



Waterford
FOUNDATION, INC.

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September 10, 2024

Re: Proposal for Aspen to Golden Line Undergrounding

Commissioners Bagot, Hudson, and Towell,

I am writing on behalf of the Waterford Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to the stewardship of the National Historic Landmark of Waterford, Virginia and to historic preservation and education.

The Foundation is in support of the proposal to put a portion of the **Aspen to Golden line** underground. The people of Loudoun County have been unduly burdened by a continuing growth in the energy needs of the data centers that dominate our business profile. We are not against data centers, but rather we ask the State Corporation Commission to exercise particular care when approving elements of transmission line projects that will benefit only these businesses and not the citizens of Loudoun more broadly. The citizens of Loudoun County are asked to bear the burden of infrastructure supporting the concentrated location of an industry that serves a global customer base.

We believe that adding more high voltage lines to the Route 7 corridor not only sullies the entrance to Loudoun County and the views of countless residents, it also poses hazards for helicopters landing at the hospital, limits the use of the land along its path, and diminishes the general appearance of this important transportation corridor.

The past few weeks of storms and their attendant damage highlight some of the key advantages of undergrounding transmission and other utility lines. Tens of thousands of Loudoun residents were without power for many hours and in some cases, days. Underground transmission lines have been proven safe and effective.

The residents of Loudoun County have worked hard to create beautiful, livable, and mixed use spaces like the Lansdowne community. The State Corporation

Commission should consider the impact on property value, quality of life, and the health and well-being of the residents who will have to cope with the effects of this new transmission line project. For most citizens, the value of their home is their single largest asset. Numerous studies show that the presence of overhead power transmission lines results in a devaluation of property values between 5% and 30%, with a direct relationship of the property's proximity to the Right of Way and viewshed being a major factor. The Commission's standards state that you will only approve projects that avoid or reasonably minimize adverse impacts on scenic assets, historic resources, and the environment. Your standards also state that projects must avoid or minimize negative effects on economic development. Loudoun residents ability to grow and expand their business along the Aspen to Golden corridor will be negatively affected should these 190 foot tall transmission lines block the viewshed.

Obviously, there are significant costs to undergrounding. However, the advantages to both people and businesses are obvious. **Undergrounding the Aspen to Golden line will improve reliability, meet the current energy demand, and protect Loudoun citizens' property values and well-being.**

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Susan Manch". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Susan" and the last name "Manch" clearly distinguishable.

Susan Manch
President, Waterford Foundation Board of Directors
Chair, Loudoun Transmission Line Alliance
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