

People protest proposed power line project, CAPX2020

People got a chance to voice their opinion today in La Crosse about a proposed \$450-million power line project called, CAPX2020. It would connect La Crosse with Rochester and just south of the Twin Cities. People are concerned about their health and the overall need for the proposed project.



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LA CROSSE, WI (WEA)--A power line has always been a part of Cindy Peterson's Town of Holland backyard. But she's concerned that a bigger line may replace or be build next to the existing line as part of the proposed CAPX2020 project, which involves about five utility agencies in Minnesota and Wisconsin.

"I'm mainly concerned about the electric magnetic field and destroying the value of our property," Peterson said.

CAPX2020 Spokesman Tim Carlsgaard says right now the project is still in the proposal stage, so a specific line hasn't been identified yet.

"You have to look at the criteria," Carlsgaard said. "Is there opportunities to run it where there are existing transmission lines? Near highways?"

Carlsgaard says about 90-percent of the proposed transmission line routes follow existing facilities. He says a new, improved line is necessary because energy use has gone up.

"We have done all the short-term band-aid fixes to the transmission line," Carlsgaard said. "What we need now is a big, robust transmission line that will provide the necessary, affordable, reliable energy that will allow these communities to continue to grow."

Carlsgaard says the proposed project would cost energy rate-payers about an extra \$1.85 per month during the height of construction, from 2013 to 2014.

Today Carlsgaard and people opposed to the project like Peterson got to give their opinion to the La Crosse County Planning, Resources and Development Committee who will request more information about the project and potential health and environmental impacts for people like Peterson who live near the power lines.

Carlsgaard says the Wisconsin Public Service Commission is currently working on an environmental impact study. He says there will be opportunities for people to voice their opinion about the proposed CAPX2020 lines once the study is complete some time in January.

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