Greenwich-Thalia-Lynnhaven Virtual Community Meeting Transcript
Speaker: Carrie Rose Pace

Transcript:

Okay. Hey, good evening. My name is Carrie Rose Pace. I am a communication specialist in our electric transmission project team. We are here tonight to give you an update on our Greenwich Thalia Lynnhaven, 230 kilovolt electric transmission line rebuild project.

This will be happening in the City of Virginia Beach. And this is the first of two opportunities before construction for neighbors to learn about the project. We'll be in person on Thursday, and I'll share more information about that in just a moment.

You may have seen the alert pop up. We are recording this meeting, so it will be posted on the project website. After the meeting, it may take a day or two to get it edited and posted online, but we will have this content available for replay, whether you want to go back and watch something that we talk about tonight again or if you want to share it with friends who missed the in the opportunity this evening. So the meeting is being recorded and your audio as participants will remain muted throughout the presentation. But at any time while I'm going through this slide deck, I encourage you to see in the bottom right of your Webex window a Q and A option. And when we're going through the slides, if you have a question, go ahead, type it in, and we have teammates here online who will be monitoring those questions and help me at the end of the presentation to organize the questions and make sure that we address all of your inquiries that are coming in.

We are here tonight to talk about what we call an end of life rebuild project. It's where transmission infrastructure has reached the end of its service life, and in order to replace that equipment and maintain reliable service for you, our customers, we are going to rebuild this line in the same right of way, in approximately the exact same footprint says as we'll show you in the slide deck, and this will be between our Lynnhaven and Thalia substations and partially rebuilding a section of the same line between our Thalia and Greenwich substations. We are committed to working respectfully and being good neighbors while we are working, in some cases, very close to people's backyards. So we acknowledge that construction is unusual in your neighborhood and we're not often through here as so much of our transmission infrastructure can last for decades at a time, so we appreciate your patience in advance and we want you to leave here tonight knowing what to expect. And these are just some of our team members who are on the meeting with us this evening available to answer questions from our project manager Danny, to engineering and permitting representatives as well as how we get in and out for construction and forestry activities. So these are just some of the folks here tonight able to answer your questions.

Dominion safety is our first core value, and we like to start with the safety moment, and I think this is particularly timely, not just because it's summer, but because this week and leading up to the end of this week is going to be seriously hot. I know that a lot of us have had some weeks now with high temperatures getting into the nineties to let our bodies start to acclimate, but the end of this week is going to be very serious heat and we should all be taking it seriously. And the best time to prepare for a heat wave like we are experiencing in the coming days and then into the upcoming weekend is to start now, hydrate days before you’re going to be spending a lot of time outdoors. Make sure that you are hydrating your body and then take rest breaks in the shade preferably and if possible in the cool. And then take advantage of the tools that that are available now, whether it's the cooling cloths or the more breathable fabric. If

you're going to be spending time outdoors in this heat wave, make sure that you're thinking about how you're going to spend that time and that you are proactively thinking about those in your party and your family who maybe more prone to heat related illnesses. Little kids, the elderly, people with long term chronic issues, make sure that you're keeping an eye on each other and being each other's keeper. And if you spot someone with signs of heat related illness, like, shortness of breath, dizziness, sleepiness, and if especially if they stop sweating, you need to call 911 right away and get them help. So that's our safety moment before the meeting, and I hope you all start drinking that water right now.

So let's talk about the grid. We're here tonight to talk specifically about transmission lines, but here's how transmission lines fit into the grid itself. We generate power using traditional methods like coal or natural gas to renewable, generation sources like solar and there's also nuclear power plants in our service territory. So no matter what generator is creating that energy for us, it is then transmitted, taken from that generation source on high voltage power lines. And that's what we're here to talk about tonight are the transmission lines. They're really the highways of the energy grid. They carry high power over long distance and then they step it down or can even step it up to higher voltage transmission lines at a substation. And the substation has a distribution connection point in many cases, and that allows us to then safely step down that higher voltage power to a distribution level of voltage which then takes power to the customer. That could be your school, your workplace, your home, hospitals. These are the lines that are primarily serving at the neighborhood level and keeping those lights on. So we're here tonight to talk about the transmission line, so those are again our highways, our workforces that are carrying power to and from longer distances and to and from major substation destination points to get that power to the distribution grid. So this is the area on our map that we're focused on this evening.

