



MEMORANDUM

To: *Chairman and Members of the
West Orange Zoning Board*

From: *Ryan MacNeill, PE For
John J. Hess, PE, PP, CME
Zoning Board Engineer*

Date: *December 12, 2025*

Re: *Application No. ZB-24-06
Public Service Electric & Gas Company
Preliminary & Final Site Plan with 'C' and 'D'
Variances and Tree Removal Permit - Review #3
325 Mount Pleasant Avenue
Block 155, Lot 26.01
Our File: 115.WRZ0155.V04*

CC: *Geniece Gary-Adams – Director of Planning & Development/Zoning Official
Zayibeth Carballo, PE, PLS, PP, CME, CFM, CFS – Municipal Engineer
Steven K. Warner, Esq. – Zoning Board Attorney
Public Service Electric & Gas Company – Applicant
Jennifer M. Porter, Esq. – Applicant's Attorney
Michael J. Blake, PE – Applicant's Engineer
Jonathan M. Copa, PE – Applicant's Engineer
Noreen Merainer, PP, PMP – Applicant's Planner
Michael D. Ragsdale, PLS – Applicant's Surveyor
John R. Futey II, LLA – Applicant's Landscape Architect
Michael R. Conaway, PE – Applicant's Acoustical Engineer*

Our office has received for review the following documents which were submitted in support of the above referenced application for Preliminary and Final Major Site Plan approval with 'C' and 'D' Variances:

- A set of unsigned West Orange Switching Station plans (3 sheets) prepared by Burns & McDonnell Engineering Company, Inc. of Kansas City, MO and bearing a latest revision date of December 8, 2025.
- An unsigned Tree Removal Plan & Landscape Plan (2 sheets) prepared by John R. Futey II, LLA with Paulus, Sokolowski and Sartor, LLC of Warren, New Jersey and bearing the latest revision date of December 8, 2025.
- A report entitled "Stormwater Management Plan Memorandum" prepared by Burns & McDonnell Engineering Company, Inc. dated December 8, 2025.



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- A Conceptual Tree Removal Memo prepared by Paulus, Sokolowski and Sartor, LLC dated December 8, 2025, detailing the 47 trees previously noted for removal that are now proposed to remain.
- A December 8, 2025 submission letter to the Township of West Orange Zoning Board from Noreen Merainer, AICP, PP, PMP describing the revisions to the application.

In addition to the above, our office previously received the following information as part of the previous submissions for this application:

- A set of Site Plan drawings (3 sheets) prepared by Michael J. Blake, PE with Burns & McDonnell Engineering Company, Inc. and Michael D. Ragsdale, PLS with PSEG Services Corporation dated May 2, 2024.
- A set of unsigned West Orange Switching Station plans (16 sheets) prepared by Jonathan M. Copa, PE and Michael J. Blake, PE with Burns & McDonnell Engineering Company, Inc. dated March 20, 2023.
- A set of Boundary and Topographic Survey plans (3 sheets) prepared by Michael D. Ragsdale, PLS dated May 2, 2024.
- A set of Tree Removal Plans (3 sheets) prepared by John R. Futey II, LLA with Paulus, Sokolowski and Sartor, LLC and bearing a latest revision date of August 11, 2024.
- A set of Landscape Plans (2 sheets) prepared by John R. Futey II, LLA and bearing a latest revision date of August 11, 2024.
- A print of an unsigned Landscape Rendering (1 sheet) prepared by John R. Futey II, LLA and bearing a latest revision date of August 18, 2024.
- An Environmental Impact Memorandum dated August 29, 2024.
- A report entitled "Requirements for Variances and Reasons for Relief Statement" prepared by Noreen Merainer, PP, PMP with Public Service Electric and Gas Company dated May 10, 2024.
- A report entitled "Stormwater Management Plan" prepared by Michael J. Blake, PE dated May 9, 2024.
- A report entitled "Stormwater Management Measures Maintenance Plan and Field Manuals" prepared by Michael J. Blake, PE and dated April 30, 2024. Included in the report are the following documents:
 - A Supplemental Test Pits and Permeability Testing Report prepared by Christopher McLaughlin, PE with GZA GeoEnvironmental, Inc. of South Bound Brook, New Jersey and dated January 17, 2023
 - A Subsurface Investigation Report prepared by Christopher McLaughlin, PE dated August 8, 2022.



