State Environmental Quality Review
NEGATIVE DECLARATION
Notice of Determination of Non-Significance

Project: Navy Road Substation and Transmission and Distribution Interconnections

Date: December 12, 2019

This notice is issued in accordance with Article 8 (State Environmental Quality Review Act) of the Environmental Conservation Law and its implementing regulations at 6 NYCRR Part 617 and 21 NYCRR LXXXI 10052.

The Long Island Power Authority ("Authority") has determined, based on information provided by PSEG Long Island and the Environmental Assessment Form Parts 1, 2 & 3 prepared by GEI, that the Proposed Action described below will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment and a Draft Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared.

Name of Action: Navy Road Substation and Transmission and Distribution Interconnections

Location: 7 Second House Road and North Shore Road, Hamlet of Montauk, Town of East Hampton, Suffolk County, New York

SEQR Status: Unlisted

Conditioned Negative Declaration: No

Proposed Action Description:

The Proposed Action involves construction of an electrical substation along with the installation of associated transmission and distribution exit feeders. A portion of Second House Road/North Shore Road located adjacent to the Substation Site will be elevated following completion of the Proposed Action, however, engineering for elevation of this road is not yet available. Once elevation design is completed, a separate SEQRA will be prepared pursuant to 6 NYCRR 617.3(g)(1) for the proposed elevation of the road. Completing a separate environmental review under SEQRA for the road elevation will be no less protective of the environment than a SEQRA review encompassing both the Proposed Action and the future elevation of Second House Road/North Shore Road. No cumulative impacts with the Proposed Action are anticipated from the proposed future roadway elevation.

The Proposed Action will increase service reliability and capacity to customers in the hamlet of Montauk, Town of East Hampton. Recent engineering studies and analysis by PSEG Long Island have determined that during peak summer demand, the existing circuits are at risk of becoming overloaded, a condition that may lead to voltage reductions or service disruption. The Proposed Substation and associated feeders will address current needs, provide a more reliable electric supply, and provide capacity for future projected loads.

The Proposed Substation will replace the existing Montauk Substation, which is located on the north shore of Fort Pond with an upgraded substation in an industrial area. Montauk Substation will remain in service until the Proposed Substation is constructed and the interconnecting transmission and distribution feeders are in service. Although not yet engineered or designed, the existing Montauk Substation is expected to be decommissioned at a later date as part of a separate project.

The Proposed Action's major scope of work elements includes the following:

- The Substation Site will be raised by approximately 6 feet to an elevation of approximately 12 feet above mean sea level prior to the installation of the Proposed Substation structures and associated appurtenances. A ramped concrete driveway will be constructed off Second House Road/North Shore Road to provide access to the raised Substation Site. A concrete retaining wall extending approximately 0.5 feet above the dolomite substation surface will be constructed along the northern and eastern boundaries of the Substation Site, and along the western side of the access driveway. In addition, a sloped vegetated swale will be constructed along the western and southern boundaries of the Substation Site. The proposed site elevation is shown on the Grading and Drainage Plan provided in Attachment A.

- The Proposed Substation equipment area will include two (2) 33/23/13KV-14 MVA transformer banks and associated equipment i.e., breakers, switches, bus supports, and cable terminations. In addition, there will be an enclosed storage shed for relays with HVAC and a battery enclosure. Four (4) 55.5' tall lightning masts will also be placed within the equipment area.

- Substation Site improvements will include the installation of an 8-foot high perimeter security fence with a swing gate; a dolomite surface within the equipment area; a 20-foot wide ramped concrete driveway; a concrete retaining wall; a vegetated swale for stormwater detention; and buffer landscaping to screen the Proposed Substation from Industrial Road. The entirety of the 1.21-acre property will be disturbed for the proposed improvements.

- Installation of four transmission exit feeders (cable in conduit) between 460 feet and 530 feet in length, from the Proposed Substation terminating at the intersection of Second House Road and Industrial Road. The total length of all four transmission feeders is approximately 2,000 linear feet. All transmission cables will connect to existing underground transmission circuits and will be installed via three-foot open trenches.

