



**ORDER NUMBER
G-250-21**

IN THE MATTER OF
the *Utilities Commission Act*, RSBC 1996, Chapter 473

and

British Columbia Power and Hydro Authority
Complaint Filed by E.C.

BEFORE:

B. A. Magnan, Commissioner

on August 23, 2021

ORDER

WHEREAS:

- A. By email dated September 21, 2020, E.C. filed a complaint against British Columbia Hydro and Power Authority (BC Hydro) regarding a possible installation of a Low-Profile Transformer (LPT) following a property renovation. According to the complainant an additional easement on the property would also be required (Complaint). BC Hydro noted that there are vegetation and access concerns regarding the current infrastructure that is located on a City of Vancouver easement at the back of the property. Further, BC Hydro's current design practices require new infrastructure to be constructed along public roads or along BC Hydro right of ways that are cleared of trees;
- B. Within the Complaint, the complainant included a timeline of events and correspondence from BC Hydro dating back to 2018 when the complainant first initiated the renovation of the property;
- C. On April 30, 2018, the complainant communicated their renovation plans with BC Hydro, at that time the complainant was informed by BC Hydro that an LPT would be required to supply energy to the property once the renovation was completed. The complainant did not agree to the installation of an LPT on their property and moved forward with their project;
- D. On May 3, 2018, BC Hydro responded to the complainant that the reconnection of power services would require an installation of an LPT. BC Hydro noted that an LPT would be required as BC Hydro could no longer use the existing pole;
- E. On May 16, 2018, BC Hydro noted the location requirements of the LPT on the property and requested the complainant discuss the location with the City of Vancouver as it fell within a protected section of the complainant's property;
- F. On September 17, 2018, BC Hydro noted, within their correspondence with the complainant, that two options for service connections were to be considered. An LPT with an underground connection to services located on Arbutus Street or an overhead extension at the front of the property on W 51st Street. BC Hydro stated that the overhead extension had been denied by the City of Vancouver leaving only the LPT as an

option and the proposed gas and sewer service to the property needed to be relocated to accommodate an LPT. BC Hydro offered the reason for City of Vancouver denying the overhead extension, noting the City of Vancouver had cited section 3.9 of the Utilities Design and Construction Manual that states the City does not permit any utility to install new pole lines or extension to existing pole line;

- G. On July 9, 2020, BC Hydro noted that the sewer and gas lines were installed at the complainant's home and would need to be relocated to accommodate the LPT;
- H. On August 18, 2020, BC Hydro confirmed they would pay all costs regarding the arborist's fees for protected trees on the property and the installation of the LPT. BC Hydro further reduced the installation fees for the complainant from the initial \$100,000, approximated by BC Hydro, to the standard connection charges and meter installation of approximately \$1,451. However, BC Hydro denied the costs associated with the relocation of sewer and gas lines on the complainant's property;
- I. Between September 2020 to March 2021, British Columbia Utilities Commission (BCUC) staff reviewed the Complaint according to the BCUC's Customer Complaint Guide. On February 25, 2021, the BCUC issued staff questions to BC Hydro regarding the Complaint. On March 4, 2021 BC Hydro filed its responses to the staff questions;
- J. On March 23, 2021, the complainant commented on BC Hydro's responses to staff questions, disagreeing with BC Hydro's position;
- K. On June 21, 2021, the BCUC issued information requests (IRs) to the complainant and BC Hydro, and both parties filed their responses on July 6, 2021;
- L. On July 20, 2021, BC Hydro filed its rebuttal to the complainant's IR response. Subsequently on August 3, 2021, the complainant filed their rebuttal to BC Hydro's IR responses; and
- M. The BCUC reviewed the responses and determines that further process is warranted.

NOW THEREFORE pursuant to section 83 of the *Utilities Commission Act*, the BCUC orders that a further regulatory timetable is established as set out in Appendix A to this order.

DATED at the City of Vancouver, in the Province of British Columbia, this 23rd day of August 2021.

BY ORDER

Original signed by:

B. A. Magnan
Commissioner

Attachment

British Columbia Hydro and Power Authority
Complaint Filed by E.C.

REGULATORY TIMETABLE

Action	Date (2021)
BC Hydro and E.C. final arguments	Tuesday, September 7