

Lawrence Township Planning Board
Regular Meeting
Monday, June 20, 2016

Present: Maria Connolly
Philip Duran
Terrence Leggett
David Maffei, Councilman
Kim Y. Taylor, Vice Chairperson
Doris Weisberg, Chairperson
Edward Wiznitzer

Excused Absence: James Kownacki, Councilman
Richard Krawczun, Municipal Manager
Stephanie Pangaldi
Diego Samuel

Absent: None

Also Present: James F. Parvesse, Municipal Engineer
Philip B. Caton, Clarke Caton & Hintz, Planning Consultant
Neil Yoskin, Planning Board Attorney
Norman Baron, PE, Special Consultant, Utility Engineers
James Havrilla, PE, Esquire, Special Consultant, Utility Engineers
Susan Snook, Recording Secretary

1. **Statement of Proper Notice**

Adequate notice of this meeting of the Lawrence Township Planning Board has been provided by filing the annual meeting schedule with the Municipal Clerk as required by law, and by filing this agenda and notice with the Municipal Clerk, posting prominently in the Municipal Building, and mailing to the Trenton Times.

Vice Chairperson Taylor made an announcement that at 7:55 pm there will be a break because there is a candle light vigil for the Orlando victims upstairs in the front of the Municipal Building.

2. **Public Participation (for items no on the agenda)**

None

3. **Minutes for Approval**

Monday, May 16, 2016 minutes were unanimously approved.

4. **Resolutions**

None

5. **Applications**

Major Site Plan – Preliminary & Final Approval with Variances & Waivers; Application No. SP-15/12; **Public Service Electric & Gas Co.**; 60 Bunker Hill Road; Tax Map Page 27.01, Block 2701, Lots 33 – 38 & 40

Mr. Nicholas Talvacchia, Esquire who represented the applicant and gave a brief summary of the project location and expansion of the sub-station. Mr. Talvacchia stated the applicant submitted an extensive noise study, attached.

Witness #1: Kyle King, PE presented Exhibit A1: Arial View of the Existing Sub-station and the Surrounding properties, dated June 20, 2016. He described the power system in the area and what is being changed in the area. There are three 230,000 transmission lines that come into this location (KV) and explained where the lines come in from. He continued that they have higher voltage because it is much more efficient; 26,000 kv are distributed to the smaller sub-stations; this facility was built in 1953 – 1958; it is reaching its limit of capacity; upgrading to 69 KV; a 13 KV are to individual customer homes, schools; 230 to 269 that was added back in 1986 and four circuits out of that section is the portion that is being upgraded which will be taking the load of the KV 69 network and put it on new 69 KV circuits.

Mr. King continued that the applicant will be adding onto the 69 KV network, existing transformers that take energy at 230,000 volts and set it down to 69 KV and will add two more 69 KV circuits that will feed three sub-stations in the immediate area. The bus configuration will be changed which will improve the reliability of the 69 KV networks because it will be serving more customers. The number of customers served from this sub-station is 30,000 customers. The purpose of the project is to replace the 26 KV circuits and the 26 KV network that feeds the Fernwood, Ewing and Hamilton sub-stations; will be adding two 69 KV circuits that will feed those three sub-stations. The purpose of this is to improve the reliability to those customers because the equipment is now at the end of its useful life and the overall design of those sub-stations is 1950 technology.

The existing 69 KV network has an electrical conductor configuration where if one component fails it takes the whole system out and that would affect the reliability of the three sub-stations as well as others. In adding the two additional circuits will be improving the reliability of the 69 KV.

Witness #2: Gregory Player, PE, Public Service Electric & Gas Manager. Mayor Maffei was concerned if there would be any blackouts when switching over and Mr. Player stated there will be no blackouts. The lighting will have a minimum level of light that is used for security and safety personnel that will have to be in the area and will be on from dusk to dawn and has a low level of illumination because it is a down ward facing light. There is a secondary system of lights that are upward facing that would be only turned on if an operator had to be out there at night to see what they are doing and will be used for emergency type procedures and will be on for the duration of the maintenance procedure. Mr. Caton wanted to know the height.

