COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

DPU 24-151

PUBLIC HEARING held at Westfield State College, Scanlon Hall, Westfield, Massachusetts by the Department of Public Utilities, Boston, Massachusetts, on Thursday, December 5, 2024, commencing at 6:32 p.m., concerning

WESTFIELD ESS LLC

SITTING:

Stacey Rubin, DPU Commissioner

Donna Sharkey, Presiding Officer

Siting Division

Andrew Greene, director

Joan Foster Evans, general counsel

Wayne Wang, assistant director

Timothy Reilly, senior energy analyst

Nathaniel Strosberg, energy analyst

-----Reporter: David A. Arsenault, RPR----
Farmer Arsenault Brock LLC

Boston, Massachusetts

617.728.4404

Page 2 Page 4 APPEARANCES: approval to construct associated transmission 2 Sheppard Mullin Richter & Hampton LLP 2 infrastructure, including two underground 3 Shane Early, Esq. transmission lines and two project substations. 4 2099 Pennsylvania Ave. NW which collectively I will refer to as the project. 5 Washington, DC 20006 5 My name is Donna Sharkey. I'm the 202.747.1900 6 hearing officer in this proceeding and I'm 7 searly@sheppardmullin.com 7 conducting the hybrid public comment hearing for Westfield ESS LLC 8 8 tonight. 9 9 As you can see on the stage tonight, and 10 on your screen if you are participating remotely, 10 11 11 there are other people with me from the Department 12 12 who will be involved in the review of this project. 13 13 Staci Rubin, Commissioner of the Department of 14 14 Public Utilities, is here with us tonight and would 15 like to speak to everyone at this time. 16 16 Commissioner Rubin? 17 17 COMMS. RUBIN: Thank you very much, 18 18 Presiding Officer Sharkey. 19 19 Good evening and welcome to the 20 Department of Public Utilities' public hearing 20 21 regarding Westfield ESS LLC's proposal to construct 21 22 22 and operate two underground transmission lines and 23 23 obtain a zoning exemption from the City of 24 24 Westfield's zoning ordinance. Thank you for joining Page 3 Page 5 1 PROCEEDINGS -- 6:32 p.m. 1 us tonight. 2 MS. SHARKEY: On the record. Good 2 My name is Staci Rubin, and I serve as 3 evening and welcome everyone. Before we start I Commissioner of the Department of Public Utilities. We are overseen by a three-member Commission. Chair 4 want to explain how to use Zoom tonight to ensure Jamie Van Nostrand and Commissioner Cecile Fraser that everyone can fully participate in this public 5 comment hearing from the start. are unable to attend tonight since they are 6 attending another public hearing on a different 7 For audio only participation, attendees matter. We are also joined by dedicated and can dial in at 646-558-8656, which is not a tolltalented staff from the Department's Siting 9 free number, and then enter the webinar ID 10 899962036437. Whether you are here in the Division, and this collective team will assist the 11 auditorium or on Zoom, our hybrid setup for the Commission on reaching a final decision on the 11 12 hearing should allow you to see and hear everything 12 proposal. 13 that is said tonight. We will be recording the 13 As we review the proposals, we have the 14 hearing tonight and it will be posted on the 14 challenging yet exciting task of balancing multiple 15 Department's YouTube channel. That listing is 15 priorities. The Massachusetts Legislature requires 16 provided in the notice of the public comment our agency to prioritize not only safety, security, 17 hearing. 17 reliability and affordability, but also equity and 18 I would like to welcome everyone to this 18 reducing greenhouse gas emissions. 19 public comment hearing in the Department of Public 19 Determining how to balance those six 20 Utilities Docket DPU 24-151. This proceeding priorities is part of our daily work toward an 21 involves a request by Westfield ESS LLC for 21 equitable and affordable clean energy transition. 22 individual and comprehensive zoning exemption for Energy storage systems represent an important piece 23 the construction of a 200-megawatt, or 800 23 on how the Commonwealth pursues these goals. 24 megawatthours, battery energy storage system and an 24 Tonight's public hearing comes at an

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- 1 important time, just two weeks after Governor Maura
- 2 Healey signed a new law, An Act Promoting a Clean
- 3 Energy Grid, Advancing Equity, and Protecting
- 4 Ratepayers. That law sets the stage for many
- 5 important changes for how we site energy
- 6 infrastructure in the Commonwealth, including for
- 7 energy storage systems like the one we are
- 8 discussing tonight. This new climate law will
- 9 accelerate the deployment of clean energy
- 10 infrastructure. It will facilitate community input
- 11 on the permitting and siting of clean energy
- 12 infrastructure, and it will ensure that the benefits
- 13 of the clean energy transition are shared equitably

14 among all residents of the Commonwealth.

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Numerous components of that new climate 16 law are effective on March 1, 2026. So it will take 17 time for our team to implement the law and we will 18 invite public comments at a different time on those 19 draft proposals before they are finalized.

20 I want to share with you four of the 21 Department Commission priorities over the next few 22 years.

23 The first of these priorities is 24 transparency, which we jokingly referred to earlier gas prices last winter given this region's exposure

- to the global liquefied natural gas market. Wind
- and solar both have zero fuel costs, so in the long
- term this clean energy transition will be good for
- 5 customers. In the short term, however, it may be 6 expensive.

That brings me to our third priority,

- which is affordability. Energy prices are very
- expensive in this region compared to other parts of
- 10 the country. Utilities will file with our agency
- seeking to increase them further to recover the
- 12 costs associated with offshore wind and the
- 13 investment in transmission and distribution
- 14 infrastructure that's necessary so that we can
 - interconnect solar and accommodate electric vehicle
- 16 charging and electric heat pumps.

17 We need to take action to address the

- 18 challenges of climate changes and the challenges
- 19 that residents of the Commonwealth have in paying
- 20 their bills. Earlier this year in January we opened
- 21 a proceeding to explore innovative solutions to the
- affordability issue. We invited the public to offer
- 23 comments on programs that might alter low-income

spend based on their income. In the energy burden

docket we collected a large number of comments which

discount programs or cap the amount that people

we are still reviewing. We will convene

stakeholders to discuss a better approach for

Our fourth and final priority that I

will discuss tonight is equity and environmental

justice. We need to do a better job of providing

proceedings, particularly when we are taking action

This includes providing opportunities

opportunities for meaningful involvement of

12 to approve the siting of energy facilities and

13 infrastructure that is part of this clean energy

10 environmental justice populations in our

Massachusetts to reduce energy burdens.

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14 buildout.

- tonight. I'm present here to hear your thoughts on
- 2 these proposals. The Commission makes its decisions
- 3 in writing, so we will not be making any ruling here
- 4 tonight. I will be taking careful notes and
- 5 listening intently. The Department's staff will
- 6 review the company's testimony; we will
- 7 cross-examine witnesses in evidentiary hearings, and
- 8 review public comments. Your comments tonight will
- 9 inform the questions that Department staff will ask
- 10 to gather evidence and be used to make the final
- 11 decision. We will do our best to respond to your
- 12 comments in the written decision.

For this case we created a page on our 14 website that is specific to the procedures and

17 All of this leads to more transparency.

18 A second priority is clean energy. 19 In 2021 the legislature expanded our agency's 20 enabling law to require us to consider issues like 21 clean energy and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. 22 As we reduce those emissions, we will also reduce

- 23 our exposure to the impact of expensive and volatile
- 24 fossil fuels, such as the dramatic run-up of natural

15 processes of the case, and you can review 16 information there about the company's proposals.

16 for limited English proficient speakers to

- 17 understand and participate. It also includes
- 18 integrating environmental justice into our
- decision-making process. That's a high priority for
- 20 us. Our agency hired a new director of
- 21 environmental justice and public participation who
- 22 joined us in March of this year and that individual
- and her team is supporting our efforts to better
- involve the public in our work for equitable

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outcomes.

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Back to the point of tonight's hearing.

The actions of our agency affect nearly everyone in the Commonwealth. Our decisions will be better when we hear from you and ensure that your comments influence our decisions. This public hearing is one way you can participate and influence our decisions.

Thank you for making time in your very
busy schedules to attend this evening and to share
your comments with us.

