

Resolution 2014-02

Resolution of the Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association Regarding Proposed Crown Hydro Facility

Whereas, Crown Hydro, LLC was granted a license in 1999 by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to construct a hydroelectric facility nears the Falls of St. Anthony and is now seeking an amendment to that license;

Whereas, Crown Hydro's original proposal was to construct the facility in the basement of the Crown Roller Mill Building, which eventually proved infeasible;

Whereas, Crown Hydro now seeks to build a facility on land owned by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in and around the St. Anthony Falls lock and dam;

Whereas, The site on which Crown Hydro wishes to locate their facility would require a tunnel near or under the James J. Hill Stone Arch Bridge, an irreplaceable structure of great historical and cultural importance;

Whereas, The proposed site is in a geologically-sensitive area that has been prone to underground tunnel collapse in the past;

Whereas, A public hearing was held on November 26, 2013 at the Hennepin County Central Library to discuss Crown Hydro's revised plan;

Whereas, A large number of citizens were at the public hearing and expressed a number of concerns about the project, including potential effects on the upper sea wall, requirements during construction that could affect the James J. Hill Stone Arch Bridge, interference with existing Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board (MPRB) surface easements for road and trails, and access to existing parkland in the lower St. Anthony Falls area;

Whereas, The MPRB and numerous residents of the area have publicly expressed concerns over the proposal including financial liability, water flow, historic, geologic, aesthetic and recreational impacts, and safety;

Whereas, None of these concerns have been addressed or resolved in Crown Hydro's latest proposal;

Whereas, Crown Hydro's proposal would divert water flowing over the St. Anthony Falls spillway into the hydro facility, thereby potentially lowering the amount of water going over the falls to unacceptable levels;

Whereas, The Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association (DMNA) feels that Crown Hydro's latest proposal has not received the type of public review required of such an important project located in an area of great historical, cultural, recreational and geologic importance;

Whereas, In the nearly 15 years since Crown Hydro original proposed a hydroelectric facility, much residential and recreational development has occurred in the Central Riverfront area including over \$300 million in public investment and over \$2 billion in private development; and

Whereas, The Central Riverfront Regional Park received over 1.8 million user visits in 2013 for a variety of recreational purposes;

RESOLVED, That the DMNA Board of Directors memorialize FERC to require Crown Hydro to submit a completely new license application to obtain water usage at the Falls of St. Anthony for any proposed hydroelectric facility;

RESOLVED, That the DMNA go on record as opposing diversion of water over St. Anthony Falls unless a minimum of 2,000 cubic feet per second can be guaranteed at all times when the existing flow of the Mississippi River so allows;

RESOLVED, That the DMNA opposes any construction of hydroelectric facilities located in or around St. Anthony Falls or the Central Riverfront Regional Park that will impact public access to or use of the Stone Arch Bridge or that would affect the structural integrity of the Stone Arch Bridge or existing infrastructure at Lock and Dam Number 1 and opposes any construction or operation of a hydroelectric facility that will cause interruption of public access to parkland;

RESOLVED, That additional public hearing on this matter should occur in order for the public to learn more about potential impacts to recreational, commercial, and residential uses in the area;

RESOLVED, That the DMNA opposes the granting of any license or license amendment until all financial surety, noise, vibration, public safety, geologic stability, aesthetic, commercial, recreational and residential issues are satisfactorily addressed; and

RESOLVED, That the Chair of the Board and Secretary to the Board transmit this resolution to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, members of the Minnesota Congressional delegation, the Minneapolis City Council, and Minneapolis legislators.

Adopted by the Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association
In a formal meeting assembled on November 6, 2014

Approved:

Chad DiDonato, Board Chair

Carletta Sweet, Board Secretary