Mr. Player continued spoke about what was being installed (aluminum tubes, HVAC equipment) and the fence will be a PSE&G standard which is 7' fence with 1' of barbed wire which is to get people out because of the high voltage. Mr. Caton stated for the Board's benefit that is not in conformance with the Lawrence Township Land Use Ordinance; however, the Consultants are recommending granting the variance needed for the fencing because of the high hazard that is inside, which will be a total of 8' which is out there now. The height of the light is 8'6". The construction will start in the fall and continue for 18 months (2018 completion). The purpose of the stone in the sub-station is it forms an electrical barrier for maintenance personnel because there are electrical faults under this area and it protects the maintenance personnel, it will be crushed granite.

Witness #3: Steven Hansen, PE. Presented Exhibit A2: Site Plan, dated December 10, 2015 and was revised slightly; described that the area is covered with trees and brush; the grade goes northwest to northeast to the transmission right-of-way; there is a drainage swale; the purpose is to keep the direction of flow to the wet basin; the asphalt area will be directed to inlets; the drainage system will have a geo-membrane to make sure the pond remains wet; since it is gravel will not be treated with fertilizer or pesticides; the basin serves a purpose where it provides quality for the runoff that drains into it and also reduce the peak run-off since the impervious coverage is being increased.

Mr. Duran wanted to know about mosquito control because it will be a wet basin. Mr. Player stated they will follow the guidelines from New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection & the permit with the Mercer County Soil Conservation District to maintain mosquito control, which requires removing of debris and other materials. There is a plan specifically for this basin and meets the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection criteria. Mr. Parvesse stated the mosquito control will be part of the condition of the resolution to submit the plan for mosquito control; therefore, an irrigation system is not being provided, it will be watered by the contractor.

Mr. Hansen spoke about the impervious coverage on what was previously approved and what is revised. It is because there was more stone laid than permitted; the trailer area had gravel and the existing right-of-way has stone. The applicant is in the processing of removing unpermitted rock service and around the trailers to lower the final impervious coverage and would be 36% which is lower than what was requested.

The trailers were removed but the gravel is still there. The crushed stone is defined as impervious coverage. Mr. Caton stated as time goes by the rocks fill the gaps between the rocks and between the gravel and then the water runs off. The basin is also considered impervious coverage because it has water in it because of the design.

Witness #4: Nicholas Ginther, P.P. Exhibit A3: Colorized version Landscape Plan, dated June 20, 2016 shows the buffer residential zone; around basin; minimum density of trees that would be installed along the property; there is a deficiency in the buffer area (required is 100' and only able to provide 66' in the front to the existing fence line) and providing 50' from the edge of the transmission right-of-way to the basin fence and not fully landscaped because of the access road, see Page 7 of 9 of the Planning Consultant reports (Item 5.1) Looking at the entire site the applicant will be providing 95 shade trees, 106 ornamental trees; 214 evergreens and 322 shrubs.

Break from 7:53 to 8:15 for the Vigil for the Orlando victims.

The buffer around the entire site were plantings around the storm water basin, street trees along Bunker Hill Road and verify the minimum tree density; provide adequate landscaping around the basin (mix of shade trees, evergreens and shrubs); there is a seed mix around the detention basin. The mature trees will be cut down because of the expansion and because of the basin. The trees that do not conflict with the improvements will be kept and a number of trees will be replaced. Mr. Ginther spoke about the existing trees do not block the view; but the new plantings will grow to a height out there and hide the site. He continued that the landscaping will continue along the driveway, Bunker Hill Road, additional buffering along the transmission right-of-way and around the basin which will be a visual separation for a mature complete screen station.

He spoke with regard to the variance and waivers for the buffer width. The transmission right-of-way which is 100' wide and owned by the Homeowners Association; however, Public Service Electric & Gas has an easement, for transmission purposes, which will be transferred to another property. There is a 100' right-of-way to the homes behind and on the applicant's property there is a 50' to the basin fence and another 50' to the interior of the required 100' buffer. The landscape will overtime will have a more visual screen once the trees mature.