11 I'll turn it back over to Presiding12 Officer Sharkey.

MS. SHARKEY: Thank you, Commissioner
Rubin. I'd like to introduce the rest of the bench
sitting here to take your comments tonight. I would
like to introduce Andrew Greene, the director of
Siting Division; Joan Foster Evans, the general
counsel of the Siting Division; Wayne Wang, the
assistant director of the Siting Division at the
table up front; Tim Reilly, senior energy analyst;
and Nathaniel Strosberg, another energy analyst with
the Siting Division.

Please let us know if you are having any technical difficulties with Zoom. Call or text

project website which is identified as the
 Streamfield Energy Project website. The link and
 web addresses are listed in the notice.

I will now briefly describe the filings
made by Westfield ESS related to its proposed
project and the legal standards that govern the

7 Department's project review. Next I will ask the8 company to make a presentation regarding the

9 project. After that presentation I will open the

10 floor to comments and questions from members of the public. Please note that we will also review any

12 written comments submitted by the public by email

13 through Friday, December 20, 2024.

The proposed location for the project is on approximately 34.9 acres of land on Medeiros Way in Westfield, Massachusetts, specifically parcels

17 70R-17 and 63R-37, which we will refer to

18 collectively as the project site. The project

19 includes locations on Medeiros Way for two sets of

20 battery storage units. The northern parcel is 23.3

21 acres in size, and would include approximately 140

22 megawatts, or 560 megawatthours, of battery storage

23 units, a project substation and supporting

24 infrastructure. The parcels are in an industrial A

Page 11

1 857-200-0065 for assistance.

Counsel and representatives for
Westfield ESS, which I will refer to tonight as the
company, are also participating in this public
comment hearing and will make a presentation
regarding the proposed project.

For those of you using Zoom to

participate remotely, the public will have a full

popportunity to see and hear everything said during

this hearing, to offer comments and to ask

questions. For those of you accessing the meeting

by phone dial-in, you too can hear everything and

have an opportunity to comment or ask questions.

The instructions on how to participate were provided

in the public comment hearing notice that was

published in the Westfield Voice and the Springfield

Republican and in the notices sent to addresses near

the project.

The notice related to this project is
posted in a number of different places online with
links that would allow you to obtain additional
information, including the Westfield ESS project
webpage on the Department's Siting Division webpage,
the Department's siting calendar, and the company's

1 zoning district. The portion of the project on the

2 northern parcel is currently occupied by a freight

3 trailer storage business. The southern parcel,

4 which is 11.6 acres in size, would include

5 approximately 60 megawatts, or 240 megawatthours, of

battery storage units along with a second project

7 substation and related infrastructure.

Transmission lines from the northern and southern parcels interconnect the two project

10 substations to the existing Buck Pond Substation,

11 which is also located on Medeiros Way. The proposed

12 transmission lines are approximately 1800 feet and

13 600 feet long. A project description and maps of

To good look long. At project decompliant and maps of

14 the project site were provided in the notice of this

15 public comment hearing. We have additional copies

16 available near the entrance to this room if anyone

17 needs a copy tonight.

18 The company filed a petition with the

19 Department under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter

20 164, Section 72. Under this statute the Department

21 will review the filing to determine whether the

22 proposed project is necessary, serves the public

23 convenience, and is consistent with the public

24 interest. The company's request for zoning

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- 1 exemptions from the City of Westfield's zoning
- 2 ordinance for the project is filed pursuant to
- 3 General Laws Chapter 40A, Section 3. Under this
- 4 statute the Department must determine whether the
- 5 company is a public service corporation, whether the
- 6 exemptions are required, and whether the present or
- proposed use of the land or structure is reasonably 7
- 8 necessary for the convenience or welfare of the

9 public.

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10 There are multiple ways that you can 11 participate in the Department's review of the 12 project. First, you may comment on the project

13 tonight. You may also file written comments by

14 Friday, December 20, 2024 by email to me at the

15 address in the notice and to the company's counsel

16 whose email address is also listed in the notice.

17 In addition, you may choose to seek participation as

18 an intervenor or a limited participant in the

19 proceeding. The deadline for requesting

20 participation as an intervenor or as a limited

21 participant is Friday, December 20, 2024. We would

22 encourage anyone who does seek to participate to

23 review the material published on the Department's

24 website which outlines the different ways in which

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you can participate in the proceeding.

For example, you may participate as a 3 full intervenor. A full intervenor has rights to

4 ask discovery questions of the company, to present

5 witnesses, to ask questions of witnesses testifying

6 at the hearing, to file briefs and motions, and to

7 appeal the decision of the Department. In the

8 alternative you may participate as a limited

9 participant. A limited participant can receive

10 filings made in this proceeding and may file briefs

11 with the Department. A limited participant does not

12 have the right to appeal the decision.

The information on participation is also 14 in the public comment hearing notice for this 15 proceeding. If you would like a copy of the notice 16 and intervention rules, please send your contact 17 information to my email at Donna. Sharkey@ m a s s 18 dot g o v, and I can send the information to you by

19 email. 20 The company counsel and company 21 representatives are participating in this public

22 comment hearing. May I have appearance of counsel, 23 please.

MR. EARLY: Shane Early of Sheppard

1 Mullin for the company.

2 MS. SHARKEY: Thank you. I would note

the company has provided a certification that the 3

notice for this public comment hearing has been

provided consistent with the terms required by the

Department.

7 Would the company like to begin with its presentation regarding the project? After that

9 presentation we will open the floor for comments and

10 questions from the public.

11 MR. EARLY: Yes. Thank you, Hearing

12 Officer Sharkey. As I mentioned, my name is Shane

Early. I'm the attorney representing the company

14 and helped them file the petition with the

Department in September. I'm going to introduce Dan

16 Watson who will give the presentation for the

17 company.

18 First off, I thank everyone for coming

19 out. As both Presiding Officer Sharkey and

Commissioner Rubin stated, this is an important part

21 of the process and a great opportunity for both the

22 company and the Department of Public Utilities to

23 understand the public's thoughts and concerns about

the project as we work through this entire process.

Page 17 It is great -- it is obviously challenging at times

to come out in the evening, and it is great to see

you here and great to see many faces who were also

at the earlier open house that the company held.

We look forward to hearing your

6 comments. There are other people from Jupiter

Power; the company and their consultants are here. 7

We are happy to talk with anyone who has questions

afterwards on those issues. There are consultants

10 from Epsilon who dealt with a number of different

environmental issues and filed reports with the

12 petition. There's also a representative from Fire &

13 Risk Alliance who additionally filed a report with

14 the petition.

15 With that, I will introduce Dan Watson,

16 the lead developer for the company on the project.

MR. WATSON: Thank you, Commissioner

18 Rubin, DPU staff, City of Westfield leaders,

government officials, and everyone in the community

who attended this evening and who attended virtually

21 and who have come to our previous open houses. I'm

22 going to give a brief presentation.

23 So my name is Dan Watson. I'm with

24 Jupiter Power. That is the parent company of

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1 Westfield ESS LLC. The project is also referred to 2 as Streamfield Energy Storage, the project nickname, 3 so to speak.

4 A little bit about the project team and people involved in preparing our petition. Again 5 Jupiter Power, we are the developer and long-term 7 owner/operator of this project. We have Tighe & 8 Bond here who is our civil engineering. We have 9 Epsilon Associates, who is our environmental 10 consultant; Fire & Risk Alliance, who does our 11 safety engineering. Our electric engineering was 12 done by NEI, Electric Power Engineering, Inc.; 13 permitting counsel is Sheppard Mullin.

14 I will give a brief overview of Jupiter 15 Power. All this information is available on our 16 website. JupiterPower.io. if you want to learn more 17 about our projects. We are a developer, owner and 18 operator of battery energy storage projects, 19 large-scale energy storage projects. We are 20 headquartered in Austin, Texas. We were founded 21 in 2017 with the express purpose of developing and 22 building these projects.

23 We have a fleet of just about 12 24 projects, between nine operational projects and

levelize that demand and make sure that our grid is resilient while also doing that without producing any carbon emissions. That's the real benefit of these projects.

