

March 12, 2018

Mr. Ebenezer A. Botchway, P.E, M. ASCE
Manager, Civil/Structural Engineering
Transmission and Civil Engineering
Edison Place
701 Ninth Street, N.W., Suite 500
Washington, D.C. 20068-0001

**RE: PEPCO Takoma Substation Addition
(MR-1703F)**

Dear Mr. Botchway:

The Prince George's County Planning Board had the opportunity to review the proposed PEPCO Substation Addition project during its regular meeting on March 8, 2018, and a copy of the staff report is enclosed for your information. The staff recommendations are as follows:

- The rooftop mechanical equipment should be screened by a parapet, or similar architectural treatment.
- Applicant should provide a mix of shade trees and evergreen shrubs south of existing Ray Road to protect multi-family and single-family properties and to soften the view of the proposed eleven-foot high security mesh fence.
- Applicant should revise the site plan and the other plans to remove the existing chain link fence that is to be replaced with the 11-foot high security mesh fence.
- References to the 2010 Prince George's Landscape Manual should be removed from the Landscape Plan and the other plans prior to submitting these plans to DPIE.
- Applicant should repair the broken portion of the existing five-foot chain link fence around the existing storm drain south of Ray Road and Talbert Lane.
- Applicant should add a note on the Development Concept Plan and the other plans to indicate that all heavy-duty vehicles will only use the existing MD 650 access to and from the site.

If you have any questions, please contact Christine A. Osei, Project Manager, at 301-952-3313 or via email at Christine.Osei@ppd.mncppc.org.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth M. Hewlett
Chairman

Mr. Ebenezer A. Botchway
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Enclosure

c: Andree Green Checkley, Planning Director, Office of the Planning Director
Derick Berlage, Chief, Countywide Planning Division
Maria Ann Martin, Planning Supervisor, Special Projects Section, Countywide Planning Division
Christine A. Osei, Project Manager, Countywide Planning Division
Redis C. Floyd, Clerk of the Council, Prince George's County Council



