

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

Project: 2G Rockaway Beach Substation Feeder and Conversion and Reinforcement Project
– Phase 1

Date: March 27, 2020

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 PSEG Long Island 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: 2G Rockaway Beach Substation Feeder and Conversion and Reinforcement Project – Phase 1 (the “Proposed Action”)

Location: Within and proximate to the existing LIPA 2G Rockaway Beach Substation (the “Substation”), within portions of National Grid owned property, and along public roadways or rights of way within in Rockaway Park, Belle Harbor and Neponsit, Queens County, New York

SEQR Status: Unlisted

Conditioned Negative Declaration: No

Proposed Action Description:

The Proposed Action includes the installation of one new 13kV underground (UG) distribution exit feeder, the installation of new 13kV UG distribution cable to reconfigure existing distribution circuits, and overhead (OH) distribution conversion and reinforcement work (C&R). The Proposed Action will be completed within and proximate to the existing Substation, within portions of the adjacent National Grid owned property, and along public roadways or rights of way within in Rockaway Park, Belle Harbor and Neponsit, Queens County, New York (see Figures 1 through 3).

The Proposed Action will support load growth due to new developments in the surrounding areas, by upgrading and modernizing the existing Substation and associated distribution infrastructure

to supply the increased load. In addition, these upgrades will increase the electric reliability and minimize restoration time during outages in the area.

The Proposed Action is the first of two phases which will collectively convert the 4kV Substation to 13kV. Phase 2 activities will include the removal of existing 4kV substation equipment and the installation of new 13kV equipment; however, sufficient engineering details for this phase is not yet completed. A separate SEQRA will be prepared pursuant to 6 NYCRR 617.3(g)(1) for Phase 2. Completing a separate environmental review under SEQRA for the Phase 2 work will be no less protective of the environment than a SEQRA review encompassing both the Proposed Action and the Phase 2 work. No cumulative impacts are anticipated to result from the proposed Phase 2 work.

Specifically, the Proposed Action consists of the following activities:

- One new UG 13kV distribution exit feeder (Circuit 2G-6L5; approximately 75 linear feet) will originate from a spare switchgear cubicle located within the Substation and will exit the Substation to the north where it will connect to a new switchgear that will be installed.
- Approximately 650-700 linear feet of new UG distribution cable will be installed from the new switchgear north of the Substation, and will extend westerly along Beach Channel Drive
- Approximately 1,100 linear feet of new UG distribution cable will be installed along Beach 108th Street and Rockaway Freeway, southeast of the Substation.
- C&R activities will consist of:
 - Replacement of approximately 77 wood distribution utility poles. Pole replacements will be of the same material, no more than 10 feet taller than existing poles and will be installed in the same general locations. 4 of the pole replacements will involve the replacement of existing utility poles with new riser poles.
 - Installation of approximately 9 new wood poles ranging from 30-55 feet in height. 7 of these poles will be installed in-line with existing poles. The two other poles to be installed will be in close proximity to existing utility infrastructure. New poles will be similar in height to existing utility poles in the immediate area. 3 of these poles will be riser poles.
 - Replacement or installation of OH distribution wire (~2,500-3,000 linear feet) and pole-top equipment (transformers, switches, capacitors, insulators, etc.) to convert surrounding OH circuits from 4kV to 13kV.
 - Replacement or installation of underground pad-mounted and submersible transformers.

Reasons Supporting This Determination:

The Proposed Action is an “Unlisted” Action as defined in SEQRA. An Environmental Assessment (“EA”) was completed by PSEG Long Island. The EA analyzed the potential environmental impacts of the Proposed Action. Based on a review of the Proposed Action’s scope of work in accordance with the requirements of SEQRA, a Short Environmental Assessment Form Parts 1, 2 & 3 (“SEAF”) was prepared. The SEAF evaluates the effect of the Proposed Action upon land use, natural resources, visual resources and character of the areas, energy use, environmental hazards and human health resources. Key findings are outlined below.

