



July 15, 2019

Michael Behrendt
Durham Town Planner
Town of Durham
8 Newmarket Road
Durham, NH 03824

Re: Town of Durham Application for Permitted Use in Wetland Conservation and Shoreland Protection Overlay Districts, Eversource 377 Distribution Line, Emergency structure replacement

Dear Mr. Behrendt:

Public Service of New Hampshire d/b/a Eversource Energy (“Eversource”) is submitting this application for Permitted Use in the Wetland Conservation Overlay District (“WCOD”) and Shoreland Protection Overlay District (“SPOD”) to the Town of Durham Planning Board for proposed utility maintenance on the existing 377, 34.5 kV distribution line in Durham, NH. The Application for Permitted Use is being submitted in accordance with Article XIII Section 175-60. B. and Article XIV, Section 175-71.B. of the current Durham Zoning Ordinance.

Project Description

To maintain reliability of its electrical system, Eversource routinely flies helicopter patrols to survey its off-road distribution lines right-of-way (“ROW”) to determine if there are any deficient structures in need of replacement. One of these surveys identified a structure with significant woodpecker holes in Durham on Eversource’s existing 377 line. Upon a follow-up inspection on foot, it was confirmed that this structure should be replaced as soon as possible under an emergency due to the structure’s condition. Eversource plans to replace the structure in the same approximate location (typically within 10 feet), with the new structure composed of weathered steel of a similar size and height to the existing. The old wood structure will be removed and taken off-site.

As shown on the attached 377 Distribution Line Wetland Plans, Eversource and its contractors will travel from Lee Hook Road in Lee and head east on its ROW to Durham to reach the structure. Where equipment access requires temporary crossing of wetlands and spanning stream banks of Follett’s Brook and the South Brank of Follett’s Brook, Eversource will utilize timber mats. No significant upland grading is anticipated due to use of tracked vehicles that can handle slightly uneven terrain that is encountered on this section of ROW.

Compliance with Zoning Ordinance

175-60. Permitted Uses in the WCOD

B. The following uses or activities, including any necessary grading, shall be permitted in the WCOD if they are permitted in the underlying zoning district provided that the Zoning Administrator issues a permit for the activity after the Planning Board, with the advice of the Conservation Commission, determines that: a.) appropriate erosion control measures will be used, b.) any disturbed area will be restored, and c.) the activity will be conducted in a manner that minimizes any impact on the wetland:

Compliance: This project qualifies as a permitted use under 175-60.B.4. -Temporary crossings for the maintenance of utility pipes or lines or for other utility structures.

A) - The primary erosion control practice will be timber mats to distribute equipment weight and avoid vehicle rutting in wetlands. Straw wattles will be employed as needed in upland areas adjacent to wetlands. All work will follow the “Best Management Practices Manual for Utility Maintenance in and Adjacent to Wetlands and Waterbodies in New Hampshire” (“BMP manual”).

B) At the completion of work, all timber mats will be removed in wetlands and wetland vegetation will be allowed to naturally revegetate utilizing ample surrounding plant seedbanks.

C) Equipment will use Eversource’s existing ROW and therefore minimize impacts to wetlands by avoiding creating of new access routes and employing controls as specified in the BMP manual.

175-71 Permitted Uses in the SPOD

B. The following uses or activities, including any necessary grading, shall be permitted in the SPOD provided that the Zoning Administrator issues a permit for the activity after the Planning Board, with the advice of the Conservation Commission, determines that: a) appropriate erosion control measures will be used, b) any disturbed area will be restored, and c) the activity will be conducted in a manner that minimizes any impact on the shoreland:

Compliance: This project qualifies as a permitted use under 175-71.B.4. -Temporary crossings for the maintenance of utility pipes or lines or for other utility structures.

A) The primary erosion control practice will be timber mats to distribute equipment weight and avoid vehicle rutting in wetlands. Straw wattles will be employed as needed in upland areas adjacent to wetlands. All work will follow the “Best Management Practices Manual for Utility Maintenance in and Adjacent to Wetlands and Waterbodies in New Hampshire” (“BMP manual”).

B) At the completion of work, all timber mats will be removed in wetlands and wetland vegetation will be allowed to naturally revegetate utilizing ample surrounding plant seedbanks. If minor upland grading is needed to facilitate safe equipment movement, it will be restored to natural contours.

C) Timber mats will span Follett Brook and the South Branch of the Follett Brook to avoid and minimize impacts to the streams. Timber mats will be used in wetlands adjacent to the streams in the SPOD. Equipment will use Eversource's existing ROW and therefore minimize impacts to the SPOD by avoiding creating of new access routes and otherwise employ controls as specified in the BMP manual.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with questions at 603.634.3396 or Jeremy.fennell@eversource.com

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jeremy Fennell". The signature is cursive and fluid, with the first name "Jeremy" and last name "Fennell" clearly distinguishable.

Jeremy Fennell, NH CWS, PWS, CESSWI
Senior Environmental Specialist
Eversource Energy

Attachments: 377 Distribution Line Wetland Plans