5 A little overview of what exactly are in these projects. These start with a battery cell. 7 They are lined in a string in a battery module, which is a hard plastic and metal box. That's the

second image here. This is our lithium ion

phosphate cells proposed for this project. Again, the models are stacked on top of each other in a

12 unit here. It is also called a battery rack. And

13 then those are placed inside a container. This

project that Jupiter builds are open-air, container-

15 based systems. This means they are assembled in a 16 manufacturing plant elsewhere and then arrive onsite

17 in that containerized unit that you see on the right

18 here. That means we are not actually altering the

19 battery cells or modules at any point in time

20 actually at this site. So no alteration of the 21 chemistry.

22 For us, safety always comes first. We 23 recognize the importance of safety to battery energy

storage projects. Coordination with first

Page 19

1 three currently in construction across the U.S.

2 Most of those historically have been in Texas. We

3 have a 1,000-megawatt pipeline here in New England.

Most of that is here in the Commonwealth of 5 Massachusetts.

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This is just some examples of some of the projects that we have built as a company. It gives you an overview of what the facilities when 9 they are built, what they look like. Again, I won't 10 get into the details on these. A lot of information 11 is available on our website about these projects.

12 So I want to give a brief overview of 13 the baseline of what battery energy storage systems 14 are, why we are proposing this here in Westfield. 15 So these batteries are designed to pull energy from 16 the grid during periods of low demand and produce 17 that energy during periods of higher demand. These 18 projects connect to the transmission system. They 19 don't connect to any single energy resource. They 20 pull power agnostically, and that power is then sold

22 As many of you know, our energy use in 23 the Commonwealth does not stay the same throughout 24 the day and even seasonally. So batteries help

21 back into the grid during periods of high need.

responders, all the emergency services is critical

to our project development. We want to make sure they understand the project, the layout, the access

considerations, all of that, and that there is a

5 clear and safe protocol if there ever is any sort of

6 event that occurs at our facilities. So we hire

teams like Fire & Risk Alliance to help us prepare

those reports. Those reports that outline a lot of

this are part of the petition and are living

10 documents that we will continue to amend and edit

and work with the emergency services here in 11

12 Westfield.

13 We also do classroom trainings with Fire 14 & Risk Alliance and the emergency services. We do site walks of the plant both before and after it is built. And one of the things that we want to make 17 sure we do is to have a program so that there is an 18 annual refresher training about these facilities.

19 I want to speak a little bit about 20

Jupiter's construction and operation practices, some

21 of the things we are proud of and are specific to

22 this project. First of all, we are an owner/

23 operator. Every day we have a team of trainers and 24 maintenance people who wake up and manage our

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1 facilities that are already built. That will be the 2 plan here, to own this for the long-term. That

3 gives us a little bit of a different perspective on

4 how to build these projects safely and make sure

5 that they are really part of the community and work

6 and are going to be here for 20-plus years.

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15 for these sites.

We really think about project design. We really considered the water resource protection district, Zone 2 wellhead protection zones. We know 9 10 how sensitive that is here. We really make sure 11 that all of our equipment for these sites is located 12 out of those zones. We have also made sure we 13 maximize the use of previously developed areas, and 14 we avoid all the wetland resources and buffer areas

Stormwater management, again we have 17 professional engineers who have designed this to 18 comply with Massachusetts stormwater management 19 standards. We have actually gone above and beyond 20 that for this project. We have some slope drainage 21 systems to add an additional layer of protection on 22 these sites.

We comply with the state noise 24 regulations. An important part of this project is 1 There's obviously construction jobs

associated with the year-plus-long construction

cycle for this project and a handful of long-term

jobs. And we hope to bring a significant amount of

property tax revenues when we are built with very

minimal burden on municipal services like your gas,

your sewer, your garbage, your school systems, again 7

improving the electric grid with very minimal water

9 usage.

10 This is the site. Again, I don't want 11 to get into too much detail because we could speak

for a very long time about all the different project

details and site plans. That's all available in the

petition on our website and the DPU's website as

15 well. But a brief overview is: This site is

16 located on Medeiros Way which is off Southampton

17 Road. Medeiros Way is also formerly known as Summit

18 Lock Road. This is the Buck Pond Substation here.

19 We have two parcels, the northern parcel and the

20 southern parcel. The northern parcel is 23 acres;

21 the southern parcel is just under 12 acres. We are

22 going to be developing about 12 acres of those two

parcels. And we will interconnect, again, with that

24 Buck Pond Substation.

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once we are operational we really have very minimal 2 traffic. These plants are not manned. They are 3 remote operated. You don't have people coming in 4 and out on most days.

5 Of course, we don't want to lose the forest through the trees here. These are clean 6 7 energy projects. This is the transition, this is how we get there without any more greenhouse gases 9 while meeting the peak demand that we have here in 10 the Commonwealth.

11 While all that's great, we do want to 12 talk about the benefits here for Westfield. 13 Obviously the Commissioner spoke about the 14 Commonwealth's energy goals and clean energy goals 15 and this is a big part of that transition. We also 16 enhance grid resiliency locally. These projects are 17 able to meet sudden changes in electricity demand 18 almost simultaneously. They are very fast to turn 19 on. That enhances grid resiliency in the region.

20 Again, we are using, we think, a great 21 property. We are using an existing trucking 22 operation, the site of a trucking operation, 23 minimizing new disturbance, and again hopefully 24 lowering the vehicular traffic in the area.

There's been a lot of analysis that has 1

gone into selecting the site. There's an

alternatives analysis as part of our petition. We

encourage folks to read that and recognize the work

that we did in geotech, stormwater, noise studies,

traffic, all of that that went into selecting the

site and design that we have.

Again, this is the site plan. You can see, these are all the battery units here and here.

10 Stormwater management features are here and here,

and then the project substation in the darker gray,

12 and then the electric lines connecting to the Buck

13 Pond Substation.

14 These are project renderings. You can see the existing trucking facility on the northern parcel shown here on the top left, and then the 17 image on the right is the post construction view

18 facing north off of Medeiros Way. You can see that

the overall visibility is pretty similar to the

existing trucking operation. These batteries really 20

21 do kind of look like containers once they are

22 installed. They sit relatively low to the ground.

23 We also have a line-of-sight profile for

24 the nearest residents to the property showing the

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1 roughly 600 feet of forest in between the northern

- 2 parcel, the development limits, and the Armbrook
- 3 Center property. Again, all of this information is
- in the petition if you would like to get more
- 5 detail.

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6 So updates and next steps. Obviously 7 the DPU process is going to continue over the next

six to 12 months at least. I would like to

emphasize that we have had two open houses here in

10 Westfield. We have had a number of meetings with

11 municipal officials and other community groups.

12 Just because we have started the DPU process and

13 kicked that off does not mean those meetings will

14 need to stop at all. We would hope we can continue

15 to engage with the community in whatever way you all

16 see fit as the DPU considers this project in their

17 process. We will continue to work, again, with all

18 the departments we have been, and hopefully more.

19 And the plan would be to start construction in March

20 of 2026, so about 15 months from now.

21 Our project agreement with the regional 22 grid operator, ISO New England, does require us to

23 be operational by June of 2027 in order to meet a

capacity supply obligation secured for the project.

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That's all the information I have.

2 Thank you to everyone for joining us this evening,

3 and we look forward to your comments.

4 MS. SHARKEY: Thank you.

5 Next we will proceed with public

comments regarding the project. We begin with

7 federal, state and local officials, appointed as

well as elected officials who wish to be heard.

9 Then we will proceed with members of the public who

10 have signed up to speak in the order in which they

11 have signed up. Finally, we will allow anyone who

12 wishes to speak but did not have the chance to let

13 us know in advance to proceed.

When called to speak if you are

15 participating remotely we will move you into the

16 Zoom panel so that you can be seen and heard by the

17 Zoom audience as well as those here in the

18 auditorium. For all speakers, please give your name

19 and address, spell your name, and speak slowly and

20 clearly. Please stop speaking if you see me raise

21 my hand. If a company response to a comment or

22 question asked is appropriate, I will ask the

23 company to respond.

This public comment hearing is being

1 recorded through an official transcript by a court

stenographer who is here tonight. In order to

3 accurately transcribe everything spoken tonight, he

needs to hear you clearly. So please be patient if

we need to interrupt you to repeat yourself so that

it can be included in the record. In addition to

7 the transcript, we are recording tonight's public

comment hearing and will post the recording on the

Department's YouTube channel. Anyone can review the

recording at the YouTube channel address included in

11 the notice.