- Installation of three distribution feeders from the Proposed Substation to interconnection points with existing distribution feeders, plus installation of one section of a distribution feeder across from the existing Montauk substation to replace the existing substation connection for the circuit. One distribution feeder will be approximately 290 feet in length and will connect from the Proposed Substation to the adjacent battery storage facility, located immediately west of the Substation Site. A second distribution feeder will be approximately 800 feet in length and will exit the Proposed Substation and be located beneath Second House Road, where it will terminate at a riser to be constructed at Pole #42 and connect to an existing OH distribution circuit. The third feeder will provide a connection to an existing circuit and all work will be within the Proposed Substation. The fourth feeder will be approximately 75 feet in length and will provide interconnection from the Proposed Substation for an existing area circuit. Spare conduits will be installed to accommodate the future installation of additional distribution feeder cables. All feeders will be installed via a two-foot-wide open trench with the exception of the 800-foot-long feeder, which will be installed via directional drill.

- Elevation of a portion of Second House Road/North Shore Road (to be designed and reviewed under a separate SEQRA document once design is complete). Construction of the elevated roadway is anticipated to commence mid- to late 2021, following completion of the Proposed Action.

It is anticipated that construction of the Proposed Action would commence in November 2019 and last approximately 20 months.

Reasons Supporting This Determination:

The Proposed Action is an "Unlisted" Action as that term is defined in SEQRA. Based on a review of the project's scope of work in accordance with the requirements of SEQRA, the Full Environmental Assessment Form Parts 1, 2 & 3 ("FEAF") was prepared to evaluate potential impacts of the Proposed Action. An Environmental Assessment and supplemental information ("EA") was completed by PSEG Long Island. The EA analyzed the potential environmental impacts of the Proposed Action. Supplemental information includes the Visual Resource Assessment and Noise Study, completed by PS&S, and the EMF Assessment, completed by Exponent, Inc.

Land Use

The Proposed Substation will be located on a property previously developed with a commercial greenhouse use, which has been previously removed. The redevelopment of the subject property will not have any impact on land uses, as it will be sited in an area comprised primarily of industrial uses. While commercial and residential uses exist beyond the area immediately adjacent to the Proposed Substation property, these uses will not be impacted either directly or indirectly by the Proposed Substation. The Proposed Action's feeders will be consistent with the current character and present conditions in the area, as these feeders will all be located in rights-of-way beneath the existing roadways. The Proposed Action would therefore have no significant adverse impacts in terms on land use.

Groundwater

Special Groundwater Protection Area Hither Hills and the Water Recharge Overlay District Critical Environmental Areas are located west of the Proposed Action; however, the Proposed Action is not located within the limits of these areas. Groundwater within the Proposed Action is not used as a drinking water source. The freshwater lens beneath the site is shallow. There is a lack of a freshwater well in the vicinity of the site. Excavation activities related to the Proposed Action will not disturb the groundwater level. As such, no significant adverse impacts to groundwater or the identified Critical Environmental Areas will occur as a result of operation of the Proposed Action.

Floodplains

Portions of the Proposed Action are within the 100-year floodplain (the area with a 1 percent probability of flooding each year) or the 500-year floodplain (the area with a 0.2 percent probability of flooding each year). The Substation Site is within the 500-year flood plain, while the feeders will be within the 100-year floodplain. The Proposed Substation will be raised to an elevation of approximately 12 feet above mean sea level, above the base flood elevation (BFE). This will effectively elevate the Proposed Substation out of the 500-year floodplain. This base elevation will mitigate against potential flood impacts to the Proposed Substation. Further, the feeders within the 100-year floodplain will all be underground, in conduit. Proposed Action construction activities will occur within previously developed and existing disturbed and paved areas. No impacts to the floodplains will result from the construction and operation of the Proposed Action, particularly in view of the on-site drainage provided and the resiliency of the Proposed Substation design. Flood patterns will not have a positive or negative affect on the feeders given that they are below grade. All stormwater runoff will be retained on site, and no impacts to the floodplains or to other upstream/downstream properties are expected from the Proposed Substation, transmission, and distribution system. Therefore, operation of the Proposed Action will not result in significant adverse impacts to flood levels, flood risk, or the flow of flood waters on the site of the Proposed Action or within the vicinity.