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- A Thermal Analysis of Native Soil Samples prepared by Nimesh Patel with Geotherm USA of Cypress, Texas dated June 16, 2022.
- A Stormwater Management Report prepared by Barry J. Sutherland, PW with TRC Engineers, Inc. of Millburn, New Jersey dated March 2012.
- A Subsurface Investigation Report prepared by Mark R. Denno, PE and Todd E. Horowitz, PE with Mellick-Tully and Associates, PC of South Bound Brook, New Jersey dated May 17, 2011.
- A Custom Soil Resource Report for the PSE&G West Orange Switching Station from the United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service dated December 8, 2022.
- A May 15, 2024 letter from Noreen Merainer, PP, PMP to the West Orange Zoning Board of Adjustment which provides details of the project scope, sets forth the requested variances and lists the required outside agency approvals.
- A completed Application Form dated May 10, 2024.
- A completed Application for Tree Removal and Replacement Permit dated May 15, 2024.
- A completed Ownership Disclosure dated May 10, 2024.
- A completed Affidavit of Ownership dated May 10, 2024.
- A completed Site Plan/Subdivision Checklist.
- A completed Sustainability Checklist Form.
- A Discussion of Submission and Design Waivers.
- A Buffer Report which lists the owners of properties within 200 feet of Block 155, Lot 26.01 from the Office of the West Orange Assessor dated July 30, 2024.
- A statement from the Township of West Orange which shows that the property taxes on Block 155, Lot 26.01 are paid through the 2nd quarter of 2024.
- A copy of an Indenture dated May 31, 1928 which conveyed the property in question from The Holland Company to Public Service Electric and Gas Company. This Indenture was recorded in the Register's Office of the County of Essex, NJ on June 5, 1928 in Book M-78 on pages 157-170.
- Copies of the following prior Zoning Board of Adjustment Resolutions of Approval for the property in question:
 - Zoning Board Case No. ZB-06-40 dated January 22, 2007.
 - Zoning Board Case No. ZB-16-15 dated March 16, 2017.



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- A completed State of New Jersey Non-Residential Development Fee Certification/Exemption dated May 10, 2024 which states that Public Service Electric and Gas is exempt.
- A set of photosimulations prepared by Burns McDonnell consisting of 6 sheets. The photosimulations show the existing and proposed conditions at various locations along Mt. Pleasant Avenue and Prospect Avenue.
- A brochure of the proposed Impasse II high security steel palisade fencing from Ameristar Fence Products.

We have reviewed the information submitted in support of this application and offer the following comments:

A. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The property in question is an irregularly shaped tract located on the northwest corner of the intersection of Mount Pleasant Avenue and Prospect Avenue. It is located in the O-R Office Research Zone and has an area of approximately 23.36 acres. The site is currently occupied by an electrical switching station.

The Applicant is seeking Preliminary & Final Site Plan approval with 'C' and 'D' Variances and Tree Removal Permit to upgrade the existing electric substation. The proposed improvement include the following:

- The installation of 2-story 26kV switchgear and associated electrical equipment.
- The installation of six (6) 70-ft tall lightning masts.
- The installation of new underground electrical ducts and electrical manholes.
- The installation of a new 8 ft high security fence along Mt. Pleasant Avenue and Prospect Avenue and along a portion of the westerly Mt. Pleasant Avenue access driveway.
- The installation of a new gate at the easterly entrance to the site from Mt. Pleasant Avenue.
- Reconfiguration of the existing driveway entering the site.
- The construction of new drive paths for access to the new equipment.
- The installation of new grass swale and underground detention basins to convey and collect new stormwater runoff.
- The installation of up to six (6) temporary construction trailers and possibly a guard shack for the duration of the project which is expected to take 3 years to complete.
- The removal of 14 dead or dying trees and 89 viable trees at the site and the installation of 220 replacement trees.



