

GENERAL MANAGER'S UPDATE

Joint Planning Board and Zoning Board Meeting
on Proposed HMLP Substation
June 4, 2024 – 7:00 p.m.

How to participate on June 4

You may dial in, or use the Web

Dial-in callers: Call 929-205-6099

Web users: <https://zoom.us/join>

Meeting ID: 826 9132

Passcode: 424332

Dear HMLP Customers:

Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant (HMLP) continues to move forward with the Hingham Electrical Infrastructure Reliability Project (HEIRP), an initiative designed to ensure the long-term reliability of Hingham's electrical supply and help meet the Town's climate goals. This update is intended to provide notice of, and information on, an upcoming local meeting regarding HMLP's proposed substation in Hingham.

On June 4, 2024 at 7:00 p.m., the Hingham Planning Board and Hingham Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a joint public meeting via Zoom regarding HMLP's proposed substation to be located at the Hingham Transfer Station at O Hobart Street. This Zoom meeting is part of the Town's informal review of HMLP's proposed substation.

The Proposed Project:

The proposed infrastructure project includes: (1) a new tap station off Broad Street in Weymouth that will be built and operated by Eversource; (2) a 3.2-mile underground 115 kV line that will travel through Weymouth and Hingham; and (3) a new enclosed substation to be constructed and operated by HMLP at the transfer station in Hingham. Together, the new line and two new stations will provide Hingham with a critical second source of power and bring HMLP into compliance with regional reliability standards.



Artist rendering shows proposed substation at the Town Transfer Station

Currently, HMLP obtains its entire supply of electricity via two overhead lines that feed into a single substation off Hobart Street. In many places, these two lines are located on single poles. If severe weather or another contingency causes a double-circuit pole to fall, Hingham residents and businesses could be without power for an extended period of time. Similarly, if one of the two lines is out of service for maintenance and the second line experiences an unexpected contingency event, the entire Town would be without power.

These reliability issues are the fundamental driver behind the HEIRP initiative. The proposed project would secure Hingham's electrical supply by adding a new underground transmission line. The new line would supplement HMLP's existing lines and could handle the Town's entire power supply needs if the existing overhead lines are taken out of service. Moreover, as the Town continues to pursue greater electrification consistent with its climate goals, the HEIRP will ensure adequate capacity for all customers and future uses.

June 4th Public Meeting:

As noted above, on June 4, 2024 at 7:00 p.m., the Hingham Planning Board and Hingham Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a joint public meeting via Zoom as part of its informal review of the substation proposal.

Because HMLP’s proposed transmission line is greater than one mile in length and will operate at a capacity greater than 69 kV, the entire HEIRP proposal must be reviewed and approved by the State’s Energy Facilities Siting Board (“Siting Board”). HMLP will also file a petition with the State for an exemption from local zoning requirements in both Hingham and Weymouth. Like many utility-proposed transmission line projects that span multiple cities and towns, HMLP is seeking this exemption to (1) minimize the possibility of being subject to conflicting decisions from different towns, and (2) reduce the likelihood of costly and time-consuming litigation.

While HMLP is permitted by law to petition the State for this exemption from local zoning requirements, it is not HMLP’s intent here to avoid input and recommendations from the Zoning Board of Appeals, the Planning Board or, importantly, from the citizens of Hingham regarding the proposed Hingham substation. Rather, HMLP plans to present the Siting Board with the Town’s input and recommendations regarding the proposed substation whenever they are issued.

On April 12, 2024, HMLP submitted its plans for construction and operation of its proposed substation to the Planning Board and Zoning Board. Significantly, HMLP’s filing identifies construction and environmental impacts associated with construction and operation of the proposed substation and sets forth HMLP’s plans to mitigate those impacts. A copy of HMLP April 12th submission to the Planning and Zoning Boards can be accessed through the following link: <https://www.hingham-ma.gov/767/Applications-Pending>

HMLP has provided the Planning Board and Zoning Board with comprehensive information and documentation regarding its plans in order to elicit feedback from Hingham residents and ultimately input and recommendations from the Planning and Zoning Boards. HMLP plans to submit its zoning exemption petition to the State over the next several weeks and will forward the Planning Board’s and Zoning Board’s Town’s input and recommendations directly to the DPU and Siting Board for consideration once they are available.

HMLP encourages its customers to participate in the joint public meeting of the Planning and Zoning Boards and provide any comments regarding the proposed substation project.

HMLP is committed to working cooperatively with the towns of Hingham and Weymouth and to keeping residents and ratepayers informed about this important electric infrastructure project. Additional information about this project - and opportunities to provide feedback - can be found at the HEIRP website: <http://heirp.com>

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Morahan
HMLP General Manager