12 Okay, we are now ready to begin to hear

13 your comments. Please identify yourself, giving

your name and the office that you hold for the

record. Do we have any federal officials present or

16 on Zoom that wish to comment? Please raise your

17 hand in person or on the Zoom if you wish to speak.

18 Are there any state officials present or on Zoom who

19 wish to comment? Please raise your hand in person

20 or on Zoom if you wish to speak. Are there any

21 local officials present or on Zoom who wish to

22 comment? We are going to stop for a minute to fix

23 the camera.

24 (Pause.)

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MS. SHARKEY: The first public official

who registered to speak is Mr. Tom Flaherty, who is

the general manager of the Westfield Gas and

Electric Department. Would you come up to the

5 podium.

Can I help you?

MR. ALLIE: I'm Dan Allie, city

8 councilor. I raised my hand.

MS. SHARKEY: I'm sorry. Okay.

10 MR. ALLIE: Dan Allie, A I I i e, 38

Union Street. I'm a Westfield city councilor. I 11

just have a question. Is there any scenario or 12

13 circumstance in the event of a fire where fire

14 fighting foam containing PFAS would be used?

15 MS. SHARKEY: Can the company respond to

16 that?

17 MR. EARLY: The answer to that question

18 is no.

19 MS. SHARKEY: Are there any other

members of the city council who wish to speak?

21 Please come up to the podium.

MS. FANION: Good evening. My name is

23 Karen Fanion, Fanion. My address is 83 Cabot

Road in Westfield. I'm a Ward 1 city councilor, and

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this project is located in Ward 1.

I'm here tonight to represent my
constituents of Ward 1. I have received an
overwhelming amount of opposition to this proposed
battery storage facility to be located on Medeiros
Way. As you know, the proposed battery storage
facility is directly over the aquifer, and with this
direct vicinity of the aquifer it raises many
concerns.

The materials the batteries are made of,
mostly lithium ion, cause environmental risk. There
is risk of fire and thermal runaway. Fire
suppressants used to fight fire contain toxic
materials. The risk of water contamination from
firefighting runoff and chemical leaks is
particularly concerning relative to the history of
water contamination in Westfield. The risk of fire
is very real, and there have been actual fires of
battery storage facilities in past facilities such
as in South Korea, Arizona and New York. And

I therefore ask for the followingdocumentation: The list of types of batteries to be

21 battery storage facilities generate light and noise

1 room are shocked because I never take this off in

2 public buildings. I'm immune compromised. My body

3 is full of PFAS chemicals that I drank in the water

4 that you are talking about putting this storage on

top of. The parcels you are talking about includethe Zone 2, which the state is responsible to

7 protect and we are responsible to protect. Sorry,

8 I'm very angry.

9 No, they don't use PFAS firefighting
10 foam AFFF to put out these fires, not anymore,
11 because they used millions of gallons and it doesn't
12 really work. They put PFAS in these cells to keep
13 the thermal runaway from happening. And when it
14 does it puts bydrogen fluoride gas in the air

14 does, it puts hydrogen fluoride gas in the air.15 Chemists call it the devil's piss. That will rain

16 down on us. We will breathe it.

17 I didn't see in that spiffy little

18 presentation how far way it was from our

19 environmental justice communities. There's a map

20 for that. Didn't see that. Didn't see the map from

21 the EPA or Massachusetts showing the health impact

of our environmental justice communities here inWestfield. There are maps for that. Didn't include

24 that. Didn't show the Arm Brook. Didn't show that

Page 31

stored, including the material make-up; a fire
 safety plan; the suppressants to be used in the
 firefighting; the plan to reduce the noise; a

4 lighting plan; and a security plan.

22 pollution.

While safety features in battery storage
facilities are essential and significantly reduce
the risk, they do not eliminate them entirely. The
potential for fires, leaks and environmental
contamination remains, especially in sensitive areas
like aquifers. Given the significant environmental
and safety risks, locating a battery storage
facility near an aquifer is not advisable. The
potential for water contamination, along with the

14 challenges in controlling fires and the hazardous

15 materials involved, make such a placement a high16 risk. It is crucial to consider alternative

17 locations that minimize these risks and ensure the protection of our vital water resources. Thank you.

(Applause.)

19

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21

MS. SHARKEY: Thank you.

Are there any other members of the city

council who would like to speak?MS. MELLO: My name is

23 MS. MELLO: My name is Kristen Mello. I 24 live at 27 Moseley Avenue, and the people in this that is cold-water fishery already impaired. Didn'tshow where the natural gas and the storage tanks for

3 gas are filled. Didn't show where the new F-35s are

4 coming in. Didn't talk about what happens and what

5 chemicals escape when those things catch on fire or

the frequency of the fires, which I don't know if

you know, but in the last four years are like way up. And they burn, some of them for weeks.

9 There's a school right near there, 600

10 yards away. How far does that -- did you know when

they did that research they only had to look atwhere the chemicals go to the perimeter of the

where the chemicals go to the perimeter of the project. Right? Once it hits that edge, it doesn't

14 go anywhere. It doesn't go into the aguifer.

Nobody breathes on the other side of the propertyline.

17 You have a priority about saving money,

8 about green energy. Green energy isn't full of PFAS

19 on our aquifer. Appropriate siting isn't on top of20 an aquifer already poisoned that already had an

21 impact on 41,000 people. We had an ATSDR exposure

assessment here. The people who drank the water hada direct correlation between the PFAS in their blood

24 and the PFAS in their water, and you are sitting

4

Page 36

Page 34

1 here talking isn't this an appropriate site. No, it isn't. And when he said we are not using the foam, 3 it's because the PFAS is included.

4 And so you're going to say, it doesn't matter about the local zoning because we need to store power. For who? Is it coming to us? 7 Westfield takes all the risk, our residents take all 8 the risk. Who gets the benefit? I asked them, Who gets it? Eversource. Is it coming back to 10 Westfield first? Are we going back online first 11 when the power goes out? No. Are they putting 12 buildings on this so that our property taxes go up? 13 No. Are we going to be able to tax what's inside 14 those boxes? No. When the environmental justice 15 council came to Holyoke, I zoomed into that meeting, 16 and said, Hey, how come Jupiter Power keeps coming 17 back every couple years, and when I asked them 18 what's in the box, they ghost me. I'm a city 19 councilor. Why do they keep ghosting me? Where is 20 the environmental justice?

21 You so now we are here in this room 22 that's at least 85 degrees. Do you know how hot it 23 is in one of these? I'm back there fanning myself. 24 I see you wiping the sweat off your brows. You

Page 35 1 can't reduce the temperature in here? You hold the 2 meeting at 6:30 the week after Thanksgiving and you

3 call it environmental justice. No, it isn't. It's

4 a lie. It is a dog-and-pony show where you sit here

5 and all of you and half of them get paid to sit here

6 and let us talk. And you're going to make your

7 decision somewhere else where you don't drink our

water, you don't breathe our air, and you're not 9 driving your kids to Boston for kidney treatment.

10 Lucky for you I have two chemistry

11 degrees. I'm going to write down all the

12 information I found out about what battery ESSs do,

13 and what is wrong with our aquifer, and all those

14 maps. And I will send it to you fully referenced in

15 writing by the 20th. And you will be lucky if I 16 don't come after the state for the violation of our

17 rights. Because when that fire foam was sprayed,

18 those national guard people were under state

19 control. Be careful what you decide here. Thank 20 you.

21 (Applause.)

22 MS. SHARKEY: Thank you. Are there any 23 other members of the city council who would like to 24 speak? Are there any other public officials from

the City of Westfield who would like to speak? 1 2

Mr. Flaherty?

MR. FLAHERTY: Thank you, Commissioner and Ms. Sharkey. A few things kind of backing up

Councilor Mello. It is not always that we agree on

things, but there is not an overall benefit to the

7 residents of Westfield as far as the power that's

going to be stored and then released back into the

9 system into the Eversource transmission line. That

power just goes straight back in the transmission

line. Some of that power could come into Westfield

through that line, but it is not Westfield buying 13 that power.