Wetlands

NYSDEC indicated in correspondence dated August 26, 2016 that the Substation Site is not on or within 100 feet of a NYSDEC regulated freshwater wetland. The underground feeder portion of the Proposed Action will be located within pre-disturbed developed and paved transportation rights-of-way which do not transect wetland boundaries. Given the above, no permanent impacts to wetlands will occur as a result of the Proposed Action.

Portions of the underground transmission and distribution feeders will transect NYSDEC regulated 100-foot freshwater wetland adjacent areas associated with NYSDEC-mapped freshwater wetlands MP-23 and MP-18. The existing NYSDEC General Wetlands Permit (Servco/PSEG LI NYSDEC Permit Nos. 1-9901-00011/00026) allows directional drilling and open trenching for underground cable installations (including the excavation of jack pits) located in freshwater wetland adjacent areas, requiring only notification to the NYSDEC, as well as the Town of East Hampton. Standard wetland protection measures including the use of silt fence and inlet protection, where necessary, will be used to ensure unconsolidated sediment disturbed during construction activities will not enter the wetland. No permanent impacts to the wetland adjacent areas will occur, as all areas will be restored to the previously existing conditions.

Terrestrial Ecological Communities and Vegetation

The existing site of the Proposed Action is best described as an Urban Vacant Lot, which is defined as "an open site in a developed, urban area that has been cleared either for construction or following the demolition of a building." Vegetation to be removed as part of development of the Substation Site is sparse and limited to a tree row along the eastern, western, and southern perimeter portions of the property.

The new underground feeder cables would be installed entirely within existing asphalt roadways. No removal of vegetation along the asphalt roadways will be required for the construction of the feeder cables.

Given the limited ecological value and resources of the areas comprising the Proposed Action, and the limited amount of vegetative removal that would be required for construction of the Proposed Substation, no significant adverse impacts to terrestrial ecological communities and vegetation will result from the Proposed Action.

Wildlife

The Proposed Action will not result in significant adverse impacts to wildlife at either the individual or population level. Terrestrial wildlife use of the site of the Proposed Action is extremely limited due to current conditions as a previously disturbed, primarily vacant property and existing asphalt roadways. Installation of the Proposed Action would not eliminate any high quality or valuable wildlife habitat, and would not adversely affect the few urban-adapted species that may occur in the area. As habitat generalists, these species are highly disturbance-tolerant. Individuals of these species may temporarily be displaced from the site of the Proposed Action during construction. However, they are likely to return once construction is completed.

Threatened, Endangered, and Special Concern Species and Significant Habitats

Although USFWS IPaC and the NYSDEC Nature Explorer records did identify a number of federal and state-listed endangered and threatened species potentially occurring in the vicinity of the Proposed Action, no existing habitat supporting those species is present on the site of the Proposed Action. As

such, the Proposed Action would not result in any significant adverse impacts to threatened, endangered, special concern species or significant habitats.

Visual Resources

The site of the Proposed Substation is bordered on the south by Second House Road and on the north by the Long Island Rail Road right-of-way. Adjacent industrial uses are present to the east and west of the Proposed Substation. The existing vegetation and elevated railroad bed will serve as a visual buffer between the residences to the north and the Substation Site. Due to the elevation of the houses located to the south along Fort Lane, the planned vegetative buffer along the southern property boundary of the Substation Site will not provide any screening of the Proposed Substation equipment. However, the Proposed Substation equipment will be of a similar height to the existing built structures at the Substation Site and to the east and west of the Substation Site. The Proposed Substation equipment will be barely visible as a distant image from Fort Lane and will also not impede the view from Fort Lane towards Fort Pond Bay.

