

STATE OF NEW YORK

# Public Service Commission

William M. Flynn, Chairman

Three Empire State Plaza, Albany, NY 12223

Further Details: (518) 474-7080

<http://www.dps.state.ny.us>

FOR RELEASE: IMMEDIATELY

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## **PSC Approves Certificate for Electric Transmission Line In the City of Rensselaer and the Towns of East and North Greenbush**

New York, NY – 3/16/05 – The New York State Public Service Commission today voted to issue a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need (Certificate) to Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation (Niagara Mohawk) to construct and operate an 8.1 mile-long overhead 345-kilovolt (kV) electric transmission line to connect Besicorp-Empire Development Company's 505-megawatt (MW) natural gas-fired electric generating facility in the City of Rensselaer to the bulk electric grid at the Reynolds Road Substation in North Greenbush.

"Today's approval of the Niagara Mohawk transmission line proposal will provide more electric supply both locally and statewide, enhance competition in the wholesale electricity market and help to reduce wholesale electricity prices in the area," said Commission Chairman William M. Flynn. "This transmission line will play an important role in meeting future energy needs by reducing the area's reliance on sometimes heavily loaded transmission lines from Western New York."

The Besicorp Project consists of a 505-megawatt (MW) natural gas-fired electric generation facility that was approved by the New York State Board on Electric Generation Siting and the Environment in September 2004. Also on site is a recycled-newsprint manufacturing plant to which the cogeneration will provide steam and approximately 55 MW of electricity.

The Commission voted to approve a Joint Proposal recommending certification of the transmission line that was supported by Niagara Mohawk, Besicorp-Empire Development Company, the City of Rensselaer, the Rensselaer County Environmental Management Council, and the staffs the State Departments of Public Service, Environmental Conservation, and Agriculture and Markets. The Joint Proposal evaluated the factors relevant to the transmission line proposal, including the need for the facility and its compatibility with the environment.

Following a thorough environmental and technical review of the Joint Proposal, the Commission determined that the facility is consistent with the state's long-range energy goals, including the objectives identified in the 2002 State Energy Plan. The Proposal includes measures that minimize the impact of the construction and operation of the line on the environment, including cultural resources and agricultural lands.

The Commission will issue a written decision detailing today's vote. The decision in Commission Case 03-T-0644, when available, can be obtained from the Commission's Web site at <http://www.dps.state.ny.us> by accessing the Commission Documents section of the homepage. Many libraries offer free Internet access. Commission orders can also be obtained from the File Room, 14<sup>th</sup> floor, 3 Empire State Plaza, Albany, NY 12223 (518-474-2500).