14 I do have a couple of questions and

15 there's probably a quick answer. Is there any way

to bring up the site map again or no? That one

17 there. So Westfield Gas and Electric is the owner

18 of the property in the middle on the south side

where the substation is. And there's a line that, 19

the transmission line I believe is the dual cable

21 line coming from the north to the south properties.

22 We have our distribution system lines 23 coming out through that same direction. I was just

wondering how that power is coming in. We were

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under the understanding that there was just going to

be access coming from the second line into the

substation on the Eversource side.

4 MR. WATSON: Dan Watson. That line will

be directionally bored underground. That line was

done in consideration after reading what the WG&E officials considered were the number of utilities in

7 that area. We want to make sure that still works

for you all and we will continue to have these

10 conversations.

MR. FLAHERTY: So we are still working

on that. I would like to comment about Jupiter.

Ever since their filing into the ISO New England

14 queue since 2021 they have been very communicative

with us, very open with us. Not necessarily a

16 partnership, but we have had a great flowing 17 conversation regarding this project and what the

18 needs are with us and Eversource. So I do applaud

19 them for that. There's been other entities coming

20 into town that don't really want to talk to us.

21 Again, the benefit that I see to Westfield is really

more of a tax benefit and cleaning up that yard.

23 Thank you very much.

24 MS. SHARKEY: Thank you.

11

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I understand the Westfield Fire Chief 1 2 Egloff wishes to speak.

FIRE CHIEF EGLOFF: Patrick Egloff, Fire 3 4 Chief, Westfield Fire Department and the authority having jurisdiction for any fire permitting. This 5 6 is more of a statement than anything else. Mr. 7 Flaherty had said Jupiter has been -- they reached 8 out to us probably in July. They have been very 9 communicative also. So fires in ESS facilities are 10 low-frequency, high-risk events. When they happen 11 things can be catastrophic. There have been major 12 fires in the U.S. as well as across the world from 13 thermal runaway, which make ESS fires that could 14 burn for days.

15 When you have a fire in an ESS you need 16 to put copious amounts of water on the fire. If it 17 burns for days, we could be talking about hundreds 18 of thousands of gallons of water. Because we have 19 to try to try to put the fire out and as well as 20 cool the exposures, that water has to go somewhere. 21 I received a lot of phone calls lately of people 22 worried about the aguifer.

23 I'm also worried about -- I have 24 concerns for firefighter health and safety as well

Page 40 MAYOR McCABE: My name is Mike McCabe. I'm the mayor of the city. Nice to meet you all.

Thank you to everybody for coming.

I came here tonight with the same kind of questions that I think everybody else has. I specifically, when I got the notice from the DPU of

7 the meeting tonight, asked if general manager

Flaherty would come along, the communicative one,

and Chief Egloff from the fire department. My chief

10 concern is and always will be for the safety of our

citizens. I'm concerned. I have kind of kept quite 12 now for a little while because I wanted to see how

13 this would play out, as to what really would happen

in the event of a fire. I think they did a very

good job of kind of skirting the issue without

16 really talking about the calamitous effect that a

fire could actually have in terms of spreading over 17

18 the aquifer. And I'm not just talking about the

19 flames and the heat. I'm actually talking about the

20 water.

21 I want to thank them for coming up and 22 having these conversations. I think you are going

to hear a lot more of those same conversations

coming in behind you. I want to thank Karen Fanion,

Page 39

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as the citizens because of the gases that are being given off. I just wanted everybody to know in the

audience that Fire Risk Alliance has given us

4 documentation for hazard mitigation and they are

5 willing to work with us to train our firefighters

6 because there has been an increase in fires over the

7 last four years in everything lithium; not just

8 these battery modules, but in the homeowners'

9 batteries. Lithium-ion batteries have issues. I

10 want to make sure that my firefighters and the

11 citizens are as safe as they can be.

12 I have a career and my men and women 13 have a career in something where we could go and not 14 come home to our family and friends the next day. I 15 want to make sure that everything is done to make

16 this as safe as possible if it happens. Thank you. 17 MS. SHARKEY: Does the deputy fire chief

18 wish to speak as well?

19 DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF: I'm good. Thank 20 you.

21 MS. SHARKEY: Thank you.

22 Are there any other public officials who

23 would like to speak before we move on to members of

24 the general public?

Page 41 Councilor Mello, and Councilor Allie for voicing 1 2 their opinion on the record. Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

MS. SHARKEY: Thank you.

I believe Mary Ann Babinski is the first person to sign up to speak.

MS. BABINSKI: Thank you, Commissioner Rubin and the DPU team. I want to welcome you to

Westfield and the Pioneer Valley. My name is Mary

10 Ann Babinski, that's Mary space Ann space Bab

11 in ski. I reside at 114 Rogers Avenue which is

12 approximately 1.7 miles from the site of the

proposed battery energy storage called BESS. I

14 wanted to write a song about it but I didn't have

15 time. I have notes, but I'm going to show you how

16 much I have crossed off and everything because a lot

17 of the stuff was already said eloquently. But I

18 want to just on the record make some comments

19 because I'm going to focus also on some of the

20 issues with our water resources. I'll try to keep

21 my comments brief, but everybody knows I have a

problem with that. No laughing, please. 22

23 Over the last couple of years, for a

little background, my own background, I have been

7

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- 1 actively involved in efforts involving environmental
- 2 justice in the State of Massachusetts. I have
- 3 participated in many virtual or in-person meetings
- 4 regarding cumulative impact assessments, which you
- 5 all know about, and the EJ strategy. As a former
- 6 director of Westfield Concerned Citizens and former
- 7 Ward 1 city councilor, I attended many Barnes
- 8 Aquifer Protection Advisory Committee meetings,
- 9 which you have already heard is no longer in

10 existence and that's too bad for us.

As the Chair of the council's Natural 11

12 Resources Committee I was involved with

13 implementing, strengthening and enforcing the city's

14 water resource protection district zoning. So I'm

15 very familiar with what our concerns are with that

16 Zone 2 and our water resource zoning.

Over the past two and a half years I've

18 had several opportunities to meet and communicate

19 with these Jupiter guys over here as they presented

20 and represented the BESS project. In fact, way back

21 on March 7th, 2022 I first met their representatives

- 22 at City Hall with Councilor Mello phoning it in.
- 23 And on January 24th at their public community
- 24 meeting that they held at Barnes Airport, I met

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1 them. They were running an online and in-person 2 event and explaining this project. On June 26 --

- 3 there's big gaps in between when these things
- 4 happen, obviously -- on June 26, 2024 they had an
- 5 open house at Elks Lodge on Franklin Street which
- 6 didn't have a very high attendance but they did
- 7 their best to present their whole project to the
- 8 residents that showed up.

In June of 2024, that same month, 10 preliminary information had been mailed to us about

11 the original parcel plan. What I noticed is that

12 they had placed -- replaced, I should say -- one of

13 the parcels that was north of the one that's near

14 the Buck Pond Substation, it was north of it and to

15 the left of where Old Dominion was. That also

16 touched a little bit of the other aquifer that we

17 have.

9

17

18 Now, in the notice that they sent pre 19 meeting at the Elks Lodge, pre open house, I noticed

20 that they had picked the parcel of land that was

21 next to the solar field, which I heard some of you

22 went by today. So I brought a map with me to the

23 open house to explain to them that that parcel now

24 was, almost half overlapped our aquifer and Arm

Page 44 Brook, a very important brook, as those of us who

live on the north side know that it is. This new

parcel location was a concern to me because it

overlapped the water resource district. I'm

skipping around because I crossed out a lot here.

My concerns and those shared by

residents of the north side of Westfield, who will

potentially be impacted by the siting of this

project, have been eloquently explained to you

10 already by Councilor Mello. Our history with PFAS

11 contamination of our aquifer and the increasing

12 development and traffic congestion on the north side

13 of Westfield is always a cause of concern for those

14 of us who live up there, and probably those of us

15 who come off of the turnpike too who try to get

16 where they live, which is somewhere else in

17 Westfield. With the project's location now

18 overlapping the Zone 2 water resource and Arm Brook,

19 which I was told or heard at a meeting it is

intermittent from north of North Road down to

Medeiros, but from Medeiros down it is a perennial 21

22 brook and it flows south into the Arm Brook

23 Reservoir.

24 I along with other residents are

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concerned that once again our water supply and the health and safety of residents, particularly

environmental justice populations, will continue to

be put at risk. Residents have stressed the

importance of protecting our aquifers as a top

priority, and updates -- when they were present at

7 updates of the Westfield's Open Space Recreation

Plan, Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan, and

the Master Plan -- this priority should not be

ignored now. They put a lot of effort into getting, 10

building those documents. 11

12 Now I have a whole bunch I crossed out

13 here. I will skip down. As I learned in a walk I

took across the state, we must keep in mind that a

15 even a good thing, if you think it is good, can be a

bad thing when sited in the wrong place. Our

17 community needs to be ever vigilant regarding the

18 where, what and why of any new development on the

19 north side in particular because of everything that

20 we have to deal with now.

