed project – we are only suffering from it. This project has been proposed solely because Amazon wants to establish 3 more data centers outside of the town of Haymarket. The Dominion Virginia Power and Amazon Web Services corporations are the beneficiaries of this project – not me, and not my neighbors. I would venture to say that most, if not all, of the people seated in this auditorium behind me, are willing to stand right now to demonstrate their opposition to this proposed project.

It has become patently clear, and adequately substantiated, that our County, Dominion Power, and Amazon, colluded together, behind closed doors, in secret, to put this deal together. Each of these entities has tried to thwart the residents of this community to know and to understand what they really want to bring upon us. But we have persevered to educate ourselves, and to obtain information. Information which proves that these plans are only needed for Amazon, and only benefit Amazon's and Dominion's profit margins.

Our county leadership, Director of Economic Development Jeff Kaczmarek and others, took a nice junket in 2013 to Seattle, Washington (Amazon's headquarters), together with Dominion Power representatives, to sell Amazon on establishing their data centers here.

Dominion Power sources have given differing explanations of the need for this project over the course of the last two years. These different stories include Chuck Penn, Media Relations Manager for Dominion Power, telling the Washington Post in August of 2014 that "...the transmission line is needed because of regional growth."

Subsequently, a year later at a June 2015 Dominion Power Open House for the proposed project, Mr. Penn told a USA9 reporter that "...the line is needed because we have a customer in place who will increase bulk load and we have an obligation to serve that customer."

Dominion Power Manager Greg Mathe, when asked if there would still be a need, if Dominion's corporate client abandoned its project, which calls for installation of a transmission line, responded in a July 2015 email to a citizen "Since the area is growing, there could be a need at some point, but the immediacy of the new infrastructure would no longer be there. New transmission facilities would still be useful to Dominion's and NOVEC's distribution operations to serve the native growth, but as of today that growth alone is not enough of a driver to necessitate new electric transmission facilities in our five-year planning horizon."

Dominion's application to the SCC for this project, dated November 6, 2015, calls out *the Customer* 81 different times. Yes – I have read every page of the entire application. When Haymarket or regional growth is mentioned in the application, it is always a second statement, following detail about the customer and the customer's data center campus.

In Section I of the Appendix, Necessity for the Proposed Project, Section A, in which Dominion must detail the engineering justifications for the proposed project, Dominion responds first: "In order to provide service requested by a retail electric service customer (the customer);" then next "to maintain reliable service for the overall growth in the area;" and last "to comply with mandatory North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) Reliability Standards."

By contrast, when recently asked in an official interrogatory for this case if the project would be needed to assure reliability of the transmission and distribution systems in the local area, if not for the new demand attributable to the customer's data center, Dominion provided this response "...there is not a NERC reliability criteria violation driving the construction of the project. Without the request to serve the proposed Haymarket Substation, the Company did not have plans to construct a 230kV line into the Haymarket Load area."

Translation: The proposed substation isn't needed, to convert and distribute power from the proposed transmission lines, if the proposed data centers aren't there.

So – bottom line – in spite of attempts to pad, pile on, or obfuscate, the only true drivers for this transmission and substation project, are Amazon's multiple data center plans, and Dominion's continuous push to build evermore transmission lines, using Amazon's need, in this instance, as their impetus and excuse.

Amazon, by comparison, has not stepped up to respond to any inquiries. But VADData, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Amazon, is listed as the owner on a grading infrastructure permit dated Feb. 3, 2016, which is posted at the entrance to the Midwood Center 1 site across from the Walmart outside of the town of Haymarket. VADData has started clearing the site, purportedly for the proposed Amazon Web Services data centers.

Included in their land is a parcel set aside for the substation. VADData is also clearing for the substation which is included in VADData's site plan - a Dominion Virginia Power substation required to meet Amazon's needs.

Additionally, VADData and Amazon.com Inc. have been specifically and publicly named as the “customer” in a motion filed by FST Properties, a respondent to this case, who owns property directly adjacent to the VADData site.

