

Tina Crawford

From: Dan Beardsley <dbeardsley@esgrp.net>
Sent: Tuesday, April 23, 2013 4:27 PM
To: Tina Crawford
Subject: Matanuska Electric Association - Hospital to Hering 115 kV Transmission Line Applications - Routing Reports
Attachments: MEA-Hospital to Hering Analysis of Parks Hwy Corridor.pdf

Tina,

As mentioned in the previous e-mail, the Hospital Substation to Hering Substation Transmission System Route Selection – Analysis of Parks Highway Corridor Option to Determine Optimal Alignment is attached for addition to the application materials.

Dan Beardsley

DRAFT - PRELIMINARY REPORT

**Hospital Substation to Herning Substation Transmission System
Route Selection (Herning Circuit Routing and Easement Study)**

**ANALYSIS OF PARKS HIGHWAY CORRIDOR OPTION TO
DETERMINE OPTIMAL ALIGNMENT**

MATANUSKA ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

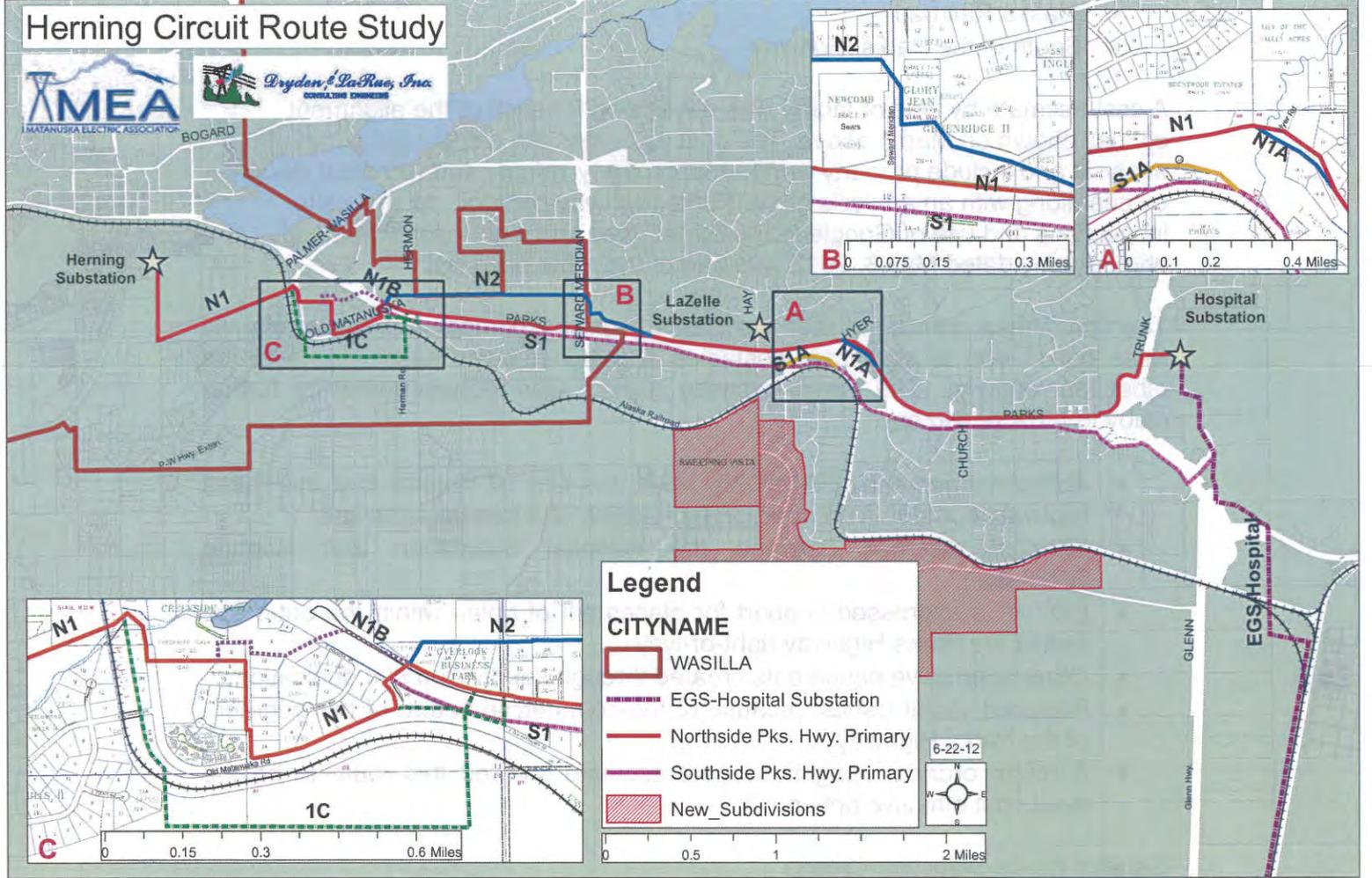
August, 2012



Dryden & LaRue, Inc.
CONSULTING ENGINEERS

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Herning Circuit Route Study



Legend

CITYNAME

- WASILLA
- EGS-Hospital Substation
- Northside Pks. Hwy. Primary
- Southside Pks. Hwy. Primary
- New_Subdivisions

6-22-12

Introduction

This is the second phase in the route analysis for Herning Circuit Transmission Route Selection Study.

The first phase looked at five route options:

- Bogard Road
- Palmer-Wasilla Highway
- Parks Highway corridor
- Alaska Railroad
- South of the Parks Highway

A cost estimate by type of facility was developed for each of the alignment options shown on Map 1 above. The cost estimates are a substantial part of the analysis and include property ownership, property values, and technical design criteria along with an analysis of the Parks Highway corridor. Multiple site inspections and use of Google Maps Street View and high resolution aerial photography dated May 8, 2012 was part of the route analysis.

The first phase concluded that the Parks Highway corridor was the preferred route option due to significant obstacles and higher costs associated with the other four options. The Parks Highway corridor was recommended for further study to MEA based on:

- Acknowledgement by DOT/PF, MSB and City of Wasilla that the Parks Highway corridor is an appropriate location of a transmission line.
- Shortest distance between the Hospital Substation and Herning Substation.
- DOT/PF's expressed support for placement of poles within the outer five feet of the Parks Highway right-of-way
- Other alternative easements created through subdivision plat dedication.
- Reduced visual issues because of the commercial nature of this segment of the Parks Highway.
- A rough order of magnitude cost estimate showed this route to be the most cost effective option.

General Route Selection Criteria

1. The north and south sides of the Parks Highway corridor will be considered.
2. It is advisable to minimize the number of crossings as DOT/PF requires a double dead-end design that costs approximately \$6,000 for each side of a crossing. The Parks Highway has controlled access restrictions that will limit MEA's access for maintenance at crossings.

3. Three highway interchanges need to be crossed: Trunk, Hyer and the Seward-Meridian. These interchanges present special design and routing requirements. The most significant interchange is the Seward-Meridian where Sears is located on the northwest corner and Wal-mart is located on the southwest corner.
4. The Alaska Railroad (ARR) right-of-way overlaps the Parks Highway right-of-way in three places on the south side. This means that there is not room to install poles without potential conflicts with the ARR right-of-way
5. The objectives of the City of Wasilla's Comprehensive Plan need to be reviewed in the routing of a new transmission line. The City's commercial zone starts at the Seward-Meridian Parkway. The strip fronting the Parks Highway will see dense commercial/retail development. Minimizing conflicts with commercial/retail activities should be considered.
6. The cost to tear down existing distribution facilities and then replace them on new poles is a cost that should be avoided where possible. Outages during construction should also be minimized.

DOT/PF Authorization

MEA must receive a Major Utility Permit from the DOT/PF Utilities Section pursuant to 17 AAC 15 Utility Permits before it can install its facilities within the Parks Highway right-of-way. DOT/PF seeks to have utilities located in the outer five feet of the right-of-way unless there is a conflict.

The ability to locate poles inside the Parks Highway corridor is affected by:

- Slopes (cuts and fills)
- Location of existing facilities (frontage roads, bike trails, drainage ditches, light poles, retaining walls, etc.)
- Prior existing utilities (underground telephone, gas lines, etc.)

The following three highway project maps were consulted to identify placement of poles within the Parks Highway corridor:

- PARKS HIGHWAY, Old Matanuska Road, IR-OA4-1(5) 58079
- PARKS HIGHWAY, MP 35.5-40, Glenn Hwy to Seward Meridian (Partial) NH-OA4-1(13) 52479
- PARKS HIGHWAY, Seward Meridian to Crusey Street, NH-OA4-1(12) 52474

The DOT/PF Utility Permit provides the needed property interest on the inside of the Parks Highway right-of-way. DOT/PF has the last word on where the

transmission line may be located within its right-of-way. The DOT/PF Utilities Section staff was consulted several times as the analysis developed.

Easements on Adjacent Private Property

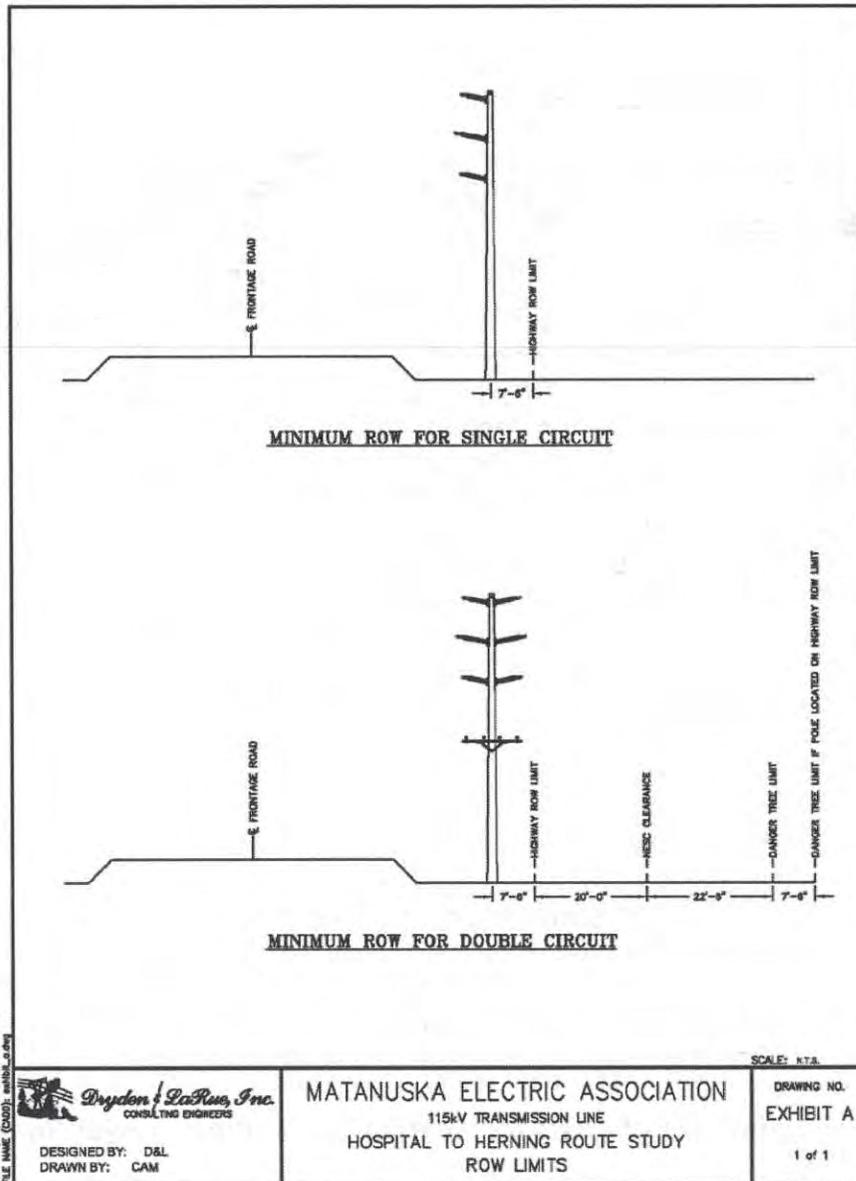
Electric transmission lines must meet National Electric Safety Code (NESC) clearance standards. Also, the USDA Rural Development Electric Programs – Rural Utility Service (RUS) has standards for construction of electric facilities. MEA has set an objective to have 100-foot easements for its 115 kV transmission lines. An easement allows MEA to construct, operate and maintain its electrical system on the land of another. MEA acquires easements for the installation and maintenance of its facilities, to meet NESC clearance requirements and to protect the line from encroachments and danger trees. Cost estimates provided in this report are for a 115 kV, double circuit transmission line with a distribution underbuild.

Placing the transmission facility (poles, insulators, conductors, guy wires) inside the DOT/PF right-of-way means that MEA only has to acquire easements on one side of its pole line, i.e. the side opposite the DOT/PF right-of-way. Design and safety criteria will dictate the need to acquire easements on private property that is adjacent to the Parks Highway. The width of the easement will depend on the type of facility that MEA installs. Assuming that there are already existing utilities in the outer five feet of the Parks Highway corridor, the application for a Major Utility Permit will request that the poles for the Hospital to Herning Circuit be authorized to be installed at 7.5 feet, so that the poles will not conflict with existing utilities. As shown on the illustration below, the conductors and wires will face inward, or toward the Parks Highway. The MSB zoning code requires a 25 feet building setback from property line. The 7.5 feet inset from the outer boundary of the Park Highway plus the 25 feet building set back provides enough distance separation between a single circuit transmission line and buildings to meet National Electric Safety Code requirements. When a second transmission circuit or a distribution line (underbuild) are added to poles, then the separation distances increase.

In addition to the significant advantage of placing facilities inside the DOT/PF right-of-way is the commercial nature of most of the development along the Parks Highway. Commercial development typically desires to be accessible and visible from the adjacent roadway. As such, there are limited danger trees and parking lots in front of commercial development that assists in meeting clearance requirements. Viewshed issues caused by transmission lines that may be a problem in residential areas are reduced in commercial districts.

The following chart and illustration show typical additional right-of-way that will need to be acquired outside the Parks Highway corridor depending on the type of facility that is constructed.

| Type of Facility | Easement width from pole (feet) | Additional R.O.W. beyond 7.5 feet |
|--|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Single Circuit 115 kV (minimum) | 7.5 | 0 |
| Double Circuit 115 kV with distribution underbuild (MEA minimum) | 25 | 17.5 |
| Double Circuit 115 kV (MEA desired easement width) | 50 | 42.5 |
| Double Circuit with no DOT/PF R.O.W. | Pole on R.O.W. line | 50-feet each side of centerline |

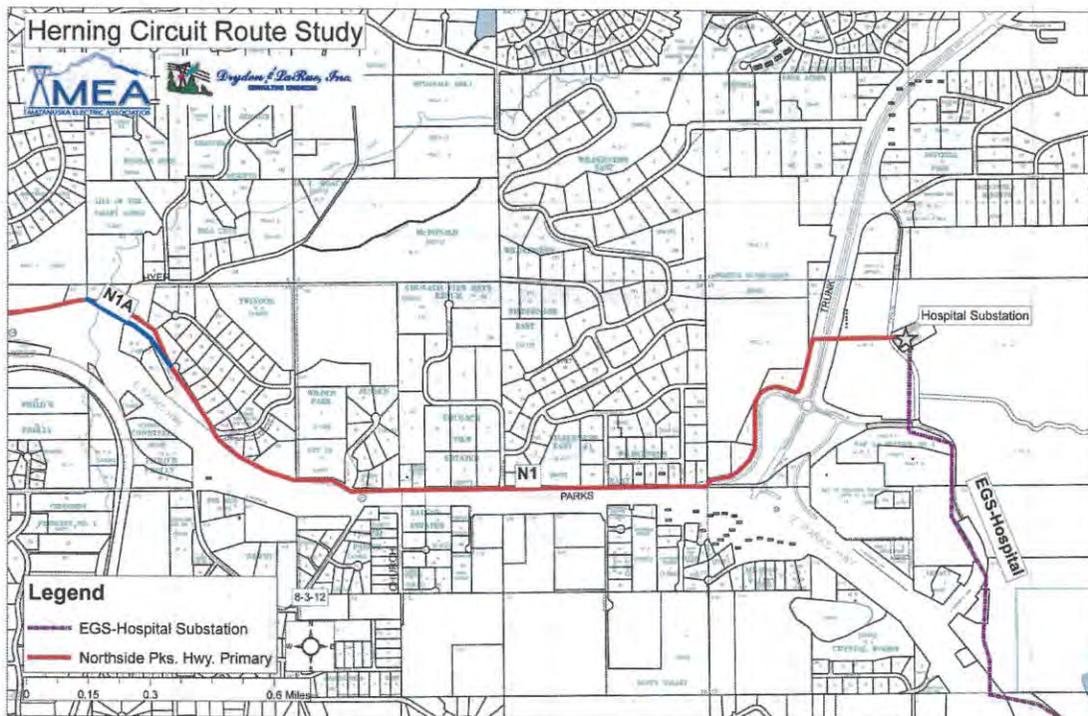


North Side Parks Highway

Introduction

The north side of the Parks Highway corridor is from Trunk Road Interchange to where the line would cross to the south side in the vicinity of Herman Road. The primary route stays on the north side of the frontage roads until Kendall Ford where it moves to the south side of the frontage road due to a bike trail taking up available space on the north side of the frontage road. There are two alternative routes, one at Hyer Road and the other that starts on the east side of Seward Meridian Parkway and runs along the 1/16th line and is referred to as the back lot line.

Hospital Substation to Hyer Road



Starting at the intersection of South Woodworth Loop, East Cottrell Campus Drive and Matanuska Road, the transmission line would stay on the north side of Matanuska Road. It would then cross Trunk Road on the north side of the roundabout to the north side of East Blue Lupine Drive. The line would then stay on the north side of East Blue Lupine Drive until it reaches Hyer Road.

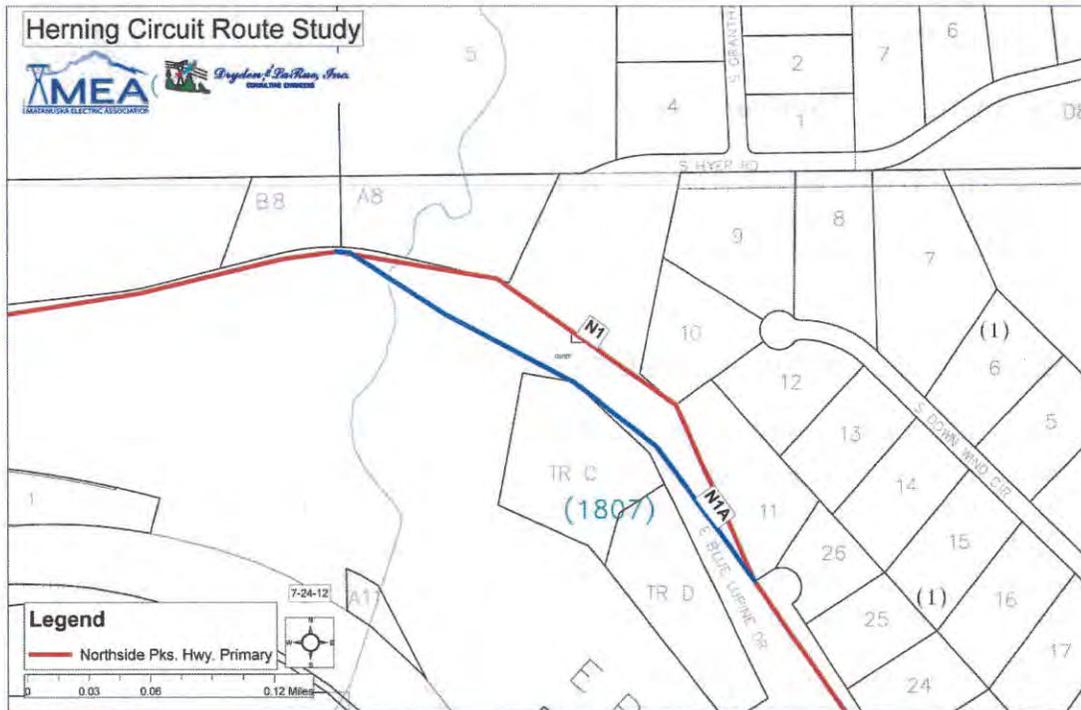
Rough order of magnitude of costs for Hospital Substation to Hyer Road

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| 115 kV Double Circuit with Distribution Underbuild | |
| Estimated Number of Parcels | 14 |
| ROW Acquisition Cost | \$254,227 |
| Construction Dollars | \$1,862,328 |
| Order of Magnitude Costs | \$2,116,555 |

Hyer Road Crossing

Two options are considered for the Hyer Road Crossing:

- Option N1 – North Side Option
- Option N1A – South Side Option



Option N1 - Hyer Road Crossing – North Side

The primary route continues on the north side of Hyer Road, which is characterized by a curve that will require many angle points. Danger trees would also need to be cleared on the north side.

Option N1A – Hyer Road Crossing – South Side

The benefit of this alignment is following the tangent to the curve, creating a straight line and minimizing angle points and guy wires. On the south side East Blue Lupine Drive is a fill slope. The line would be located at the toe of the slope on private property. Easements would need to be acquired from the commercial property for the line but it is not anticipated that the line would be perceived as interfering with the commercial use.

Rough order of magnitude of costs Hyer Road Crossing

| 115 kV Double Circuit with Distribution Underbuild | N1-North Side | N1A-South side |
|---|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Estimated Number of Parcels | 3 | 2 |
| ROW Acquisition Cost | \$64,093 | \$93,739 |
| Construction Dollars | \$262,700 | \$195,340 |
| Order of Magnitude Costs | \$326,793 | \$289,079 |

Recommendation for Hyer Road Crossing

Either option is acceptable. For this analysis option N1A is recommended for the Hyer Road Crossing due to slightly lower initial costs and the longer term savings on maintenance and operations as a result of avoiding a long curvilinear section of poles.

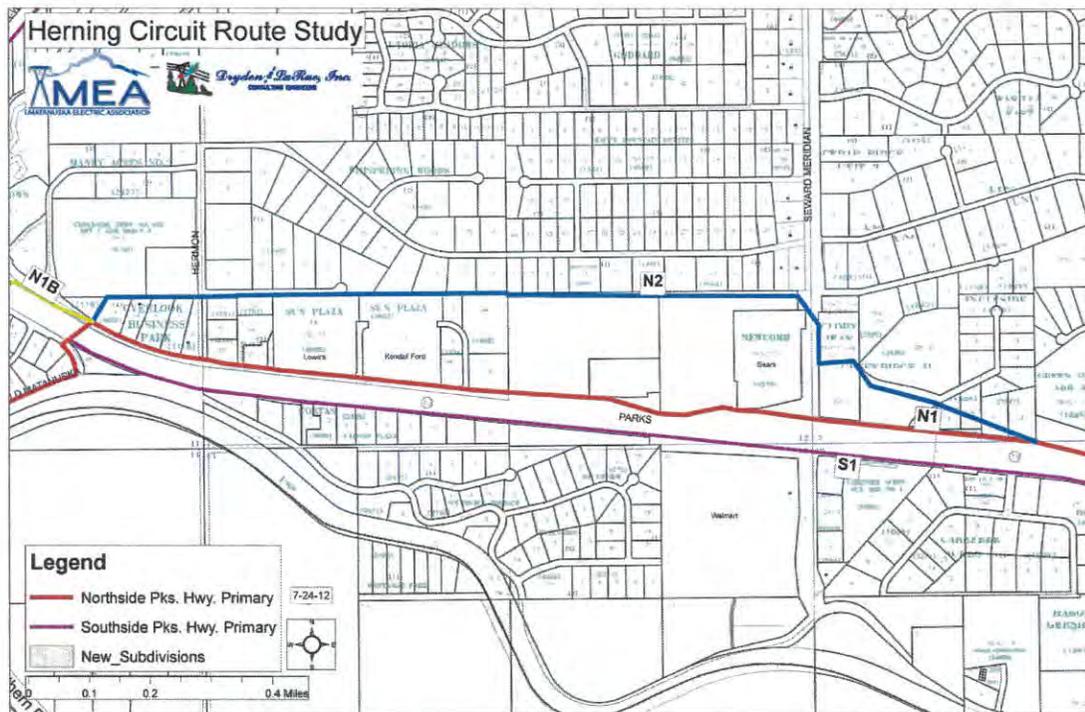
Hyer Road to Seward-Meridian Parkway

On the west side of Hyer Road, the line will continue on the north side of East Blue Lupine Drive, until it reaches Seward-Meridian Parkway. The line will need to span Wasilla Creek and the wetland area associated with it. On the west side of Oat Street specific pole spotting will be needed to insure appropriate separation distance from the Wolverine Supply building that is immediately adjacent to East Blue Lupine Drive.