Mandatory Referral

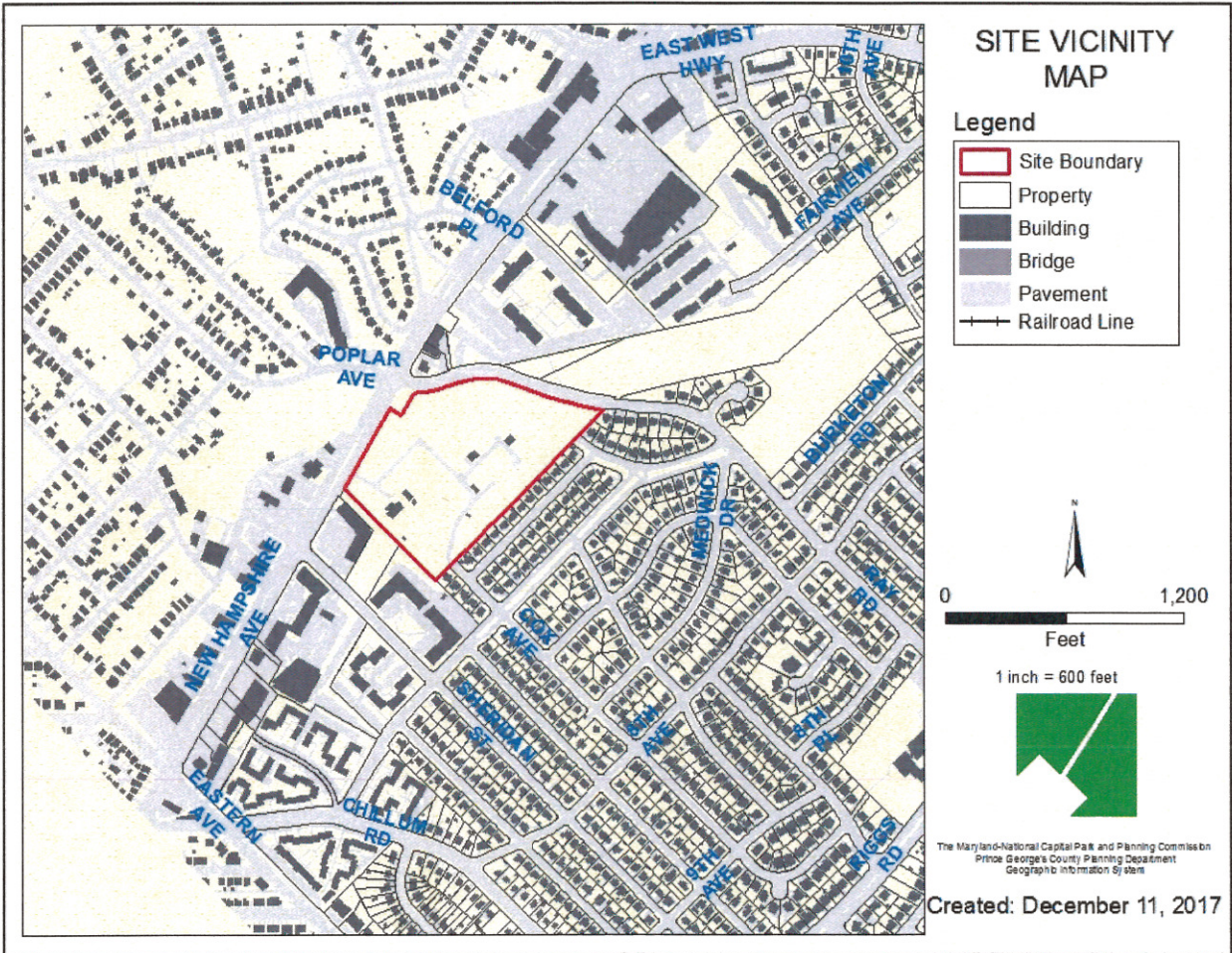
MR-1703F

Application	General Data	
Project Name: Takoma (PEPCO) Substation Addition Location: 6601 New Hampshire Avenue, Takoma Park, Maryland Applicant/Address: 701 Ninth Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20068-0001 Property Owner: Potomac Electric Power Company (PEPCO)	Planning Board Hearing Date:	03/8/18
	Date Accepted:	11/21/17
	Mandatory Action Beyond Required Timeframe:	Waiver Letter
	Acreage:	15.52-acre site
	Zone:	R-55
	Planning Area:	65
	Plan Prince George's 2035:	Established Communities
	Council District:	District 2
	Municipality:	N/A

Purpose of Application	Notice Date
The application is to upgrade the existing substation and construct a 21,386 square foot building, two retaining walls, a new driveway access, an 11-foot security fence/gate and stormwater management improvements as required by DPIE.	Acceptance February 8, 2018

Staff Recommendation	Staff Reviewer:
Transmit Staff Report to: Mr. Ebenezer A. Botchway, P.E, M. ASCE Manager, Civil/Structural Engineering Transmission and Civil Engineering Edison Place 701 Ninth Street, N.W., Suite 500 Washington, D.C. 20068-0001	Christine A. Osei , Project Manager
	Phone Number: 301-952-3313
	Email: Christine.Osei@ppd.mncppc.org

Map 1 - Project Site



MR-1703F Staff Report – Takoma Substation Improvements Proposed PEPCO Addition Project

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The subject project is being reviewed pursuant to the Land Use Article §§20-301 through 305 of the Maryland Annotated Code and Section 27-294 of the Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance which require the Planning Board to review public construction projects for all federal, state, county and municipal governments, and publicly and privately-owned utilities through the Mandatory Referral review process.

PROJECT SUMMARY

The existing substation is owned and operated by Potomac Electric Power Company (PEPCO) since 1951. The 15.5-acre site is in the R-55 Zone. The original use was permitted by Special Exception (SE-64) in 1951 with other site improvements in 1956 (SE-314), in 1980 (SE-2353), and in 1997 (SE-2353/01). The site currently consists of 230, 69, and 13.2kV control houses, ancillary equipment buildings, 230kV overhead lines, 69kV underground lines, and 13.2kV and 33kV underground distribution feeders. The substation currently provides electric service to Maryland residents in portions of Silver Spring, Takoma Park, Chillum, as well as northern District of Columbia residents.

