

PEPCO BRIGHTON SUBSTATION TOWER REPLACEMENT

MANDATORY REFFERAL NO. MR2022006

Description

Proposal to remove all existing telecommunications equipment and the existing structurally unsound 195'-6" self-support tower. This will be replaced with a new 250' self-support tower and associated ground equipment. The 231.76-acre property is located at 1300 Brighton Dam Road, 1,200 feet west of New Hampshire Avenue, is zoned RC, within the 2005 *Olney Master Plan* area.

NO. MR2022006

COMPLETED: 12-03-2021

MCPB

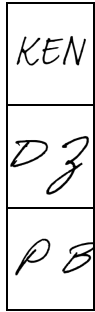
Item No 1 Consent

December 16, 2021

2425 Reedie Drive

Floor 14

Wheaton, MD 20902



Katherine Nelson, Planner Coordinator, Katherine.Nelson@montgomeryplanning.org, 301-495-4622

Don Zeigler, Supervisor Upcounty Planning, Donnell.Zeigler@montgomeryplanning.org, 301-495-4511

Patrick Butler, Chief Upcounty Planning Division, Patrick.Butler@montgomeryplanning.org, 301-495-4561



Summary

LOCATION:

1300 Brighton Dam Road

Brookeville, MD 20833

MASTER PLAN & ZONE

2005 Olney Master Plan

RC Zone

PROPERTY SIZE

231.76 Acres

APPLICATION

Pepco Brighton Mandatory Referral

ACCEPTANCE DATE:

October 25, 2021

REVIEW BASIS:

20-301 et seq. of the Land Use Article

- Pepco proposes to replace an existing 195'-6" self-support radio tower with a 250' self-support tower and associated ground equipment.
- Forest Conservation exemption #42021273E was confirmed on August 26, 2021 as a modification to an existing non-residential use.
- Staff recommends Approval of the Mandatory Referral.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Comply with Confirmed Exemption 42021273E. See Attachment 1

SECTION I

INTRODUCTION

Site Description

The substation is located at 1300 Brighton Dam Road, in Brookeville. This 231.76-acre site is bordered by the Hawlings River Stream Valley Park on the west, Pepco power line right-of way to the south and Rural Cluster (RC) zoned properties to the north and east. Access to the substation is currently from Brighton Dam Road. The developed area of the site is approximately 23 acres. The substation property surrounding the facility is forested and there is at least 750 feet of forest between the facility and the surrounding farms and houses. The Site is within the boundaries of the 2005 *Olney Master Plan*.



Figure 1: Aerial Photograph of the Vicinity



Figure 2: Aerial Photograph of the Site

Project Description

Pepco proposes to remove all existing telecommunications equipment and the existing structurally unsound 195'-6" self-support tower. This will be replaced with a new 250' self-support tower and associated ground equipment. The new tower will be in the same general location as the existing tower.

The substation was originally built in 1973 and is located at the confluence of three high-voltage powerline rights of way that are dominated by 150-foot stanchions.

The substation is also undergoing a facility enhancement to:

- (1) replace the existing fence with an upgraded, more secure fence;
- (2) install aprons at the fence gates;
- (3) relocate culvert wall without altering site drainage;
- (4) install a new data enclosure shed within the bounds of the substation fence to house electronics; and
- (5) relocate a BGE distribution structure within the bounds of the substation fence.

These enhancements were the subject of recently approved Mandatory Referral No. MR2021015. See Attachment 2.

SECTION II

ANALYSIS

Neighborhood Compatibility

The 21-acre developed area of this 231.76-acre site is surrounded by both on and off-site forest. There is a minimum of 750 feet of forest between the proposed tower and the surrounding farms and home. The Hawlings River and Reddy Branch Stream Valley Parks border the southwest property boundaries and visibility from the nearby roads is practically non-existent. The most prominent feature associated with this facility is the existing 150-foot stanchions located every 1,000 to 2,500 feet within the Pepco power line rights of way. The new tower with a 50-foot increase in height is unlikely to change the existing character of the neighborhood.

Master Plan Conformance

The subject Property is located within the Rural Open Space region of the 2005 *Olney Master Plan* ("Master Plan") area. This area is located in Northern Olney, east of Georgia Avenue. The Master Plan recommends:

"Encourage WSSC and Pepco to manage properties to support a diversity of wildlife habitats and species" (p.73).

