STATE OF VERMONT
PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION

Case No. 20-0789-INV

Vermont Public Utility Commission orders and memoranda issued in response to COVID-19 pandemic	

Order entered: 03/26/2020

ORDER WAIVING TWO PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS

THAT REQUIRE CLOSE PERSONAL CONTACT

Both the State of Vermont and the federal government have declared a state of emergency due to the outbreak of the new coronavirus known as COVID-19. The Vermont Public Utility Commission ("Commission") recognizes the importance of helping to slow the spread of COVID-19 in Vermont. Social distancing is one step that helps slow the spread of this virus.

The Commission is examining its procedural requirements to identify those that require close personal contact and to review whether those requirements could be temporarily modified during this public health emergency without adversely affecting other parties' procedural rights.

First, the Commission waives all requirements that any document be notarized for any documents filed from March 25, 2020, through June 1, 2020. This includes the requirement in Commission Rule 5.107(C)(7) that any witness sponsoring an exhibit or testimony must file a notarized affidavit stating that the information provided is accurate to the best of the witness's knowledge. Note that the required documents (such as this affidavit) must still be filed; only the requirement that the documents be notarized is waived.

Second, for notices sent by petitioners to adjoining landowners pursuant to Commission Rule 5.402(B)(1) from March 25, 2020, through June 1, 2020, we waive the requirement that the notices identify:

> the locations at which project plans and the petition can be viewed and the hours during which those documents may be viewed. Such locations shall include at least the offices of the petitioner, the municipal and regional planning commissions, and the Commission.

Even such indirect encouragement of close personal contact is contrary to the current need for social distancing. Therefore we temporarily waive this requirement, on the condition that

petitioners include the following information instead in the notices sent to adjoining landowners: (1) instructions on how to download electronically a copy of the complete project plans and petition; and (2) instructions on how an adjoining landowner can contact the petitioner to obtain a copy of the complete project plans and petition if the adjoining landowner is not able to access them electronically. If an adjoining landowner asks the petitioner for a copy of the complete project plans and petition, the petitioner must provide it by mail; if the requester is able to read it, the petitioner may provide it via compact disc or thumbdrive.

The Commission encourages stakeholders to subscribe to this case in ePUC to receive automatic notifications of any future orders issued by the Commission related to changes to its operations due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Instructions on how to subscribe to a case in ePUC are available at: https://puc.vermont.gov/epuc-information/subscribe-case If you need further assistance, please contact the ePUC system administrator at puc.ePUCadmin@vermont.gov.

SO ORDERED.

Dated at Montpelier, Vermont, this 26th day of March, 2020.

Anthony Z. Roisman	)	PUBLIC UTILITY
Margaret Cheney	)	COMMISSION
Sarah Hofmann	)	OF VERMONT

OFFICE OF THE CLERK

Filed: March 26, 2020

Attest: Judith C. Whitney
Clerk of the Commission

Notice to Readers: This decision is subject to revision of technical errors. Readers are requested to notify the Clerk of the Commission (by e-mail, telephone, or in writing) of any apparent errors, in order that any necessary corrections may be made. (E-mail address: puc.clerk@vermont.gov)