Amazon Web Services is a corporation which has brought, to Amazon, revenues of a minimum of \$1 billion dollars, every quarter, of every year, for the last 3 years. Trying to put the cost burdens for this Amazon project onto the backs of average working citizens is just simply immoral.

The cost of burying this proposed transmission line, in fact burying the entire route of the transmission line, which is only to feed Amazon’s need, is a mere pittance cost for this multi-billion dollar corporation to absorb.

Did Amazon pay for the cost of the double-build distribution lines, already erected by Dominion as Phase I of this project, down the main street of the town of Haymarket, which solely feed power to Amazon’s existing data center? If not, why not?

Frankly, with their billions of dollars, Amazon should be paying reparations to the people in our community for the thousands upon thousands of hours the community has already expended in building a defense for our homes and our way of life; and for the millions upon millions of dollars we will lose if this project is approved.

When we talk about what we will lose if this project is approved, there are multiple factors which must be considered. I am sure that citizens who will speak tonight will address many of these. I will touch on a few, which stand out for me.

My family’s home – Our legacy

The house and property we own at the base of Bull Run Mountain is our forever home. We plan to spend the rest of our lives together here, chasing deer and rabbits out of our vegetable and fruit gardens, maintaining and expanding our beehives, and watching the sun set, and the weather from the seasons, roll over the mountain. It will be the home of our daughter and her family after us. No one in my family wants to find overhead transmission lines running across our fields, through the properties in our valley, or through the neighborhoods in our Haymarket and Gainesville region.

Historical and Visual Impacts

George Washington travelled the road half a mile from our house. We live on part of the lands which were home to Civil War Confederate General Richard S. Ewell. All of us here today, live in the area that has been set aside by our federal government as the Journey Through Hallowed Ground. Every neighborhood in this part of Virginia can point to history and beauty which must be protected and preserved – history and beauty down every road, along every stream, and through every woods. History and beauty which will be forever altered and lost, if any part of this project is approved.

Dominion's responses to SCC Staff interrogatory questions, regarding the estimated visual impact of this project, demonstrate Dominion's insensitivity to the impacts which their transmission lines bring to communities. They responded "....the Project area, would not be particularly sensitive to changes in aesthetic conditions." Who are they, to tell you, how we in this area, feel about impacts that they are causing?

They went on to say "Dominion Virginia Power therefore identified the project area as having "low" sensitivity to changes in the visual environment." They further responded "The Project is expected to create only minor changes in aesthetic conditions." And then they added "...because the transmission line structures (for an overhead line) would be taller than some existing landscape features, Dominion Virginia Power determined that the project would have an "intermediate" impact magnitude." In closing, they declare "As a result, the Project would have an overall "moderate" level of visual impact."

These are the same people who accept the analysis of Dutton + Associates, submitting Dutton's Pre-Application Analysis for Cultural Resources of the Haymarket Substation and 230kV Transmission Line Project as Appendix B in Dominion's application to the SCC.

Throughout D+A's detailed analysis, Dutton gives opinions anywhere from *moderate* to *no impact* brought by the proposed routes on multiple historic locations: St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Haymarket Town Hall and School, Buckland Mills Battlefield, Thoroughfare Gap Battlefield, Manassas National Battlefield Park Historic District, Manassas Station Operations Battlefield, Second Battle of Manassas, Woodlawn, Monroe House, Haymarket Post Office, Winterham, and the Masonic Temple.

As an example, in Dutton's field reconnaissance sections for the Manassas National Battlefield Park Historic District, which is directly impacted by all proposed routes in this proposed project, Dutton offers the opinion "From portions of the park that will be exposed to the new towers, no new elements will be introduced to the views as it is already characterized by existing transmission lines within the Park... Therefore it is D+A's opinion that the (proposed routes) will have only a *minimal impact* on the Manassas National Battlefield Park Historic District."

The only historic site determined to have the next highest impact, *moderate*, is the Second Battle of Manassas location. Dutton did not deem any aspect of this project to pose a *severe* impact.

In addition to representing that the addition of more transmission towers, to any that are already seen around these historic locations, will not be objectionable, Dutton continuously contends in these numerous examples that "land outside of the historic district boundaries....once rural in nature....will most likely fade within the next five years."

