

MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 20, 2016 PLANNING BOARD MEETING  
BOROUGH HALL, BOROUGH OF HILLSDALE

MEMBERS PRESENT: E. Lichtstein, J. Miano, F. Franco, Z. Horvath, E. Alter  
G. Biener, Chairman M. Giancarlo, M. Kates (late)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Councilman F. Pizzella, Mayor D. Frank, Vice Chairwoman Calabria

EMPLOYEES PRESENT: N. Nabbie, Esq., Board Attorney  
C. Statile, P.E., Board Engineer  
C. Chadwick, Deputy Board Secretary

Chairman Giancarlo called the meeting to order with a reading of the Open Public Meetings Statement at approximately 7:15pm.

OPEN TO PUBLIC (for matters not on the Agenda):  
As no one wished to speak, the meeting was closed to the public.

MEETING MINUTES:  
The *October 13, 2016 Meeting Minutes* were approved by the Board.

PUBLIC HEARING:  
*PZ-12-15; PSE&G Substation – Phase III; Block 1212, Lot 14; 295 Patterson Street  
Major Site Plan with Variances (includes use variance); Carried from September 27, 2016*

Counsel for the Applicant – Glenn C. Kienz, Esq.

Mr. Kienz's next witness was architect Ariadne Rodriguez from Black & Veatch, 11401 Lamar Avenue, Overland Park, Kansas. Mr. Kienz distributed a handout of an updated power point presentation and marked it as **Exhibit A2**. Ms. Rodriguez spoke about the powerpoint presentation, explaining the collaboration process that occurred between PSE&G and Morpurgo Architects regarding the exterior appearance of the buildings and wall. Ms. Rodriguez described the type of material that will be used on the building, including concrete panels with brick inlays. The building will also have European style arches. Documents portraying different views of the building were then marked into evidence – **Exhibit A3: View #2 Prospect Place** and **Exhibit A4: View #4 Prospect Place**. Exhibit A4's proposed view does not show overhead utility wires because these wires will be relocated underground. Mr. Kienz stated the GIS building is the same on all four sides and although the wall will not be on all four sides, it will connect with the building elements. Ms. Miano stated there will be two separate buildings on the site and requested PSE&G clear up any confusion for the Board members who did not participate in subcommittee meetings.

Expert witness Andrew Martin, PE of Black & Veatch, 9000 Regency Parkway, Cary, North Carolina remained under oath from the last public hearing and continued to give testimony. Mr. Martin explained there will be a four sided building with intricate architectural detail on each side. There will also be a 30 ft. wall and a 15 ft. easement for a walkway along the brook. The easement has not yet been defined because there has not yet been any formal notification received regarding same. Mr. Martin explained the entire site will be heavily landscaped, including landscape buffering of the property lines and a chain link fence. Another document was then marked into evidence – **Exhibit A5: View #5 Queen Court**. This view shows the western end of the site, looking east. Exhibits A3, A4, and A5 all show various depictions of the site's

existing views as of February 2016, as well as proposed views with architectural renderings of the proposed building(s) and proposed landscaping.

The Board then had the opportunity to question this witness. It was confirmed that silt fencing is installed and as a result, there should be no runoff from the site to the brook. Also as part of the stormwater management plan, inspections of the site after rainfall exceeding 1" will occur annually. The equipment on site is grounded metal housing and will be monitored constantly; an alarm will sound and PSE&G employees will be sent to the site immediately in case of an emergency and local emergency departments would be notified as well. Site lighting will be concentrated and only the areas that require lighting will be lit. Mr. Kienz confirmed for the Board that most PSE&G projects are not as architecturally elaborate or detailed as this proposed substation. Hillsdale's height ordinance was also discussed and the parameters of same confirmed.

The Board's architect, Gus Morpurgo of 18 Sycamore Ave, Ho-Ho-Kus, also provided testimony. Mr. Morpurgo explained that the site's building(s) will feature European inspired arches which will visually slim down the building(s), a peaked roof, and are designed to appear more as residential buildings despite their industrial use. Mr. Morpurgo also explained that the wall was lifted to a certain height in order to hide the building behind it.

The meeting was then opened to the public to question both witnesses. Local business owner Nick Markantus of 109 Prospect Place, Hillsdale stated his concern regarding visibility of pedestrians when backing out of his driveway due to the 25 ft. wall. Mr. Martin explained that the wall will be set 12 ft. away from the curb and Ms. Rodriguez explained that sidewalks will not be installed on that side of the building. Board Engineer Statile explained there is no code which applies to sight distance here; the code applies to corners and intersections.

Mr. Horvath asked where the wall lines up with Mr. Markantus' property/building and Mr. Martin demonstrated on the map/site plan that the wall will line up with the end of Mr. Markantus' property. As this portion of the wall functions purely for aesthetical purposes and not for the shielding of equipment, a suggestion was presented to open this section up and install wrought iron fence instead. PSE&G was willing to make this accommodation if worked out with Board Engineer Statile and Board Architect Morpurgo.