Because of the facility's aging transmission and substation infrastructure, continuous operation without the proposed changes could pose risks to the electric system. To this effect, PEPCO is proposing a new 230kV GIS (Gas Insulated Switchgear) substation building and additional underground 230kV transmission lines to be installed within the site. The new substation will support transmission expansion as part of PEPCO's Capital Grid Program, which would address the aging infrastructure, enhance reliability, and support load growth in the District of Columbia, Prince George's and Montgomery Counties.

The proposed improvements include: (i) a 21,386 square-foot building to house electrical equipment; (ii) two retaining walls (each approximately 20 feet high); (iii) a new driveway, gate and fence to enhance security on the site; (iv) underground electrical facilities necessary to connect to the new substation; (v) stormwater management facilities required by Prince George's County Department of Permitting, Inspections and Enforcement (DPIE). The new driveway (access road) off MD Route 650 (New Hampshire Avenue) will require coordination and approval from Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA).

Staff Concerns:

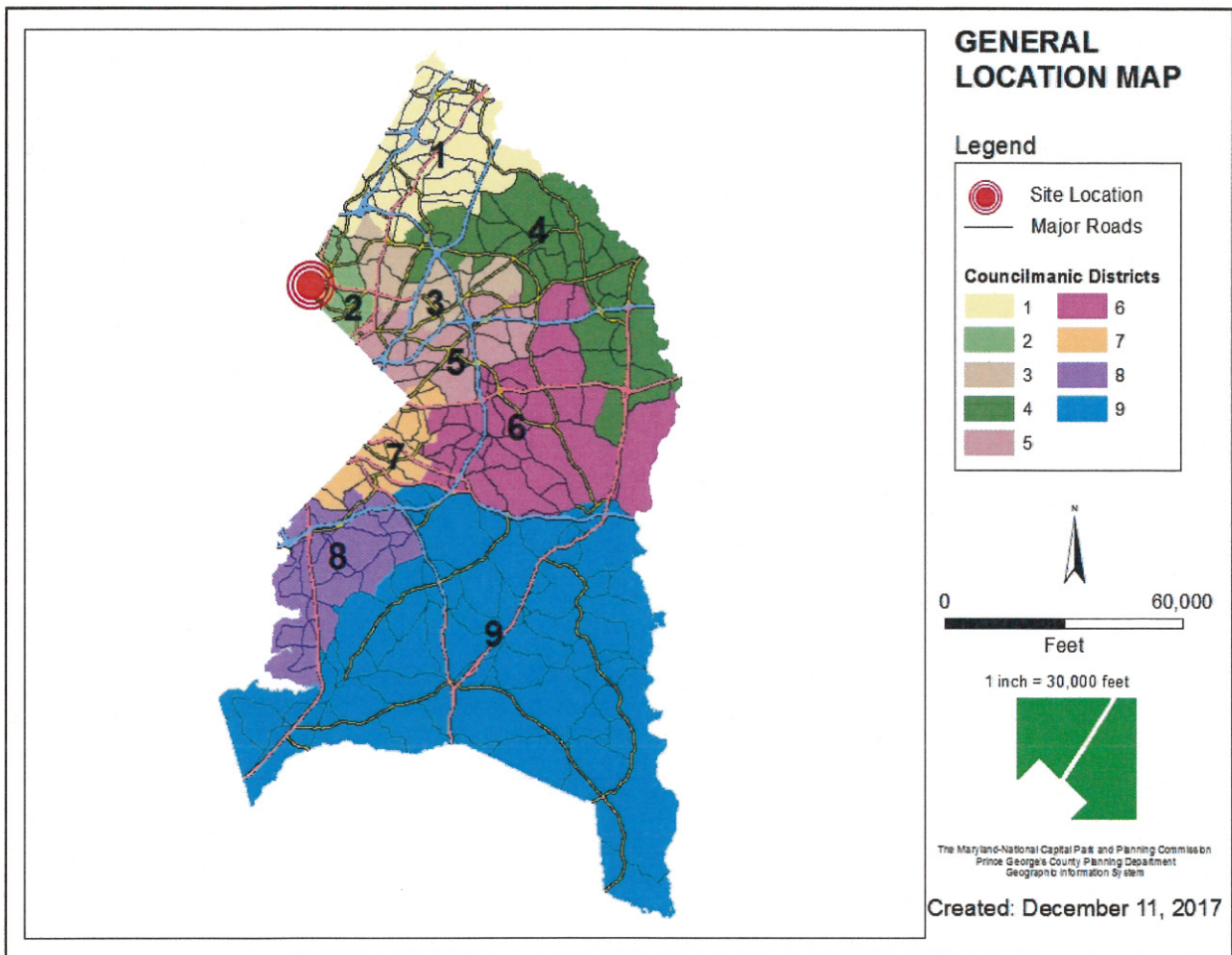
- Proposed building architecture may be negatively impacted by the inclusion of multiple unscreened mechanical units on the rooftop.
- Information provided on Sheet L1.00, shows that the existing landscaping along MD 650/Ray Road is to be removed. Landscaping needs to be provided as a visual asset to improve aesthetics of the project along existing roadway frontages to break the visual monotony of the proposed high security mesh fence encircling the site.
- The project includes a high-security mesh fence enclosing existing and proposed facilities on the site. Although a symbol for the high security mesh fence is included in the plan legend and fencing information is shown on Sheet L1.01 of the plan, the labeling of the existing chain link fence is shown on many of the same drawings. Showing both fences on the concept plan is confusing since the chain link fence is to be replaced with the high security mesh fence.
- A portion of the existing chain link fence (enclosing the existing storm drain south of Ray Road and Talbert Lane) is broken and needs immediate attention.
- Development Concept Plans and the other plans do not indicate which access points will be used during and after construction.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

