

Kane County Board to consider resolution on ComEd project

Published: Thursday, Jan. 16, 2014 5:30 a.m. CST Kane County Chronicle

By ASHLEY SLOBODA - asloboda@shawmedia.com

GENEVA – The Kane County Board has no authority to prohibit ComEd’s proposed high-voltage power lines from being installed, but it will work to mitigate any negative effects the new utility might bring.

Plans for the Grand Prairie Gateway Project include the installation of a 345-kilovolt transmission line between ComEd’s existing substations near Wayne and Byron.

In addition to Kane County, it would affect Ogle, DeKalb and DuPage counties.

The Illinois Commerce Commission is considering the proposal and notified Kane County – a party of interest – about a status hearing for the project.

Wednesday, the Kane County Development Committee recommended approval of a resolution stating the Kane County Board will act on behalf of its citizens and communities by participating in the ICC hearing process.

“... The Kane County state’s attorney [will] file appropriate paperwork or motions with the Illinois Commerce Commission in order to protect the interests of the county of Kane, its highway system, natural resources, protected buildings and lands, and its residents, businesses and landowners,” the resolution states.

Citizens have attended previous county meetings expressing concerns about the potential effects the power lines could have on property values, public health and the Muirhead Springs Forest Preserve.

The resolution notes the proposed aboveground tower design might adversely affect the areas near it, which include homes, forest preserves, county highways and agricultural operations.

The steel pole structures would be about 150 to 160 feet tall, according to the resolution.

“The installation of the power lines underground for certain sections of the project adjacent to residential and other sensitive uses may be technically feasible and could substantially

mitigate the adverse impacts and effects of the project on residents and landowners as compared to the currently proposed aboveground tower design,” the resolution states.

The Kane County Board is expected to vote on the resolution Feb. 11.

The Elgin City Council last month adopted a resolution declaring opposition to the project’s proposed route and design.

Citizens can submit feedback on the proposal at www.icc.illinois.gov. The case number is 13-0657.

A ComEd spokesperson has said the utility company anticipates to have a ruling by July.