It's in the northern part of the city of Virginia Beach between our Greenwich, Thalia, and Lynnhaven substations, and you can see each of those green triangles represents an existing substation. I mentioned on my opening slide that we are only partially rebuilding a section of line between our Greenwich and Dalia substations. And you can see it's a little over a mile, under two miles long in orange, just east of 190. That's the section that we're going to rebuild. And if you're wondering, well, why leave that green section to the west? Well, it's because we did recently rebuild some of those structures ranging from 2015 to 2018, a number of those structures were rebuilt or replaced and so they're in a state of good repair and have more years of service ahead of them we believe at this time.

So what we are going to rebuild is a section of structures that were originally built in several decades ago. And so they have reached the end of their service life. The majority of these that we're going to be rebuilding were around 1970 that that they were placed into service. We're not changing the voltage, it's still going to be 230 kilovolts, that's what it's operating at today and we'll be operating at after we replace the structures and replace the conductor, on these lines as well. And we're going to do this in two phases. So we're going to start at the West and work to the east. That's our current work plan for this project. So we will start at Greenwich.

And because we don't have to rebuild those structures, we're going to only need to install fresh fiber, new communication fiber and that fiber's at the very top of the transmission structure and it, it serves two purposes. It provides communication between our substations so that we can s monitor the safety and the security and the reliability of the transmission line and then the assets that are on it, but it also serves as lightning protection. It is the topmost wire and the outer layer of that wire, should there be a lightning strike will be the first to be struck rather

than the conductor and hopefully prevent loss of service on that transmission line beneath the topmost static wire or fiber.

We are within the same right of way that exists today, and we're going to talk a little bit more near the end of our time together about this right of way in Virginia Beach. This project was approved by the State Corporation Commission in August of last year. They issued what's called a final order approving the project, and you can still see all those documents from that state review process on our project website.

So this is what we proposed to the state and they agreed and issued that approval to proceed. The original structures are concrete monopoles - mono meaning single pole, meaning pole. So a single poll. So it's a single concrete poll. We will be replacing it with a single steel pole so that it will look similar to the original structures, but they are going to be a little bit taller. On average, the existing structures are about 88 ft or so tall and the new structures that we will build will be just a little bit over 100 ft tall. So a little bit of a height increase there. If you participated in the public engagement before we filed this project with the State Corporation Commission, then these photo simulations are going to be familiar to you. On the top, you'll see a real photo of the existing conditions as they were in 2022 when this photo was taken. And you can just see the tops of the existing monopoles, those concrete monopoles sticking up over the tree line in that view. Now the view on the bottom shows you what it will look like. It simulates using a real photo and overlaying what those transmission towers will look like once they are built. So I'm just going to flip through some of these from a few different locations.

This is the simulated view from looking within one of the residential neighborhoods, looking south into the existing transmission right of way, and you'll see again on the top the existing poll as it was photographed in 2022, and then on the bottom simulating what it will look like once, once the structure is, is rebuilt and you can see that the poles are in very similar footprints. They, they may not always be exactly in the same physical spot, but we are going to be placing them in most instances very close to where the existing poles are today.

Another view here you can see what the different, poles will look like from the top where it exists today to the bottom beneath. This is a view looking southeast. And then finally, you can see looking straight down the right of way, the existing on the top, and the new structure on the bottom. Before I leave this, I do want to point out that on the right side of the photo, you will see distribution poles, which we talked about just a moment ago. These distribution poles in, in most of this project will not be affected, but we are already working with the city of Virginia Beach and our distribution partners here at Dominion on any updates that we may need to make to certain sections of the distribution infrastructure in order to accommodate not just the transmission line but other uses within this right of way which is City of Virginia Beach property. So just wanted to point that out for everybody. And then our, I believe this is our last photo simulation, you can see another view here and you can see how the concrete monopoles at the top will still look in finish very similar to the new structures that we will be installing to replace them.

We have a number of tools on our website that will help you see where we're going to be working near you. This is an interactive map that we recently updated if you were with us back in 2022 and 2023 and all the preparing and planning stage for this project, this site was there, but we've updated it recently with our latest structure heights, locations, making sure that we have just a little bit more information on this tool for you. So you'll go to our project website, which is how you found this meeting, dominionenergy.com/Greenwich, and then you'll click on the button that says simulations, height comparisons. And that will then launch this interactive

map. And it's Google based, so you can type in your address, and it will point you to the closest area of our project near your location. If you click on any one of those dots, a green dot is a structure that we are not rebuilding on this project, just installing fiber or if you click on a silver and orange dot, that's going to let you see a pop up box like I showed here in this screenshot, comparing the existing structure, how tall it is, what it looks like, side by side with the new structure that we will be building so that you can see exactly what's going to be, just outside of your property within this ride of way. So this is a really helpful tool. I encourage you to check it out after the meeting.