The proposed redevelopment project was reviewed by Planning Department staff, resulting in the following recommendations:

- The rooftop mechanical equipment should be screened by a parapet, or similar architectural treatment.
- Applicant should provide a mix of shade trees and evergreen shrubs south of existing Ray Road to protect multi-family and single-family properties and to soften the view of the proposed eleven-foot high security mesh fence.
- Applicant should revise the site plan and the other plans to remove the existing chain link fence that is to be replaced with the 11-foot high security mesh fence.
- References to the 2010 Prince George's Landscape Manual should be removed from the site plan and the other plans prior to submitting these plans to DPIE.
- Applicant should repair the broken portion of the existing five foot chain link fence around the existing storm drain south of Ray Road and Talbert Lane.
- Applicant should add a note on the Development Concept Plan and the other plans to indicate that all heavy duty vehicles will only use the existing MD 650 access to and from the site.

Map 2 - General Project Location Map



PROJECT DESCRIPTION, FUNDING AND SCHEDULE

DESCRIPTION:

The subject 15.52-acre property is located at 6601 New Hampshire Avenue in Takoma Park on a single-family detached residential (R-55) Zone. The site is currently developed with an existing PEPCO electrical substation which was originally constructed in the 1930's, with plan revisions and further construction on the site occurring in 1951, 1956, 1970, 1980 and 1997. Existing on the site are multiple small buildings and a variety of electrical equipment.

PROJECT FUNDING AND SCHEDULE:

The project is funded by PEPCO and is expected to be completed within a single development phase. Construction will begin in the Spring of 2019 and is expected to be completed in the Summer of 2021. During construction of the new building, approximately ten construction vehicles will access the site through New Hampshire Avenue. The total volume of construction traffic will vary during the different segments of the project; with most of the construction activity taking place during the day between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

PEPCO anticipates an increase in noise and dust levels during the construction phase of the project construction; however, all construction activities will conform to dust control requirements in the 2011 Maryland Standards and Specifications for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control and noise control requirements in Subtitle 19 of the Prince George's County Code. Post construction traffic is expected to return to normal levels primarily to conduct required maintenance and inspection in the facility.

