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## Ashton Woods Residents Oppose Power Line

Residents of Ashton Woods asked the Hardy County Commission December 19 to join them in requesting Allegheny Power to reconsider the location of a 500,000 volt electric transmission line across Hardy County.

George and Veronica Banks and Linda Wangerin all expressed their concerns about the proposed electric transmission line which is to run from Pennsylvania east to Loudoun County, Virginia, providing additional power to the Mid-Atlantic region.

"We are concerned," said Banks, "because we believe the power company has not studied the area enough to know the historic, scenic, home and business locations that would be damaged by their transmission project. Allegheny Power is simply looking for a community that will offer the least resistance to this and future projects as the demand for power continues to grow."

Banks, a full time resident of the county, told the Commission that the value of his property would be decreased which in turn would reduce the tax rate for schools and the community.

He said the power line would spoil scenic views, historic sites and hunting areas in addition to displacing the new homes built for both retirement and recreation. According to Banks, the power line would cause residents of Ashton Woods to lose their life savings invested in building their homes.

Banks asked the Commissioners "to urge Allegheny Power to find alternative means for supplying electric

power to states outside of West Virginia." He suggested that power plants should be built close to the areas with large demand, that lines be upgraded rather than adding new ones, and that better maintenance of existing power lines and power plants could improve reliability.

In conclusion, he asked the Commission to work with the Public Service Commission, an agency which supports homeowners and businesses generating their own power using solar panels. "That way," he said, "West Virginians can benefit from the statewide plan instead of being damaged by Allegheny's patchwork plan."

Linda Wangerin, also a full time resident, expressed dismay that no one was speaking out against the planned power line.

She told Commissioners that one young couple who had driven in from the metro area for the public meeting had stayed at the South Branch Inn since their planned home was not built. The morning after the meeting they overheard power company officials obviously delighted that there would be no resistance to the power line from West Virginians.

She noted that all three of the power line alternatives would cut through Hardy County. The southern route would impact Clifford Hollow and one will cut through the Trough.

"There is a health risk," she told the Commissioners. "There are volumes written showing certain types of cancers prevalent" in areas where there are power lines.

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## Ashton Woods.....

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Wangerin stated that population in the East will continue growing as will the need for power. "The power company will take the cheapest route," she said. "What happens in five years" when another line is needed? "Is that what we want?" she asked. "Once the power line is up it isn't going away."

She urged the Commission to protect natural places which can never be put back again. "As long as we roll over, they (the power company) will continue" doing what they want.

Commissioner Stanley Moyer asked Banks if Allegheny Power had been asked about building new plants or upgrading.

Banks replied that he did ask the question and got no answer.

Moyer said he got no answer when he asked how the power line would benefit the county. He also commented that he heard no one at either of the public meetings who was in favor of the proposed power line.

Public comments were taken until December 31. One person heard at the public meeting was scolding the power company for having the meetings during the holidays when people were too busy to participate and had little time to get information out to those who would be impacted.

However, power company officials told the Examiner that an official public hearing would be held by the Public Service Commission prior to being given approval to build the transmission line.