So when can you expect us to be working in your neighborhood? Well, this is our current schedule pending final permits, weather in progress, so this is subject to change. We always want to make sure that that expectation is set at the beginning. But I did mention we will be doing this in two phases. So if you live closer to Greenwich or Thalia in that section, that's phase one. And so the earliest that we may show up in that ride of way to begin what we call pre construction activities, that's things like clearing the ride of ways, staking new structure locations, performing surveying activities, and in preparing access to those. That is on track to start this summer, next month, July into the early August timeframe.

And then our construction window for this section between Greenwich and Thalia is between August and December and that of course includes installing the fiber on that whole section, but then only rebuilding the section of the transmission line that you see in orange. We will then restore the right of way after we complete construction in the section starting this winter. I do want to mention because we will be wrapping up construction in the middle of winter, in this section, you may still see some of our environmental controls remaining in place until we ensure that the soil restabilizes, and that will include us coming back and putting grass seed and straw down that is seasonally appropriate for growth in the wintertime, and then we'll be back periodically to monitor it and make sure that it does grow as expected, helps restabilize that soil. So if you do see things like silt fence or silt sock, still in the right of way with some stakes helping to hold them in place, we haven't forgotten about them. We left them there for a reason, so you may still see some of those environmental controls in place between Greenwich and Thalia, even into spring of next year before we feel comfortable with releasing those controls and have confidence that that grass seed and the soil has restabilized as expected.

Okay, so that's phase one. There's just going to be a little bit of an overlap in activities around the Thalia substation though. We will start to prepare preconstruction activities, that access, staking the structures, conducting any forestry activities that we need to do as early as November of this year, starting at Dalia and working east toward our Lynnhaven substation. But construction itself in this phase two will start right after New Year's. The plan is to move in and build from Thalia to Lynnhaven with those construction activities. So if you live within that section of our project, you've got months before we're going to show up in your backyard and you're absolutely welcome to check back in with me closer to time if you have any questions about construction.

The phase two construction activities are expected to last from January to May, so a winter through spring construction timeline where we will both install fiber and rebuild that transmission line. And then just like we did on phase one except this time we'll be rehabilitating the right of way starting in the middle of summer, we'll put down seasonally appropriate seed and straw will be monitoring it through the end of summer and through fall to make sure that that soil restabilizes, so same story. If you see silt fence or silt sock or other parts of our

protective measures left in place for some months after construction has ended, it's to make sure that we get that soil restabilized and rehabilitated, restored as it should be.

So here's what you can expect with construction access. Where possible we will use the right of way to get to the right of way using existing roads. And so that means existing construction entrances, places where we will go in and out for operations and maintenance purposes, e.g., today, we prefer to use those first because they're already established, and we already use them. But there may be additional access roads or paths that are temporarily installed to support the, the construction activities here. Make sure that we can get in to our work zones where we need to. And this could be from the north or the south side of the right of way depending on where we are in the project Route.

Timber mats are laid, and these are various photo examples to protect the ground beneath and to minimize disturbance to that ground or the surface below and if e.g., it's a harder surface and not necessarily grass. So we just want to protect whatever is underneath the mats, but there may also be instances where we install gravel access to get into and out of the right of way, so this may vary. But our matted support systems are there to provide that protection for the grass, but we can also use them in wetlands swamps or other environmentally sensitive areas. And you can see in this rendering of installing a pole like we will on this project, how the mats are meant to help disperse the weight of the equipment. In this photo you can see we may need to bring a crane. There may be some support equipment for the foundation being installed concrete trucks if necessary, and then staging the material. So this is meant to serve as our work pad and, and make sure that we can minimize our disturbances to the ground beneath. This is an interactive tool that's on our project website as well. If you scroll down and you'll see construction as one of the links, this will take you to the interactive map. I've also put the web link at the bottom of this slide and, and you are welcome to go and click on any of these orange hotspots that will pop up and teach you a little bit more about the activity and the equipment and what to expect. We really want to demystify our construction processes for you so that you know what to expect.

So we'll, again, just to repeat this process, prepare access, we'll take down the old structures install the new structures. Sometimes we install the new structures before we take down the old structure, so you may see that happen in that order. The last activity that we do is install the wires, the conductor and the fiber, and then we restore the right of way. So the exact order of when we take the original infrastructure down and put up the new infrastructure may vary by location, but that is the general sequence of construction activities.

Now I know that some of our neighbors have had questions about this leading up to getting ready for this project to move into preconstruction activities vibration monitoring. So some of the our structures today are within about a hundred feet of some people's backyards or sheds or their homes themselves, and you.