The next witness was Paul Ricci, PP of 10 Georgian Drive, Clark, NJ. Mr. Ricci reviewed the variances being sought by PSE&G, explaining a height variance is needed for the 58 ft. high GIS building, and 75 ft. lightning masts where only 30 ft. is permitted. PSE&G also seeks a front yard setback variance and use variance however, the Board already understands this is an inherently beneficial use. Mr. Ricci informed the Board of the positive and negative criteria for the application, reviewing that the increased height of the building will not increase the density as the site has the ability to accommodate the height. Mr. Ricci explained that the Board needs to evaluate issues of proportionality as well given the larger lot. The proposed building will be at the terminus of the street and adequate buffering has been provided, with a substantial amount of plantings as well as a new streetscape. Mr. Ricci clarified that the increased height of the building is a result of specific engineering requirements of the facility imposed on PSE&G. The main purpose of the project is to improve resiliency and is the "gold standard" for a PSE&G facility in terms of the level of detail they have added to this particular substation. Mr. Ricci also explained that this is a 5.3 acre site and PSE&G will be reducing the impervious surface coverage as well. Lightning masts are accessory and essential to protect the facility; they will not result in negative visual impact and will be virtually undetectable to the naked eye.

Mr. Ricci then reviewed the negative criteria of the application, stating he evaluated the Borough's zoning schedule and which zones allow taller buildings and how it compares to this application. Mr. Ricci referenced the SCH district, which allows buildings up to 48 ft. high, stating PSE&G proposes a building coverage of 9% where 15% is allowed and has a building setback of 100 ft. from Knickerbocker Ave. where 30 ft. is required.

The Board was then given the opportunity to question this witness. Mr. Alter stated his concern for fairness in comparing this application and this site to the requirements of the SCH zone.

The meeting was then opened to the public. Nick Markantus of 109 Prospect Place, Hillsdale had questions for the witness in relation to his business Westwood Banana Company. Marisa Cefali of 6 Manson Place, Hillsdale asked if the building is on stilts and how high from the ground the building starts. Mr. Ricci replied that the building is on stilts and approximately 8 ft. from existing grade is required. Donna Kamfor of 28 Esplanade Drive, Hillsdale asked if there is any kind of irrigation; Mr. Ricci responded no, there will be no modifications of that type since the applicant will not be displacing any additional water. Mr. Markantus asked if the wall was designed for strength of moving water and it was confirmed that it was. Mr. Martin confirmed that the site will be able to accommodate 198 cubic feet of water. As no one else wished to speak, the meeting was closed to the public.

Board Engineer Statile stated that the applicant is proposing a higher building than what Borough ordinance allows due to special engineering regulations of the substation. There was a discussion regarding roof runoff. Board Engineer Statile's October 14, 2016 review report was referenced and all of the concerns and comments listed therein were addressed accordingly by the applicant's counsel and professionals.

The meeting was then opened to the public for general summation comments. Ms. Cefali asked why the applicant did not use a storm drainage system instead of raising the building. Mr. Statile replied that the raising of the building is not related to storm water management, but rather a result of flood elevation requirements as well as extra Federal government requirements due to the equipment contained inside the building. Mr. Markantus asked the Board to please heavily consider whether or not to grant the applicant side and front yard setback variances as he does not believe doing so would be fair to the general public and also stated that he does feel the applicant justified the need for the use variance. As no other member of the public wished to offer closing remarks, the meeting was closed to the public at this time.

The Board then gave closing remarks. Mr. Horvath commended PSE&G for their generosity of accommodations they made to the Borough in regard to the substation and thanked them. Mr. Franco and Ms. Miano echoed Mr. Horvath's sentiments, stating working with the applicant has been wonderful and their cooperation is much appreciated. Ms. Biener thanked the site plan subcommittee for volunteering their time and efforts to the application. Mr. Alter also thanked the site plan subcommittee, and explained to Mr. Markantus that there is no precedence as the Board treats every application on its own merits; Mr. Alter stated his biggest concern is safety. Dr. Lichtstein also explained to Mr. Markantus that this application is evaluated differently by the Board because of its inherently beneficial use. Dr. Lichtstein also thanked PSE&G. Chairman Giancarlo thanked the Board's appointed architect for this application, Mr. Morpurgo and stated this substation will be an aesthetic asset to the Borough and the walkway will give great recreational opportunities to the public.

Mr. Horvath made a motion to approve this application with the conditions set forth by the Board, which were reviewed by Board Attorney Nabbie, Mr. Kienz, and Mr. Statile. The motion was seconded by Ms. Miano. The Board was polled. Dr. Lichtstein, Ms. Miano, Mr. Franco, Mr. Horvath, Mr. Alter, Ms. Biener, and Chairman Giancarlo all voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed. The application was approved. Mr. Kienz thanked the Board for the scheduling of a special meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:04pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Caitlin Chadwick  
Deputy Secretary