21 As stated already and in the documents

22 that the DPU sent, they are here to gather

23 information as to, one, whether the project is

necessary, serves the public convenience, and is

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1 consistent with the public interest; and two, 1 MR. EARLY: Shane Early, again, for the 2 whether the zoning exemption should be granted, and company. I believe that there are statements in the 3 if the proposed use of the parcel is reasonably testimony of Fire Risk Alliance on that. 4 necessary for the convenience or welfare of the 4 (Request to repeat.) 5 public. From what I heard tonight, I'm gathering 5 MR. EARLY: Shane Early, again, for the that the people sitting here would say no to any of 6 company. There's statements regarding any sort of that -- to all of that, I should say. 7 7 thermal event and that there will always be a 8 It should be of no surprise that siting release of greenhouse gases no matter what kind of 9 another project which could potentially impact our thermal event there is. We can get into more 10 water supply and also cause other hazards would be 10 details. It is impossible to quantify in 11 concerning to the residents of Westfield. When generalities what would happen in any sort of 12 events we were assured shouldn't, couldn't, wouldn't 12 thermal event. 13 happen, they happen. Because we are still in the 13 MR. RISLER: Would it be more or less 14 throes of trying to understand and clean up the than the amount of material that was released by 15 existing PFAS contamination, it makes no sense to me Union Carbide four years ago during the Bhopal, 16 to keep adding more development that could pose a 16 India event? 17 17 potential risk to our aguifer and to the health and MR. EARLY: I don't know the details of 18 well-being of the people of this city. Therefore, 18 that event enough to comment. Again, we are happy 19 at this time I do not believe that this is the best 19 to follow up afterwards. 20 location to this battery energy storage system 20 MR. RISLER: This project has been 21 called BESS. It is not best place for BESS. Thank 21 proposed for some years now, and there's been 22 you. 22 ongoing discussion with City of Westfield officials. 23 23 What has prevented the company and the City of (Applause.) 24 MS. SHARKEY: Next we have Brian Risler 24 Westfield from reaching a negotiated agreement up Page 47 who signed up to speak. until now? 1 1 2 MR. RISLER: Thank you. My name is 2 MR. EARLY: At this point there hasn't Brian Risler, Risler. I live at 929 Shaker Road, Number 14. 4 4 conversations down the line. 5 5 Can we go back to the slide that refers 6 to best practices, please. I read the applicant's 7 proposal. Somewhere around Page 70, I think, it

8 referred to a greenhouse gas called sulfur 9 hexafluoride. Dan, is that correct? My question is 10 the presentation says that greenhouse gas emissions 11 are none. But in the petition that was filed it 12 indicated that there would be approximately a 1 13 percent release per year. And I don't understand 14 how to reconcile those two figures. 15 MR. EARLY: Shane Early responding. 16 That's a material that is in the project substation,

17 not a gas. We can talk in more detail afterwards 18 about what Epsilon put in their testimony regarding 19 that. I can provide more information now or later. 20 MR. RISLER: Presumably the greenhouse 21 gas emissions are none during normal operation. Can 21 22 you comment on the amount of greenhouse gas 23 emissions that will be released in the event of a

24 thermal runaway?

been an agreement. We hope to continue those MR. RISLER: My last question concerns the welfare of the residents of Westfield. I don't like to think in terms of worst-case scenarios, but the worst-case scenario I can imagine is that we do have a catastrophic runaway thermal event, and for 10 whatever reason the company has gone bankrupt and 11 its insurance providers are insolvent. 12 What would prevent the Department of

13 Public Utilities from requiring some sort of 14 evergreen financial guarantee that any damage could 15 be repaired or any decommissioning could be paid for 16 in the event that the company and its insurers are 17 unable to do so? I don't expect an answer right 18 now. It is something to think about. 19 (Applause.) 20 MS. SHARKEY: Thank you.

22 MS. BRITTON: Hi. Jessica Britton, Br 23 it to n. Can we go back to like the very first 24 presentation page. Okay. I just have a couple of

Jessica Britton?

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1 questions. I'm just interested. So the Streamfield

2 Energy Storage by Westfield ESS LLC. So that is the

3 name of the company that will be operating in

4 Westfield, correct? That's the name of the LLC?

5 MR. EARLY: Yes, that's the name of the 6 LLC. Jupiter Power is the parent company of that 7 company.

8 MS. BRITTON: Okay. Great. Who owns 9 Jupiter Power?

10 MR. EARLY: There's a number of different investment owners. I don't know them off 11 12 the top of my head. We can follow up and get you 13 that information.

MS. BRITTON: Well, I actually have an 15 article and you can easily find this on like -- I 16 know everyone likes using Google: I like using 17 Bing -- but any of those kind of search engines. 18 And from November 15, 2022, it says: EnCap

19 Investment sells Jupiter Power to BlackRock.

20 Does BlackRock own Jupiter Power? 21 MR. EARLY: I know that BlackRock is an

22 investor. I don't know what the ownership 23 percentage is.

MS. BRITTON: Okay. So if we go back to

Page 52 on our aguifer that gives no benefit to the citizens

but further detriment. And I am a lifelong citizen,

and I was poisoned by the PFAS as well.

4 So I don't see why we are doing this. I do see this whole like name change game because, you

know, in the business world we play shell games.

I'm just curious: Why are we doing it here? Why 7

are we doing it on the aquifer? What are you guys

going to do to mitigate when something goes wrong

because Murphy's law: If it can happen, it will

happen? Just because we can do it doesn't mean that

12 we should do it. Thank you.

13 MS. SHARKEY: Thank you. The next 14 person who signed up to speak is Ms. Harrington.

Can you give your name and spell your last name.

16 MS. HARRINGTON: Kathleen Harrington 17 with a K, H a r r i n g t o n, 1445 East Mountain

18 Road. I have a bunch of questions.

19 You did bring up what kind of

20 catastrophic event could possibly be. I worked in

Virginia Beach. Well, I worked in Norfolk; I lived 21

22 in Virginia Beach far enough away from the Oceanic

23 Air and Naval Station. You pay homeowners insurance

based on how close you are to that base. So if you

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are in Zone 1, you pay outrageous property

crashed? It did. It killed a motorist who was just

4

insurance. Because what if a fire jet actually driving on the road.

5 So that's why it is really important that it not be built on the aquifer. Because when

7 you consider who is in the neighborhood besides

White Oak School, you have Armbrook Village, which

9 is a senior community. And those folks wouldn't

10 move very quickly if there was some kind of

emergency. I don't think, actually, they would be

12

prepared to move their population if there were to

13 be some kind of emergency, and they are right next

14 door to a school.

15 I would like to know why it seems that 16 Jupiter is targeting gas and electrics that are

17 municipally owned. It would make more sense to be

18 in a community that Eversource does business with.

19 Because when there's a power outage here in

20 Westfield, we have Westfield Gas and Electric. We

21 can depend on it. We know that when there's a

22 natural disaster someplace on the East Coast, and it

is a municipally owned power company that's in

24 trouble, that we send our guys there. And

24 1 that. Now, BlackRock sounds familiar. They kind of 2 seem to own almost everything in the world. I mean, 3 they are two of the world's Big Three asset 4 managers. And they have top shareholders in 5 pharmaceutical companies such as Pfizer, Moderna, 6 J&J. They have ownership in Apple and other 7 technology companies. And sometimes they are kind 8 of looked at as kind of the fourth branch of the 9 government.