PERMITTING AGENCY:

It should be noted that the Mandatory Referral review process does not exempt any project from the need to meet the requirements of any other entitlement process. The subject application will receive final approvals from the Prince George's County Department of Permitting, Inspections and Enforcement (DPIE) and other agencies as outlined below:

- Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) – Road access permit for the new access off route 650 (New Hampshire Avenue).
- Prince George's County, Soil Conservation District – Erosion and sediment control permit.
- Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC) - Optional.

ANALYSIS OF PROJECT IMPACT AREAS

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Prince George's County Planning Department staff has reviewed the proposed 21,386 square foot building and provided the following comments:

1. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

This project will not impact woodlands or tree coverage since the existing site does not contain any areas of woodlands or tree coverage. Tree coverage will not be added as part of this project as it would negatively impact electrical infrastructure reliability and personnel safety within the site.

2. TRANSPORTATION ASSESSMENT AND DRIVEWAY ACCESS

To reduce construction impacts on residential neighbors and enhance vehicular circulation within the site, PEPCO proposes a new entrance apron off New Hampshire Avenue and drive-way within the site. The existing entrance on New Hampshire Avenue allows access for current operations, but is too steep in grade to permit the transportation of heavy and large equipment to the south-west corner of the site, currently accessible from residential Cox Avenue and Elliot Place. Except for an entrance apron from New Hampshire Avenue, no improvements are proposed within the public right-of-way. The entrance will be accessible solely by PEPCO, its employees, contractors and related users. Consistent with Maryland Public Utility Commission regulations, the substation is not and will not be open to the public. Pedestrian and bicycle access to the substation is not applicable and none of the proposed improvements impact any existing pedestrian and/or bicycle routes or the safety of such infrastructure.

3. HISTORIC PRESERVATION/ARCHEOLOGY

The site is not located in an historical area and does not affect any County-designated historical resources.

4. ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT

The new facility will improve the delivery of electricity to all customers within the service area thereby enhancing economic development in the region.

5. CONSISTENCY WITH DEVELOPMENT/REGULATORY STANDARDS

Staff is concerned about the impact to the surrounding residential properties during the construction phase of the project. It is suggested that during the construction phase, and when the building is completed, large trucks use the MD 650 access point, whenever possible. Additionally, the development should adhere to State regulations regarding dust and noise control during construction.

6. CONSISTENCY WITH APPROVED PLANS

This site is located within a designated Established Community growth policy area. Plan 2035 describes Established Communities as areas appropriate for context-sensitive infill and low- to medium-density development and recommends maintaining and enhancing existing public services, facilities, and infrastructure to ensure that the needs of existing residents are met. This application is consistent with 2014 *Plan Prince George's 2035 Approved General Plan* policies for an Established Community. The development application is consistent with the 1989 *Approved Master Plan for Langley Park-College Park-Greenbelt and Vicinity* and the 1990 *Adopted Sectional Map Amendment for Planning Areas 65, 66, and 67* for Institutional land use recommendations.

7. EXISTING PUBLIC FACILITIES

The PEPCO facility is served by the existing Chillum Fire/EMS Co. 844, a first due response station (a maximum of seven minutes travel time), and is located at 6330 Riggs Road in Hyattsville, Maryland. The station is equipped with two engines, one ambulance, one breathing air unit and is staffed by career personnel. In addition, the project site is served by Police District I housed in the Hyattsville Justice Center. District I is comprised of the Hyattsville community and the surrounding areas located between The Capital Beltway and the District of Columbia, on the north side of the County. The 2008 *Approved Water and Sewer Plan* places this property in Water and Sewer Category 3, Community System.

8. COMMUNITY OUTREACH

PEPCO'S Community Outreach:

- September 2016 - Met with County Councilmember Deni Taveras and staff to discuss our outreach plan regarding the Takoma Substation.
- October 2016 - Held a community meeting with Chillum /Ray Road Citizen Association.
- November 2016 - Participated in the District 8 Rollingcrest Community Coffee Club to present information to the residents about upcoming construction at the substation.

Planning Department:

Notification letters were mailed to adjoining property owners and area civic associations. As of this date, no issues have been raised by either group; civic association or adjoining property owners.