Based on this investigation, the Proposed Action will not have any significant adverse impacts on the visual character of the study area. The Proposed Action will not significantly impair the visual landscape as experienced from any scenic or aesthetic resources of concern or interfere with or reduce the public's, or area residents', enjoyment and/or appreciation of the appearance of any inventoried scenic, open space, or other resource. Thus, there will be no significant adverse visual impacts as a result of the Proposed Action.

Energy

The Proposed Action will have beneficial impacts to the LIPA transmission and distribution system and the host community through improved reliability and resiliency. Further, the Proposed Substation will provide enhanced transmission and distribution feeder connections to existing circuits and the new feeders will aid in improving overall system reliability in Montauk. Finally, the Proposed Action will not result in an increase in generating capacity; rather, the Proposed Action will provide enhanced reliability for the existing load.

Noise and EMF

The results of the noise impact modeling indicate that projected worst-case noise levels from the Proposed Substation equipment at the closest residential and commercial properties in the vicinity of the Proposed Action will be in compliance with the applicable NYSDEC Noise Policy Guidelines (i.e., will not increase residential property line noise levels above 65 dBA, and not increase existing residential ambient noise levels by more than 6 dBA). As such, the Proposed Action will not have a significant adverse impact on noise levels per the SEQRA or NYSDEC noise impact criteria.

The EMF Assessment indicated that the Proposed Substation will not significantly increase the existing levels of magnetic fields at residences in the neighborhood above existing ambient conditions, and therefore will not have a significant adverse impact on the surrounding areas. The estimated EMF levels for the Proposed Action will be significantly lower than the magnetic field "prudence avoidance" health standard of 200 milligauss (mG) set forth by the New York State Public Service Commission (NYSPSC) for EMF exposure. Overall, the increases in EMF experienced at any property will be comparable to the installation of a small appliance. The Noise and EMF studies are provided in Appendices D and E.

Construction and Operation

The Proposed Action will not cause any significant operational or construction impacts. During most of the Substation Site construction, there would be no impact on traffic since all the work would take place on the Substation Site. The installation of underground lines on Second House Road and Industrial Road may impact traffic temporarily; however, it is anticipated that all off-site transmission and distribution feeder work will be wholly or substantially complete by the end of June 2020, thus minimizing traffic impacts during the summer months when traffic flow in the area is expected to be at its peak. In the event that limited feeder work extends into the summer months, a traffic plan will be implemented to ensure traffic impacts are minimized to the maximum extent practicable. At no time will there be a complete road closure as a result of the construction. There may be some traffic impacts during the summer months, but they will not be significant. Most traffic will flow in both directions with cones used to shift lanes. Flaggers would be deployed any time traffic needs to be regulated. Access to homes and businesses may be temporarily affected. Impacts on access would be mitigated using administrative controls, such as publicly displayed notifications and correspondence, and engineering controls, such as road construction plates to bridge roadway openings.

Policy Consistency

The Proposed Action is located within the Town of East Hampton's Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP). State Agency/Authority actions are subject to consistency review of the policies outlined in the plan. The Proposed Action is consistent with the policies within the LWRP and will not adversely impact the coastal area.

The Proposed Action is also located in proximity to the East Hampton Scenic Area of Statewide Significance (SASS). Due to distance, topography, and intervening vegetation, the Proposed Action and associated equipment and structures is not expected be visible from any points within Hither Hills State Park, Hither Woods Preserve or Lee Koppelman County Park. An assessment of potential visual impacts to scenic resources from the project site determined that the Proposed Action would not result in significant adverse visual impacts to the identified SASS or Scenic Areas of Local Significance (SALS).

Based on the FEAF and PSEG Long Island's recommendation according to the standards as set forth in SEQRA, the Proposed Action will not result in any significant adverse environmental impacts and a Draft Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared.

For Further Information:

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Dated: December 12, 2019