Seward-Meridian Parkway to Parks Highway Crossing

Two alternative routes are considered between the Seward-Meridian Parkway and where the line will cross to the south side of the Parks Highway at or beyond Hermon Road.

- Option N1 Parks Highway Frontage.
- Option N2 Back Lot Line.



Option N1 - Seward-Meridian Parkway to Parks Highway Crossing – Parks Highway Frontage

The frontage road does not cross the Seward-Meridian Parkway. East Blue Lupine Drive ends on the east side and Sun Mountain Avenue starts on the west side of Seward-Meridian Parkway.

The transmission line would continue on the north side of East Blue Lupine Drive until it intersects with Seward-Meridian Parkway and crosses on the south side of the Sears property. It is anticipated that wood pole structures will be adequate for the Seward-Meridian Parkway crossing but steel poles may be required due to DOT/PF design requirements or to gain needed elevation across the intersection.

There is a cut slope across the next two large tracts of land (Parcel 63 & 64) and danger trees adjacent to the top of the cut. Sun Mountain Avenue starts on the east boundary of Parcel 64. There is not enough room at the top of the slope to install poles within DOT/PF right-of-way. An easement would need to be acquired and danger trees removed. The next large tract of land (Parcel 65) will also require acquisition of an easement and removal of danger trees.

The bike trail crosses from the south side of Sun Mountain Avenue to the north side at Mountain Village Circle. The bike trail encumbers the area between Sun Mountain Avenue and the north boundary of DOT/PF's right-of-way past Cottonwood Creek. The application for a Major Utility Permit will request authorization to locate the transmission line between the bike trail and Parks

Highway. The separation distance between the Parks Highway and the frontage road is wide enough for expansion of the Parks Highway without relocating the proposed electrical facilities. If DOT/PF denies this location, then the poles would be installed on the property line and easements will need to be acquired starting at Mountain Village Drive.

Option N2 - Seward-Meridian Parkway to Parks Hwy Crossing – Back Lot Line

The transmission line would stay on the north side of Blue Lupine Drive and cross the Seward-Meridian Parkway at Parcel 61.02, which is approximately 100 feet south of the E. Mark Drive intersection. The line would then continue on the SW 1/16 line through Sections 12 & 11,

On the north side of the Sears (Parcel 62) there are no easements on either side of the SW 1/16 line. There is a 15-foot wide telecommunication and electrical easement that runs the length of the Parcel 62 that is 170 feet from the north property line. A 15-foot wide utility easement acquired by DOT/PF is located on the north property line of parcel 65. There are no easements to support the transmission line on the north side of the SW 1/16 line adjacent to Parcels 62, 63, & 65. It should also be noted that there is a deep gulley/ravine on much of the north property line of Parcels 63 and 65. A natural gas pipeline also runs along the SW 1/16 line.

Mountain Village Plaza Subdivision has a 20-foot utility easement and a 10-foot screening easement on the north property line across Parcels 65.01, 65.02, 69, 71.01 and 71.02. There are no easements on the north side of the SW 1/16 line within Whispering Woods Subdivision for Parcels 65.03, 65.04, 65.05, 65.06 & 65.07. Quiet circle provides a 50-foot wide right-of-way adjacent to parcels 69, 71.01 and 71.02.

After crossing Hermon Road and continuing along the SW 1/16 line, Overlook Business Park Subdivision provides a 20-foot utility easement and the various plats of Creekside Town Square Subdivision provides a 15-foot utility easement

Rough order of magnitude of costs for Seward Meridian Parkway to Parks Highway Crossing

| 115 kV Double Circuit with Distribution Underbuild | N1-Parks Hwy | N2-Back lot line |
|---|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Estimated Number of Parcels | 16 | 22 |
| ROW Acquisition Cost | \$747,869 | \$2,032,002 |
| Construction Dollars | \$1,120,427 | \$1,258,691 |
| Order of Magnitude Costs | \$1,868,296 | \$3,290,693 |

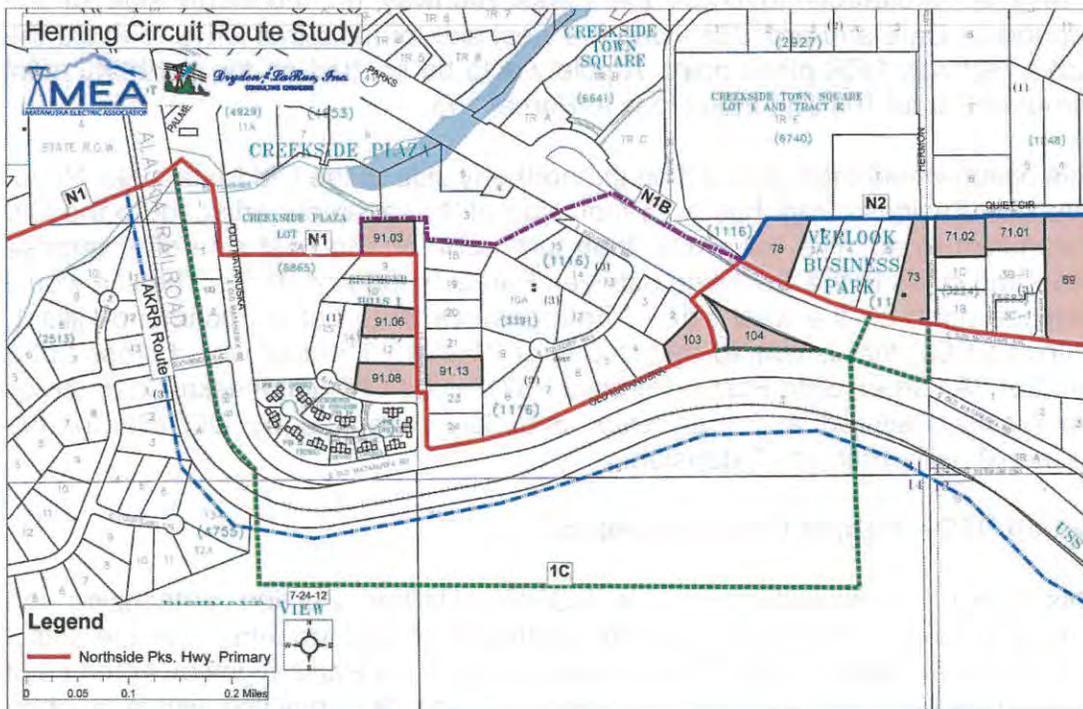
Recommendation for Seward Meridian Parkway to Parks Highway Crossing

Option N1-Parks Highway is recommended for the Seward Meridian Parkway to Parks Highway crossing segment due to overall lower costs. This recommendation is dependent on DOT/PF issuing a Major Utility Permit that authorizes the transmission line to be located on the south side of the frontage road. Should DOT/PF deny use of that portion then N2-back lot line would need to be compared with acquiring easements from commercial property adjacent to the Parks Highway.

Parks Highway to Palmer-Wasilla Highway Extension

Three options are considered for the Parks Highway Crossing:

- Option N1, Parks Highway
- Option N1C, South of ARR
- Option N1B, Behind Creekside Plaza



Overview

Three routes are proposed between the Parks Highway and the Palmer-Wasilla Highway Extension. These routes are shown on the above Map 5 showing route options. Crossing the Parks Highway to the south side could occur at Hermon

Road, the west side of the Windbreak Café, or at the Creekside Plaza. It is not anticipated that DOT/PF Utilities will object to a crossing of the Parks Highway for any of the above options. The key consideration will be whether the DOT/PF Utilities Section will issue a Major Utility Permit to authorize installing poles on the south side of the bike trail between Mountain Village Circle and South Maney Drive.

Option N1: Old Matanuska Road and Enterprise Street

Crossing the Parks Highway under this option could occur at Hermon Road, the Allen & Peterson property (Parcel 73) or on the north side of the Windbreak Café (Parcel 78). Where to cross poses both an engineering decision and a permitting question. This location is referred to as a 'pinch-point' because the ARR right-of-way overlaps the south side of the Parks Highway right-of-way at this point. There are very limited locations where poles can be placed. The ARRC may need to permit pole locations because of its overlapping right-of-way. There is a very steep grade at the ARR/Parks Highway pinch-point and Old Matanuska Road that also limits where poles can be placed. This steep slope needs to be protected against erosion.

It may be preferable to cross the Parks Highway on the north side of the Windbreak Café and proceed along the west side of Industrial Drive to avoid the Parks Highway/ARR pinch-point. A pole would be spotted on the northerly most corner of Parcel 104 and then cross to Parcel 103.

This option would then proceed on the northerly side of the Old Matanuska Road. Overlook Business Park has a 15-foot wide utility easement adjacent to the Old Matanuska Road. The line would then turn north on the east side of Enterprise Drive and cross to the west side between Parcel 91.08 and 91.13. The line would continue north on the west side of Enterprise Drive to Lot 8, Richmond Hills 1, (Parcel 91.03) that is owned by the City of Wasilla. The line would cross Lot 8 and Lot 2A, Creek Side Plaza (Parcel 91.02), cross Old Matanuska Road, cross the Alaska Railroad and then enter onto land acquired by DOT/PF for the Palmer-Wasilla Highway Extension.

Option N1B – Behind Creekside Plaza

This option is dependent on the DOT/PF Utilities Section authorizing the transmission line to be located on the south side of Sun Mountain Avenue until it is opposite Creekside Plaza. The line would cross the Parks highway at the point where it would run behind the Creekside Plaza Mall building within a utility easement dedicated by Creekside Plaza Lot 3A Subdivision, Plat No. 2012-13. This alignment would require the establishment of new easements on commercial property that are adjacent to the utility easement. The line would cross S. Enterprise Drive to Lot 8, Richmond Hills 1, (Parcel 91.03) that is owned

by the City of Wasilla where it would then continue along the alignment for Option N1.

Option N1C – Old Matanuska-Wasilla Road to PW Extension – South side of ARR

This route proceeds due south as it crosses the Parks Highway in the vicinity of Herman Road, and immediately proceeds over the steep slope, Old Matanuska Road and the ARR until it reaches a point approximately 850 feet south of the ARR. The route then proceeds due west approximately 3,100 feet, it then turns north, crosses the ARR and runs between the ARR and Parcels 104.08, 104.09 and 104.10, or can be routed between the Old Matanuska Road and these parcels. It then crosses the ARR at approximately the same location as Option N1. This alignment would require the establishment of new easements on private property south of the ARR and adjacent to the Old Matanuska Road.

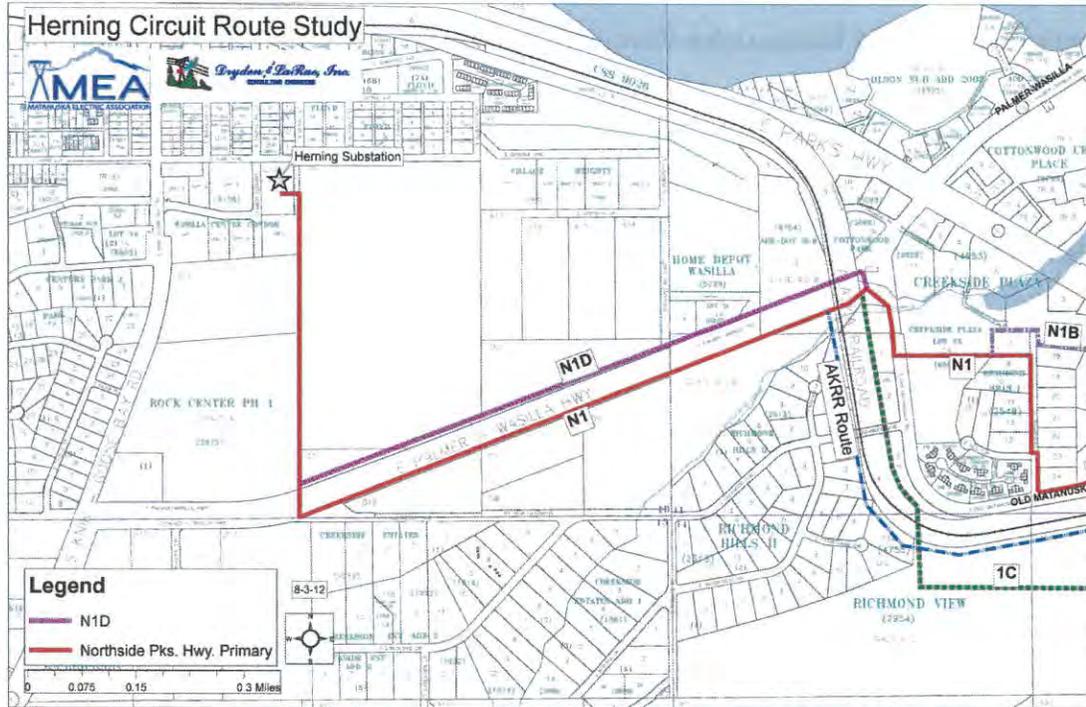
Rough order of magnitude of costs for Parks Highway to Palmer-Wasilla Highway Extension

| | N1-Old Mat. Rd. & Enterprise St. | N1B- Behind Creekside Plaza | 1C-South side of ARR |
|---|---|--|---------------------------------|
| 115 kV Double Circuit with Distribution Underbuild | | | |
| Estimated Number of Parcels | 15 | 5 | 5 |
| ROW Acquisition Cost | \$222,449 | \$78,000 | \$80,975 |
| Construction Dollars | \$858,295 | \$522,968 | \$1,023,789 |
| Order of Magnitude Costs | \$1,080,744 | \$600,968 | \$1,104,764 |

Recommendation for Parks Highway to Palmer-Wasilla Highway Extension

Of the three options discussed above, Option N1C is recommended due to overall lower costs. The lower costs are due primarily to the shorter route distance compared to the other options. Acquisition of easements should be feasible because Option N1C will primarily impact back or side lot lines of commercial property. It should be noted that a double circuit requiring maximum right-of-way width may be expensive because of the need to acquire easements outside of the platted utility easements on commercial property. This recommendation is dependent on DOT/PF issuing a Major Utility Permit that authorizes the transmission line to be located on the south side of the frontage road.

Palmer-Wasilla Highway Extension to Herring Substation



The line will proceed along the Palmer-Wasilla Highway Extension until it intersects with the existing transmission line that connects to the Herring Substation. Selecting which side of the Palmer-Wasilla Highway Extension to route the transmission line will be decided in a final discussion with the DOT/PF Utilities Section. It is technically feasible to route the line on either side. Special considers are some of the significant slopes, the bike trail, existing utilities and ascetics. Construction costs are approximately the same for both sides.

Rough order of magnitude of costs for Palmer-Wasilla Highway Extension to Herring Substation

| 115 kV Double Circuit with Distribution Underbuild | North side | South Side |
|--|------------|------------|
| Estimated Number of Parcels | 0 | 0 |
| ROW Acquisition Cost | \$0 | \$0 |
| Construction Dollars | \$718,433 | \$718,433 |
| Order of Magnitude Costs | \$718,433 | \$718,433 |

Recommendation for Palmer-Wasilla Highway Extension to Herring Substation

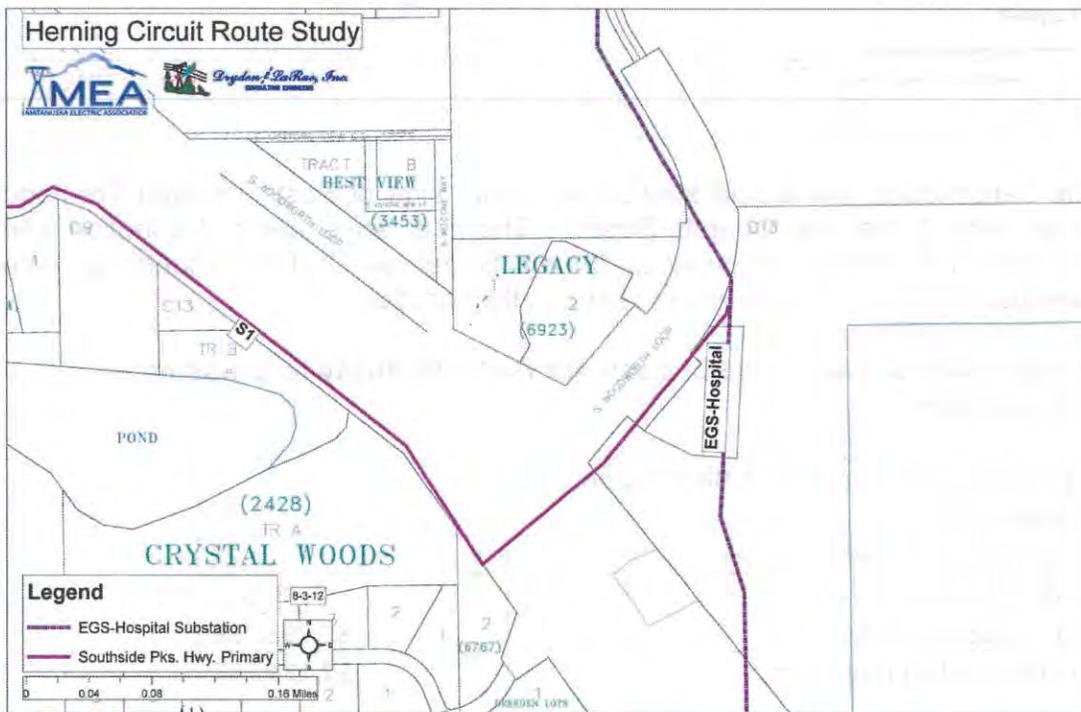
Selecting which side of the Palmer-Wasilla Highway Extension to route the transmission line will be decided in the design and permitting process.

South Side Primary Route

Overview

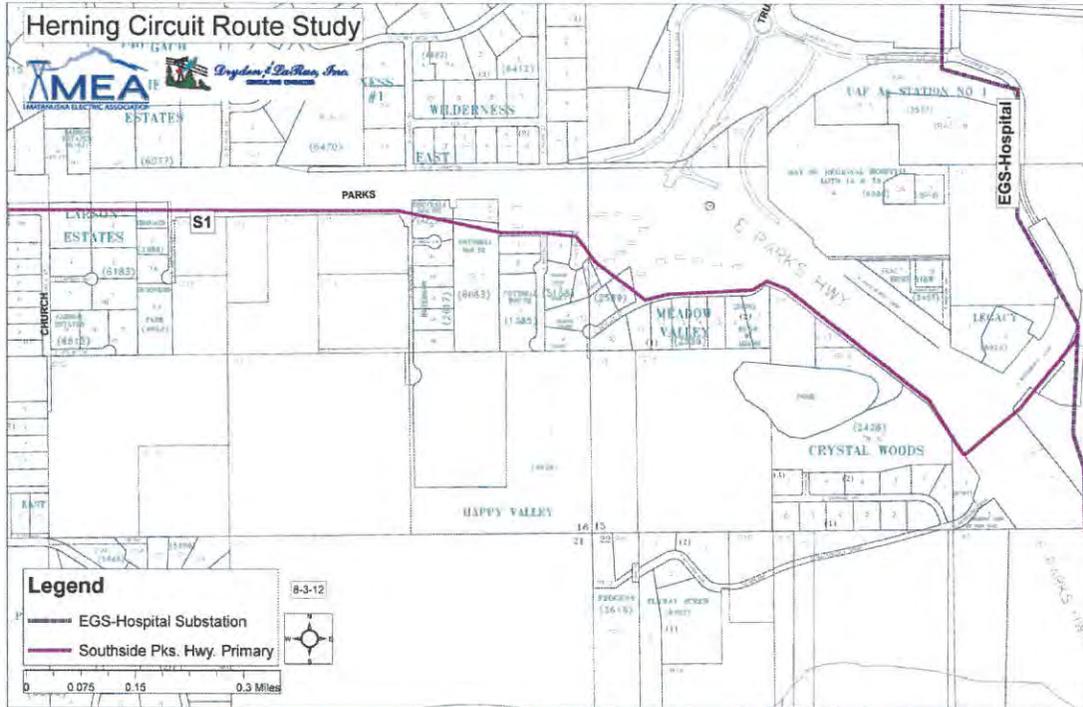
A primary objective of this routing study is to strengthen the MEA transmission grid. Having a redundant circuit between substations is an important component of a strong transmission grid. The south side route's viability is contingent on the circuit redundancy between the Hospital Substation and the Herning Substation being preserved with a crossing of the Parks Highway on the east side of the Trunk Road Interchange. The redundant circuit between the Hospital Substation and the Herning Substation will be lost should the Eklutna Generation Station (EGS) to Hospital Substation transmission line cross to the south side of the Parks Highway before proceeding to the Hospital Substation. A second transmission line would need to be constructed from the Hospital Substation back to the Parks Highway in order to create a redundant circuit. This is not a sound economic decision.

Parks Highway Crossing on East Side of Trunk Road Interchange



The EGS to Hospital Substation alignment will cross South Woodworth Loop close to the Parks Highway. Taking advantage of the proximity of the new transmission line, the at grade crossing of the Parks Highway just westerly of East Matanuska Spur Road would place the line within the East Fireweed Frontage Road.

Parks Hwy to Crossing at Church Street



The transmission line would stay on the south side of East Fireweed Frontage Road until it reaches Church Street. There is an existing distribution line crossing of the Parks Highway at Church Street, so DOT/PF should have no objection to a transmission line crossing at this location.

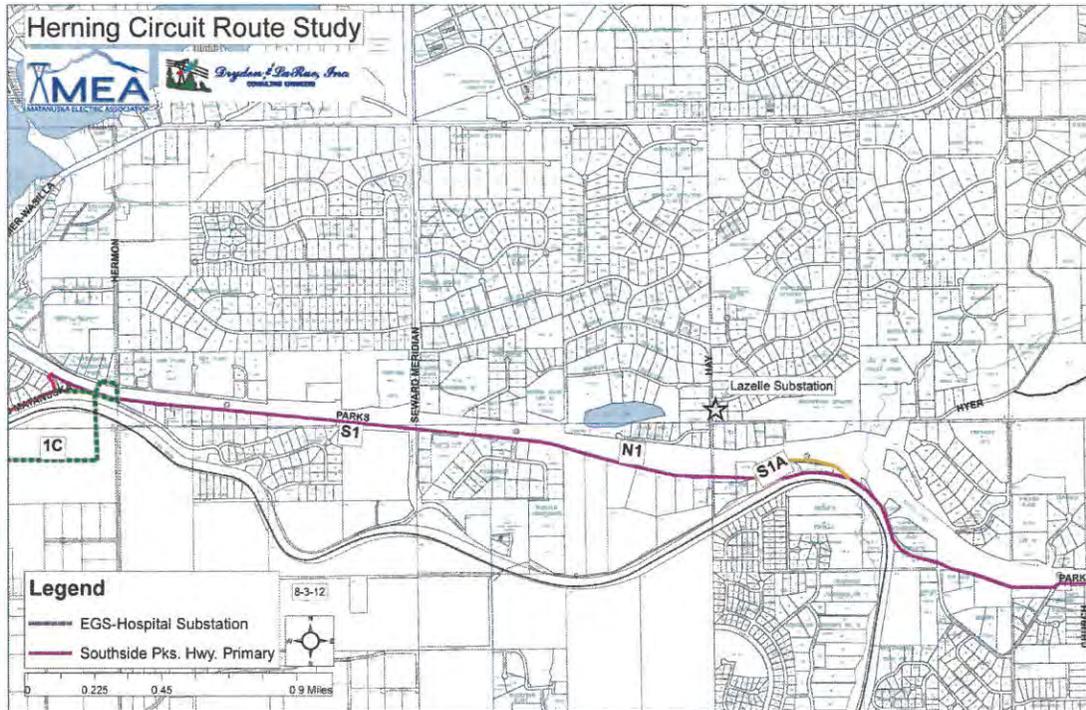
Rough order of magnitude of costs for Parks Highway to Crossing at Church Street

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| 115 kV Double Circuit with Distribution Underbuild | |
| Estimated Number of Parcels | 17 |
| ROW Acquisition Cost | \$390,512 |
| Construction Dollars | \$1,798,739 |
| Order of Magnitude Costs | \$2,189,251 |

Recommendation for Parks Highway to Crossing at Church Street

This route option is to be compared with the alternative route on the north side of the Parks Highway. The main advantage of the south side is that there are fewer existing distribution lines than on the north side of the Parks Highway that would need to be taken down and then reinstalled on the new transmission poles.