10 Combined, BlackRock and Vanguard manage 11 more than \$15 trillion globally. Like I mentioned, 12 Google, Apple, Microsoft, Coca-Cola; the news

13 stations Fox, CBS, Comcast, NBC, CNN, Disney, ABC.

14 They have gotten a lot of assets that were

15 transferred to them during a toxic acid cleanup with

16 the Obama administration. In 2020 BlackRock

17 received a no-bid contract from the U.S. Treasury

18 Department to manage \$454 billion under the Corona

19 Virus Relief and Economic Security Act. That's the

20 Cares Act.

14

21 So there seems to be a lot of money in a 22 lot of different hands that BlackRock seems to own.

23 and it looks like they want to own Westfield with

24 this battery storage park that's going to be built

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Eversource responds to bigger, privately owned 2 electric emergency outages.

3 When there are heat waves and natural 4 disasters in Texas where power is out for days, ten, two weeks at a time, and people are left cold, you 5 have people who when they do get their power back, 7 they are charged outrageous prices per kilowatthour 8 like 1600 to \$2,000. Can you imagine getting your 9 bill for electricity because you happen to be one of 10 the first communities to go back online? What's the point? We are not in that situation where we need 12 that kind of help here in Westfield. So if you are 13 a for profit, how about you locate where you may 14 need that kind of resource because Westfield doesn't 15 need that resource.

You also mentioned at one point in time 17 that this is going to benefit the city with jobs. 18 But then you said it is going to be remotely operated. That seems a great disconnect. 19

I think here in Westfield -- and these 21 are not all the questions I have; I think I'll 22 submit them online -- but I think in Westfield our 23 water is probably the most precious natural resource 24 that we have. And I don't see any reason to put

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17

1 that in jeopardy, especially since you are based in 2 Austin and Texas. Like they used to say about 3 western Massachusetts if you are in Boston, just go 4 anyplace in western Massachusetts, there's free parking everywhere. Well, there's plenty of blank space, empty land in Texas, and you can just put 7 those storage units there.

(Applause.)

16

20

8

9

MS. SHARKEY: Thank you. That's the end 10 of the people who have signed up to speak tonight. 11 If there's anyone who would like to speak who hasn't 12 signed up, please come up to speak now or raise your 13 hand on Zoom. If somebody hasn't spoken and is 14 waiting, please come.

15 MS. DANNEKER: Good evening. Thank you 16 for the opportunity to comment on the proposed 17 battery storage project. My name is Cortney 18 Danneker, Cortney Danneker. I am an 19 abutter to the project, and live in the rural 20 residential area just north of the project on North 21 Road.

22 I have a degree in mechanical engineering and 22 years of professional experience 24 in the environmental regulatory field. My comments

1 this evening are relevant to the information

2 contained in the sound level assessment report which

I have reviewed and the sound impacts from the

project on nearby residents.

5 Because battery storage facilities are known to be loud due to the need for each battery 7 unit to be climate controlled while also operating

24/7, the project has the potential for noise

impacts at the property line and at nearby

10 residences. Noise is considered an air contaminant

in Massachusetts. Therefore, it is extremely 11

important that the DPU closely evaluate the sound

13 report to ensure the project complies with the

MassDEP noise regulation at all property lines and

nearby residences, mitigates all unnecessary sound,

16 and does not worsen existing pure tone conditions.

The sound report states that the project 18 will comply the MassDEP noise regulation 310 CMR

7.10 which applies to the project's property lines

and nearest residents. However, the report does not

21 evaluate the project's sound pressure levels and

increases above ambient at the project property

23 lines. Without this data it is unknown if the

project will comply with 310 CMR 7.10. The report

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notes that, quote: "The MassDEP has waived these limits in certain cases at property line locations

where adjacent land uses are not considered noise

sensitive, such as an adjacent industrial parcel,"

unquote. But the report does not indicate if the

project is seeking waivers. It is concerning that 6

7 the report lacks data on the sound pressure levels

and increases above ambient at the property lines.

This information is essential and must be provided

10 to determine if there will be compliance issues at 11

the property lines.

12 Additionally, the sound report does not 13 explain all the potential sound mitigation methods, including operational restrictions which were 15 evaluated and how the proposed sound mitigation methods were determined to be the most effective. 17 For example, a similar project, which is the Medway 18 Grid LLC battery energy storage system included 19 operational restrictions in addition to physical 20 equipment to further minimize noise. These 21 restrictions involve limiting the fan speeds of the 22 units to 40 percent of their nominal speed and

implementing nighttime operational restrictions that

24 limited the number of units simultaneously charging

23

1 or discharging to 25 percent of the total units at

- 2 night. More information is needed to confirm that
- 3 the project has mitigated, to the extent feasible,
- 4 all unnecessary sound from the project as required
- 5 by 310 CMR 7.10(1). The project's evaluation of
- potential sound mitigation methods should include
- operational restrictions like the Medway Grid 7 8 project.

9 Another concern is that the sound report 10 shows sound increases above ambient at the Armbrook 11 Retirement facility of 9 decibels between 10:00

- 12 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., and 6 decibels between 7:00 a.m.
- 13 and 10:00 p.m. Since an increase of 10 decibels
- 14 above ambient is perceived by a human ear as being
- 15 twice as loud and 5 decibels is perceived as a
- 16 clearly noticeable change in sound level, the day
- 17 and night sound level increases at Armbrook will be

18 very noticeable by the residents.

The report also shows nine private homes 19 20 in the rural residential area along Root Road and

21 Bennett Road which each have increases of 9 decibels

- 22 at night. This can be seen on Pages 35 and 36 of
- 23 the sound report. These sound levels have a
- potential for nuisance noise complaints. People

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- 1 living in rural residential areas should not be
- 2 subjected to 9 decibel increases at night. As
- 3 previously mentioned, additional information needs
- 4 to be provided to confirm the project has mitigated
- all unnecessary sound to the extent feasible, rather 6

than adhering only to the bare minimum.

7 The sound report includes ambient sound monitoring data recorded during the day and night at

9 the White Oak School in the rural residential

10 section of North Road. On Page 15 of the report the

11 ambient data reveals an existing pure tone condition

12 during the night as well as a slight pure tone

13 during the day. According to 310 CMR 7.10, pure

14 tone conditions are prohibited in Massachusetts, but

15 the report failed to address the existing pure tone.

16 Further evaluation is needed to determine if the

17 project will worsen this condition.

18

Based on my professional experience and 19 the information currently in the record, it is

20 unclear whether the project will comply with the 310

- 21 CMR 7.10. Therefore, I request that the project
- 22 should be required to address these areas of concern
- 23 to ensure the project complies with the state's
- 24 noise regulations at all property lines and nearby

Page 60 residences, mitigates all unnecessary sound, and

- does not worsen existing pure tone conditions. If
- the project sound impacts are not addressed during
- the design phase, resolving future nuisance
- 5 complaints will be more challenging and retrofitting

6 sound mitigation will be more expensive.

7 Lastly, a post-construction sound analysis should be required to determine the

9 compliance status of the facility.

10 Thank you for your attention to this 11 matter.

MS. SHARKEY: Thank you.

13 I believe there's someone on Zoom.

14 Could you turn on your video and your

15 audio.

12

16 MS. LANZA: Yes.

17 MS. SHARKEY: Can you just give your

18 name and spell it, and your address, please.

19 MS. LANZA: Mary Lanza, L a n z a, 868

20 South Hampton Road. I have two questions. First a

21 comment.

22 I am in agreement with the participants

23 who have expressed their concerns. I have two

questions. The first one is -- and I don't

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understand how this works, but it sounds like the batteries are going to suck our excess electricity

without compensation and resell it. Is that

4 correct?

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5 My second question is, in the petition

from the company there was a request to have 6

individual and comprehensive exemptions from our

zoning laws. What are they proposing that is

9 outside of what our zoning laws are? Thank you.

10 MS. SHARKEY: Would the company like to

11 respond, please.

MR. WATSON: Dan Watson, Westfield ESS

13 LLC. I'll take the first question. First of all,

any energy used by the battery is not obviously

taken for free. It is compensated at market

electricity prices based on the (inaudible). 16

(Repeat requested.)

18 MR. WATSON: I will rephrase that. All

19 the electricity purchased by the battery system is

20 paid at market prices based on the ISO New England

21 both day-ahead and realtime electricity markets.

