

Projet de construction du poste Saint-Jean à 315-25kV et d'une ligne d'alimentation à 315kV à Dollard-des- Ormeaux

The Impact to Property market value with the
installation of an aerial 315kV transmission line.

Brief Submitted by the Pietro Di Leo
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Overview

- Numerous studies unquestionably conclude that home prices are negatively impacted by the installation of 315kV transmission lines that are less than 50 meters in proximity to residences.
- In 2002, a study funded by Hydro Quebec and conducted by Professor Des Rosiers (Laval University), concluded that “*severe visual encumbrances due to a direct view of pylon or conductors does exert a significant negative impact on property prices, with depreciations ranging from 5% to well in excess of 20%*” He further suggested that “*the potential health concern and fears from perspective buyers, founded or unfounded, can exacerbate the devaluation of home prices.*”
- Specifically, this project affects me tremendously, due to the close proximity of the pylons to my property line. The distance between my property line and the new pylon tower is only 22 meters. A 52 meter pylon tower only 22 meters from my property line will significantly affect the market value of my home, and my concerns regarding EMF and noise will be amplified with such short distance. Similarly, other homes along the servitude have the same concerns.

Market Value Definition

- The value of a property:
- Replacement Cost which is a calculated amount
- Market value is essentially based on the perception of the buyer
- This perception translates in establishing the market value of a property. Understanding this key concept is fundamental People's perception that 52M pylons will adversely impact property values.
- PERCEPTION = VALUE

Research Findings

- In the Journal of Real Estate Literature, a 2010 paper reviewed six decades worth of research on the effects of power lines on property values. The authors identified:
 - Power lines are visually ugly
 - Electromagnetic radiation generated by the power lines are believed to affect health
 - There are generally more restrictions to property directly under the transmission lines and next to pylons.
- Study of the Impact of a 315kV electric transmission line in Clark County, Town of Hendren concluded that there was a 23% negative impact on property values. Proximity to the transmission lines had the greatest impact.
- American Transmission Company, Zone 4, Northeast Wisconsin – High Voltage Transmission Line Sales concluded that there was a 12% impact on property less than 200 feet (60 meters) from the transmission lines, and no impact for property over 60 meters.
- The EMF issue, although the science is inconclusive, the fear that people believe the EMF's cause cancer is real. Perception is reality when dealing with purchasing a property. A 1992 survey of appraisers found that 84 % agreed that transmission lines lower property values by an average of 10%.

Research Findings

- Properties adjoining a power line easement have a 12.9 to 30.7% lower property assessment than the average homes not adjoined to power lines. Many *buyers refused to even look at these properties; such properties took twice as long to sell; and some sell at a 25 % loss of value.* (Properties Near Power Lines and Valuation Issues: Condemnation or Inverse Condemnation)
- The Price effects of High Voltage Transmission Lines on abutting homes is substantial and highly significant on higher priced homes (1 million dollars plus)
- The study, “Power Lines, Visual Encumbrance and House Values by François Des Rosiers, concluded “*the position of a property along a High Voltage Transmission Line structure highly influences its marketability and therefore exerts a significant impact on its value*”.

The impact on a global sample averages 9.6% of its house price, but it averages 14% in the study area where the setback between the power line and the boundary is only 15 meters. For upper price properties, the findings in the study suggest price drops in the 15% to 20%. In addition, the negative visual and property value impact decreased rapidly with the distance from the pylon to the boundary. After 150 meters the impact tends to disappear.

Tsawwassen, B.C.

- In 2009, BC Hydro purchased 104 homes from the residents who were adjacent to the new 230kV high voltage transmission line in the Tsawwassen.
- BC Hydro believed like Hydro-Québec, that there was no impact to property values, so they purchased the homes and intended to resell the homes over the next two years.
- However, in 2010, as reported by CTV Vancouver news, only 28 homes were sold. Mr. Paul Eviston, a realtor, stated that only 2 out of 10 buyers would consider buying those homes. 8 out of 10 buyers (or 80 %) would not buy those homes. The cost to BC Hydro was \$23 million (as per BC Hydro estimate). BC Hydro's theory was proven wrong at a significant cost. It is interesting to note that burying the lines underground was estimated to be \$24 million.

Hydro Quebec and BAPE Statements

- Its interesting to note that in Hydro-Québec's documentation "les atouts d'un reseau souterrain", Hydro-Québec recognizes that residential properties can increase in resale value if the lines are buried under ground. "*De plus, les maisons situées dans les secteurs résidentiels où les fils sont enfouls peuvent afflucher une valeur de revente plus élevée*"
- In addition, Hydro-Québec recognizes and states in documentation, "Distribution souterraine" that to improve the environmental vision, burying the electrical lines, protects the electrical grid from the weather, trees and increases space.
- Hydro-Québec recognizes and states in their documentation, that the best esthetic solution for residential and dense urban areas is to have the electrical grid buried underground. This maximizes the visual aspect and also provides the maximum latitude for exploiting the above ground terrain. "*La solution la plus esthétique pour les centrevilles et les quartiers résidentiels. Bien adapté aux pratiques de lotissement des zones fortement urbanisées, le réseau souterrain de distribution de l'électricité totalement enfoui permet l'embellissement optimal des sites piusqu'il offre avantage de latitude au-dessus du niveau du sol*"
- In fact in the "*BAPE rapport Project de ligne a 735kV de la Chamouchouane Bout-de-l'Île du Saguenay-Lac Saint-Jean à Montréal, dans son rapport, le BAPE soutient "que les propriétaires devraient receiver une compensation financière d'Hydro-Québec"*"