North of Church Street



Due to the following obstacles routing the line on the south side of the Parks Highway past Church Street is not recommended.

- On the west side of Church Street the Quality Storage and Moving building appears to abut the East Fireweed Road right-of-way. Expensive tall poles would be needed to span this build to meet the National Electric Safety Code separation distance.
- There are ARR pinch points (ARR right-of-way overlaps the East Fireweed Road right-of-way) on both sides of the Hyer Road Interchange. If the inside of the curve is crossed there would be two crossings of the ARR and 100 foot wide easements would need to be acquired from several private properties.
- Distribution lines are underground from the Tony Chevrolet lot past the Wal-mart store. New above ground structures may cause objections for the same reasons that caused the distribution line to be placed underground.
- The cost of easements that will need to be acquired from commercial properties on both sides of Seward Meridian.

Consideration was given to using East Broadway Avenue to connect to the Old Matanuska-Wasilla Road. However, East Broadway Avenue has inadequate right-of-way and is a primary route option for the Parks Highway Alternative Corridor Project. Routing past Wal-mart to East Broadway Avenue is not feasible without having to acquire additional right-of-way on private property adjacent to East Broadway Avenue.

From East Broadway Avenue to Hermon Road there is not a frontage road. There is limited right of way to place poles and the poles would need special protection barriers constructed around them to protect against collision by a vehicle as there are no existing curbs. Additionally, there are several areas with steep slopes that would make installation of poles difficult. The existing light poles will also interfere with placement of power poles. For these reasons, DOT/PF Utilities Section may be reluctant to grant a Major Utility Permit for this location.

Rough order of magnitude of costs for South Side of Parks Highway

| South side Parks Highway Corridor | |
|---|--------------------|
| 115 kV Double Circuit with Distribution Underbuild | |
| Estimated Number of Parcels | 64 |
| ROW Acquisition Cost | \$1,571,752 |
| Construction Dollars | \$3,669,479 |
| Order of Magnitude Costs | \$5,241,231 |

Conclusions

The preliminary study reviewed the viability of the following five routing options.

- Northern Route Option (Bogard Road)
- Central Route Option (Palmer-Wasilla Highway)
- Southern Route Option
- Alaska Railroad Route Option
- Parks Highway Route Option

The following rating criteria factored into the analysis of routing options:

- Cost
- Ability to strengthen MEA's transmission grid
- Minimize public controversy
- Ability to construct in a short time frame

In analyzing each routing option two threshold questions were asked:

1. Is the option physically feasible?
2. Is the option efficient, effective and economic?

As the study proceeded, the strengths of the Parks Highway corridor became more apparent. Each of the other route options dropped out for obvious reasons.

Northern Route (Bogard Road)

- Most expensive of all options.
- Need to replace existing facilities that have a remaining long economic life.
- Need to acquire additional easements for most of the route.

Central Route (Palmer-Wasilla Highway)

- Opposed by DOT/PF.
- Need to acquire additional easements for most of the route.

Southern Route

- It was initially thought that this route may be able to compete with the Parks Highway corridor. When plans for the 'The Ranch Subdivision' were obtained and a feasible route through the subdivision was not available, then this route was no longer viable because of the need to go around it.

Alaska Railroad

- Transmission lines need long straight lengths to be economic and ARR in this location has lots of curves.
- ARR will only allow poles inside its right-of-way making it necessary to place guy wires on adjacent private property. There will be a lot of guy wires because of all the curves in the ARR route.
- Easements will need to be acquired from adjacent private property for the entire length that the transmission line poles are inside the ARR.

- The ARR will issue a lease to MEA for the transmission line. An annual market value lease rate will be charged and the lease rate will be increased every five years based on a new appraisal. Paying the annual lease rate will be very expensive over time.

Parks Highway

- Received support of DOT/PF, Matanuska Susitna Borough and City of Wasilla.
- Appropriate location for a transmission line.
- Meets all of the selection and rating criteria.

Once the Parks Highway was selected as the preferred corridor, the route was reviewed for the optimal alignment between the two substations. The following options were reviewed:

North Side Parks Highway Primary Route

- Hospital Substation to Hyer Road
- Hyer Road Crossing
 - Option N1 –North Side Option
 - Option N1A – Hyer Road Crossing - South Side Option
- Seward-Meridian Parkway to Parks Highway Crossing
 - Option N1 - Parks Highway Frontage
 - Option N2 - Back Lot Line
- Parks Hwy to Palmer Wasilla Extension
 - Option N1 - Parks Highway Crossing to Old Mat Road and Enterprise Street
 - Option N1B - Parks Highway Crossing to rear of Creekside Plaza
 - Option N1C - Parks Highway Crossing to South side of ARR
- Palmer Wasilla Highway Extension

South Side Primary Route

- Parks Highway Crossing on East Side of Trunk Road Interchange
- Parks Hwy Crossing to Church Street and Crossing to North Side of Parks Highway
- North of Church Street

Recommended Alignment for Parks Highway Corridor

The Eklutna Generation Station to Hospital Substation will be constructed as originally proposed. The Hospital Substation to Hering Substation circuit will leave the Hospital Substation and run west across University of Alaska land to the west side of Trunk Road. It will stay within DOT/PF right-of-way until it reaches Hyer Road.

(Map 10, Recommended route on page 23)

It was decided to stay on the south side of Hyer Road following the tangent to the curve; creating a straight line and minimizing angle points and guy wires. While costs for a north versus south side crossing of Hyer Road are close, as shown on the following table, the longer-term cost savings of not having to maintain a curvilinear segment with guy wires makes the south side the preferred alignment.

| North side vs. South side of Hyer Road Crossing | | |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|
| 115 kV Double Circuit with Distribution Underbuild | North side | South Side |
| Estimated Number of Parcels | 3 | 2 |
| ROW Acquisition Cost | \$64,093 | \$93,739 |
| Construction Dollars | \$262,700 | \$195,340 |
| Order of Magnitude Costs | \$326,793 | \$289,079 |

Between Hyer Road and Seward Meridian Parkway the line will continue in DOT/PF right-of-way staying on the north side of north side of East Blue Lupine Drive. Two alternative routes were considered between the Seward-Meridian Parkway and where the line will cross to the south side of the Parks Highway at or beyond Hermon Road.

Option N1 Parks Highway Frontage would stay within DOT/PF right-of-way.

Option N2 Back Lot Line would follow the 1/16th line.

As shown on the following table, Option N1, Parks Highway is the more cost effective option and would reduce the impact on private property. However, this option is also contingent on the DOT/PF Utilities section authorizing the location of the transmission line between the bike trail and Parks Highway.

| Seward Meridian Parkway to Parks Highway Crossing | | |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|
| 115 kV Double Circuit with Distribution Underbuild | Parks Highway | Back Lot Line |
| Estimated Number of Parcels | 16 | 22 |
| ROW Acquisition Cost | \$747,869 | \$2,032,002 |
| Construction Dollars | \$1,120,427 | \$1,258,691 |
| Order of Magnitude Costs | \$1,868,296 | \$3,290,693 |

Finding a desirable alignment between the Parks Highway and the Palmer-Wasilla Extension was difficult. The recommended alignment continues on the north side of the Parks Highway to the west of the Windbreak Café, crosses the Parks Highway and traversing the backside of the Cottonwood Creek Mall within a utility easement dedicated by Creekside Plaza Lot 3A Subdivision, Plat No. 2012-13. This option is also contingent on the DOT/PF Utilities section

authorizing the location of the transmission line between the bike trail and Parks Highway.

| Parks Highway to Palmer-Wasilla Highway Extension | | | |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 115 kV Double Circuit with Distribution Underbuild | N1-Old Mat. Rd. & Enterprise St. | N1B-Behind Creekside Plaza | 1C-South side of ARR |
| Estimated Number of Parcels | 15 | 5 | 5 |
| ROW Acquisition Cost | \$222,449 | \$78,000 | \$80,975 |
| Construction Dollars | \$858,295 | \$522,968 | \$1,023,789 |
| Order of Magnitude Costs | \$1,080,744 | \$600,968 | \$1,104,764 |

When the line leaves the utility easement behind Creekside Plaza it will cross Enterprise Street and run on either the north or south side of Parcel 91.03 that is owned by the City of Wasilla. It will then cross Lot 2A, Creekside Plaza, enter the Old Matanuska Road right-of-way, cross the ARR and enter onto land acquired by DOT/PF for the Palmer-Wasilla Highway Extension. Selecting which side of the Palmer-Wasilla Highway Extension to route the transmission line will be decided in the design and permitting process.

The south side of the Parks Highway was also reviewed but is not recommended because the DOT/PF right-of-way is will not accommodate a transmission line as easily as the north side, greater overall costs and the need for a second transmission line from the Hospital Substation back to the Parks Highway in order to create a redundant circuit, The overall costs between the north verse the south side of the Parks Highway is shown on the following table.

North side compared to the South side of the Parks Highway

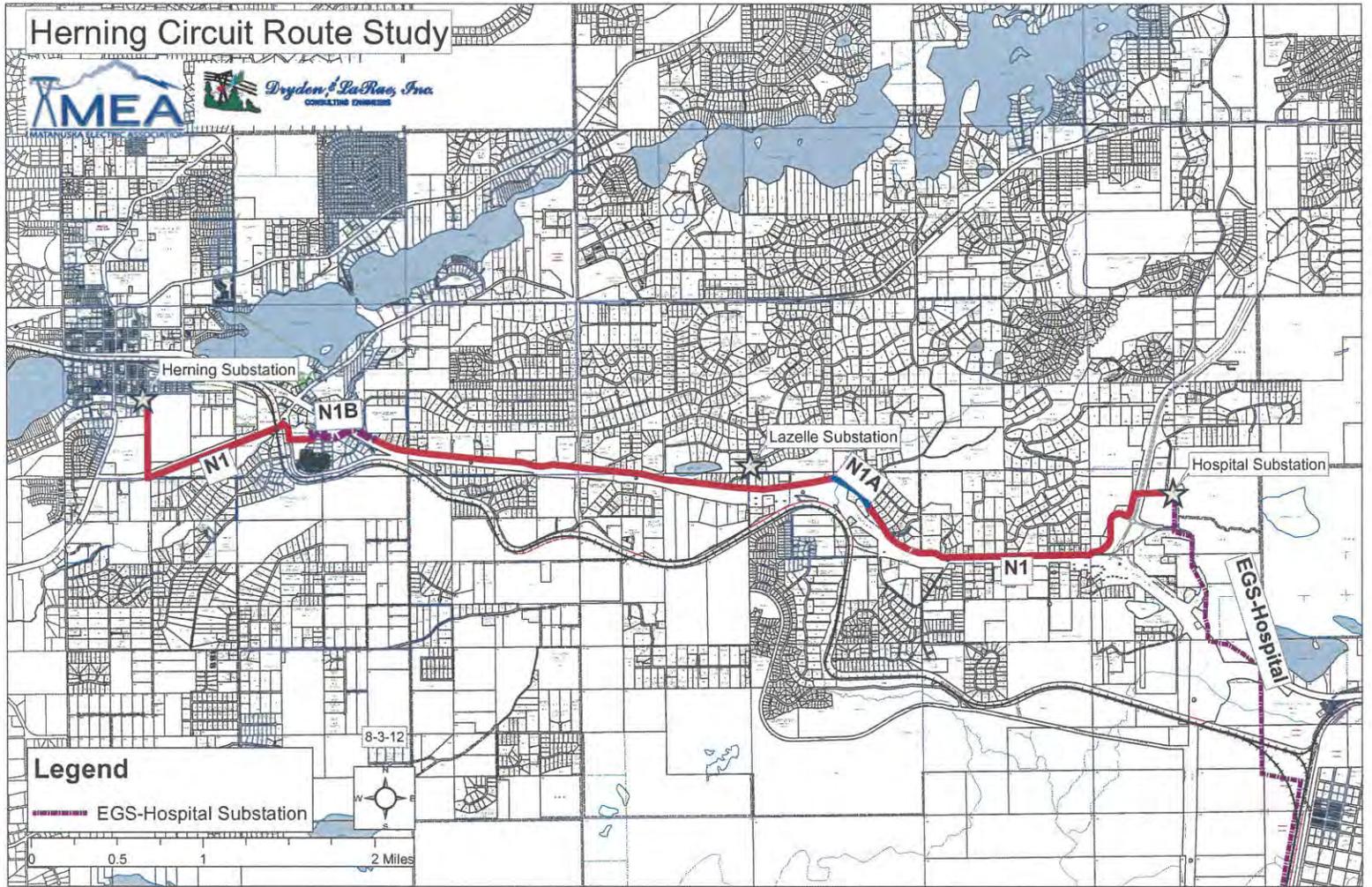
| Parks Highway Corridor | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 115 kV Double Circuit with Distribution Underbuild | North Side Recommended Route | South Side |
| Estimated Number of Parcels | 32 | 64 |
| ROW Acquisition Cost | \$1,092,835 | \$1,571,752 |
| Construction Dollars | \$3,909,826 | \$3,669,479 |
| Order of Magnitude Costs | \$5,002,661 | \$5,241,231 |

The Parks Highway Corridor – North Side alignment utilizing the south side of Hyer Road, following the Parks Highway frontage between Seward Meridian and Herman Road, crossing the Parks Highway west of the Windbreak Café and traversing the backside of the Cottonwood Creek Mall to the Palmer Wasilla Extension is the recommended route. The proposed alignment for a new 115 kV transmission line from the Hospital Substation to the Herning Substation is shown on the following map.

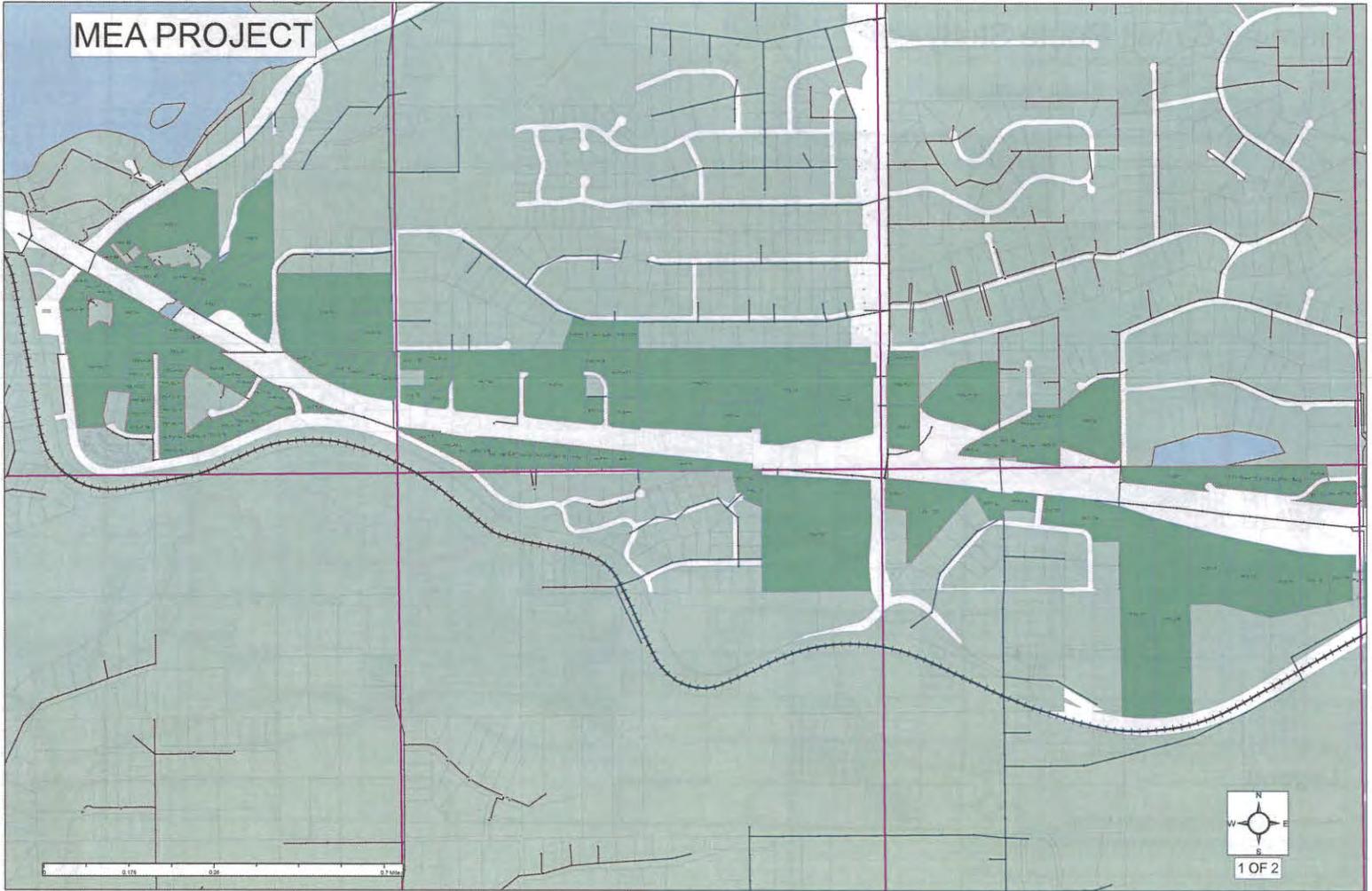
Herning Circuit Route Study



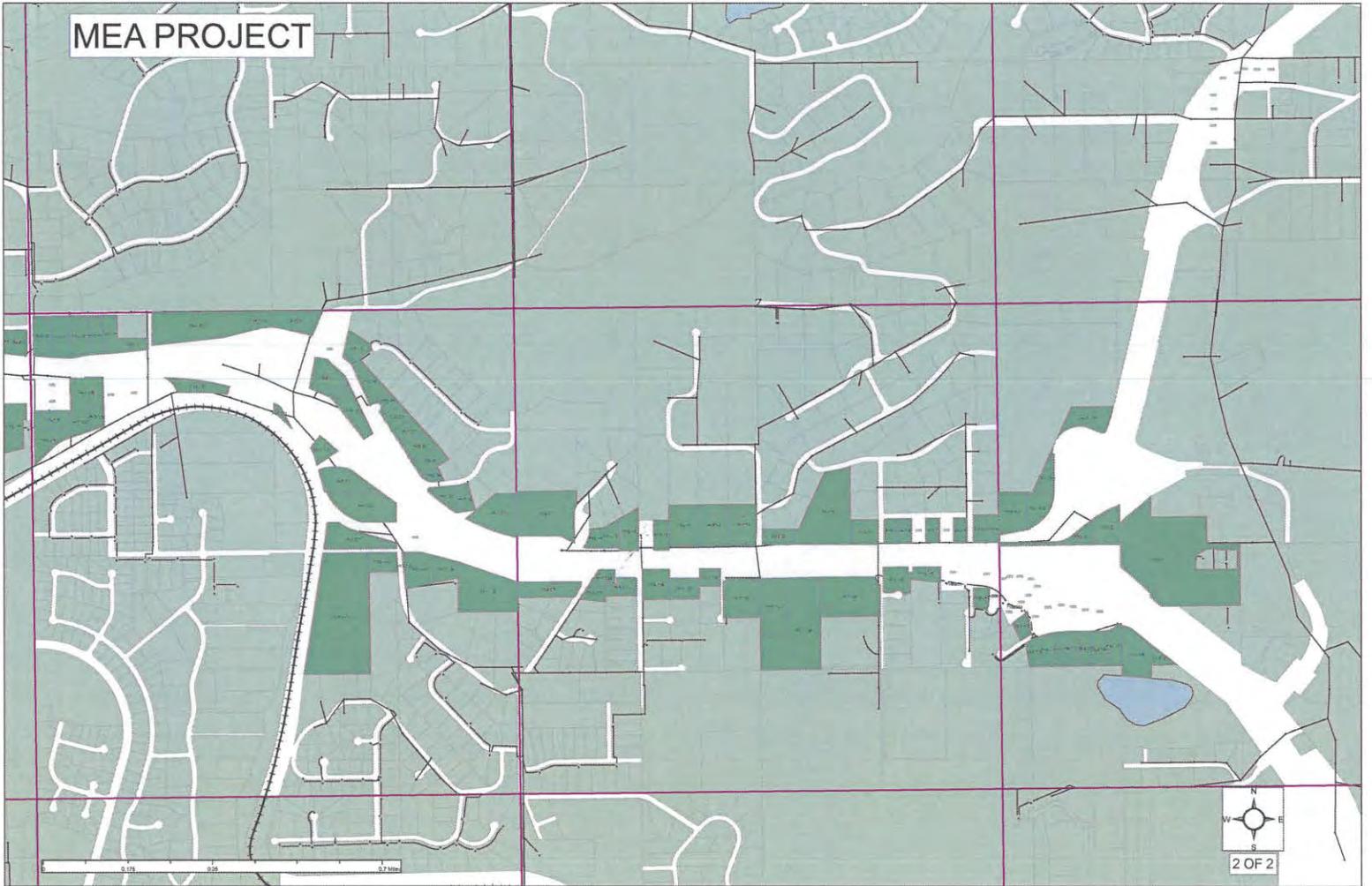
Dryden & LaRue, Inc.
CONSULTING ENGINEERS



MEA PROJECT



MEA PROJECT



Tina Crawford

From: Dan Beardsley <dbeardsley@esgrp.net>
Sent: Tuesday, April 23, 2013 4:29 PM
To: Tina Crawford
Subject: Matanuska Electric Association - Hospital to Herning 115 kV Transmission Line Applications - Hearing Transcripts
Attachments: NL12-292 - MEA Transmission Line Routing Project - Public Hearing - 11Oct12.pdf; NL13-077 - MEA Transmission Line Route Selection - Public Hearing - 28Mar13.pdf

Tina,

Attached are the transcripts from the two public hearings for the project. The first one was held on October 11, 2012 at the Curtis D. Menard Memorial Sports Center. The second was March 28, 2013 at Evangelo's Restaurant.

Please include these in the application package.

I do not have an electronic copy of the compilation of written comments. MEA is holding its annual meeting today and I won't get those to you until tomorrow.

Should you have questions concerning these three e-mails, please do not hesitate to call me at 907-646-5139 or send me an e-mail.

Dan Beardsley

1 MR. HANSON: Good evening.
2 Welcome to the MEA Transmission Line Routing
3 Project Public Hearing. This project is to
4 consider and select a route for a new
5 transmission line from the new Eklutna
6 generation station to the Herning substation
7 in Wasilla. The Matanuska Electric
8 Association, MEA, is the sponsor for tonight's
9 hearing.

10 This public hearing is happening
11 at the Curtis Menard Sports Center in Wasilla.
12 It's about a little bit after 6:00 p.m. at
13 night on Thursday, October 11th, 2012. I want
14 to thank all of you for coming tonight. We
15 definitely appreciate it.

16 My name is Dave Hanson. I'm a
17 facilitator contracted to moderate tonight's
18 hearing. My role is to neutrally facilitate
19 an orderly and effective hearing, without
20 intimidation, that provides a good atmosphere
21 for everybody to feel comfortable when they
22 wish to testify. As a neutral moderator, I
23 have not been involved in this project. I
24 will not be involved in any of the decisions
25 made in this project, and I have no position

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1 on the MEA routing project.

2 I will be assisted by Leslie
3 Knisley of Northern Lights Realtime &
4 Reporting, who will be recording the meeting.
5 And we thank her. She will be providing an
6 official transcript of the hearing record.

7 Now, the MEA transmission line
8 routing project refers to the selection of a
9 route for a 138 kilovolt transmission line
10 from the new Eklutna generation station to
11 Herning substation in Wasilla. MEA has
12 proposed alignments for the route that would
13 include two segments: One segment from the
14 new power station to the hospital substation,
15 and a second segment that goes from the
16 hospital substation to the Herning substation
17 in Wasilla.

18 The purpose of tonight's hearing
19 is to take the recorded public comment on the
20 record regarding this transmission line
21 routing project so that such comment can be
22 considered by MEA officials as they make a
23 transmission line routing decision. MEA wants
24 to hear your comments. So, please, if you
25 have comments, participate. It is an

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1 opportunity. The hearing also complies with
2 the Matanuska-Susitna Borough's (MSB) public
3 participation ordinance.

4 Now, there's been a process for
5 this project and it goes roughly like this:
6 In compliance with MSB Ordinance 17.05.040,
7 information about the route selection process
8 was posted on MEA's Eklutna generation station
9 web site and made available for inspection at
10 the Matanuska Borough and at the Wasilla city
11 offices. An open house on the project was
12 held September 29th, 2012.