Mr. Caton stated based on the willingness to provide landscaping around the outfall that is an addition to the number of plants on plan and agreed to a larger evergreen. Mr. Ginther stated there will be a double row of evergreens and increasing the size to 5 - 6 and 6 to 7' on a mixed variety. Mr. Caton stated the trees have to be inside the sidewalk to accommodate underground utilities and is justified.

Mr. Ginther continued with complying with the Township planting details and notes in the specifications and the final note is to provide irrigation in large massive landscape beds and does not provide installation in these types of beds for stability. They do provide a maintenance agreement so that the landscaping installed is guaranteed for two years and if it does not survive it will be replaced with another two year guarantee.

Mr. Wiznitzer spoke about the property owned by Public Service Electric & Gas and how it looks like a dump. Mr. Player commented that this property is a right-of-way for the circuits and currently there is maintenance going down that right-of-way and once that maintenance is completed, the mats will be removed (and are in the process of being removed) and the grass area will be re-seeded. Mr. Wiznitzer would like that to this as a condition of approval because it is an eyesore. Mr. Player stated the mats are for maintenance and reliability of the system and have an environmental obligation to remove them and restore them. Mr. Yoskin stated the Board can link one to another.

Mr. Caton commented that we do not have jurisdiction to link this application to that property and we have his testimony on the record that the mats will be removed and the lawn will be reseeded by the end of year and if that does not happen the Township can contact Public Service Electric & Gas about it and pursue it. Mr. Player stated he will check the construction schedule with both our division and project team and provide a written letter with confirming the schedule.

Chairperson Weisberg was concerned about the Emerald Ash trees and the problems with them and wanted to see if they were to be planted in this location. Mr. Ginther continued that the majority of the trees in that location are maples and pine trees as well as Douglas firs, large oaks and sycamores.

Mr. Talvacchia commented about the noise report that complies with the State standard and the person who prepared the report present or rely on the report, dated January 7, 2016, copy attached. Mr. Caton is satisfied with the report.

Witness No. #5: John Mele, P.P., discussed the variances for coverage and landscaping. He continued with the 39% impervious coverage, where 25% is required per the ordinance and the applicant was permitted from a prior approval of 29%; however, part of the development a survey of the existing conditions and it was revealed that 33% currently rather than 29%. A variance is being sought for 36% impervious coverage; a variance for the density is not in full compliance for a 100' wide buffer because of less depth in the buffer; permission for the stormwater basin within the 100' wide buffer; relief is also being sought for incidental signs in the area of 3.89sf where a maximum of 2 sf is permitted (warning signs) and a variance for the permitted height and type of fencing that is being proposed.

Mr. Mele stated the use is permitted per §430.H. in the Lawrence Township Land Use Ordinance. The definition by the ordinance of impervious surface would include concrete, sidewalks and buildings, not gravel because it has void space. The benefits would be multi zoning purposes; reduction in outages; the promotion of the visible environmental for the landscaping (screening); promoting energy resources while the detriments are no extra traffic; landscaping improvements by adding additional screening; no negative impact with the houses.

The landscaping buffer will fill the voids of trees and shrubs; aesthetic improvement; the basin located downstream from the location and is in the most appropriate location, it is where it needs to be; the 100' right-of-way for a physical separation with landscaping around the basin and the fence height and sign size promotes general welfare for the public welfare.

Mr. Talvacchia stated a letter from Robert McCarthy dated June 13, 2016 was presented at the meeting tonight, copy attached.

There was no public comment. Mr. Caton summarized conditions.

6. **Old Business / New Business / Correspondence**

Affordable Housing Plan: Mr. Krawczun, Mr. Roskos and Mr. Caton met with Court Master and Kevin Walsh; however, there is nothing new to report.

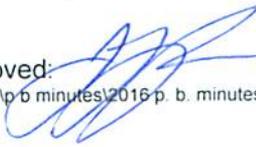
9. **Adjournment:**

There being no further to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 9:03 p.m.

Digital audio file of this meeting is available upon request.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan J. Snook
Recording Secretary

Minutes Approved: 
g:\engineering office\p b minutes\2016 p. b. minutes\june 20 2016.doc