Summary

- The requirement to upgrade the Saint-Jean substation is warranted, but implementing the proposed project will impact the citizens, the city of Dollard-des-Ormeaux, with regard to our quality of life, environmental impact, noise, visual, property values, and concern of health risks.
- The option to bury the transmission lines underground, although more expensive will minimize the visual impact to the environment, the citizens, property prices, and maximize the protection of the electrical grid, and achieve the goal of the Saint-Jean project
- The project as presented by Hydro-Québec should not be authorized. It should at least be delayed until further studies or discussions can be had with the city of Dollard-des-Ormeaux and with the residents to arrive at an acceptable option.
- The citizens and Hydro-Québec want the same ultimate goal, but the method chosen to achieve this goal is different. It's the cost factor, which impedes the project. Fortunately for us, Hydro-Québec is a great resource for all its citizens and they are very profitable. Although, cost is important, it should not be the over riding condition in this case.

Recommendations

- Bury the transmission lines underground where the homes are less than 50 meters from the pylons.
- The maximum compensation should be given to those homeowners directly in front of the towers. Adequate compensation should be given to those homeowners adjacent to the pylons.
- Where possible plant large mature trees to mitigate the visual impact of the pylons.
- Remove the 120kV line after the 315kV line is activated.

Recommendations

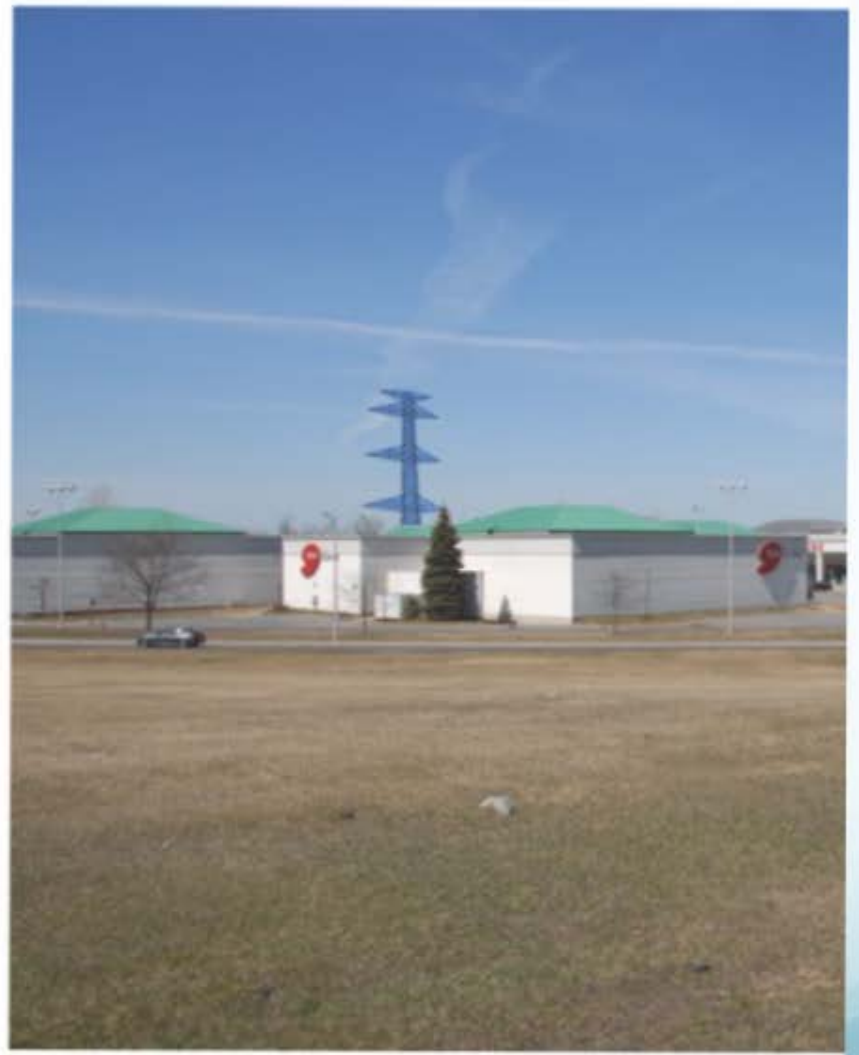
- We urge the BAPE Chairman and Commissioners to recommend to the Minister, that this project be modified, that an underground solution become the first choice based on the environmental, social viability, and possible negative health impacts resulting from an aerial transmission line in a densely populated residential area.

Visual Impact

- The following pictures show the visual aspect - how these pylons will negatively impact homes, and the landscape.
- Buyers will undoubtedly skip those houses that have a 52 meter pylons directly behind their house for those that have no pylon.
- Equally, the other photos clearly show how the city's landscape will change forever in a negative fashion.



















*Place De Salaberry
Gracieuseté d'Hydro Québec.*



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