13 Tonight, as I said, is the
14 opportunity for you as members of the public
15 to give testimony on the record about the
16 project. If you do not wish to publicly
17 testify, you can provide written comments
18 tonight. On the sign-in sheet there are the
19 addresses for fax or mailing or e-mailing to
20 MEA written comments. To be considered part
21 of the record, the written comments must be
22 received by October 18th, 2012, which is a
23 week from today. Also, you can leave comments
24 right out at the sign-in desk, if you wish to
25 leave comments tonight in writing.

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1 A decisional document will be
2 prepared and posted on the web site and made
3 available for review at the Matanuska-Susitna
4 Borough Permit Center and the City of
5 Wasilla's Clerk's office. The decisional
6 document will include an appeal process that
7 can be used to appeal any routing decision.
8 Any notice of an appeal concerning MEA's
9 routing decision must be made to the MEA Board
10 within 21 days of publishing the decision
11 document on the web site and submittal of
12 copies to the City and Borough.

13 I'd like to just take a few
14 moments. We have several MEA people who are
15 here to personally listen also tonight. I
16 believe we have Gary Kuhn, who is Chief of
17 Engineering; is that correct, Gary?

18 MR. KUHN: Director of
19 Engineering.

20 MR. HANSON: Director of
21 Engineering. Thank you.

22 And we have Acting Director of
23 Public Affairs, Suzie Deuser. Suzie. Thank
24 you.

25 Then we have Kevin Brown, who is

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1 the Communication Manager. He's at the back
2 of the room, and he was at the sign-in table.

3 We also have two of the Board of
4 Directors here, that I'm aware of, Director
5 Peter Burchell. Thank you, Peter. And
6 Director Kit Jones. Thank you, Kit.

7 Is there any other MEA
8 representative here that -- please.

9 MR. BROOKS: Jim Brooks,
10 Assistant Senior Engineer and Project Manager.

11 MR. HANSON: Okay. Thank you.
12 Thank you. Great.

13 Now, on the back of -- I hope
14 everybody has an agenda. You would have
15 picked it up outside of the door. As the
16 agenda notes, the hearing will take place from
17 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Prior to taking testimony,
18 we will consider the ground rules, hear a
19 project overview, review hearing procedures.
20 Following the testimony, we'll conclude with
21 any final MEA clarifications they may wish to
22 give and adjourn.

23 We will stay here as long as
24 someone wishes to testify as long as they're
25 signed in by about 7:50. But we'll definitely

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1 be here waiting for people until 8:00 o'clock,
2 as was advertised. It should be noted that
3 project information is around the back of the
4 room. What we'd ask is if you have questions
5 during the hearing, Kevin Brown is going to be
6 at the back, and he will be -- we ask you to
7 go out into the hall so you don't interfere
8 with the recorder hearing the testimony or the
9 testimony being interrupted. Okay.

10 Now, our ground rules are on the
11 back of the agenda. I'll just draw your
12 attention to them and just mention a couple of
13 them. I don't think with this particular
14 group of people most of these are that
15 necessary, but I always want to emphasize,
16 please be respectful of other members of the
17 listening audience by avoiding intemperate
18 language or outbursts.

19 Help maintain an atmosphere where
20 everyone feels comfortable and welcome. This
21 isn't the place where the battle or the fight,
22 if there is a disagreement, is going to take
23 place. This is where you're trying to get
24 your position on record clearly, no matter
25 what it is, and we want to hear it.

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1 All speakers, when they come up,
2 speak into the microphone and testify to
3 myself, not the audience. And I think the
4 only other thing I'll mention verbally,
5 because these will be part of the record, all
6 the ground rules, is please turn off cell
7 phones and pagers. We appreciate your help on
8 that so they don't disrupt.

9 Now, Mr. Dan Beardsley of Dryden
10 & LaRue, who's been managing the alternative
11 route analysis, will now present a project
12 overview statement. Following the statement,
13 I'll conclude my comments and we'll start the
14 hearing.

15 MR. BEARDSLEY: Good evening.

16 As he said, my name is Dan
17 Beardsley. I'm with Dryden & LaRue. We are
18 an engineering firm and also do right-of-way
19 consulting. So we've been asked by MEA to
20 take a look at some alternative routing for
21 getting power from the new Eklutna generation
22 substation to essentially the hospital
23 substation and the Herning substation.

24 So what we've got here is kind of
25 just a listing of the project name. First off

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1 is kind of why we're starting out with the
2 Eklutna generation station. This is a brand
3 new facility that will come on line in 2014,
4 at the end of 2014. Currently you're getting
5 most of your power through Chugach Electric
6 and this, again, the power sales agreement
7 that you have with Chugach Electric ends in
8 December of 2014. So, you members, in
9 preparation for that voted, and 79.4 percent
10 of the MEA members voted to establish the
11 Eklutna generation station, so that's been
12 under project control. It's now being built.
13 It's on schedule in terms of being prepared to
14 be ready to provide power to the Valley in
15 2014. So that's going to meet the needs of
16 the MEA service area. So, like I say, it's on
17 budget and on schedule.

18 Key things about this project is
19 it's going to deliver power to the key load
20 centers. One of those key load centers is the
21 hospital substation, which provides power to
22 large portions of the Valley and then actually
23 brings power back towards the Palmer area.

24 Currently, today, most of your
25 power is coming through the Eklutna

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1 transmission line from the Anchorage side
2 towards Palmer and then coming back into the
3 Wasilla area. So what will happen is that
4 this will essentially loop that and provide
5 alternative routing both ways to bring power
6 in from the Eklutna generation station that
7 will be able to come from that direction, and
8 you'll still have power coming back from
9 Palmer.

10 So if you were to have an outage
11 or an interruption on any portion of that, it
12 would still back-feed and avoid outages, so it
13 makes your system a little more reliable.
14 It's also to add to MEA's load growth. You
15 all know how much you've grown over the last
16 few years. It will provide power for power
17 sales and transfers to other utilities. It
18 will actually be an additional capacity there
19 so that you can actually sell power, and it's
20 going to increase reliability in Southcentral
21 Alaska.

22 So what we ended up looking at
23 here, we started out with the Eklutna
24 generation station here just near the Eklutna
25 interchange. What we are looking for, then,

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1 is to come up to and connect to the hospital
2 substation and then ultimately over to the
3 Herning substation. In between you have
4 Lazelle and then up just above here, just
5 above the picture, you have the Shaw
6 substation as well.

7 There's a number of other
8 substations in the general area, but the two
9 major ones and the two major load centers
10 where there's the most demand at this point in
11 time are the hospital substation directly
12 behind the hospital area there, the
13 university, and then the Herning substation,
14 which is right downtown in Wasilla. Right
15 across -- essentially if you were at Safeway,
16 then you've got the railroad station on the
17 south side of the road, and it's just south of
18 the railroad station on the south side of the
19 road.

20 So the problem was how do we get
21 power from there, from those locations, and
22 what are the routes that we need to look at?
23 What you see here real quickly is just the
24 project schedule. We're looking at -- now
25 we're in the preliminary stages of identifying

1 the route. We've gone through and looked at
2 alternatives trying to come up with a
3 recommendation, and that's where we are at
4 this point, is that we have some recommended
5 routes; but what we're looking for is to get
6 input on those routes and to find out if there
7 are issues or concerns or things that we've
8 overlooked and what do you as members of the
9 public have to say about that.

10 You're looking at a schedule
11 that, again, will ultimately get us into
12 construction late next year or into next year
13 and then built prior to 2014, so that it's
14 actually operational when the power plant goes
15 on line. Just to give you an example -- what
16 we're looking at is this kind of gives you an
17 example to see. On the left you have a
18 typical electric pole. It's a distribution
19 line. This would be more like what the
20 substation -- excuse me, the transmission pole
21 is going to look like. It would be the one
22 right in the middle of this picture right
23 here. And what we've have is two circuits.
24 Ultimately, one that would tie into the
25 hospital substation and one that goes on to

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1 the Herning substation.

2 Then, just over here we have a
3 tree and that kind of gives you an idea.
4 That's roughly about a 50-foot tree. One of
5 the things that we have to be concerned with
6 is danger trees and the ability to remove
7 trees. It's much more critical with
8 transmission lines than it is with
9 distribution. With transmission lines, that
10 serves substations which then serve large
11 numbers of folks, whereas with the
12 distribution line typically you're looking at
13 a small number of folks and usually there's
14 enough of a network around that you can shift
15 power around through the distribution side.
16 But if you lose your transmission, you lose
17 substations and you lose some of the power.

18 On the southern end -- and I'm
19 not going to spend much time on this
20 particular portion, because really what we've
21 come up with, we've looked at some
22 alternatives essentially between the Eklutna
23 generation station and the Old Glenn
24 interchange and then from the Old Glenn
25 interchange up to the Glenn Highway and then

1 cross the Glenn Highway up into the hospital
2 area.

3 After looking at all of the
4 alternatives, meeting with the agencies,
5 again, there was a very strong recommendation
6 we stay with the existing alignment. The
7 existing alignment has all of the necessary
8 rights. They've had them for years, so it
9 really is an appropriate one. But, again, we
10 wanted to go through the effort to make sure
11 that that was indeed the appropriate location
12 to go. So out of that we did choose
13 essentially following the existing alignment
14 that follows the railroad to kind of give you
15 an idea here.

16 We looked at essentially three
17 different corridors besides the existing
18 alignment. The existing alignment is the one
19 in yellow here. It comes in, crosses the
20 river right here. Ends up -- crosses the
21 Matanuska River, comes across the Old Glenn,
22 and then right into the hospital substation
23 through here. So that was the existing
24 alignment, and we'll be really upgrading the
25 existing system that's there.

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1 From there, the next step was,
2 then, where do you get into -- how do you get
3 to the Herning substation? Let me tell you,
4 that was not really an easy task, okay. So
5 the first one is -- this is for the southern
6 one. I'm going to go ahead and go past that
7 one fairly quickly. On the stretch from the
8 hospital to Herning, we initially took --
9 before we even got to these alignments, we
10 took a look at the area. Why don't we go
11 ahead and switch down to the next slide.

12 One of the things that we were
13 looking at was how do you find a way through
14 here? What we'd really rather have done than
15 go on the highway corridors is to find a nice
16 vacant location where we don't interfere with
17 a lot of houses and don't bother any folks.
18 Well, if you take a look, it's a little hard
19 to do through here. Really, the only route
20 that we looked at that ultimately could say
21 we'd probably avoid some of the construction
22 and some of the housing is this southern route
23 down here. Otherwise, you're built out such
24 that effectively we would have been going
25 through neighborhoods quite consistently.

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1 So that pretty much pushed us
2 back to looking at road alternatives. With
3 the road alternatives, then, we looked at five
4 different road alternatives. We did the
5 northern one, which, again, is the -- we were
6 going to come back and follow and come up to
7 Bogard Road, follow the existing transmission
8 lines that goes to Bogard back in, comes in.
9 This is the line that comes across the Carrs
10 property and then come into the substation
11 from the north.

12 Alternatively, we looked at
13 another choice was to go to the Palmer-Wasilla
14 Highway. One of the big issues here is,
15 again, this whole intersection there at the
16 Palmer-Wasilla Highway and the Parks. It's
17 really congested. So that was one of the big
18 issues ultimately that came in with that one.
19 I'll cover a couple more items about that.

20 Then we looked at the possibility
21 of coming down the Parks Highway corridor.
22 Then we looked -- and both sides of that
23 corridor. Then we looked at the Alaska
24 Railroad, and there's some different options
25 in there with the railroad. Then we looked at

1 the southern route. Our initial southern
2 route was a little bit further up to the
3 north, but what you see with this red outline,
4 this is a recent master plan that's been
5 approved for the development of homes by
6 Mr. Turner there. So consequently we're
7 looking at going through a numerous number of
8 individual lots as opposed to being able to
9 find some area, again, that wasn't interfering
10 with a lot of the residential subdivision use.

11 So we have a southern route,
12 then, that would come in. Most of these that
13 would come in and connect with the Old
14 Palmer-Wasilla Extension just essentially to
15 the south of the bridge, come down either
16 side. We're looking at options on either side
17 of the Palmer-Wasilla Extension and connect in
18 with the existing line that now goes into
19 Herning from the south.

20 Just real briefly, and I think
21 where most of the interest tonight is, why we
22 are recommending and we have recommended again
23 the Parks Highway alignment. What we've
24 looked at is, again, Bogard is quite long, and
25 it will really require a lot of additional

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1 easements to acquire rights-of-way there. One
2 that we really initially liked very much was
3 to go along the Palmer-Wasilla, but the
4 problem there becomes that DOT is getting
5 ready to do some additional work and their
6 right-of-way is pretty constrained. So when
7 they do build, they're going to need
8 additional rights-of-way of their own. One of
9 the things that they said is we would be in
10 conflict with their construction, so that was
11 one of the reasons that they urged us not to
12 build there.

13 We looked at the Parks. I'll
14 come back to the Parks. We looked, then, at
15 the railroad. The railroad -- we liked the
16 idea of using some of the new railroad
17 right-of-way through this portion. One of the
18 problems we started running into was as we got
19 to the western end of it here, the slopes are
20 very, very steep. There's a lot of soil
21 stability issues. The railroad was very
22 concerned about our utilizing that area, as
23 well as they also required that we stay to the
24 outer 10 feet of their right-of-way. Well,
25 putting us to the outer 10 feet of their

1 right-of-way created lots of curves and
2 essentially meant we had lots of angles, which
3 we'd be putting guys over onto private
4 property as well as needing additional
5 easements and rights-of-way through private
6 property. So that was another factor in
7 consideration.

8 Then we looked at the southern
9 route, and that one essentially was fairly
10 long. Then we are also into a large area of
11 wetlands, which creates some issues relevant
12 to, one, construction and, two, operation, but
13 more importantly at this end of the project
14 one of the concerns that the Department of
15 Transportation and the City of Wasilla
16 indicated was that they were concerned that
17 ultimately the bypass that they're proposing
18 would be affected by routing in this location
19 here. So that was one of the considerations
20 we took into account.

21 So that's kind of a general
22 overview. At that point what happened is that
23 we came back. The Department of
24 Transportation actually was recommending that
25 we did follow the Parks Highway. Primarily

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1 their point was that that facility is built
2 out to its design capacity, whereas all of the
3 other highway routings are not built. They're
4 looking at future reconstruction, modification
5 and upgrade of those. So the Department of
6 Transportation's recommendation was also to
7 follow the Parks Highway alignment. So that
8 is primarily our current recommendation.

9 A couple of areas that are
10 significant, we do have some questions of what
11 we want to do at Hyer Road, whether we want to
12 go on the south side or the north side of the
13 Hyer Road intersection. There's an overpass
14 here.

15 The other area, again, is in here
16 in front of Home Depot and Lowe's and all of
17 those in this location. Excuse me, not Home
18 Depot, but Lowe's and Kendall Ford. We looked
19 at the possibility of going around behind
20 avoiding some of that area. Then we looked at
21 some alternatives and once we get to the Parks
22 Highway here, where do we cross it?

23 Again, there's a number of issues
24 and so those are covered in the report. If
25 you take a look, there's a number of different

1 alternative alignments. Each one of them has
2 some issues that are associated with it. So
3 out of that we looked at the different issues
4 to come up with what we believe is the most
5 reasonable recommendation that limited and had
6 the least impact on adjacent properties and on
7 adjacent owners.

8 With that, I think I'll turn it
9 back over to Dave.

10 MR. HANSON: Thank you, Dan.

11 I must apologize. I usually try
12 to recognize any elected officials that are in
13 the room. So I would like to recognize now
14 that he is here, Mayor Verne Rupright of
15 Wasilla.

16 I wondered, is there any other
17 council member of the Borough or Wasilla here
18 that we should also recognize, or any
19 legislator?

20 UNIDENTIFIED MAN: The Executive
21 Director of Wasilla Chamber of Commerce. It
22 is kind of notable.

23 MR. HANSON: Welcome. Thank you
24 for coming. That's great.

25 Now, this is the point where I'm

1 at least going to mention some of the things
2 that will be placed in the record, and this
3 will be more to make sure the record has
4 everything that you've seen back there and
5 things like our agenda and so forth. So
6 obviously our agenda and ground rules will be
7 in the record to show that, yes, we had them.
8 The hearing notice, the project fact sheets,
9 public comment sheets, the sign-in sheets, and
10 other materials that are generally -- I won't
11 take time now to list them all, but we will
12 have a full list of all of them for the
13 reporter.

14 Let's move on to hearing
15 procedures. Tonight's procedures, we've got a
16 sign-in table you all saw when you came in
17 just outside the room. It will be the central
18 contact if you're wishing to testify. All
19 hearing attendees are encouraged to sign in.
20 Most definitely sign in if you wish to
21 testify. Each individual will have one
22 three-minute opportunity to speak. Each
23 organization will have one representative. If
24 you're representing an organization, such as
25 the City of Wasilla, you have a five-minute

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1 opportunity to speak.

2 We've already mentioned the
3 comment period will be open for a week as far
4 as getting written comments in or you can get
5 them in tonight. You have those addresses on
6 the comment sheets. I will call people
7 forward to testify in the order they signed in
8 to speak. The testimony will be recorded and
9 transcribed for the record.

10 When I call a person, come on up,
11 take a seat at the front table. Spell your
12 name -- say your name and spell it and give
13 your address, and your three or five minutes
14 will not start until after you do that. So we
15 can encourage clarity in getting somebody's
16 name and address down correctly.

17 During your testimony, any
18 questions asked will be recorded, but not
19 answered so the hearing keeps moving.
20 However, Kevin will be in the back of the
21 room. If during the hearing or before you
22 testify you want to go get some clarification
23 from him and then come back in, we ask you to
24 just step outside the room with him to get
25 what information you need. All of the people

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1 will be here on any breaks and after the
2 hearing to talk more obviously.

3 Our timekeeper is Kathryn
4 Schreckenghost. Okay. Thank you. She has a
5 list. She'll tell when you're two minutes,
6 one minute -- and you'll be able to hear the
7 card probably -- and then 30 seconds. Let's
8 hear what the bell sounds like when you're
9 through speaking.

10 (Bell rings.)

11 Okay. Great. As I call a person
12 forward to testify, come on up. I'll mention
13 the next person in line so they can come up
14 and sit in the front row here to be ready to
15 testify and keep things moving.

16 Our first person will be Mayor
17 Verne Rupright on behalf of the City of
18 Wasilla. Thank you, Mayor. And our next
19 person is Barry Munsell, if you want to be
20 ready to testify.

21 MAYOR RUPRIGHT: Thank you,
22 Mr. Hanson.

23 My name is Verne Rupright,
24 V-e-r-n-e R-u-p-r-i-g-h-t. I'm the mayor of
25 the City of Wasilla, and the official address

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1 for that is 290 East Herning Avenue, Wasilla,
2 Alaska 99654. I'm speaking on behalf of the
3 administration of the City.

4 Being able to upgrade our power
5 grid is something that's necessary and I
6 understand the need for it. We're the
7 fastest-growing area in the state and have
8 been for nearly 20 years and about the
9 fourteenth fastest-growing one in the United
10 States. There seems to be no let-up.

11 But for the time that I've been
12 advised of this, I have only had minimal time
13 to review the proposal. We sent a letter back
14 to the City, which should be in the possession
15 of MEA. What MEA needs to be aware of is that
16 the City has permitting authority of its own,
17 so the issue just doesn't end with the
18 Borough. Once you go across that Seward
19 Meridian, you have to come before our Planning
20 Commission and take it to a public hearing
21 with us.

22 It appears that from our own
23 code, from our comprehensive plan and our
24 development code, it appears to us on the
25 first blush that there's negative impacts,

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1 mostly visual, which have negative impacts on
2 the commercial and property development as it
3 comes into the city. The route that's now
4 been suggested is the gateway into the City.
5 We know that there's alternative routes. I
6 was a little concerned because I sit on that
7 Board with the DOT to try to find a bypass
8 around the City.

9 Perhaps I missed the meeting or
10 it was before my time. I don't recall any
11 discussion with MEA, nor do I recall MEA ever
12 calling the City, contacting my planner and
13 not until September of this year myself or my
14 Deputy Administrator, who is my assistant,
15 Mr. Cottle.

16 It would have been nice to have
17 been a little bit more in on the route plan,
18 which way it was going to go, how it would
19 impact us on the front end, so that, you know,
20 we wouldn't find ourselves at the first public
21 hearing saying, wait a minute here, you know,
22 we've got to have some time to really look at
23 this. We know from our perspective, as it
24 stands right now, there's some difficulty
25 here.

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1 Although I don't blame MEA for
2 this, nor anybody in particular perhaps other
3 than the media and gossip, but we know there's
4 been an absolutely well-groomed cynicism about
5 Wasilla being a strip-mall community. It's
6 just an ugly strip mall on the north of
7 Anchorage. Anybody that's really looked
8 around in the last few years would know it's
9 anything but that. We have improved the
10 downtown. We have a good comp plan. We have
11 new beautifully-designed buildings coming into
12 the City, and there's that whole notion of
13 that being a strip mall. We have some really
14 great anchor stores that have been required to
15 put in landscaping, to do it right, to do it
16 the way it should be done. And that notion
17 that, yes, we grew rather rapidly and the City
18 was not prepared for it.

19 But we have been working double
20 overtime, as anybody knows if they've been
21 into the core of Wasilla, how we've changed
22 it. I mean, we have beautiful parks. We have
23 nice streets. We have beautiful ball fields
24 and the development is going forward.

25 The fact of the matter is Wasilla

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1 does have foresight, and being involved in the
2 initial planning concepts would have been
3 maybe a very gracious move on the part of MEA.
4 We really urge them to bring us more into the
5 loop with that. We're looking at projects
6 into the future. A library complex, we're
7 looking at a couplet through the middle of
8 downtown. We're moving further ahead with our
9 airport projects now. Wasilla is going to
10 be -- it is quite a different city than it was
11 ten years ago.

12 To put 80-foot towers with
13 double-stacked wires on the north side of the
14 Parks Highway into the city and then cut it
15 across at about Evangelo's Restaurant,
16 truthfully it seems to me to be a God-awful
17 look. It will look like Gary, Indiana before
18 we're through, and I don't think people in
19 Wasilla really want that. I think they'd like
20 to have a little more foresight and a little
21 thought put into this.

22 I urge MEA to go forward and work
23 with the City closely because they have to
24 come before our Planning Commission for
25 permitting. We know that they said, well, if

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1 we go underground, it's going to cost more.
2 But, you know, really that's kind of a
3 disingenuous argument. I mean, we're all
4 pretty reasonable people and we all have a
5 brain. We can think our way through this. So
6 I think there are alternatives. For example,
7 the Nelson gravel pit right up Nelson Road,
8 down through that end on the other side of the
9 bluff and up and in. There's a number of ways
10 to do this.

11 I think by bringing it into the
12 City, from what I'm hearing here, really would
13 have more of a negative impact on the City and
14 its growth and its development and its pride
15 in its community. I know a number of the
16 board members, and I know how they really feel
17 about things. I don't think anybody wants to
18 see those high-powered cables and 80-foot
19 towers with 57 feet all the way around it, you
20 know, that's required to be swathed out; you
21 can't have trees. I mean, there's a lot of
22 problems and impacts along that highway.

23 I thank you for your time.

24 MR. HANSON: Thank you, Mayor
25 Rupright.

1 Is Barry Munsell available? And
2 Dave Williams would be next afterward.

3 MR. MUNSELL: Good evening. My
4 name is Barry Munsell. That's B-a-r-r-y
5 M-u-n-s-e-l-l.

6 I'm here tonight as a citizen of
7 the Borough and also as the project manager
8 for the Valley Church of Christ, who is in the
9 process of building a new building across from
10 Home Depot, and in an area where, given the
11 preferred route, it would affect us and affect
12 mainly the esthetics of our building, also the
13 landscape plan that we've been working on with
14 the City of Wasilla.

15 So I'm just here to express that
16 concern and to get that on the record. That's
17 all I have to say.

18 MR. HANSON: Okay. Thank you,
19 Mr. Munsell.

20 Dave Williams and then Susan Lee
21 would be next. Okay, Susan Lee isn't
22 testifying, so give me just a second here.
23 Bert Cottle? Okay. Well, I'll run through
24 them and see when we -- is Dennis Tresner --

25 MR. TRESNER: I don't have

1 anything to say.

2 DAVE WILLIAMS: My name is Dave
3 Williams. Good to see the moderator again.
4 D-a-v-e, not David, Williams, W-i-l-l-i-a-m-s.
5 I'm here on behalf of the Valley Church of
6 Christ. I'm an elder there. The State of
7 Alaska, for the record, would know me as vice
8 president.