This is where residential areas are much closer to the city's property and the city's right of way where the distribution and transmission infrastructure exists. So when we are installing these new foundations, if there are any structures within roughly a hundred feet of our foundation work, we're going to be watching it, monitoring it.

We use equipment called vibration monitoring equipment, and I've included some sample photos that you'll know what to expect. It might be a bag with the sensors inside or might be a box that's installed, and we'll usually have a sign beside it that lets any neighbors who may be able to see it or be nearby know, hey, this is official, this is our monitoring equipment and that

lets us see in real time as we are installing foundations, is there shaking happening and is it within acceptable levels? Because we have a threshold that we don't want to cross over and we want to make sure that our installation method keeps us, beneath that, that limit and that avoids potential cosmetic or other structural impacts to any nearby structure. So we take this very seriously and we want to give our neighbors the assurance that they, we are going to be monitoring this in real time. And then there maybe some of the properties that are, are within that zone of influence who are contacted, and this is totally voluntary, but, but we do offer preconstruction home inspections for homes that maybe within this zone of influence, as we call it in this part of our work area. So we directly reach out to those individual property owners to arrange that that offer if they would like to take advantage of it. But even if you're not comfortable having someone come onto your property and perform an assessment, that's ok. We're going to be monitoring it in real time and we'll stop if we see that there's too much pressure or too much stress at that foundation. We'll come up with a solution so that we can continue safely installing that foundation. And then lastly, if you do suspect that any of our construction activities have caused damage to your property while we are working nearby, we have a claims process, and this is standard for any of our transmission construction projects, so we will guide you through that process.

So I mentioned the city of Virginia Beach's property and this right of way, and you may have heard the good and big news that the city announced, I believe it was before the holidays last fall, that the Virginia Beach trail is happening in this corridor. If you are coming to our in person meeting on Thursday, we will have a representative from the City of Virginia Beach trail team there to answer any questions that you may have as a neighbor about that future shared use public infrastructure. And we have experience with this at Dominion Energy in other transmission corridors. Other locality properties, other parks, have infrastructure along our infrastructure, and so we know how to share this space and to minimize impacts while we not only maintain our infrastructure over time, but whenever that day comes, if we have to rebuild, a transmission line, or our distribution line for that matter, then we know how to coordinate this work to minimize impacts.

These are real photos from trails that we share space with in North Carolina all the way up to Northern Virginia. So this is something that, that we know how to work around and we absolutely are committed to being good neighbors and minimizing impacts to users of the trail biking, walking, some of our trails even have equestrian use. So we have to be mindful of horses who may need to safely navigate the trail in proximity to our infrastructure. So where safely feasible, we will always avoid detouring trail traffic during our transmission work, but because our top priority is the safety of the public and our crews working on those lines, sometimes we have to coordinate trail detours and we will communicate these detours or disruptions well in advance as we work hand in hand with the locality responsible for that trail. So I did not want to neglect to mention the exciting future for the Virginia Beach trail coming that this transmission line will be along, and we are in close coordination with the city of Virginia Beach with their engineers as they're getting ready to move through their design processes for the trail. I'm really looking forward to this infrastructure together.

So we have reached the end of our slide deck. I'm going to go on mute and check in with my project teammates as we compile your submitted questions, so thank you for your patience. This will only take just a few moments and if you have not already remember you can insert your questions into the Webex chat feature there at the bottom right of Webex. Thank you just a moment, we'll be right back.

Okay, and again, you will have an opportunity to ask questions in the bottom right Q and A feature. If you have any questions, I'll leave it open for just a moment and I'm going to reshare my screen. So bear with me just a second.

Okay, last call for any questions at this time.

Sean, feel free to, to unmute and override me if I move on and miss any. So in the interest of time, I do want to mention that if you just want to mull this over, think on it, that's great. You have plenty of time to reach out to us. Our phone number is listed here and our email as well, so we encourage you to reach out to us. And we hope that you, if, if you are available will join us in person, meet with our project team on this Thursday from 5:30 P.M. to 7:30PM. We'll be at basically the halfway point of the project at the Western Virginia Beach Town Center in the 2nd floor in the Monarch four and five meeting rooms. There is free Parking at the hotel in the parking deck, so you don't have to worry about that. There's also public transit nearby and accessible, so we encourage you to join us. This information is also posted on our project website. So we thank you for your time this evening. This meeting was recorded. We will be posting it online as soon as we can.

And don't hesitate to reach out to us if you have any questions or have just general feedback that you'd like to share with us. And we thank you so much for your time this evening. Again, my name is Carrie and our project team is here to assist you, so don't hesitate to reach out and we hope to see you on Thursday. Thanks so much.