

**From:** [Michael Behrendt](#)  
**Subject:** Eversource - hearing tonight - email from Diane Freedman  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 24, 2019 10:06:02 AM

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To the Planning Board,  
Please see the email from Diane Freedman below.

### **Michael Behrendt**

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**From:** Freedman, Diane [mailto:Diane.Freedman@unh.edu]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 23, 2019 9:26 PM  
**To:** Michael Behrendt  
**Cc:** Todd Selig  
**Subject:** Tomorrow's Eversource hearing/input session--please forward to planning board

I read all of the citizen letters pertaining to Eversource's erection of poles and decimation of trees not to mention its incursions, apparently already begun, into Great Bay. The great majority are skeptical about the usefulness and necessity and means of what is going on or is being proposed, discomfitted by the apparent lack of complete knowledge and respect for seacoast history and local knowledge on the company's part and thus sometimes that of their contractors.

I am impressed by that of the tree expert who speaks of invasives in the wake of increased sunlight and via ground disruption generally. And I disagree with Mr. Bullock (sp?), who suggests that opening right of ways will prevent invasives/provide safe places for people, bicyclists, drivers to get off the road. Why? Because clearing, just like is already evident on Laurel Lane, 108, and the almost refurbished sidewalk on Durham Point Road, in the wake of the widening activities, creates an ideal situation for poison ivy, knotweed, glossy buckthorn, all either impenetrable or noxious/dangerous plants. I tremble when I bicycle by mile after mile of poison ivy along those roads in Durham that

have been “maintained” and then NOT MAINTAINED. With global warming, poison ivy will and has already begun to spread and to grow larger than formerly. With the kind of work Eversource and DOT have been doing and planning to do, the poison ivy is growing like gangbusters right behind and now under the soil-holding temporary fences along Durham Point Road and on Laurel Lane such that I have to pull my dog away from the road edge when we walk or run lest he convey the “poison” to humans or react to it himself.

Though I respect Mr. Bullock’s complicating of the notion of what constitutes a scenic road and thus including stone walls as important parts of that scenery, I disagree with his suggestion (paraphrased) that excavating the walls at the same time as accommodating the poles will be a winning situation. What gets lost is the cooling effect and the efficacious atmospheric effect of the current large canopy (not to mention what is “scenic” according to the taste of many—though I realize tastes differ with respect to the “beautiful” and appreciate being so reminded). People enjoy walking and cycling on Durham Point Road and other of our scenic roads for the views and the shade, the temperature control, the feeling of remoteness and wonder.

I disagree with the allure of non-wooden poles. Wooden poles are more aesthetic, more familiar, and last well enough and are less expensive than composite. I fear more (unnecessary) expenses will be passed onto private customers and that the latter (non-wooden poles) will be manufactured the way cell towers meant to look like trees but always failing to do so and marring landscapes

I was also intrigued but not surprised that some of the rationale for the higher poles were for three-phases that residential homes are said not to need . . . I would like to see citizen concessions to be in the service of their actual needs and best interests not those of local corporations or the power company’s bottom line. I can’t but agree with those citizens and neighbors who note only the unsightliness of many wires, more wires, and silhouetted (with the loss of foliage in the immediate background and vicinity) wires along with the perception of high-voltage lines/a cluster of lines being deleterious to one’s health and because of that perception (or just the aesthetics, again), render the properties in the area less desirable and less valuable and a worse investment than in other areas. (Again, I wonder if Eversource is so bent on re-engineering Great Bay to accommodate cables, why the heck couldn’t the company put the wires now on poles underground. If they had paid attention to Town records, local knowledge, and on-site geology, the company should have known how

much bedrock is in our area—more ended up having to be blasted and removed and more areas rebuilt than anticipated but given all that excavating and so forth, I can't believe it wouldn't have been not that much more money or trouble to bury the wires, thereby also ensuring greater "reliability" throughout high wind and wet weather and snow seasons.

Finally, now that I have mentioned the jetplowing situation—why doesn't the Army Corps stand up about the Bay? Why doesn't the Town of Durham stand up and speak more loudly against the tree cutting for the land lines? Many citizens point out the Town has that prerogative. We have no REAL reason to trust the company – so I disagree with the one person who seems willing to just take what Eversource says on faith, the necessity of the large poles and tree cutting. As Josh Meyrowitz points out, if the latter was so necessary, then why is pole heights have been reduced or exist differently elsewhere and way fewer trees and tops are now slated for mistreatment than had originally been the plan? I also appreciated Mr. Meyrowitz's examination of the leading-question aspect of the questionnaire posed to local residents by another resident, where the either/or question pre-determined the results or the misperception that we could either have reliable electricity or our trees with no apparent in-betweens.

The great majority are skeptical about the usefulness and necessity and means of what is going on or is being proposed, discomfited by the apparent lack of complete knowledge and respect for seacoast history and local knowledge on the company's part and thus sometimes that of their contractors, and evincing an awareness or a sense of being pushed into corners.

I close at last with a plea that all interested parties read a piece from today's New York Times entitled "The Trees Might Save Us Yet,")\* by Margaret Renkl, in the op-ed section, on page A25 in the print edition, which returns us, of course, to the trees.

Diane P. Freedman

\*go to [nytimes.com](http://nytimes.com) and search for the title of the article to find it on line