9 So speaking on behalf of the
10 Valley, I want to start by saying I had no
11 idea until two days ago. I understand we
12 might have received a letter about two weeks
13 ago. I found out about it two days ago. So
14 most of what I want to do this evening is put
15 myself on the record as objecting to a couple
16 parts of the routes and learn more, because
17 I've heard very little.

18 And I'm no longer surprised when
19 I hear that our mayor hasn't heard anything
20 about it. I realize we've gone through a
21 comprehensive plan development. I think it
22 was August of last year we adopted that.
23 Heard nothing about this during that. So I'm
24 really quite concerned about the planning and
25 foresight that this doesn't seem to have, to

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1 me. I could change my mind after I learn
2 something about it.

3 But we have two properties
4 impacted by this proposal. One of them is on
5 Blue Lupine down towards the -- close to
6 Hartley Motors. So it's already got some
7 power lines in front of it. One of the
8 questions I have about that is: Do those
9 power lines go away if new ones go up? And if
10 the new ones go up, they would be higher? I'm
11 going mostly on hearsay because I called the
12 people who ought to know about these things
13 that I know; they were unaware also.

14 I think the mayor has said many
15 remarks that I would like to say also, but I'm
16 going to save some of my time by just saying I
17 pretty much agree with what he said. Looking
18 at our town, it's not a very good entrance as
19 it is now and we looked at a lot of ways to
20 improve that and this just kind of like would
21 get quite in the way. The yellow line does
22 not look preferred to me.

23 I would like to have another
24 three minutes as a citizen, but I won't do
25 that. The other thing about it is there seems

1 to be a lot of other preferred alternatives to
2 the end part of the preferred approach, rather
3 than going through the middle of what our
4 comprehensive plan seems to envision as a
5 commercial center of the City in the future.
6 It's just crazy to me to be thinking of an
7 80-foot divider down the middle of that.
8 We're already dealing with a railroad that
9 divides our town and the Parks Highway that
10 divides our town. We're addressing both of
11 those as a City. So, I mean, why would we do
12 this?

13 I have lots of questions that
14 might be answered by reading some of this
15 material about the height of the power lines
16 and such. I'm going to refer to my quickly
17 jotted-down notes. I have a letter that I'm
18 going to submit. It reveals my ignorance and
19 that's okay. Just lots of misinformation out
20 there that others have heard. I appreciate
21 the opportunity to comment.

22 I want to be on the record here,
23 and I want to be a part of the Wasilla city
24 review and the Borough review as well. One of
25 the questions is I don't know if there's a

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1 Department of Transportation review or not. I
2 would like to know.

3 Thank you.

4 MR. HANSON: Thank you,
5 Mr. Williams.

6 Let's see. Dennis Tresner, do
7 you have testimony tonight?

8 MR. TRESNER: I'm good.

9 MR. HANSON: Okay. What about
10 Tina Crawford? No. Okay. Paul Gardner.
11 Please come on up, Paul.

12 MR. GARDNER: Thank you,
13 Mr. Hanson. My name is Paul Gardner, P-a-u-l
14 G-a-r-d-n-e-r.

15 I guess my main point in this is
16 that the City of Wasilla tried to do with all
17 of the highway and the railroad and several
18 things that seem to be going through town that
19 aren't only making it difficult to develop,
20 but also aren't really that out of sight to be
21 looking at. We, at our shopping center which
22 is where Value Village is, we spent \$232,000
23 burying lines in front of our center. That
24 wasn't with any help from MEA or from anybody
25 else. That was at our own expense. The

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1 reason why we done it is because those lines
2 looked horrible in front of that building, and
3 the poles were stacked in front of the parking
4 lot. We went out of our way to step up to the
5 pump and pay to get those put under the
6 ground.

7 I think if they're going to bring
8 a transmission line in, a large one like that,
9 it really should be considered to maybe put
10 them underground. We know what it costs.
11 It's a lot of money. I understand that.
12 Maybe a thought might be to consider getting
13 with the City of Wasilla, the Department of
14 Transportation, and considering the bypass
15 route where everybody can get on board and do
16 it all at the same place at the same time.

17 I don't know. I'm not that
18 familiar with this. I was kind of blind-sided
19 by it also. I just found out about it today
20 actually, and I heard a little bit on the
21 radio from advertisements. But some really
22 serious consideration needs to be done.

23 I'm not -- you know, I'm not one
24 of the guys that's going to get up and scream
25 about this. I just -- I think in driving

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1 through town and stuff, you know, it would be
2 nice not to have to see that anymore. I
3 understand the need to get the transmission
4 line and I understand that. I commend MEA for
5 getting on board and getting that power
6 station up and -- I mean, actually getting
7 something moving forward is great for us to be
8 able to try to be independent on our own.

9 That was all I have to say.
10 Thank you for your time.

11 MR. HANSON: Thank you,
12 Mr. Gardner. Grace Gardner. Okay. Beth
13 Free. Okay.

14 Is there anyone else here who
15 would like to testify? Okay. I think Kevin
16 is going to go check the list because we tried
17 to go in the order it was -- he's bringing it
18 forward. Thank you for your patience.

19 Was it Tina Carlton -- looks like
20 it was crossed out. Sig Colberg, and then
21 Leonard Grau. Thank you.

22 MR. COLBERG: Hello. My name is
23 Sig Colberg. It's spelled S-i-g, first name,
24 and C-o-l-b-e-r-g. I live in the vicinity of
25 the Parks/Trunk Road interchange, just south

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1 of there.

2 My concern, I guess, is on the
3 section that's going basically from the
4 hospital substation over to Herman Road and
5 specifically the power line in the vicinity
6 that would be placed in the Trunk Road/Parks
7 intersection. There's an existing air strip
8 that's been in place there for 35 years. I
9 guess in the interest of aviation safety, any
10 power line put on the approach path could
11 present a problem with aviators coming in and
12 out of the air strip safely. It's also near
13 the hospital helipad, which isn't used
14 frequently by aircraft.

15 So I'd like to make sure that the
16 routing, the final routing selected considers
17 both of those aviation, airports and helipads,
18 and is put in place such that it doesn't
19 inflict a problem on the approach and bypass
20 to either one of those areas. The air strip
21 is used by three folks on a fairly consistent
22 basis, and there's concern there with any of
23 the southern routes if the power line is put
24 on the south alignment, which doesn't seem too
25 probable, but that would be worse than the

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1 north alignment.

2 I'm for the power line in
3 general. I'm a power user like everyone else.
4 I'd like to see it go through. But just
5 consideration of that obstruction to an
6 airport is my primary interest.

7 That's it.

8 MR. HANSON: Thank you,
9 Mr. Colberg. Leonard.

10 MR. GRAU: My name is Leonard
11 Grau, L-e-o-n-a-r-d G-r-a-u. I own the
12 10 acres on the north side adjacent to the
13 Home Depot, to the west of Home Depot, and
14 also 13 acres on the south side directly
15 across from that.

16 And it looks like no matter what
17 happens, that transmission line is going to go
18 through either one side or the other. And the
19 north side 10 acres is -- is zoned commercial
20 and I hope to sell it. But with all these
21 right-of-way and so forth that would be
22 involved there, it looks like my property is
23 worthless and I don't look forward to that.
24 And I hope that if there's a chance the power
25 line, once it gets to that point could be put

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1 underground. It would help a lot.

2 That's about all I have to say.

3 Thank you.

4 MR. HANSON: Thank you, sir. Ken
5 Ray. Ken Ray here?

6 Before you begin, there are
7 refreshments in the back, or I think there's
8 at least coffee there. Is there water back
9 there too?

10 MR. BEARDSLEY: There's hot water
11 and coffee.

12 MR. HANSON: Hot water and coffee
13 out there's some water out in the hall. So
14 feel free to use that if anyone would like.

15 MR. RAY: Good evening. My name
16 is Ken Ray. I'm impacted with the Hyer Road
17 area and one of the commercial properties.

18 I hear tonight a lot of
19 consideration of DOT in making these choices.
20 I question whether the former head of DOT
21 right-of-way, who is your contractor, may be
22 influenced a little bit more by their wishes
23 than the wishes of rate payers in the Valley.
24 And that should be a consideration that is
25 clarified by him.

1 I am not in favor of the Parks
2 Highway route because of my impact, but more
3 important, as the mayor said, it creates such
4 a visual change to the approach of Wasilla,
5 and I'm talking about from a term of esthetics
6 with 80-foot power poles in front of Lowe's.
7 The motel across the street is for sale for
8 \$3 million. You know, you're headed into some
9 mighty expensive territory. Most of the
10 business owners that I've spoken to had only
11 heard of this recently. And in looking at the
12 budget that you published for right-of-way,
13 they're laughing. There will be a sticker
14 shock once you start buying right-of-way along
15 the Parks Highway, and I think that's
16 unfortunate for co-op members.

17 I am in favor of the railroad
18 use. You're using the railroad for half of
19 the way. Stay on the railway in the
20 industrial corridor. The argument of the
21 curves, State of Alaska and the railroad have
22 straightened 40 curves. It's a lot straighter
23 than it used to be. Take another look at
24 this.

25 I think the power plant ordinance

1 applies. I think the MatSu Borough's power
2 plant ordinance specifically addresses view
3 shed, and I suggest either enforce the
4 ordinance or repeal it, but I would like to
5 see an examination of that. The rail route,
6 if you simply stay on the railroad, shortens
7 the power line one mile. One mile of power
8 line, one mile of railroad. That's what the
9 difference is when the right-of-way discussion
10 on curve 155 comes in. That right-of-way has
11 been purchased and is available.

12 I think that this is a confusing
13 project in that this is more than a
14 transmission line. This also catches all of
15 the power stations. That's what its purpose
16 is for. That is a good and noble thing, but
17 is this a transmission line for the purpose of
18 energizing our power plant? And, yes, we are
19 looking forward, but one option that hasn't
20 been discussed is a direct across the inlet.
21 And it's not the inlet. It's simply crossing
22 two rivers.

23 The Iditarod Historic Trail went
24 straight across Eklutna, and that's something
25 I don't see on the table. So instead of this

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1 being Step 4 in the final, I think this is
2 Step 1. I think a little bit more public
3 involvement is necessary.

4 Thank you.

5 MR. HANSON: Thank you, Mr. Ray.

6 We have Len Niesen.

7 MR. NIESEN: She stepped out for
8 a minute.

9 MR. HANSON: What about Greg?

10 MR. NIESEN: I'm here. My name
11 is Greg Niesen. My wife and I own 10 acres
12 just across from Home Depot, down a little
13 ways from this, the Pioneer Bluff Subdivision.

14 We purchased the property in
15 2005. We've been developing it. We had to
16 do, you know, a preliminary plat and go
17 through all that. We finally got the final
18 plat this year. We got it zoned commercial.
19 Two-and-a-half weeks ago it was approved
20 finally. And, you know, real short notice.
21 It was actually -- we got tipped off by a
22 realtor that this was going on.

23 Where this currently is proposed
24 on our side of the road, to take a hundred
25 foot out would totally destroy that

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1 subdivision. The lots aren't that big to
2 begin with. The lots that are along the
3 Palmer-Wasilla are only 27,000 square feet.
4 If you're talking a hundred-foot-wide
5 right-of-way, you've basically destroyed that
6 property. There's a church currently that has
7 a larger portion and is in the process of
8 building and, you know, it would wipe that
9 out. So we're really concerned.

10 You know, the City of Wasilla
11 doesn't have all that much good commercial
12 frontage, and this is a good spot up there to
13 really do a planned development. And that was
14 what the City has planned all along is a more
15 planned City than what occurred along the
16 Parks Highway in the last 40 years, you know,
17 stuff just popping up. They want streets,
18 curbs, gutters, street lights, parking,
19 planned out. Now you're putting this
20 humongous power line through there, and it
21 just doesn't make any sense at all to do that
22 through this corridor.

23 Typically, this type of power
24 line is set back into a more rural,
25 noncommercial setting than running it right

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1 through the last 360 acres of developable
2 commercial right in the heart of Wasilla, so
3 we strongly object to it.

4 I strongly object to the short
5 notice, too. It was -- you know, we just
6 pulled our mail after being out of town for a
7 few days and got this. It may have been there
8 for a day or two, but I think a project this
9 big, the notice just kind of blind-sided a lot
10 of people. You can see there are so few
11 people here. I'm surprised that there isn't
12 more. I think it's because of the short
13 notice.

14 MR. HANSON: Thank you,
15 Mr. Niesen.

16 Len Niesen.

17 MS. NIESEN: Well, I didn't hear
18 everything that my husband said.

19 MR. HANSON: We'll ask you to
20 state your name and address first before you
21 start.

22 MS. NIESEN: My name is Len
23 Niesen. My address is P.O. Box 670842,
24 Chugiak, Alaska 99567.

25 MR. HANSON: Okay. Thank you.

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1 MS. NIESEN: I didn't hear
2 everything that he said, but I'm sure that he
3 said that we object to this. We've put a lot
4 of money into this subdivision that we've just
5 completed. You put an investment like that
6 into something, you hate to see somebody come
7 along and just destroy it. And that's exactly
8 what would happen if you run this power line
9 through that corridor, especially on the side
10 that our subdivision is on, Pioneer Bluff.
11 It's one of the most beautiful views in the
12 area.

13 We had planned it for
14 professional offices. People in professional
15 offices don't want to be located right below a
16 massive power line. And I believe it would
17 destroy what we have planned to do. It would
18 destroy it after we've put a lot of money and
19 energy into doing it on the good faith that it
20 was going to be as it appeared to be. I don't
21 see any reason you need to change it. I think
22 there are perfectly good corridors that you
23 could run through along the railroad corridor,
24 for example, through that area on the other
25 side of Home Depot that would work out very

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1 well for you and it would work out very well
2 for the community and the people of Wasilla.
3 And it would certainly interfere a lot less
4 with what we have tried to do over the last
5 five years.

6 That's all.

7 MR. HANSON: Thank you,
8 Ms. Niesen.

9 Is there anyone else who, even if
10 you haven't signed up, wishes to testify at
11 this time that's in the room?

12 Okay. I guess we might check
13 with Kevin to make sure there's no one else
14 signed up. Okay. Well, what I'm going to do
15 is -- like I said at the beginning, we're here
16 until 8:00 o'clock at least. So what we'll do
17 is we'll take a recess and restart the hearing
18 if other people come in and wish to testify or
19 anyone here who hasn't testified changes their
20 mind and wishes to testify, let Kevin or
21 myself know and we'll reopen the hearing.

22 So I'll recess it. The longest
23 it would be would be until about 7:50 so that
24 we can have final remarks and close the
25 hearing appropriately if there isn't anyone

1 else. We very much want to encourage anybody
2 who wishes to testify or wants to even get
3 their position across even if it's short. We
4 will be here. I very much appreciate the
5 quality of the testimony that we've heard
6 tonight, and I appreciate the rapport of the
7 people participating. So thank you very much
8 for that.

9 We'll recess the hearing until we
10 have more people that wish to testify. Thank
11 you very much.

12 (Hearing recessed at 7:03 p.m.)

13 (Hearing reconvened at 7:56 p.m.)

14 MR. HANSON: Okay. Good evening.

15 We're going to reopen the hearing
16 and ask one final time if there's anyone else
17 who wishes to testify tonight. For the
18 record, we have been asking during the period
19 the hearing was recessed and no one has
20 indicated that they wanted to testify. I see
21 no one at this time who's saying they wish to
22 testify, so we will consider the testimony for
23 this hearing tonight to be over.

24 I do want to encourage everybody
25 who has concerns, and wishes to, to still put

1 in written comment which can be mailed,
2 e-mailed or faxed to Matanuska Electric
3 Association at the addresses and numbers
4 already provided and referred to. The record
5 will close a week from tonight on Thursday the
6 18th of October, so you need to get it in by
7 then.

8 I'd also like to thank everyone
9 for a very cooperative hearing and a hearing
10 in which is lot of very substantive testimony
11 was provided. That's very much appreciated.
12 I'd also like to thank our recorder for her
13 work tonight and also our timekeeper.

14 So with that, I will now adjourn
15 the public hearing on the MEA transmission
16 line routing project, which is the Eklutna
17 generation station to the Herning substation
18 in Wasilla. Thank you again for your
19 cooperation and participation, and we hope you
20 all have a good evening.

21 Good night.

22 (Hearing adjourned at 8:01 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE

I, LESLIE J. KNISLEY, Notary Public for the State of Alaska, and Shorthand Reporter, do hereby certify that the foregoing proceedings were taken before me at the time and place herein set forth; that the proceedings were reported stenographically by me and later transcribed by computer transcription; that the foregoing is a true record of the proceedings taken at that time; and that I am not a party to, nor do I have any interest in, the outcome of the action herein contained.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my seal this 23rd day of October, 2012.

LESLIE J. KNISLEY
Notary Public, State of Alaska
My commission expires: 06/06/16

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MATANUSKA ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION, INC.
HOSPITAL SUBSTATION TO HERNING OR COTTLE
SUBSTATION TRANSMISSION LINE
ROUTE SELECTION
PUBLIC HEARING

March 28, 2013
6:02 to 8:00 p.m.

Evangelos's Restaurant
2530 East Parks Highway
Wasilla, Alaska

Reported by: Leslie J. Knisley
Shorthand Reporter

1 MR. HANSON: Good evening.

2 Welcome to the Matanuska Electric
3 Association Transmission Line Route Selection
4 Public Hearing. This project is to consider
5 and select a route for a new transmission line
6 from the Hospital Substation to the Herning
7 Substation in Wasilla or the Cottle Substation
8 on the Knik-Goose Bay Highway.

9 This hearing is sponsored by
10 Matanuska Electric Association, or MEA. The
11 public hearing is taking place at Evangelo's
12 Restaurant located at 2530 East Parks Highway
13 in Wasilla, Alaska at approximately 6:00 p.m.
14 on Thursday, March 28th, 2013. I'm glad to
15 see so many of you could make it tonight.

16 My name is Dave Hanson. I am a
17 facilitator contracted to moderate this
18 hearing. My role is to neutrally moderate an
19 orderly and effective public hearing, free of
20 any intimidation that provides a fair
21 opportunity for all of you to testify. As a
22 neutral moderator, I have not been involved
23 with this project, except as a moderator for
24 the first public hearing, and will not be
25 involved in any policy decisions regarding

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1 this project. I have no position on the MEA
2 transmission line route selection effort. I
3 am here tonight to make sure you get a fair
4 chance to testify. That's what I'm about.

5 I will be assisted by Leslie
6 Knisley of Northern Lights Realtime &
7 Reporting, who is recording the hearing and
8 will provide an official transcript of the
9 hearing record.

10 Now, the MEA transmission line
11 route selection refers to the selection of a
12 route for a 115 kilovolt transmission line
13 from the Hospital Substation west of the
14 interchange of the Parks Highway and Glenn
15 Highway to the Herning Substation in Wasilla
16 or to the Knik-Goose Bay Road Cottle
17 Substation.

18 Three routes are considered to
19 the Herning Substation, two along the Parks
20 Highway and one along Bogard Road. The route
21 being considered to the Cottle Substation
22 partially follows the Fairview Loop corridor.
23 One of the proposed routes along the Parks
24 Highway to the Herning Substation is
25 considered MEA's preferred route.

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1 Mr. Dan Beardsley will shortly
2 provide more information and background on
3 these routes. The purpose of tonight's
4 hearing is to take recorded public comment on
5 the record regarding these transmission line
6 route alternatives so that such comment can be
7 considered by MEA officials as they select a
8 transmission line route and make a routing
9 decision.

10 MEA wants to hear your comments,
11 so please participate. Sign up at the
12 entrance table that you do want to testify if
13 you do. This hearing also complies with the
14 Matanuska-Susitna Borough public participation
15 ordinance.

16 In compliance with
17 Matanuska-Susitna Borough or, MSB, Ordinance
18 17.05.040, information about the route
19 selection process was posted on MEA's website
20 and made available for inspection at the
21 Matanuska-Susitna Borough and City of Wasilla
22 offices. Open houses on the project have been
23 held on September 29th, 2012, February 28th,
24 2013 and March 14th, 2013. An initial public
25 hearing was held on October 11th, 2012.

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1 Tonight's hearing is the
2 opportunity for you, as members of the public,
3 to give testimony on the record regarding the
4 four alternatives. If you do not wish to
5 publicly testify, you can provide written
6 comments tonight by dropping them in the box
7 at the sign-in table or mail, fax or e-mail
8 comments to the addresses provided on the
9 sheets available at the sign-in table.

10 The comments received in
11 testimony or written form during this hearing
12 and written comments received by MEA by
13 Friday, April 5th, 2013, will be considered
14 part of the official record. All testimony
15 and written comments will be reviewed by MEA
16 and its consultants for consideration in the
17 final selection of a transmission line route.

18 When MEA makes a decision, a
19 decisional document will be prepared and
20 posted on the MEA website and made available
21 for review at the Matanuska-Susitna Borough
22 Permit Center and the City of Wasilla clerk's
23 office. The decisional document will include
24 an appeal process that can be used to appeal
25 any routing decision.

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1 Any notice of an appeal
2 concerning the MEA routing decision should be
3 made to the MEA Board within 21 days of the
4 publishing of the decisional document on the
5 website and submittal of copies to the City
6 and Borough. Those who have attended or
7 participated in this hearing, or have
8 submitted comments, will receive an e-mail
9 notice when a decision is made so that you
10 will know that the material is available.

11 Before I go further, I'd like to
12 quickly make a few introductions of MEA
13 representatives who will be listening to
14 testimony tonight and who are helping put on
15 this hearing.

16 We are pleased to have MEA
17 general manager Mr. Joe Griffith here. He's
18 going to introduce Board members.

19 MR. GRIFFITH: Thank you. We
20 have two members who are here, Bob Doyle, over
21 here to my right, and Peter Burchell. I also
22 see two former Board members in the group,
23 Tammy Miller, and I saw former Director Bill
24 Cottle here somewhere. There he is right
25 there. So a lot of interest in this.

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1 I'd like all of the staff to
2 raise your hand so you can see who the staff
3 members are. I'm not going to try to
4 introduce them. There are quite a few here if
5 you need to talk to somebody. They may not
6 all have the answers, but they're here to talk
7 and we'll get an answer back to you.

8 We should introduce the Mayor
9 over there too. I believe he has an oar in
10 the water on this. So, glad to have him and
11 his staff.

12 MR. HANSON: Thank you. Welcome
13 to all the Board members, staff and Mayor.

14 May I also ask: Are there any
15 legislators present tonight, or any Borough
16 Assembly members, or any City Council members?
17 Guess not. Okay. In case I missed anybody,
18 is there anybody who has to be introduced
19 tonight? Okay. Thank you so much. Thank
20 you, Joe.

21 So what we're going to do now is
22 I'd like to draw your attention -- hopefully
23 when you came in, you picked up an agenda.
24 I'd like to draw your attention to that
25 agenda. As the agenda notes, this hearing

1 will take place from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m.
2 Prior to taking testimony, we will consider
3 ground rules, hear a route alternatives
4 overview and review hearing procedures.

5 Please note that anyone who has
6 signed up to speak by 8:00 p.m. tonight will
7 be provided with an opportunity to speak.
8 Given the large number of people interested in
9 testifying, we will continue beyond 8:00 p.m.
10 as necessary. At 8:00 p.m. we will look at
11 how many people have signed up and are yet
12 here to testify to decide -- since we can only
13 go to 10:00 o'clock -- if we need to continue
14 the hearing on an additional night, so
15 everybody will know that by 8:00 o'clock
16 tonight.

17 Following the hearing testimony,
18 we will conclude with any final MEA comments
19 or clarifications and adjourn.

20 Now, I mentioned we have an
21 agenda and on the back of it are ground rules
22 for the hearing tonight. We have a brochure,
23 an MEA brochure on the routing study, which
24 provides a great deal of information. We have
25 a route and data sheet that you should have

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1 gotten that you may want to refer to in your
2 testimony or as Mr. Beardsley gives his
3 presentation. Then, you have a comment paper
4 that has addresses for getting comments in.
5 If you want to write it down right now tonight
6 and put it in the box there, even if you
7 speak, you can even write more. You're
8 welcome to do that.

9 There are also maps and
10 additional information in the back of the
11 room. An MEA person will be back there
12 available to explain the information and
13 answer questions. If you really wish to get
14 into a discussion, we encourage you to try to
15 go out in the hall or out in this hall so we
16 don't disturb the hearing and the recorder can
17 hear everything. I encourage you to use these
18 resources.