22 That's the regional electricity trading market.

23 MS. LANZA: Who receives that money that

24 is purchased for the battery storage? Does it go to

Page 62

the City of Westfield?

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MR. WATSON: It goes to any energy 3 generator that is participating during that time. Again, I will say the point of the system is to 5 provide power when electricity is needed most. So 6 electricity in the Commonwealth is not used equally 7 across all 24 hours in the day. There's great 8 fluctuations. Usually more than 30 percent during 9 the day. And the batteries produce energy back onto 10 the grid when it is needed most usually when the

MS. LANZA: Thank you. So Westfield doesn't receive the money from the electricity 14 that's taken from Westfield Gas and Electric Company.

11 electricity prices are also higher.

MR. WATSON: If Westfield Gas and 17 Electric is the generator selling the electricity 18 during those hours, then they would. If they were not, then they would not.

MS. LANZA: Thank you. And the second auestion?

22 MR. EARLY: Shane Early. On your second 23 question, Shane Early. There are a number of different specific exemptions that were requested,

solar field. So I was wondering what they were thinking when they moved it there. I don't know if they knew that there was an aquifer or it didn't matter and whether they just wanted to be hugging the solar field. So that's one question. So I'm 6 wondering if there's something else going on there.

7 The other question is, I did mention before, or I meant to, above the Buck Pond 9 Substation the parcel to the left of that, or west 10 of it, above that, north of it is Old Dominion. I don't know if people remember when Old Dominion 12 trucking company came to town, and then after they 13 were in here they wanted to put a gas station, a 14 fueling station onsite for their trucks so that they didn't have to stop at a gas station. They could just come back to their main place there on Medeiros 17 Way and fuel up.

People have mentioned catastrophic 19 events that could happen with these batteries and 20 have happened in some communities. I don't know in 21 relation to the location of both of those parcels 22 and what they are going to have there if something could be such a catastrophic event that it could ignite and impact the Old Dominion gas station -- I

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18

1 including height restrictions based on the mass that 2 would be in the project substation. Those are 3 listed in the petition. There are a number of them. 4 I can't recall them all off the top of my head. It also involved setbacks that are required under the zoning code for the industrial A parcel. 6

MS. LANZA: Thank you. Well, that is concerning that there are so many exemptions being requested outside of our zoning laws that you can't 10 recall them. Thank you for answering the questions.

MS. SHARKEY: Are there any more people 12 who haven't spoken who would like to comment? And 13 then you can come up and ask your question next. Is

14 there anyone online or in the room? Would you like 15 to come up and make further comment? 16 MS. BABINSKI: Thank you. Mary Ann 17 Babinski, 114 Rogers Avenue. I just have two 18 questions. One is, because as I mentioned before, 19 is that when we originally met with them over a 20 couple-year span the original parcel next to the 21 Buck Pond was one of the parcels for this battery 22 storage. The other one was to the, a little bit 23 north and left along the other aguifer, along Timber 24 Swamp Road, and when they switched it over to the

Page 65 will just say in quotes gas station -- for fueling stations that they built there. That's all I wanted to mention, because nobody has mentioned Old Dominion or the fueling stations. Thank you. 5 MS. SHARKEY: Would the company like to

6 address that? 7 MR. EARLY: On the first question I

refer to the petition and site selection analysis where it talked about each parcel and how the company evaluated those. That would provide that 10 information. With regard to the second question, I 11 12 would also refer to Fire Risk analysis in their 13 reports talking about the mitigation of any risk 14 from any sort of thermal event.

15 MR. WATSON: Nothing in the modeling 16 that have we done, Fire Risk Alliance has done that was performed by the manufacturers of these 17 18 facilities show any risk of going back that far into the Old Dominion property. That's also shown in the reports provided as part of the petition and we are 20 21 happy to address those as necessary. 22

MS. SHARKEY: Ms. Bello.

23 MS. BELLO: Thank you. Something Mary 24 Ann said came to my mind. That other aguifer, like

1 the other parcel that isn't in our Zone 2 that I am 2 so obsessed with, that other aguifer is a Zone 2 for 3 South Hampton. Where are they? Did you all call 4 them? Anybody for Southampton? Their drinking 5 water too.

6 MS. BRITTON: Jessica Britton. What are 7 we going to leave our kids and our future in our community? My son is in eighth grade. Today he had to do an interview of community members on just 9 10 questions on what's important to Westfield. So he 11 asked me what are three things that are important to 12 Westfield. So I had to think. I said well, first 13 of all, it is the water. Obviously any community 14 that is built on water has a lot of -- well, you 15 know, back when the city or town at the time it was 16 founded in 1669, they founded around the water 17 because you need water to live.

18 Our second, you know, tangible benefit 19 resource of Westfield would be our local 20 municipality, the Westfield Gas and Electric. We 21 are able to have our own energy. So that was a huge 22 value to the citizens in the City of Westfield.

23 The third thing is our land. We have a 24 lot of parks. We have Stanley Park. We have

7

15

Page 68 talking about 20 years. Because it didn't even take 20 years for Enron to blow up and go away.

3 So I'm just wondering about tax 4 incentives for the City of Westfield. What happens 5 to waste from the lithium batteries? What are your responsibilities for taking it away from Westfield? You are certainly not going to bury it here.

And finally, back to the water. I actually got to interview T. Boone Pickens once. If 10 I were to say what he says the most valuable

resource that he owns, you would be shocked because

12 it is not his oil or his gas reserves. It is the

13 land that he owns in Canada that has all this water

14 that he just has to figure out how to get to the

15 United States. And you really have to consider,

16 that's an Oklahoma/Texas guy who says that about the 17 water.

18 And again, I don't think we have an 19 answer about how many jobs are actually going to be here in Westfield once the construction is done. How many jobs are being created? Where are the 22 people being trained? Are you bringing them in from 23 someplace else from another Jupiter Power company?

24 I would like to know.

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21

1

1 Grandmother's Garden. We have a lot of green 2 spaces. What was mentioned before, out in western 3 Mass. -- it is very different than Boston -- which 4 I've driven all around, because I'm a pharmaceutical 5 rep today even. Those are the three things that was important to us. 6

So when I was asking who owned Jupiter

Power, really was it BlackRock, they already own the 9 world. We own our autonomy still in Westfield. And 10 this project should not be here. It should not be 11 on our aquifer. It shouldn't be taking up our land. 12 If we are truly a Texas company, like that 13 suggestion was made, go build it in Texas. We don't 14 want it here. Thank you.

MS. SHARKEY: Thank you.

16 Please come up again and give your name again for David.

17 18 MS. HARRINGTON: Kathleen Harrington. I 19 have a few questions. One is, in your presentation 20 you said long-term was 20 years. And perhaps a 21 little briefer of the City of Westfield would have 22 shown you that there are two schools about to close 23 and they have been around for, what, 60 years. 24 That's what we call long-term here. We're not

Page 69 MS. SHARKEY: Would the company like to address the question?

3 MR. EARLY: One response to an earlier comment. Pursuant to the notice and order of notice, the South Hampton Planning Board was served with notice of this proceeding. 6

7 MS. SHARKEY: Would anybody else like to 8 come back up or someone who hasn't spoken before like to come up to speak, or online? 9

10 Okay. I would like to thank everyone for participating tonight. I would like to remind 11 you that comments and requests for participation are due Friday, December 20th, 2024. We welcome your 14 input and questions. The information is very 15 important in our review of the proposed project. 16 If you have questions relating to

17 tonight's hearing or want a clarification of the 18 Department's review of this case or anything else related to this hearing, please email me at my

address D o n n a dot S h a r k e y @ M a s s dot g

21 o v. I would like to thank you for your

participation tonight and the comments and questions

regarding the company's proposed project. Thank

24 you. Off the record. (8:10 p.m.)

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                  CERTIFICATE
 2
                  I, David A. Arsenault, Registered
    Professional Reporter, and Certified Reporter in the
     Commonwealth of Massachusetts, #100693, do hereby
     certify that the foregoing record is a true and
    accurate transcript of my stenographic notes taken
     on December 5, 2024 in the above-captioned matter.
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                        David A. Arsenault, RPR
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    Brian Risler
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     Jessica Britton
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