- The Proposed Action involves the installation of UG distribution cable beneath existing rights-of-way and OH work along existing pole alignments; therefore, the Proposed Action will be consistent with the current character of the area. All distribution pole replacements/installations will involve wood utility poles that will be no more than 10 feet taller than existing poles in the immediate area and will be in-line with existing pole alignments, with the exception of two poles (consistent in height with existing poles) that will be located in areas where utility infrastructure exists. As such, the Proposed Action will not result in significant adverse visual impacts or impacts to land use.
- Certain C&R work activities will be located within 500-feet of one Historic District listed on the National Register for Historic Places (Jacob Riis Park) and within 500-feet of six properties eligible for listing on the State or National Register for Historic Places (Rockaway Park Station; FDNY Engine 268; 148 Beach 116th Street; St. Frances De Sales RC Church and Catholic Academy; Belle Harbor Jewish Center, and; Former Neponsit Beach Hospital for Children). As this work consists of pole replacements within existing pole alignments, there will not be significant adverse impacts to these resources. The Proposed Action is not located within a New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) designated archaeologically sensitive area. A consultation request was submitted to OPRHP, and OPRHP responded in a letter dated February 7, 2020 that the Proposed Action would have no impact on historic properties, including archaeological and/or historic resources, listed in or eligible for the New York State and National Registers of Historic Places (see Appendix A).
- The Proposed Action is not located within any state or federally regulated wetlands or wetland adjacent areas. Therefore, the Proposed Action will not result in any significant adverse impacts to these areas.
- As the Proposed Action is located within the New York State coastal zone and within a New York City waterfront revitalization program (WRP) area, a New York State Coastal Assessment Form was completed and submitted to New York Department of State (NYSDOS) and a New York City WRP Consistency Assessment Form (CAF) was completed and submitted to the New York City Department of City Planning (DCP) (see Appendix B). The Proposed Action will be consistent with and will not substantially

hinder the achievement of any of the coastal policies set forth in 19 NYCRR Part 600.5 or New York City WRP.

- A portion of the Proposed Action will be completed within the 100-year floodplain. The Proposed Action will result in a negligible increase in impervious area, as the vast majority of the work will be completed within existing paved or concrete areas that will be restored upon completion of construction. Therefore, the Proposed Action would not result in significant adverse impacts to flood levels, flood risk, or the flow of flood waters on the Proposed Action site or within the project vicinity.
- One State-listed threatened animal species (Common Tern) was identified in the vicinity of the Proposed Action. Common terns inhabit sand and shell beaches, grassy uplands and rocky inland shores. The Proposed Action will occur entirely within previously disturbed land, primarily within paved or concrete roadways and rights-of-way. No portions of the Proposed Action will occur within or immediately adjacent to habitats suitable for the Common Tern. Thus, the Proposed Action will not result in significant adverse impacts to the Common Tern.
- The Proposed Action is located within or adjoining the Jamaica Bay Critical Environmental Area (CEA), which has been identified as a CEA due to its ecosystem and the significant wildlife concentrations. Construction activities in this area will be completed within previously disturbed roadways and rights-of-ways; no work will encroach into Jamaica Bay. Further, Jamaica Bay is separated from the work activities by substantially fabricated structures (Beach Channel Drive, bulkheads and/or walls). Best Management Practices will be implemented during construction activities to avoid any impacts to the CEA. As a result, the Proposed Action will not result in any significant adverse impacts to the CEA.
- The Proposed Action is located partially in or adjacent to four properties listed in the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) environmental remediation database. PSEG Long Island's contractor will be required to submit an acceptable Health and Safety Plan (HASP) to PSEG Long Island prior to construction. Proper health and safety protocols will be implemented during soil excavation activities, including procedures for the proper handling and management of contaminated materials. If necessary, excavation activities will be halted if any unanticipated contamination is identified until proper testing is completed, as warranted. All materials will be properly disposed of in compliance with all federal and state regulations. As such, significant adverse impacts to human health are not anticipated during construction or operation of the Proposed Action.

Based on the EA and PSEGLI'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 need not be prepared.

For Further Information:

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