19 Our ground rules, if you look at
20 the back of the agenda -- I'm not going to go
21 into great detail -- but obviously please be
22 respectful of others and avoid intemperate
23 language or outbursts. Help maintain an
24 atmosphere where everyone feels comfortable
25 and welcome regardless of their position.

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1 When you come up to speak, make sure you speak
2 into the microphone so the recorder can hear
3 your comments and get them down. To-the-point
4 comments are many times the most successful
5 ones. Obviously we don't interrupt anybody
6 who is speaking.

7 Remain quiet so the recorder can
8 hear. Testify to myself. I'm very interested
9 in what you have to say and I don't have an
10 opinion on it, so I will be very welcome to
11 your comments. With this group I don't think
12 I have to mention anything about unruly
13 behavior or booing, hissing, clapping or
14 harassing remarks. All of that is out of
15 order. That's not going to help us
16 communicate tonight your very important
17 message. Obviously please turn off cell
18 phones, pagers, any other machine that's going
19 to make noise. I appreciate that and thank
20 you for it.

21 Just a quick housekeeping
22 measure. I think everybody can see we have an
23 exit right there that goes out into the
24 parking lot. We have an exit right here that
25 goes up into the restaurant and outside. If

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1 you go out this exit to the left, there are
2 restrooms.

3 Now I'd like to introduce Mr. Dan
4 Beardsley of Dryden & LaRue, Incorporated, who
5 has been managing the alternative route
6 analysis and will now present a transmission
7 line route selection project overview.
8 Following his statement, I will conclude my
9 comments, review the hearing process and we'll
10 start taking testimony.

11 Dan.

12 MR. BEARDSLEY: Good evening.

13 On behalf of Matanuska Electric
14 Association I'd like to welcome you all here
15 to the public hearing. Briefly what we would
16 like to do is -- what we're talking about is
17 the route selection for a 115 KV
18 double-circuit underbuild distribution
19 transmission line.

20 What we're looking to do is we're
21 looking to try to find a route that
22 essentially works the best through this area.
23 It's never an easy task. There's always a lot
24 of issues in terms of any route we select, so
25 part of what we're looking for tonight is

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1 comments from each and every one of you that
2 would help us.

3 Primarily what we're looking for
4 is testimony and comments about our route
5 alternatives and other issues you may have and
6 any specific concerns you may have about your
7 particular alignment or alignments that may
8 affect you. Again, what we are learning from
9 these hearings and so forth is to find out
10 different things about what's going on in the
11 neighborhoods, things that maybe we did not
12 know about or were not aware of. So if you
13 have items or things of specific concern that
14 you need to bring to our attention, we would
15 certainly appreciate you bringing those to us.
16 So we'd like to hear your concerns, your
17 issues, and any items that you think would be
18 helpful or relevant to us in helping try to
19 make a prudent selection at the end of this
20 whole process.

21 Just real briefly I'd like to
22 kind of give you an idea of what we're talking
23 about with a 115 KV double-circuit
24 transmission line. Essentially what we have
25 here are three different poles. The one in

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1 the middle is actually one that you would see
2 now today on Bogard Road. That was taken from
3 Bogard Road. The one on the left would be a
4 wood structure that would be similar to what
5 we may be looking at. These are all what we'd
6 call tangent structures, those that are in a
7 straight line.

8 These are typical tangent-type
9 structures that you would find on a line of
10 this type. There may be some variations as we
11 go through, but when you get into an actual
12 construction, you'll have angles that may have
13 multiple poles. So there will be different
14 things at different locations on the project.
15 But for the straight-line portions, they're
16 typically going to be something of this
17 nature.

18 When we talk about a
19 double-circuit, what we're really referring to
20 is on each side you see that there are three
21 insulators. Three wires make up a circuit, so
22 these would be the transmission line wires up
23 top. Those are the ones that are the most
24 critical because they're taking the high
25 voltage from substation to substation

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1 essentially.

2 Down below, when we talk about
3 the underbuild distribution, this lower
4 crossarm, that is a distribution. It's
5 three-phase distribution, three-phase power.
6 That would be available to the local area.
7 The residents that are nearby would be able to
8 utilize the power that comes here. So this is
9 at distribution level, and that's what's on
10 this lower crossarm. So that would also be
11 there for developers and folks in the
12 neighborhood.

13 Initially we took a look at
14 different routes. When we first started this
15 whole process, we really took the whole area
16 without any of these routes on it. Looked at
17 it trying to find possible ways to get
18 through. As you can see, if you look at this
19 area, it's incredibly developed and it's
20 continuing to develop as we go. This map is
21 actually older. What you'll find is that some
22 of the areas in here, for instance, that look
23 like they're not quite so developed are now
24 even more developed than they were originally.

25 In looking at that and trying to

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1 find a cross-country route without going along
2 the transportation corridors, we essentially
3 were going to end up running right through
4 some neighborhoods or some subdivisions. So
5 consequently we started then looking at
6 transportation corridors as possible alignment
7 alternatives.

8 So we looked at four initial
9 transportation corridors: We looked at
10 following the existing Bogard transmission
11 line, going along, leaving the hospital,
12 coming up, going up Bogard Road, coming all
13 the way back down and around. That was one of
14 the choices, again, utilizing part of the
15 highway right-of-way as well as having to have
16 additional easements on the outside of it.

17 The second one we looked at was
18 to come up and go down the Palmer-Wasilla
19 Highway, kind of a central route. A third
20 one, then, was the Parks Highway. The fourth
21 was looking at the Alaska Railroad alignment.
22 Then we added an additional one trying to go
23 down essentially towards Nelson Road, coming
24 down in the southern end, and following up
25 through near where the sewer plant is and

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1 walking through some of the lower wetland
2 areas in through here.

3 So we looked at five different
4 original alignments. Out of those five, we
5 then did an assessment to try to figure out
6 what we felt would be the most likely of those
7 preferred alternatives with those. What we
8 found with Bogard -- our biggest problem with
9 Bogard, one, it's long, so it's almost twice
10 as costly as going any of the other routes.

11 The second issue with Bogard was
12 that we would effectively not be adding a
13 redundant route. One of the important parts
14 of what we're trying to do is to link
15 substations and provide an additional
16 alignment to those substations. So we would
17 essentially be taking out an existing one
18 that's already there that provides a circuit
19 to an existing substation now. So it really
20 wouldn't add anything to the system other than
21 just having this new double circuit that would
22 go along that alignment.

23 Palmer-Wasilla at first blush was
24 very viable. Looked very good as an
25 alternative. A couple of problems. One was

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1 the intersection here at the Parks Highway,
2 and then the other problem we have is that DOT
3 is currently looking at developing and
4 reworking this particular alignment. If
5 you're familiar with this, the terrain is such
6 that there's very little room to make that
7 alignment through there. So it's going to
8 take a lot of right-of-way ultimately.

9 The same thing with us. We have
10 some electrical facilities alongside of it,
11 however, again, they're very narrow
12 rights-of-way and they're not very large, so
13 it would take a lot of right-of-way. The
14 bigger problem for us, again, was that DOT
15 came along. They would not give us probably a
16 permit that we would be forced to -- if they
17 came along later, it would force us to
18 relocate at our own cost. I think there's a
19 high risk that if we put an alignment along
20 here, we would be forced to relocate it at our
21 own cost in a very short period of time,
22 within five to ten years possibly. So that
23 was one of the primary reasons we decided
24 against the central route.

25 I'll leave the Parks for a

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1 moment. We came down to the railroad. The
2 railroad is pretty curvilinear. What I mean
3 is essentially it's got lots of bends. One of
4 the problems that we have with trying to
5 follow that alignment, again, the railroad
6 requires that we stay within the outer ten
7 feet of their alignment. So following that
8 alignment would cause a lot of curves, a lot
9 of bends, a lot of angles, which adds a lot to
10 the construction cost as well as creates a lot
11 of guy easements and needs to use adjacent
12 lands for the guy -- those angle structures.

13 Some issues that came up in here.
14 Again, I'll call this kind of the gully area.
15 Geotechnically we've got some issues. Again,
16 with the railroad alignment, it's pretty
17 steep. If you looked at it from the old Mat
18 Road there near the old movie theater, if you
19 go out there and take a look, it's straight
20 down and the railroad is on a bench kind of
21 down the side of the hill. So they were quite
22 concerned with the potential for causing
23 problems with the railroad geotechnically. If
24 we move further down into it, we again start
25 getting into wetlands and floodplain areas.

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1 So those are some considerations
2 that we took into account. Wetlands and
3 floodplains also add tremendously to the cost
4 in terms of foundations and maintenance of
5 construction. So, again, for that reason the
6 railroad was a very expensive alternative for
7 us at that point when we looked at it
8 originally.

9 Then, the last of the other
10 alignments was the southern route, which,
11 again, a little bit longer. Then, as we got
12 into it, one of the things we found is that
13 Mr. Turner had gotten his plan approved. He
14 has a master plan. So this is all pretty much
15 now subdivided. They're all individual lots.
16 So going through there would have ultimately
17 resulted in us having to acquire individual
18 lots as opposed to going across acreage, which
19 again raises the cost quite a bit. The same
20 issues came up on this end again with the
21 wetlands and some of those issues.

22 So for those reasons we thought
23 that the Parks Highway was the best alignment.
24 Consequently that became our preferred
25 alignment.

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1 So initially what we did, then,
2 is looked at alternatives on different sides
3 of the Parks Highway, whether to go on the
4 south or the north. Ultimately we felt that
5 the north side was the best. It was the least
6 impact on individual businesses. There were
7 some businesses on the south side that were
8 right on the road. Essentially Evangelo's
9 here would be one particular one.

10 This strip right in through here
11 would be virtually very difficult to get
12 through. Also, there were some conflicting
13 issues with the railroad and the highway back
14 down in the Hyer Road area. So consequently
15 we ultimately came up with an alignment that
16 would come up through the Parks, essentially
17 come just beyond the Windbreak Cafe, turn and
18 go across, go behind the Cottonwood Creek
19 Mall, come down the old Mat Road, pop up, and
20 then come back out on the Palmer-Wasilla
21 Highway.

22 So that was our preferred
23 alternative. What we did with that is that we
24 then held public hearings. Essentially had
25 open houses and public hearings and then made

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1 an application following those to the City of
2 Wasilla. The City of Wasilla was not pleased
3 with our application, let's say it that way.
4 Consequently what happened is that we withdrew
5 the application based on some of the comments
6 and the issues that were raised as a result of
7 that. That's part of what's precipitated
8 having this set of hearings, is that we were
9 looking at all these different alternatives to
10 make sure that we got the right data and the
11 right information.

12 I will say that we have gone back
13 to the City again with another application,
14 looking again at the preferred alternative.
15 They have currently rejected it. We will
16 follow up with that with the City as we go
17 forward.

18 So tonight what I'm asking you to
19 do is to take a look at our different
20 alternatives. We have all of these up on the
21 board. Give us your comments and state your
22 concerns and any information that you would
23 like to provide.

24 UNIDENTIFIED WOMAN: So what was
25 the City of Wasilla's reasons for rejecting

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1 your applications?

2 MR. BEARDSLEY: I'm not going to
3 answer that at the moment.

4 UNIDENTIFIED WOMAN: Is that part
5 of the public record?

6 MR. BEARDSLEY: I don't know yet.
7 I just know that that was -- we were told it
8 was not acceptable at this point. So we'll
9 have to sit down with the City and work with
10 them. This is kind of for your comments
11 ultimately, but I'm trying to give you a
12 background and an update of exactly where we
13 are.

14 So we have the different
15 alternatives. We looked at, again,
16 essentially the same original Bogard Road
17 alternative, coming back to Herning
18 Substation. We're looking at the Parks
19 Highway as one of the alternatives. Again,
20 one alternative -- it may be the same
21 alternative from the east end, but on the west
22 end it would split.

23 We've got two alternatives under
24 consideration. One is down the frontage
25 essentially of the Parks, and then the other

1 is essentially a back lot line alternative,
2 which would place it back behind the major
3 commercial entities. It would come across.
4 Then the other variation on that particular
5 route from the original preferred route was
6 that it would then follow below down in the
7 gravel pit and around back in the Herning
8 Substation instead of going up on the
9 Palmer-Wasilla Highway.

10 The other alignment that we've
11 looked at now is a new alignment, an alignment
12 coming from essentially the hospital. It
13 comes up to essentially Lazelle Substation,
14 which would be tied in. Then from Lazelle it
15 would come down to the south and then head
16 east along the section lines between the
17 properties through here, coming to the Cottle
18 Substation out on the Knik-Goose Bay Road.

19 So those are the alternatives
20 that we're looking at, and those are the ones
21 we would like your comments on. If you need
22 to see the map a little better, again, we have
23 copies of the maps right here. They're on the
24 website. We also have data relative to the
25 individual routes on the back. You have --

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1 this, again, kind of gives you the aerial
2 photography.

3 With that, I'm going to turn it
4 back over to Dave. Thank you. We will
5 proceed to the hearing.

6 MR. HANSON: Thank you very much,
7 Dan. I will just clarify that since this is a
8 hearing, and we've had open -- I've been
9 informed that open houses have been held. Out
10 of fairness to everyone who came here to
11 testify tonight, we won't publicly take
12 questions. You can definitely get them on the
13 record. You can definitely go and talk to
14 anybody from MEA about the questions, but on
15 the record we want to keep it moving so
16 everybody that came to testify has a chance to
17 testify since it is a hearing tonight and not
18 an open house.

19 With that, I'd like to go over
20 the hearing procedures. You've already
21 acquainted yourself with the sign-in table at
22 the backs that also has these handouts that we
23 mentioned to you. All hearing attendees are
24 asked to sign in at the sign-in table so we
25 know who's here and can keep them informed if

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1 any decision is made or anything comes out.
2 If they wish to testify, they would note that
3 when they signed in. If they are representing
4 a group, they would also note that and who the
5 group was.

6 As I mentioned, people may
7 continue to sign up to testify until 8:00 p.m.
8 We will stay past 8:00 p.m. so that everyone
9 has a chance to testify that is signed in at
10 that time. Also, at about 8:00 p.m., as I
11 mentioned earlier, we will make a judgment
12 decision on whether we can get everybody --
13 give everybody a chance by 10:00 o'clock when
14 we have to leave. They close down the room at
15 that time. We will see if we have to continue
16 the hearing another night, so we'll see how
17 we're doing then.

18 If you decide you don't want to
19 testify after you signed up, please let the
20 person at the desk know so we can take your
21 name off the list so we can make sure others
22 get a chance to testify. Each individual will
23 have one three-minute opportunity to speak.
24 Each organization, if you have a
25 representative, will have one five-minute

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1 opportunity. Only one representative of an
2 organization may use the five minutes to speak
3 for that organization. This is where you are
4 indeed representing an organization and not
5 just yourself; otherwise, it's personal; it's
6 three minutes.

7 An individual or a group may
8 submit written comments when they testify or
9 later for the official comment record as long
10 as they're received by Friday, April 5th,
11 2013. I will call people forward to testify
12 in the order they signed in to speak.
13 Testimony will be recorded and transcribed for
14 the record by the court reporter.

15 When called, a person should take
16 a seat at this front table and clearly state
17 and spell their name and give their address.
18 Your three or five minutes will not begin
19 until you've stated your name and address, so
20 there's no reason to try and hurry through it,
21 in which case we may not understand what you
22 said. During your testimony, any questions
23 asked will be recorded but not answered, so
24 that the hearing keeps moving. However,
25 representatives from MEA are in the back room

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1 if you wish to go back and talk to them about
2 a question.

3 Now, Kathryn Schreckenghost, our
4 timekeeper, is right over here. She will be
5 sitting right here and she will let you know
6 when you have two minutes left, one minute
7 left and a half-minute left. When you get to
8 the end of your three minutes, that's the
9 sound you'll hear. That means time's up and
10 we'll move on to the next person.

11 As I call a person forward to
12 testify, I will indicate who is next and on
13 deck. We have a chair right behind the
14 testimony table to my right, to your left,
15 that has a reserved piece of paper on it. The
16 first person that's on deck will just move
17 that off. That is where we have a person so
18 we can keep it moving well.

19 So I do have a beginning point
20 list. The first person that signed up was
21 Lisa Ameen, if she would come up to the table,
22 and Ron Eggleston to the on-deck chair.

23 Welcome, Lisa.

24 LISA AMEEN: Good evening. My
25 name is Lisa Ameen. I live at 3433 Whispering

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1 Woods Drive. I'm sorry, I didn't attend any
2 of the workshops. I didn't hear about it
3 until now. But I wanted to get my opinion in.

4 I live across the street from
5 where I guess I was told the City of Wasilla
6 proposed back lot thing. That comes right
7 into our residential subdivision and I'm
8 totally against that. Either way, the Parks
9 or down there, I guess I'm going to be looking
10 at these strictures, which I believe can be up
11 to 80 feet tall. I believe when I was working
12 on our tall power structure for the MatSu
13 Borough, that was at 75 feet.

14 So with three sets of wires
15 strung across, to me, it's going to look like
16 an industrial thing. I purchased a view
17 property to look at a view. It's going to
18 impact the value of my property. My husband
19 is a real estate appraiser. He's out of town.
20 But I did look up on the Internet the impact
21 of transmission lines on residential values,
22 and they estimate between 6.3 up to 10.1 on
23 average, but it could go higher.

24 So if it's going to go down
25 there -- I mean, I'm personally going to end

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1 up paying the cost in addition to the
2 ratepayer cost. For me ever selling my
3 property, somebody wanting to purchase a
4 \$300,000 home is not going to want to look at
5 that. So I feel I want some kind of
6 compensation if that's where it ends up,
7 because I'm going to foot that bill.

8 I've had to move in the past
9 because of external impacts that are
10 nuisances, and that's why I moved into the
11 city limits of Wasilla to get away from that
12 stuff, where we had a police department, we
13 had zoning intact, and now this is yet another
14 thing coming. So I object to that.

15 I tend to propose -- favor the
16 Bogard Road since those poles are already
17 there. Nobody -- this is not like another
18 intrusion into residential properties. I
19 think the impact on commercial properties
20 would be less than as a residential view
21 property, because they're looking for traffic
22 exposure, not so much a view property. That's
23 what residential properties pay for.

24 If it's a hundred-foot clearance
25 for these lines, those residential properties

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1 on this back lot thing, they're going to
2 pretty much have to remove all the trees. So
3 it will just be that much more that all of
4 these properties up on that hillside are going
5 to be looking at this and we're all
6 residential properties. So I object to that.

7 Another route I would like to
8 see, if not the Bogard, is to go down that
9 railroad corridor back behind where nobody is
10 impacted, because it's down below. Even
11 though the cost to build in wetlands -- there
12 is a mixture of soils back there. You could
13 build it even if it is a higher cost.

14 Thank you.

15 MR. HANSON: Thank you, Lisa.
16 Mr. Eggleston and on deck will be Anthony
17 Nabb.

18 Now, I might just clarify
19 something. I'm the kind of person, when
20 somebody is talking to me, I want to let them
21 know I heard them and that I'm understanding.
22 So I will be nodding my head. I will be
23 sympathetic, but I have nothing to do with the
24 decision. But I want to encourage you to get
25 out your remarks. So don't mistake that my

1 agreement means anything except to encourage
2 you. Thank you.

3 Mr. Eggleston.

4 RON EGGLESTON: Ron Eggleston.
5 That's E-g-g-l-e-s-t-o-n. I live at 961 East
6 Sue Lane, Unit 4C. It's a condo development
7 that's impacted by this. Maybe I might want
8 to sign up as a director of the Board of the
9 condos for another five minutes.

10 MR. HANSON: So you're
11 representing the condo association?

12 RON EGGLESTON: Well, right now
13 I'm representing myself because I wasn't aware
14 of that, but I am on the Board of Directors of
15 the condo association.

16 MR. HANSON: Okay. By the way,
17 this won't count against your time, our little
18 clarification here. But my problem is
19 somebody else could come up and say, I'm part
20 of the condo association and he didn't
21 represent it because the condo association
22 didn't have a chance to decide on a
23 representative. So I think I'm going to have
24 to probably have you -- we'll let you start
25 your three minutes over and have you represent

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1 yourself as a condo association officer or
2 Board member with the three minutes in case
3 there's somebody else that's going to come up
4 and say, I'm the real representative. I'm
5 sorry you didn't know ahead of time.

6 RON EGGLESTON: Okay. That's
7 fair.

8 Well, I see a couple things here.
9 Dan never mentioned the word Fairview once.
10 It hurts a little bit less when it's just
11 known as the Cottle route. But as a resident
12 of the condo association there, it's a choke
13 point on that particular route. One of the
14 buildings goes right up against the
15 right-of-way that's there, which also holds a
16 high-pressure natural gas line that goes along
17 the same right-of-way. Our wellhouse and well
18 and the house for it and everything also is in
19 that same thing right there. If you took that
20 back building out, it kind of destroys the
21 association you might say.

22 There is also a airstrip right
23 across the right-of-way there that's used as a
24 private airstrip, but if it's using that
25 80-foot wire, I'm sure it wouldn't make him

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1 feel too good either. I do think that the --
2 the highway line would be the best actually
3 for several reasons. Maintenance on the wires
4 once they are installed and so forth is a
5 matter generally of putting a few traffic
6 cones out and so forth. If it's on the north
7 side of the highway, you've got frontage roads
8 to work off of. You've got several things
9 that it's a lot easier to try to get to those
10 wires in the swamps or anywhere else.

11 Quite frankly, as far as view
12 goes, nobody is going to stop and admire the
13 view there. They're going to get killed if
14 they do it. As far as that view goes, there's
15 light standards from the interchanges.
16 There's cell towers; there's everything else.
17 You're going to be watching that view as I
18 often do -- I love that view -- but 60 miles
19 an hour or whatever you're breaking the speed
20 limit at as you go along there.

21 So for those reasons alone I
22 think that that would be the best. A lot of
23 the people along the Fairview route did buy
24 their homes with the view in mind so forth.
25 It will take down their property values,

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1 because as the previous person said, nobody
2 like to look out their windows. The
3 commercial route, I can't think of hardly
4 anybody that would be affected.

5 MR. HANSON: Thank you,
6 Mr. Eggleston.

7 Mr. Nabb and next will be Dale
8 Fosselman.

9 TONY NABB: Tony Nabb. I live at
10 3 Mile, Fairview Loop, 2201 East Fairview
11 Loop.

12 I am for the MEA route going down
13 the Parks Highway for the simple reason: One,
14 like Ron said, maintenance would be a lot
15 easier to raise your rigs to maintain the
16 line. I worked power transmission for the
17 better part of my life and running a line down
18 Fairview Loop, you got to cut trees in the
19 right-of-way to try to put a rig up there
20 either on the right-of-way or on Fairview
21 Loop, which is already congested. You'll have
22 wrecks, and you're creating more and more
23 impediment to transportation.

24 Going down the Parks Highway you
25 already have an access corridor for vehicles

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1 and there's already utility lines going
2 underground and cables going underground.
3 Going down Fairview Loop, like MEA recommends,
4 like Ron was saying, maintenance alone will
5 make the difference. As far as running that
6 line in front of neighborhoods and all that,
7 our mayor -- not my mayor, but the mayor of
8 Wasilla, he states he doesn't want the power
9 lines to make his city ugly. Put them in
10 neighborhoods where they won't bother anybody.

11 Well, the power feeds the Wasilla
12 industrial area and the sporting areas around
13 it. Put that line down where it belongs.
14 Like Ron said, nobody's going to want to see
15 that line and view that line. We're driving
16 80 miles an hour -- 60 miles an hour. You
17 can't blink. If you blink, you're done.

18 So we're in favor of running that
19 power line down the Parks Highway. Keep it
20 out of the residential areas. If he wants it
21 over there, put it down his road where he
22 wants it. Let him pay the cost, an additional
23 \$7 million difference. He's a healthy man.
24 Let him pay the bill. That's all I have to
25 say.

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1 MR. HANSON: Thank you, Mr. Nabb.
2 Dale Fosselman. Is Dale here? Okay.

3 And next will be Greg Van Thiel.
4 Is Dale here? Are you Dale?

5 GREGORY VAN THIEL: Good evening.
6 I'm Gregory Van Thiel. Last name is spelled
7 V-a-n space T-h-i-e-l. And I live at 4771
8 East Crane Road in Wasilla.

9 I'm in favor of the original
10 Parks Highway route, also known as the OPHR,
11 for the following reasons: Tourists do not
12 travel to Wasilla to do tourist activities.
13 Their presence for the most part is
14 transitory. The addition of the new
15 transmission line will not be noticed. It
16 will not be a feature they will think or speak
17 of negatively.