Dominion Power and Dutton + Associates are corporations made up of people who have been inured to the effects of these transmission projects. They would expect us, and the SCC, to agree with their perverted belief that we all should become accustomed to their

assumption: that what has been done, to begin removing our history and our countryside, will and should just continue, until it is all gone. They expect us to accept, that tearing out, and then covering our countryside with transmission lines, is acceptable.

Industrial Water - Need and Usage

The water use for this proposed project is massive. According to the proposed project's Site Plan 0021-A-001, on Page 86 of 111, the peak water usage for the three proposed buildings is estimated at 5,459,472 gallons per month. By comparison, an average American 4 person family home uses 12,000 gallons per month. This means that this one property of 44.3 acres, with three buildings, will be using the monthly amount of water normally required for 455 homes.

The site is planned to use public water and sewer. Where is all of this water coming from? It is coming from a newly planned enlarged line from a supply tower on Antioch Road, terminating at the Amazon site. A line planned to be added by the Prince William County Service Authority at a cost of \$4.6 million to Prince William citizens. The total plan, adopted in May of 2014 by the Prince William County Service Authority Board of Directors, represents total costs of \$22 million through the year 2020, to increase water service solely to the "Haymarket Pressure Zone." A plan adopted without substantive public discussion, and with the costs being passed along to county citizens. Again, our county helping Amazon, and the citizens suffering for it.

Since one of the SCC's chief goals and objectives is to "Ensure the equitable assessment, distribution, and collection of applicable taxes and fees," shouldn't this plan and these increased fees be under the purview of the SCC as well?

Industrial Power - Need and Usage

The amount of power which will be required for Amazon's proposed data centers is enough to provide power, during peak hours, to two Empire State buildings, or to 400,000 homes. This amount of power is industrial use – it is not residential or rural use. Our entire county's growth has averaged little more than 1% for the last 5 years. Our *particular* area of the county is predominantly rural, where there has been and will continue to be close to nil growth.

We are obviously not the intended consumers of any power which this proposed project will provide. But Dominion's process would have us, public taxpayers, covering the costs for a private business consumer.

If a Haymarket substation is approved, it will be like giving a gateway drug to Dominion Virginia Power. Dominion only sees open land as something to be taken, and covered, by their grids of metal and wire. A substation in Haymarket will be a gateway to enable and feed Dominion's desire to expand and create more networked overhead transmission lines – forever changing what brought my family to Prince William County.

Once Dominion has the right of way, there is no going back, there is no stopping their ability or addiction to expand. And there are citizens in other vulnerable counties all around us, who will also suffer if and when additional transmission lines are proposed through their rural communities, all as a result of this one substation possibility, which is driven only by Amazon's needs.

In Summary

If the residents of this county are truly to benefit from this proposed project, Amazon must be required to take the incredible incentives of free land offered to them by the County, and move their data centers to Innovation Park.

Only then will the burden of services be properly borne by the county infrastructure, which is already set up in that *appropriate* location, to support activities such as Amazon's multiple data centers.

Only then, will any benefits from this proposed project be balanced across the people in this county, together with the utility and the customer; as opposed to being huge gains solely for the corporations proposing this project, and huge losses for the people of this community.

I hadn't understood the mandated vision and mission of the SCC until they were pointed out in public commentary by other citizens at previous hearings for this project. Now, along with all the other daily involvements that this fight entails, I remind myself that the SCC vision is "... to be the premier, high-performing agency serving and protecting the citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia."

And, that its mission is "... to apply law and regulation to balance the interests of businesses and citizens in regulating Virginia's business and economic concerns and work continually to improve the regulatory and administrative processes."

The future of this area does not depend on Dominion Virginia Power and Amazon Web Services – it depends on the *conscience* of the citizens, and on the *conscience* of the SCC.

I respectfully request that the SCC disapprove this project as proposed - for all of the reasons that I, and others have raised, and will continue to raise.

Reasons which prove that there is no balance in this request, and that the need for this project does not consider or enhance the interests of the citizens in this community.

Thank you for permitting me the opportunity, and the time, to state my case.