The proposed project is currently at approximately 9% imperviousness and does not propose to disturb the existing ~160 acres of on-site forest. Powerline maintenance may also be tailored to encourage wildlife and should be a recommendation for this mandatory referral.

Transportation Analysis

This is an unmanned facility which requires infrequent maintenance creating minimal trip generation.

Environment

The Site is within the Hawlings River watershed, a Use IV designation. Only minimal disturbance will take place outside the existing developed area. Forest Conservation exemption #42021273E was confirmed on August 26, 2021 as a modification to an existing non-residential use. The Application meets the requirements of Chapter 22A of the Montgomery County Forest Conservation Law.

Conclusion

Staff recommends approval of the Mandatory Referral.

Attachments:

1. Forest Conservation Exemption Memo
2. Mandatory Referral No. MR2021015 Approval Memo

Attachment 1



MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

August 26, 2021

Harold Bernadzikowski
Network Building + Consulting
6095 Marshalee Drive, Suite 300
Elkridge, MD 21075

Re: Forest Conservation Exemption Request
#42021273E Pepco – Brighton – Approved
Plan approval expires August 26, 2026 if project has not commenced by that date.

Dear Mr. Bernadzikowski,

Based on the review by staff of the Montgomery County Planning Department, the Forest Conservation Exemption Plan request for the plan identified above, **is confirmed**. The project site is exempt from Article II of the Montgomery County Code, Chapter 22A (Forest Conservation Law), Section 22A-5(t)(1) because the site is a modification to an existing non-residential developed property where:

- (A) no more than 5,000 square feet of forest is ever cleared at one time or cumulatively after an exemption is issued;
- (B) the modification does not result in the cutting, clearing, or grading of any forest in a stream buffer or forest located on property in a special protection area which must submit a water quality plan;
- (C) the modification does not require approval of a preliminary plan, administrative subdivision plan, or conditional use/special exception;
- (D) the modification does not increase the developed area by more than 50%, and any existing principal building, as defined in Chapter 59, is retained; and
- (E) the pending development application does not propose any residential uses

A pre-construction meeting is required after the limits of disturbance have been staked prior to clearing and grading. The property owner, construction superintendent, forest conservation inspector, and the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services sediment control inspector shall attend this meeting. If you have any questions regarding these actions, please feel free to contact me at 301-495-4603 or at michael.sharp@montgomeryplanning.org.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Sharp

Michael J. Sharp
Forest Conservation Inspector
M-NCPPC, IRC

Attachment 2

Montgomery Planning

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

March 5, 2021

Brandon White
Pepco
709 9th Street NW
Washington DC, 20001

Subject: Pepco Brighton Substation Facility Enhancement
Mandatory Referral No. MR2021015

Dear Mr. White:

The Montgomery County Planning Department has reviewed a Mandatory Referral for the proposed enhancements at the Pepco Brighton Substation Facility. The Department has determined that the project qualifies for an Administrative Mandatory Referral review, which allows for a staff level review, and recommends its approval. This letter will serve as the approval notification.

The substation is located at 1300 Brighton Dam Road, in Brookeville. This 231.76-acre site is bordered by the Hawlings River Stream Valley Park on the west, Pepco power line right-of way to the south and Rural Cluster (RC) zoned properties to the north and east. Access to the substation is currently from Brighton Dam Road. The substation property surrounding the facility is forested and there is at least 750 feet of forest between the facility and the surrounding farms and houses.

The scope of the substation facility enhancement is to (1) replace the existing fence with an upgraded, more secure fence, (2) install aprons at the fence gates, (3) relocate culvert wall without altering site drainage, (4) install a new data enclosure shed within the bounds of the substation fence to house electronics, and (5) relocate a BGE distribution structure within the bounds of the substation fence. The data enclosure shed is a 276.75 ft² prefab enclosure that will be mounted on a foundation.

The Planning Department appreciates the opportunity to comment on this project and looks forward to working closely and cooperatively with Pepco on future projects. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Katherine Nelson at (301) 495-4622 or Katherine.Nelson@montgomeryplanning.org.

Sincerely,



Gwen L.M. Wright
Director

cc: David Busse, KDM Engineering
Patrick Butler, Upcounty Planning Area, Chief, Montgomery Planning Department
Katherine Nelson, Upcounty Planner Coordinator, Montgomery Planning Department