18 Along a similar vein, the new
19 line will have a fleeting and almost unnoticed
20 effect on tourists while if routed through
21 residential areas, those affected will be
22 forced to have the quality of their life
23 greatly diminished 24/7 in perpetuity and in
24 some cases decrease their property values.
25 They will be affected by new ATV trails, loss

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1 of privacy and security, unseemly views and
2 health concerns. For instance, my bed is
3 70 feet from the proposed Cottle line.

4 Wasilla is already a commercial,
5 light industrial community. There already
6 exist a plethora of cell phone towers, traffic
7 lights, street lights, business signs, parking
8 lots, et cetera, and a noticeable lack of
9 trees and other esthetically pleasing
10 features. The addition of the new line will
11 not worsen this condition in the least.

12 The number of residences affected
13 along the OPHR are minimal compared to others,
14 and they already continually view the
15 commercial light industrial presence. The
16 number of residences passed statistic does not
17 take into account those residences negatively
18 impacted to not actually have the line touch
19 their property. This figure is negligible
20 along the OPHR; it's significant along other
21 routes.

22 The OPHR is the least costly by
23 at least \$4 million. If it was buried for
24 three miles, that extra expense should be
25 borne by taxing Wasilla businesses and

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1 residents who believe they stand to gain from
2 that, not the whole of the MEA co-op
3 membership. That's just an aside.

4 In summary, I would like to say
5 that Wasilla lost its boutique colony town
6 charm beginning in the late '70s and early
7 '80s. Since then it has never been anything
8 other than a highway with a strip mall on one
9 side and a railroad track on the other.
10 Routing this transmission line along more
11 extensive routes, affecting more residents so
12 that the City of Wasilla, the sole beneficiary
13 of this upgrade, doesn't have to have it in
14 its backyard makes the least sense. Please
15 choose the original Parks Highway route.

16 Thank you.

17 MR. HANSON: Thank you, Mr. Van
18 Thiel. Lee Peterson, and after Lee will be
19 Elmer Kluxton.

20 LEE PETERSON: Lee Peterson. I
21 live at 4867 East Alder Drive.

22 In the 23 years I've been in the
23 Valley, MEA has provided me with safe,
24 reliable, cost-effective power. No matter
25 which route is chosen it will be wrong in

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1 someone's opinion. Should the Bogard Road
2 route be chosen, it will directly impact me as
3 it bisects my property. I cut my grass under
4 it. I play croquet under it. I play
5 volleyball with grandkids under it. I'm not
6 here to tell MEA which route to choose or not
7 choose. I am here to ask them, MEA, make
8 their decision based on a fiscal, not
9 emotional, response. I say that because I
10 like electricity and I like paying as little
11 as possible. So that's my reason for saying,
12 I don't care if you cross my property. You're
13 already there. I don't notice those lines
14 today. I don't see that I will notice 115
15 anymore.

16 Thank you.

17 MR. HANSON: Thank you,
18 Mr. Peterson. Elmer -- is it Kluxton?

19 GENE KLUXTON: My name is Gene
20 Kluxton. I live at 100 East Fiona Street in
21 Wasilla -- or it's outside of Wasilla. It's
22 along the corner of Fern and Leota.

23 Currently I have -- on the west
24 side of my house I have two easements and on
25 the east side I also have another easement,

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1 and I have five guy wires. I've got four
2 pedestals and a vault on my lot. My lot has
3 been -- part of my lot sits over the hill and
4 down in the swamp. So I've got a lot that's
5 only about 200 foot in length. It started out
6 at 145 foot wide. Out of that comes the
7 street, 15-foot easements and an additional
8 17-foot easement with appropriate guys and
9 anchors. So my lot is getting down to
10 practically nothing.

11 If you bring a power line through
12 there and take any additional part, then I
13 won't have any room to live. So if they do
14 that, the only way you're going to get it is
15 to buy the whole place. I mean, I'm not going
16 to live underneath a power line. I've got
17 enough health problems as it is.

18 It will cost us a great deal more
19 to come through there than it will cost to go
20 through Wasilla. Perhaps they don't want it,
21 but Wasilla is already an industrial area, as
22 they already said. This is a high-voltage
23 line and the recommended distance in the
24 literature that I have shows 100 feet from the
25 edge of their easement, so that would be

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1 right -- take part of my house. So I
2 certainly don't want it going down Leota.

3 Thank you.

4 MR. HANSON: Thank you, sir.
5 Barbara Miller, and after Barbara would be
6 Mayor Rupright.

7 BARBARA MILLER: My name is
8 Barbara J. Tammy Miller. I live at 1450 West
9 Edmond Road, which is not in Wasilla. I
10 didn't even know about this problem and I've
11 been on the Board of MEA for 18 years prior.

12 This is an economic problem. We
13 have an economic problem in the State. The
14 oil is diminishing. We have an economic
15 problem federally because the taxes are rising
16 and you're getting nothing for your money. I
17 personally prefer the original Parks Highway
18 because every meter that MEA has out will pay
19 \$2,000 for that first option. Any other
20 option -- if you have a \$5 million addition,
21 which several of these have, will cost every
22 meter another thousand dollars. That is not
23 even including whatever the rate of interest
24 is going to be.

25 So you've got to understand that

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1 when you're looking at decisions like this,
2 you're looking not only at 20, 30, 50 or 100
3 years ahead. You're looking at how you're
4 going to pay for these. Are you going to ask
5 the person in Talkeetna who has one meter and
6 uses maybe 800 kilowatts a month to pay
7 another \$3,000 for anything else in downtown
8 Wasilla, and they may not even get here more
9 than twice a year. It has to be done
10 economically.

11 The easement is there through the
12 City of Wasilla. It's a shopping area. The
13 other routes all have residences there.
14 Businesses generally run from 8:00 to 5:00 or
15 8:00 to 7:00. Houses run 24 hours. There's
16 either somebody in bed, somebody eating
17 breakfast, somebody going to school, somebody
18 going to work. But you're asking every rate,
19 every meter in the MEA service area to spend
20 \$3,000 for anything other than the original
21 Parks Highway. The original Parks Highway
22 will cost every meter \$2,000.

23 So everybody is going to have
24 medical insurance problems. They're going to
25 have IRS problems. They're going to have

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1 State taxes coming up if that oil disappears
2 because gas is never going to fill it. Is it
3 fair because someone doesn't want it here or
4 there to cost any meter any more?

5 Thank you.

6 MR. HANSON: Thank you,
7 Ms. Miller. Mayor Rupright and then John and
8 Linda Publicover. I'm sorry. Thank you.
9 You'll be next.

10 MAYOR RUPRIGHT: Thank you,
11 Mr. Moderator.

12 First, the City is not a sole
13 beneficiary of an alternative route or the
14 power upgrade, nor has the City ever said, put
15 it in a residential meter.

16 MR. HANSON: Mr. Mayor, I'm going
17 to have you start over and just ask: I'm
18 assuming you're representing the City?

19 MAYOR RUPRIGHT: Yes, and I'm
20 also a ratepayer. And the City did pay
21 499,199 bucks --

22 MR. HANSON: I take it you're
23 asking for five minutes.

24 MAYOR RUPRIGHT: Sure. Just our
25 concerns. Thank you, Mr. Moderator. I'll

1 start over.

2 If MEA truly values the public
3 input and comments, then why have they already
4 submitted their permit application to the City
5 for approval of the transmission lines on the
6 26th of March? Why is the proposed route the
7 same as the one submitted last fall instead of
8 one of the three routes presented in the last
9 two open-house meetings as an alternative?

10 MEA states that their goal is to
11 remove redundancy of the transmission rate in
12 the Valley, which requires construction of new
13 transmission lines extending from the Hospital
14 Substation to either Cottle or Herning
15 Substations. This will be a separate project
16 from the new power plant in Eklutna; however,
17 MEA's goal of tying into the Herning
18 Substation is to achieve an idealized
19 distribution system after sacrificing
20 Wasilla's idealized viewshed.

21 The difference is additional
22 monies providing MEA what it needs. Once the
23 viewshed is gone, there's no amount of money
24 that can compensate for that loss. MEA can
25 achieve most of what they are seeking with new

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1 transmission lines from the Hospital
2 Substation using the existing Eklutna line to
3 Palmer. MEA can also recognize the
4 24-megawatt power plant being proposed is a
5 co-generation site facility that will yield 10
6 megawatts back to the grid towards Wasilla as
7 a form of redundancy.

8 MEA does not need to construct a
9 new transmission line in Wasilla to derive
10 redundancy they are seeking. According to the
11 testimony of Mr. Griffith before the
12 Regulatory Commission on March 13th of this
13 year, power will still be transmitted to the
14 Valley from the new power plant to provide a
15 loop transmission system even if the proposed
16 line is not built. He stated: We can still
17 feed through the existing line right here. We
18 also have a long-range plan to build from this
19 area to Douglas Substation. So that will in
20 effect give us a loop transmission system in
21 the Valley. That's what's long been needed up
22 there.

23 MEA can serve power by the
24 January 1st, 2015 deadline when their 30-year
25 contract ends with Chugach for selling power

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1 to MEA without any new transmission using the
2 existing Eklutna line into Palmer in one
3 direction and back through Chugach ML&P in the
4 other direction. The existing transmission
5 lines currently distribute power adequately to
6 the Wasilla area. Those same lines also will
7 be able to distribute power from the new
8 plant. MEA is the one-third owner of those
9 lines.

10 MEA could have joined Chugach
11 Electric and constructed a new power plant in
12 Anchorage versus constructing a separate plant
13 at Eklutna. If any of you agree MEA must
14 construct new 80-foot-tall transmission lines,
15 there are many other alternatives along the
16 Parks/Palmer-Wasilla Highway, which include
17 following the Alaska Railroad right-of-way,
18 then to Herning; follow the Parks Highway to
19 Seward Meridian, then head south a
20 quarter-mile less to the existing Herning;
21 connect to Cottle Substation instead of
22 Herning, following the southern route; bury a
23 line within the City limits, not the entire
24 length of the Parks Highway.

25 No, the Bogard Road and

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1 Palmer-Wasilla routes are unrealistic
2 alternatives due to length of the distribution
3 system, potential conflicts with the roadway
4 improvements and the number of businesses
5 impacted by right-of-way acquisition. MEA
6 states that it can't bury the transmission
7 lines within the City viewshed even though
8 this is three miles or less, not the entire
9 Parks Highway.

10 However, Mr. Griffith also
11 testified before the Regulatory Commission
12 that the Planning and Zoning Commission of
13 Wasilla will probably try to force
14 underground. We have priced that and my
15 position with them is, if you want
16 underground, go underground; it just costs
17 more.

18 Where is the meaningful look at
19 the alternatives Wasilla has proposed to MEA
20 to avoid the Parks Highway/Palmer-Wasilla
21 Highway viewsheds? MEA's route will
22 negatively impact the existing commercial
23 route along the highway, including the ability
24 to expand, potential for future development of
25 vacant commercially-zoned properties along the

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1 route, commercial property values, the scenic
2 vistas and viewsheds along the Parks and
3 Palmer-Wasilla, economic development within
4 the City and the Valley, potential for
5 increased sales tax for commercial businesses,
6 which directly impacts the existing and
7 enhanced services provided by the City, which
8 feeds libraries, roads, police,
9 beautification.

10 Regardless of which route is
11 chosen and how it will be constructed, MEA
12 needs to engage the residents and property
13 owners, residential and commercial, in a
14 meaningful process where their important
15 suggestions actually mean something. MEA
16 intends to move forward with the Parks Highway
17 route period. They clearly never intended to
18 consider anyone's input since they have
19 already submitted the permit applications to
20 the City to construct the transmission lines
21 along the original route.

22 Mr. Griffith made it perfectly
23 clear that MEA intends to push forward with
24 that route as indicated in his testimony
25 before the RCA on March 13th. The next step

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1 is to go to court and have the argument in
2 court. They have a right to be in that
3 right-of-way along that highway. All Wasilla
4 has ever asked for, since all of our
5 businesses are all underground themselves and
6 there's already lines in there, you can loop
7 the redundancy and there's a private power
8 company ready to come on line to feed. I
9 mean, there's a lot of options.

10 Thank you.

11 MR. HANSON: Thank you,
12 Mr. Mayor. John and Linda Publicover. Then,
13 Ken Ray will be next.

14 LINDA PUBLICOVER: Hi, Linda
15 Publicover. We own a home at 256 East Leota,
16 right down the street from the other speaker.

17 We just found out about this this
18 morning because the home is actually being
19 leased right now, but I did live there for
20 three years. So I'm kind of stunned that any
21 of this is going on. So I guess my question
22 would be how you notified people, if you were
23 sent something in the mail or something was
24 flagged on the door or just the Frontiersman.
25 Because I don't read the Frontiersman. I

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1 typically just read on the Internet or
2 whatever. I get the Anchorage Daily News, but
3 I don't get the Frontiersman. So that would
4 be my major question, how people were notified
5 because we didn't know until this morning from
6 our tenant.

7 I'm in agreement with most of the
8 other people that have spoken to keep the
9 route on a commercial corridor or whatever you
10 call it, either the Parks or the Bogard
11 because it's already commercialized. I know
12 that a lot of people are saying, don't get
13 emotionally involved with it, but when our
14 tenants do move out, we had intended to move
15 back to Leota. I have some health issues.
16 I'm on a fourth pacemaker. There's no way I
17 could live around a major power line.

18 So if the idea was going to be a
19 buy-out, we're also builders. So we're used
20 to different things and impacts from the
21 community, you know, development and all that.
22 But I'm just kind of stunned that you want to
23 go through any kind of residential subdivision
24 areas. So with the impact and then not
25 knowing a lot about the electrical impact on

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1 people that are around these great big tall
2 power lines unless they're buried underground,
3 that's going to have a major impact on
4 people's health. I'm concerned about that as
5 well. If they want to buy out, I would just
6 sell out, whatever, and get out of there. But
7 I wouldn't want it going through anybody's
8 residential neighborhood.

9 So, thank you.

10 MR. HANSON: Thank you. Ken Ray,
11 and then Archie Giddings.

12 KEN RAY: Hello, my name is Ken
13 Ray. I live on Fairview Loop Road.

14 I am directly impacted right
15 across the street with the new power line
16 proposal. I see four proposals here tonight.
17 I would like to bring to everybody's attention
18 some information. The gentleman that gave
19 this presentation is the same gentleman that
20 is taking people's homes on the Parks Highway
21 north of Wasilla. It is the same company.
22 They are working for the Department of
23 Transportation. They do have experience.
24 They know exactly what's involved with eminent
25 domain. I don't think many know that.

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1 I know of 15 options that have
2 been brought before the public that are not
3 being discussed tonight. The oldest in 2002
4 was called the Wasilla Rail Reconnaissance
5 Studies with four corridors going through the
6 Valley. The Wasilla bypass, the Parks Highway
7 Alternate Corridor Study, currently has a
8 \$2 million budget. The steering committee,
9 one member, the mayor, is here. It has four
10 routes.

11 MEA tonight has four routes. The
12 idea of running it down the railroad, we have
13 not got a price. Why haven't we got a price
14 of what does it cost to put it down the
15 industrial corridor that does exist today?
16 One other is that there is no crises. There
17 is the railbelt intertie. It does exist. We
18 can sell power to Willow, Houston, all the way
19 up the line, and we can connect the power
20 plant to that. There is a wheeling charge.
21 It is a cost. That has not been brought out
22 as an option. That gives some breathing room
23 to where we can connect this power plant. But
24 that is not being discussed tonight.

25 I'm in favor of the rail corridor

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1 and I'm in favor of the rail corridor the
2 entire route; however, MEA is in the camper
3 park business and has purchased \$1 million
4 worth of camper park on the Glenn Highway for
5 this line already. They have pretty much made
6 up their mind as to where this is going.

7 When we have corridors that have
8 been through public hearings that are over ten
9 years old -- our Borough assembly member came
10 to the Knik/Fairview Community Council showing
11 us the real reconnaissance routes of study
12 commissioned by the City, and these routes are
13 an opportunity for the future. We have a
14 100-foot right-of-way going through the middle
15 of the Valley. This is an opportunity for a
16 transportation corridor and a utility
17 corridor, and I would like to see DOT standing
18 up here and MEA together discussing a real
19 corridor and potential for future planning in
20 the Valley.

21 This is a developer, be it a
22 public developer, ramrodding a project through
23 and I don't feel that we have enough public
24 input.

25 Thank you.

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1 MR. HANSON: Thank you, Mr. Ray.
2 Archie Giddings. Has Dale Fosselman, who was
3 called earlier, has he left or he is not in
4 the room? Okay. So the next person after
5 that would be Joel Stefanski. Okay.

6 ARCHIE GIDDINGS: Thank you.
7 Archie Giddings. I'm with the City of
8 Wasilla, Public Works Director, 290 East
9 Herning Avenue.

10 I'm familiar with how a utility
11 operates as I'm responsible for the City's
12 water and sewer utility. I do have an
13 appreciation for MEA's trying to do in
14 building an optimum electrical grid. I do the
15 same thing with the water and sewer grid.
16 Fortunately all my lines are underground.
17 Unfortunately I've had to learn a lot about
18 electrical utilities over the past several
19 months.

20 I understand MEA can bring the
21 Eklutna generation station online by their
22 deadline of January 15th with no new
23 transmission improvements. I understand MEA
24 has no funding for the proposed transmission
25 improvements at this time into Wasilla. I

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1 understand the entire railbelt system is in
2 need of hundreds of millions of dollars of
3 electrical transmission improvements.

4 My question is: What makes the
5 Wasilla transmission improvements so critical
6 versus the rest of the railbelt? MEA is
7 competing with the other utilities for the
8 same transmission dollars. Someone needs to
9 step back and ask: Where should the
10 transmission dollars be spent in a railbelt
11 before proceeding with this project?

12 According to MEA, the
13 transmission alternatives cost between 9 and
14 14 million into Wasilla. With the Eklutna
15 power plant, MEA will be spending over
16 \$300 million for the new power supply and the
17 transmission. Is MEA not willing to spend
18 \$5 million to preserve the Parks Highway
19 viewshed? 1.6 percent, that's like 1 percent
20 for art on a public project if we call the
21 viewshed art.

22 The Parks Highway is the front
23 door to the Borough. Please consider other
24 options to protect this viewshed.

25 Thank you.

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1 MR. HANSON: Thank you,
2 Mr. Giddings. Joel Stefanski, and after Joel
3 would be Kerry Potter.

4 JOEL STEFANSKI: My name is Joel
5 Stefanski, and for the record I'm for the
6 Parks Highway corridor and for a number of
7 reasons. But I must for the record tell you
8 that I'm also an employee for MEA for 24
9 years, and I've had the privilege of working
10 for the utility for the last 24 years.

11 Before that, as a young man, I
12 worked on the Fairbanks/Anchorage intertie and
13 thank God we had people with visions. Those
14 visions were to supply power to and from
15 Fairbanks and from the Anchorage area,
16 reliable, safe power. I had the privilege of
17 working on that as a young man, 26 years old.
18 Like I said, now I realize 29 years later the
19 benefit and who's benefited from that
20 transmission line.

21 On a local level, I also had the
22 privilege to work with Mayor John Stein on his
23 visions on the City of Wasilla back in the
24 '80s. His vision was to beautify Wasilla and
25 through an extensive tree program we all

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1 benefited from the beautification project of
2 Mayor Stein. I also had a privilege of
3 working with Governor Palin and this was with
4 the Menard Center and her visions and the
5 sales tax that went on. One of the things
6 that MEA had done with the Menard Center is
7 the very thing that we're trying to do with
8 our transmission line. We're trying to have a
9 safety valve. We're trying to have loop
10 feeds.

11 With the Menard Center, we feed
12 it two ways there because of the benefit to
13 the community of having safe, reliable power.
14 So on a small scale we do it for businesses
15 like the Menard Center. We do it for the City
16 of Wasilla. We do it for the MatSu Borough.
17 When I first started working for MEA, we had
18 30,000 customers. We have 58,000 customers.
19 This is not a Wasilla issue. This is a
20 Matanuska Valley issue. This is the whole
21 Valley and this is to benefit the whole
22 Valley. We have to think about that.

23 So, getting back to the small
24 things that make a difference. Businesses
25 depend on safe, reliable power. This

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1 underbuild is going to serve those commercial
2 businesses. The businesses provide most of
3 the revenue for City employees. We have to
4 think about that. The City doesn't -- it's a
5 win-win situation. The City doesn't win if
6 the businesses are not paying their taxes and
7 people aren't doing business at these
8 businesses.

9 I want to recognize that, but I
10 also want to say that I'm also the vegetation
11 management manager for MEA. We put in a
12 half-million dollars last year keeping the
13 lines clear and the power going. This year
14 we're going to do a million dollars' worth of
15 clearing on our power line easements in the
16 Wasilla area. I just want to let you know we
17 do care and everyone uses energy here, so if
18 we want to provide safe, reliable power for a
19 new generation, we've got to think about the
20 future.

21 Thank you very much.

22 MR. HANSON: Thank you, sir.

23 Kerry Potter and then Patrick Marley.

24 KERRY POTTER: Well, I hope I'm
25 the right person, because it's Kerry,

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1 K-e-r-r-y, Potter. I live at 2941 Althea
2 Street.

3 I'm not here so much because
4 these power lines are going to impact my
5 residence. I'm here as an MEA member and it
6 will impact my pocketbook. I think the cost
7 factor, what, \$3.6 million more to take it on
8 an alternate route than if you take it the
9 original route.

10 I think maybe MEA could have
11 approached the City of Wasilla a little
12 differently; started and offered them maybe a
13 million dollars' worth of beautification
14 projects to put the power lines through and
15 then there would maybe be a viewshed. Mary
16 used that term maybe six times; Mr. Giddings
17 at least three times. I've yet to see a
18 viewshed in Wasilla.

19 Most of the opinion that -- what
20 would the mayor of Wasilla be doing right now
21 if his annex plan that he originally proposed,
22 he and the City Council, where they were going
23 to annex almost the whole Valley. This line,
24 no matter what route it took, would be going
25 through Wasilla at that point. Would he have

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1 been sitting here actively trying to run it
2 outside of there?

3 So my bottom line is let's do
4 what's economical. If MEA could work with the
5 City of Wasilla to put some trees in and do
6 some different things that would maybe develop
7 a viewshed instead of protecting what they're
8 now considering viewshed -- I don't know what
9 that is. Gravel pit, railroad, strip malls?
10 I'm like a lot of the other folks that have
11 expressed those opinions before. I understand
12 where he's coming from. I understand that.
13 But for \$3.6 million more, and the
14 residents --

15 Because I look here, and like I
16 said, I'm not going to be able to see these
17 lines from my house. They're at least
18 five-eighths of a mile away on that one route
19 that would come the closest, but I look at 65
20 residences in one of them, like the Cottle
21 route. If you go the Parks Highway, 24. I
22 mean, residences, I think, are important to
23 this Valley.

24 The businesses are too, but like
25 has been said already, folks when they go

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1 shopping aren't going to notice those power
2 lines. The tourists coming through here, if
3 they want to know where Sarah Palin lives,
4 where the Iditarod headquarters is, they're
5 not going to notice those power lines. I
6 appreciate the mayor's viewpoint, but there is
7 no viewshed in Wasilla at the present time.

8 Thank you. Let's do what's most
9 economical.

10 MR. HANSON: Thank you, Mr.
11 Potter.

12 Mr. Marley and then Brenda
13 Muller.

14 PATRICK MARLEY: I'm Patrick
15 Marley. I live at 2672 Merrimac.

16 I might see the transmission
17 lines, but the reason I'm testifying is I
18 think it's really not very smart -- it's
19 incompatible to put power lines next to an
20 airstrip, especially 80-foot power lines.
21 That seems pretty incompatible and dangerous
22 to me on your southern route there where it
23 goes down along Crane Road and -- behind
24 houses along Crane Road and the Nelson Road
25 extension area.

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1 You know, there's probably a
2 whole lot of other alternatives that don't
3 seem to have been discussed and one of them
4 would be coming straight across the flats from
5 the new power plant. It wouldn't have to go
6 through very many residences that way. But it
7 doesn't make much sense to put it right next
8 to an airstrip. I'm not sure we really need
9 it anyway.

10 Thank you.

11 MR. HANSON: Thank you,
12 Mr. Marley. Brenda Muller and then Ryan
13 McClure is next.

14 BRENDA MULLER: Good evening,
15 Mr. Hanson. I want to thank MEA for providing
16 the informational meetings over the past month
17 and an opportunity for this public comment.

18 My name is Brenda Muller. I live
19 at 1850 East Ted's Place with my husband. I'm
20 also representing my son, Jacob Muller, who
21 lives at 1400 East Fairview Loop with his
22 family, including my three-and-a-half year old
23 grandson, and the Cottle Road/Fairview Loop
24 route would pass right over the middle of
25 their yard where my grandson plays.

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1 So I am opposed to the Cottle/
2 Fairview Loop route, as is he. We're in favor
3 of one of the Parks Highway routes for the
4 following reasons: The first is that it would
5 affect the least number of residences going
6 the Parks Highway route, any of those rather
7 than the Fairview Loop route. Also, my
8 understanding is that the power being
9 transmitted is three-phase power, commercial
10 grade power that would potentially be of
11 benefit to businesses along the Parks Highway
12 route.

13 Also, short of the significant
14 increased cost for buried lines, any route
15 will affect the views of someone. I think
16 that the Parks Highway route would still have
17 the least cost than the alternate back-up
18 routes for power delivery to the area that is
19 being looked for.

20 Thanks.

21 MR. HANSON: Thank you. Ryan
22 McClure and then Michelle Davis.

23 RYAN MCCLURE: My name is Ryan
24 McClure. I live at 8667 West O'Brien Creek
25 Drive, so I'm not affected really by the

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1 transmission lines here or the proposals.

2 I'm a journeyman electrician, so
3 I know a little bit about electricity. From
4 what I see, the original Parks Highway route
5 seems to make the most sense to me. The
6 bottom line is the cost. If the City of
7 Wasilla, you know, wants to take it
8 underground, that's fine. I think they could
9 be able to brunt the extra roughly 30 million
10 to pay for that. The bottom line is the cost
11 amount. That's it.

12 Thank you.

13 MR. HANSON: Thank you,
14 Mr. McClure. Michelle Davis and then Dianne
15 Woodruff.

16 MICHELLE DAVIS: My name is
17 Michelle Davis. I live at Fairview Loop on
18 Jackson Court.

19 I guess in listening to the
20 discussion what really struck me is the lack
21 of conversation between the railroad and the
22 City of Wasilla. It really seems like there
23 would be a way to make this work for both
24 parties. There are -- when you look at
25 principles of good urban design, one of the

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1 things that you do is you contain your utility
2 corridors, that you keep your industrial
3 corridors. Instead of spreading them out
4 across the landscape, that you keep them where
5 they are already established.

6 So maybe if MEA comes to the
7 table with the City of Wasilla and says, you
8 know, could we build a bike path? Could we do
9 a section or two underground? What about
10 putting in some trees? That might help to
11 advance both towards mutual goals of making
12 Wasilla maybe a more walkable, attractive
13 community. So my first preference would, of
14 course, be the Parks Highway route.

15 Failing that, going back to the
16 principle of using existing industrial
17 corridors, then I would urge you to go back
18 and work with the railroad. There are design
19 challenges there, but that land is already
20 compromised. Once you go into the
21 neighborhoods, you go out along any of these,
22 you're going to ruin areas that are beautiful.

23 Once that's done, you can't go
24 back from it. You know, it's just -- beauty
25 is a gift in this world and to put these

1 towers in areas where there's not already
2 industrial development is to really give away
3 a gift that we've been given. I find the
4 beauty of the natural landscape is something
5 that's worth preserving. So I would urge you
6 to work with the City of Wasilla to bring in a
7 mediator if you need to, to bring in different
8 design consultants, but to look for a way to
9 make the Parks Highway alternative work. I
10 think that that's in the best interest of both
11 parties.

12 MR. HANSON: Thank you,
13 Ms. Davis. Dianne Woodruff and then Mike
14 Sabol.

15 DIANNE WOODRUFF: Thank you for
16 this opportunity to speak. My name is Dianne
17 Woodruff, and my address is 441 West Lone Cub
18 Drive in Wasilla.

19 I am a citizen of the City of
20 Wasilla. I am an MEA ratepayer and a former
21 MatSu Borough planning commissioner. I am
22 speaking this evening as an individual, not as
23 a representative of the Wasilla City Council
24 on which I serve, nor as a representative of
25 any other agency or group, which I may

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1 accurately or inaccurately be associated with.

2 Of the routes presented this
3 evening, I favor the Parks Highway route. It
4 simply makes sense to me to serve commercial
5 properties in a commercial district by a
6 commercial route. There is already existing
7 right-of-way there, which means that we're
8 going to have less disruption to property
9 owners, residential and commercial, elsewhere.

10 It also means that there's
11 significantly less cost, which in this day and
12 age of, as already noted, significantly
13 diminished federal funding, state funding, and
14 some of us have already experienced it in our
15 personal pocketbooks as well. It would make
16 sense that we would want a route that costs us
17 less to fund in the future.

18 I also note that this is a better
19 route from an electrical distribution
20 standpoint. It puts power where it's needed
21 now and also where it's going to be needed in
22 the future. I don't believe it's prudent to
23 spend more and get less, which is what appears
24 to be happening with the other routes proposed
25 so far this evening.

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1 There's already a tower in the
2 Carrs parking lot. There are power lines in
3 front of the D&A Shop Rite Mall, and so this
4 is not inconsistent with the view that we've
5 already got in Wasilla. As much as it pains
6 me to say so, Wasilla is no more so as an ugly
7 strip mall than as a beautiful place to be
8 downtown. I also looked for the towers along
9 the Glenn Highway on my way here this evening,
10 and I can tell you that some of them you
11 really have to look for. They blend into the
12 background pretty well. There are prettier
13 tower designs that are available. Some of
14 them hide better than what we might be
15 thinking or imagining at this particular
16 moment in time.

17 I do know that this has not had a
18 hearing before the Wasilla Planning
19 Commission, and in fact it says so on an
20 e-mail that they sent out at 4:10 this
21 evening, that they have not had a hearing
22 there. We have also not had a full
23 presentation before the Wasilla City Council.
24 When that doesn't happen, that means that our
25 public hasn't had an opportunity to weigh in

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1 with our governing body and let them know
2 exactly what they think about this project.

3 So I would, I guess, be looking
4 for a resolution from either the Planning
5 Commission or the Council before taking
6 anything said as the view of the City body.

7 MR. HANSON: Thank you,
8 Ms. Woodruff. Mike Sabol, and Don Zimmerman
9 will be next.

10 MIKE SABOL: Hello. My name is
11 Mike Sabol. I live on Leota and South Ruth
12 Street. That's part of the Cottle Substation
13 route. I'm also an MEA ratepayer, and I think
14 the most important thing I need to focus on is
15 just the fiscal responsibility.

16 Going through the Parks Highway
17 is the cheapest route and, therefore, I think
18 that's one of the reasons we need to stick
19 with that route. Everybody here has covered a
20 lot of good reasons why not to put it here or
21 put it there, but I just want to focus on the
22 money aspect of it. Running it through
23 Wasilla is really no different as far as the
24 visual or, as they say, the landscape. It
25 already has a high-power line. It's full of

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1 strip malls, and really Wasilla doesn't have
2 any attributes that draw the small-town
3 feeling anyways.

4 Even though I did say something
5 about the \$5 million difference between going
6 through downtown Wasilla versus even the
7 Cottle Station, this is the -- in this part of
8 the country -- or in our history, money is
9 cheap to borrow. It's the lowest interest
10 rates. To follow up what the young lady said
11 earlier: Putting it underground, even though
12 that's the more costly aspect, it's the
13 cheapest way in the future as far as taking a
14 loan and doing it that way.

15 Also, once it's done you can have
16 a greenbelt way above the buried line. We
17 could actually use that as inspiration for
18 other people to follow as far as urban
19 planning and having bike paths or walkways. I
20 think it would be an attribute towards Wasilla
21 in the future.

22 Thank you for your time.

23 MR. HANSON: Thank you,

24 Mr. Sabol. Mr. Zimmerman.

25 And let me ask: Is there anyone

1 else signed up to testify at this time?

2 Go ahead, sir.

3 DON ZIMMERMAN: My name is Don
4 Zimmerman. I live at 1534 West Seventh
5 Avenue. I am a business owner, real estate
6 broker.

7 I am for the Parks Highway route.
8 Basically for the reasons of economics
9 primarily. We have a country right now that's
10 in trouble, and we as citizens and
11 organizations, communities, we need to start
12 making good sound decisions not based on
13 emotions, but based on economics, making good
14 sense.

15 As a real estate broker, I have
16 never had a person come to me saying, I want a
17 house next to a transmission line, but I have
18 commercial people that have said, I would like
19 to have good power. So it doesn't affect the
20 pocketbook of the commercial people, but it
21 does affect the values of the residential
22 homes.

23 Beautification, the City of
24 Wasilla has always been putting beautifying
25 things. I'm sure they'll have some creative

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1 ways to work that out. It's very easy for
2 somebody to flippantly say, hey, we'll just
3 take it to court, because it's not the money.
4 Politicians are good at using other people's
5 money. But it's time that the people stand up
6 and say, hey, we don't want to spend any more
7 money on this. We'd rather keep it ourselves.

8 The railroad option, from what I
9 understand, is not an option. It was thrown
10 out. That's why there's not a dollar figure
11 on here, because it was not possible to make
12 it happen.

13 So, I'm for the Parks Highway
14 route.

15 MR. HANSON: Thank you,
16 Mr. Zimmerman.

17 Right now I don't have anyone
18 else on the list that I've been given so far.
19 There's one more? Okay. Come on up, sir, and
20 you can introduce yourself. Welcome.

21 JOHN HENSEL: My name is John
22 Hensel. I live at 1700 Pioneer Drive.

23 I'm here as a homeowner on the
24 Parks Highway. I didn't come with a prepared
25 statement. I don't represent any utilities.

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1 Okay. We've been through the --

2 MR. HANSON: Sir, I'm going to
3 interrupt you just for a moment. We'll give
4 you your maximum time. Perhaps you could -- I
5 didn't quite get your last name. I want to
6 make sure we've got it on the record.

7 JOHN HENSEL: Okay. My name is
8 John Hensel, H-e-n-s-e-l. I live at 1700
9 Pioneer Drive.

10 MR. HANSON: Okay. Thank you.

11 JOHN HENSEL: I'm here as a
12 homeowner on the Parks Highway. I'm very much
13 against the highway route. I think there's
14 some other issues that have come up, such as
15 health issues. I've seen high-transmission
16 lines before. I had a brother that died of
17 kidney cancer because he lived in one of those
18 zones, okay, on down the line. I don't think
19 any of this has been given enough scrutiny.

20 Again, as far as the cost
21 effectiveness, we haven't heard the direct
22 route across the wetlands. They didn't have
23 any problem crossing wetlands when they ran a
24 line to Beluga, did they? I think this issue
25 with preordained nonrepresentation for where

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1 we want to go is pretty self-evident. The
2 first time around on the highway DOT came
3 through with the road easement, 16 cents a
4 square foot. After six months, it's 36 cents
5 a square foot. I know all about this crap.
6 Okay. It's gone far enough. If you guys do
7 this, I'm prepared to go to court, pure and
8 simple.

9 Thank you so much.

10 MR. HANSON: Thank you,
11 Mr. Hensel.

12 At this point we don't have
13 anyone else signed up. Is there anyone else
14 sitting in the audience that would like to
15 testify tonight? If they wish, they can just
16 come up and introduce themselves. Okay.
17 There's one in the back. Please come forward,
18 sir.

19 STU GRAHAM: Good evening. My
20 name is Stu Graham. I live at 893 East
21 Susitna in the city limits of Wasilla, and I
22 would have a direct view of the power line
23 from my front window. I also work for a
24 business along the Parks Highway. So I do --
25 I have been studying what's been going on here

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1 and had an adequate look at it.

2 Unlike some of the people that
3 have testified before, I do think that Wasilla
4 has a lot to offer. I think Wasilla -- we're
5 in a great position to be almost a booming
6 community. While we may not have the viewshed
7 that everybody talks about at this point,
8 we're in a position to be able to move forward
9 as opposed to just continuing what we have
10 been doing. I think the City of Wasilla and
11 the MatSu Borough have been working very hard
12 to raise our image in the community and
13 throughout the State of Alaska. I somehow
14 don't see an 80-foot transmission line along
15 the Parks Highway as doing anything to enhance
16 that.

17 While I do agree that it is
18 expensive to put the utility underground, I do
19 think in the long term that would make a lot
20 more sense through the City of Wasilla and
21 through what Mayor Rupright had to say, to at
22 least bury along those three miles right
23 through the City of Wasilla and along the
24 Parks Highway there so that the City of
25 Wasilla can continue to be an attractive place

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1 for businesses, continue to be an attractive
2 place for persons to relocate their families,
3 and continue to be in a position to move
4 forward.

5 I think if we put a transmission
6 line with 80-foot towers along the Parks
7 Highway that's not going to be consistent with
8 what we've been trying to do for the last 20
9 or 30 years throughout the City of Wasilla.
10 Although I would certainly like to see it
11 buried along where I live, that's certainly
12 not an option from the pure topography of
13 where I live. I'm certainly willing to live
14 with that. But I think along the Parks
15 Highway we do need to -- if we adopt that
16 route, we do need to get those power lines
17 underground so that we can continue to move
18 forward as a city, as a place where we are
19 trying to attract businesses, attract
20 homeowners, attract families, attract
21 recreational folks.

22 Thank you very much.

23 MR. HANSON: Thank you,
24 Mr. Graham.

25 Is there anyone else who's here

1 tonight who hasn't testified that would like
2 to come forward? Please, sir. Since we don't
3 have a written sign-up, make sure you spell
4 your name so the reporter gets it. Thank you.

5 BRUCE MULLER: My name is Bruce
6 Muller, M-u-l-l-e-r. I live at 1850 East
7 Ted's Place along Fairview Loop there, about a
8 block off Fairview Loop.

9 The power that's going through
10 there isn't residential power that they're
11 proposing. It's a three-phase power, which is
12 a commercial power. You don't need commercial
13 power in a residential area. MEA says that it
14 will make that power available to people along
15 that route. That tells me that they're
16 looking at commercializing a residential area,
17 and I don't think that's right. I think they
18 should keep the commercial power in the
19 commercial areas.

20 That's all I've got to say.

21 MR. HANSON: Thank you,
22 Mr. Muller.

23 Is there anyone else who would
24 like to testify? Yes, sir.

25 DARREL CARR: Yes. I'm Darrel

1 Carr, 1741 East Mary Red Circle. It's spelled
2 C-a-r-r.

3 I live a half-mile off of
4 Fairview Loop, so actually I wouldn't be
5 affected by the Fairview Loop right-of-way and
6 I would prefer the Parks Highway route. But I
7 want to remind MEA that from about Mile 4 on
8 Fairview Loop to about Mile 2, there is a
9 high-pressure natural gas line parallel to the
10 highway and in the right-of-way. Then it
11 extends on south on the power line
12 right-of-way. It seems to me like that might
13 be a factor in deciding whether they want to
14 put a line there or not.

15 Thank you.

16 MR. HANSON: Thank you, Mr. Carr.
17 Ma'am, would you please come
18 forward?

19 AMY HENRY: My name is Amy Henry,
20 H-e-n-r-y. I live at 3500 East Tamarak, along
21 Seward-Meridian, in Wasilla.

22 I don't feel the power lines
23 belong in a high-density, populated area. I
24 don't think anybody wants it in their
25 backyard, but I don't think it belongs in the

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1 town of Wasilla. I would prefer that you run
2 it down Fairview Loop, unfortunately for
3 everyone, but that's my feelings.

4 Thank you very much.

5 MR. HANSON: Thank you,
6 Ms. Henry.

7 Is there anyone else who would
8 like to testify? Okay, sir. Come on up.

9 JIM MERCHANT: My name is Jim
10 Merchant. I live in Fairview East Subdivision
11 off Fairview Road.

12 I moved to the Valley in 1963.
13 I've watched Wasilla change a lot. The Parks
14 Highway was put in to move people through
15 Wasilla and into Wasilla. I think it would be
16 a perfect place for the power line.

17 MR. HANSON: Thank you, sir.

18 Anyone else who would like to
19 testify since we have an empty chair? Yes,
20 ma'am.

21 TINA CRAWFORD: For the record,
22 my name is Tina Crawford, C-r-a-w-f-o-r-d, and
23 I'm a resident of the Matanuska-Susitna
24 Borough. I also happen to work for the City
25 of Wasilla, but I am speaking as a resident of

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1 the Borough.

2 I have to say that as a resident
3 and making a choice to move to Alaska from
4 Florida, it was based a lot on the scenic
5 vistas that Alaska has to offer. This valley
6 is extremely beautiful, and we have 360-degree
7 views of mountains in most locations. To
8 construct 80-foot power poles that are almost
9 three times the size of the street lights that
10 exist along the Parks Highway corridor would
11 cause an enormous visual blight along that
12 corridor and will impact those views.

13 I have been to Alaska as a
14 tourist and I have noticed where power lines
15 are and where they're not. The few that are
16 there are already a problem. We don't need to
17 intensify that problem by blocking the views
18 that we have. The City of Wasilla is a
19 wonderful community and it has some
20 challenges, but it has a great potential to
21 improve and to become an even better place to
22 live and operate.

23 Clearly businesses have
24 recognized that Wasilla is an attractive place
25 to locate. We still have -- the City still

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1 has undeveloped commercial properties that we
2 need to be make sure that they're preserved
3 and are attractive to commercial businesses.
4 Taking up their property with right-of-ways
5 that won't allow any kind of structures or any
6 kind of vegetation whatsoever, in some places
7 up to 50 feet on their property, is not
8 reasonable. There has to be another
9 alternative.

10 MEA needs to come to the table
11 and identify some solutions that work for the
12 businesses in the area, future businesses that
13 want to come here, and the good of the
14 community as a whole. It's not a City issue;
15 it's a Valley issue, and it's going to impact
16 this entire Valley. MEA needs to help protect
17 the Valley and be part of the improvements and
18 the attractiveness of this community versus
19 intensifying other things.

20 The other point I would like to
21 make is the majority of the businesses along
22 the stretch that's within the City do not have
23 above-ground power lines. The businesses have
24 invested money to put them underground. To
25 put these now above ground clearly goes

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1 against the financial choices that those
2 businesses have made, and it makes for a much
3 more attractive shopping experience. I
4 believe that's what drawn these businesses to
5 the area, which saves us as residents trips to
6 Anchorage and saves us money on gas and wear
7 and tear on our cars.

8 So I hope that MEA will come to
9 the table and identify an option. I'm not
10 sure that any of the options are the best
11 option.

12 Thank you.

13 MR. HANSON: Thank you,
14 Ms. Crawford.

15 Anyone else who would like to
16 testify tonight? Okay. Well, the clock I
17 have says about 7:38. What I'd like to do is
18 take about -- recess the hearing for about ten
19 minutes. We'll see if anyone else wants to
20 testify at that time, if anybody comes in and
21 wants to testify. So we'll recess until, say,
22 7:50 and then restart the hearing. Thank you
23 so much.

24 I do want to make one comment,
25 please, because some of you may be leaving.

1 I've been very impressed with the responsible
2 testimony tonight. I have run many, many,
3 many hearings and I want to compliment all of
4 you on the responsible and thoughtful
5 testimony. Thank you.

6 (Break taken.)

7 MR. HANSON: It's right at 7:50.
8 We're going to recall Mr. Eggleston, who does
9 represent the condo association in the
10 Fairview area. So we're going to give him an
11 additional two minutes, and then I'm going to
12 ask if anybody else wishes to also talk.
13 We've been so great tonight. I'd appreciate
14 it if you could give us your attention and
15 delay the conversations for a few minutes so
16 we can hear the testimony.

17 Thank you very much. Mr.
18 Eggleston.

19 RON EGGLESTON: Well, I'm back,
20 but nobody else is. Basically the thing I
21 wanted to point out is the Willow Heights
22 Condo Association property butts right up to
23 the present right-of-way that they would be
24 using. It has a high-powered natural gas
25 line, which disturbs me with the thought that

1 in the event of a catastrophic earthquake or
2 something somebody better turn something off
3 fast, because if the pipeline was ruptured and
4 the power wasn't turned off, we could have
5 problems. Besides that, they'll probably end
6 up having to take one building out of the five
7 away from us, which includes a warehouse and
8 the well. It causes a lot of problems for the
9 association, quite frankly, but there's also
10 an airstrip there. That individual would have
11 to come right through the 80-foot lines. So I
12 don't know how they're going to work that,
13 quite frankly.

14 Also, the health issue is
15 something else too. One gentleman mentioned
16 his wife being on a -- or having a pacemaker
17 or something like that. My wife does too, as
18 a matter of fact, and there are children
19 living in those buildings right there that
20 would be also possibly affected. I do know a
21 little bit. I do know that a friend of mine
22 got an offer to buy five acres one time and it
23 was right up against a high-power line. He
24 lasted a few years, but not too many. So
25 there are some health concerns, quite frankly.

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1 Then it is just -- well, the more
2 I think about it, the more I think that maybe
3 the City of Wasilla ought to take and consider
4 underground burial in their part of the line
5 to the Herning Subdivision and put a small
6 sales tax increase like they did to pay for
7 the Menard Center. When the money is done
8 with, then stop like they did with the Menard
9 Center.

10 Thank you.

11 MR. HANSON: Thank you,
12 Mr. Eggleston, and thank you for your
13 understanding tonight.

14 Is there anyone else who would
15 like to testify before the hearing is over?

16 I'll say it once more. Is there
17 anyone else who would like to testify before
18 the hearing is over?

19 Okay. Then I'd like to say that,
20 first of all, we've had excellent testimony
21 and excellent audience attention tonight. It
22 has indeed been a pleasure to run this
23 hearing, and it has been extremely
24 interesting. I compliment you all. I'd also
25 like to remind you that comments can be

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1 mailed, faxed, e-mailed or hand-delivered to
2 the addresses on the e-mail sheet. They must
3 be received by April 5th. That's a week from
4 tomorrow, Friday, April 5th, 2013.

5 I've been told that MEA has no
6 further comment tonight. So I will now --
7 well, it's 7:55, so I'm going to -- I'll wait
8 five minutes and then I'll adjourn the hearing
9 unless someone else wishes to speak. If you
10 do, please let me know.

11 So, now I'll recess for about
12 five minutes before I officially close the
13 hearing unless someone wants to speak. Thank
14 you.

15 (Break taken.)

16 MR. HANSON: I'd like to call the
17 hearing back to order. I'd like to ask again:
18 Is there anyone else who would like to testify
19 tonight in this hearing before we close it?

20 Okay. I see no hand raised and
21 no one has brought anyone to my attention if
22 they do want to testify. It is 8:00 o'clock.
23 The hearing was advertised as going from 6:00
24 to 8:00. So even though we could keep it open
25 later for people who were signed up, since no

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1 additional people are signed up or have noted
2 that they wish to testify, we will close the
3 hearing and adjourn the hearing. Thank you
4 very much.

5 (Hearing adjourned at 8:00 p.m.)

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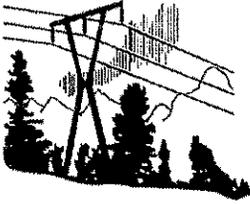
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I, LESLIE J. KNISLEY, Notary Public for the State of Alaska, and Shorthand Reporter, do hereby certify that the foregoing proceedings were taken before me at the time and place herein set forth; that the proceedings were reported stenographically by me and later transcribed by computer transcription; that the foregoing is a true record of the proceedings taken at that time; and that I am not a party to, nor do I have any interest in, the outcome of the action herein contained.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my seal this 16th day of April, 2013.

LESLIE J. KNISLEY
Notary Public, State of Alaska
My commission expires: 06/06/16



Dryden & LaRue, Inc.

CONSULTING ENGINEERS & RIGHT OF WAY SERVICES

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April 24, 2013

City of Wasilla Planning Office
290 East Herning Avenue
Wasilla, AK 99654-7091

Attn: Tina Crawford

Subject: Use Permit Application
Land Use Application

Dear Ms. Crawford:

On behalf of Matanuska Electric Association, enclosed you will find examples of the pole types being considered for the proposed Hospital Substation to Herning Substation 115 kV Electric Transmission Line Project. As previously indicated final pole selection will take place in the design process once all of the topographic and geotechnical information has been evaluated.

The four structures at the top of the sheet are the possible tangent structures. They will range from 80 feet to 100 feet in height depending upon terrain and designed span length. They will typically be spaced between 400 and 700 feet apart. The four structure details at the bottom of the page are for angle structures. They will also range in height from 80 feet to 100 feet tangent structures.

If there are any questions or you need additional information, please contact me at 907-646-5139.

Sincerely,
Dryden & LaRue, Inc.

Daniel W. Beardsley, SR/WA

Enclosure