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B. DESIGN COMMENTS

1. Based on our review, we find that the following items from the Township's Site Plan/Subdivision Checklist must be addressed:
 - a) Item #8 – *Signature blocks for Chairman, Secretary, and Municipal Engineer*
 - b) Item #20 – *Copy and/or delineation of any existing or proposed deed restrictions or covenants.*
 - c) Item #23 – *List of required regulatory approvals or permits*
 - d) Item #48 – *Sight triangles.*
2. The Applicant has requested the following waivers:
 - a) Item #31 – *Contours to extend at least 200' beyond subject property.*
 - b) Item #46 – *Solid Waste Management Plan.*
 - c) Item #49 – *Vehicular and pedestrian circulation patterns.*
 - d) Item #50 – *Parking plan showing spaces, size and type, aisle width, curb cuts, drives, driveways, and all ingress and egress areas and dimensions.*
2. It shows on sheet 792788 of the West Orange Switching Station plans that the existing sidewalk along the Prospect Avenue and Mt. Pleasant Avenue site frontages is to be removed. However, it shows on sheet 3 of the Site Plan drawings that the existing sidewalk is to be removed/replaced if necessary. This discrepancy must be resolved. Please note that our office is opposed to removal of the existing sidewalk along the site frontages.
3. Sheet 792796 includes a Standard Concrete Driveway and Concrete Apron detail. Therefore, the plans must be revised to show where a concrete driveway and concrete apron are proposed.
4. Sheet 792797 includes a Typical Bollard Detail. Therefore, the plans must be revised to show the locations where bollards are proposed.
5. The Applicant has revised sheet 792790 to utilize underground detention basins, instead of bioretention basins, to address stormwater management and notes the change as conceptual. All applicable plans sheets, stormwater management plan and maintenance plan must be revised and submitted to the Board for review reflecting this change.
6. In our September 9, 2024 review letter, we noted several conflicts between utilities and stormwater infrastructure. Since the most recent submission does not include the depth of the stormwater infrastructure, our office cannot confirm if any of previously noted conflicts were resolved, nor if any new conflicts were created.



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C. DRAINAGE COMMENTS

1. The proposed development will result in the disturbance of more than one acre. As a result, it is classified as a Major Development which requires that the project be designed to meet the stormwater runoff quality, quantity and groundwater recharge standards using green infrastructure.
2. In our September 9, 2024 review letter, we noted several runs of storm pipe that do not have adequate capacity to accommodate the design flow. Since the most recent submission does not address this issue, our office cannot confirm if this matter has been resolved. Testimony should be provided to the Board regarding the same.
3. A detail of a cross-section of the grass swale should be added to the plans for review.
4. The basin and grass swale details should be revised to include the peak water elevation during each storm event.
5. The "West Basin" detail on sheet 792798 should be revised to show the pipe connections to be consistent with the layout shown on sheet 792790.
6. The Stormwater Management Plan Memorandum states that a grass swale will be used to address stormwater runoff quality standards. Grass swales have the ability to achieve a maximum total suspended solids (TSS) removal rate of 50%, whereas 80% TSS removal rate is required for the stormwater runoff generated by the net increase of motor vehicle surfaces.
7. The Applicant must demonstrate the proposed grass swale meets the design standards set forth in Chapter 9.3 of the NJ BMP Manual.
8. The Applicant must demonstrate that the underground detention basin(s) meet the definition of green infrastructure in order to be utilized as a BMP to address stormwater runoff quantity standards.
9. The Applicant must demonstrate the required vertical separation between the seasonal high-water table and each of the proposed stormwater management measures has been provided.
10. The Applicant must provide the routing analysis of the revised stormwater management design to verify compliance with the applicable stormwater runoff quantity standards.
11. The drainage areas in Post-Developed Watershed Map must be revised to reflect the stormwater management design changes.
12. The Stormwater Management Measures Maintenance Plan and Field Manuals must be revised to reflect the stormwater management design changes.



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13. The List of Stormwater Management Measures in Stormwater Management Measures Maintenance Plan and Field Manuals must be revised to include the state plane coordinates for each basin.
14. The source of the Infiltration Testing listed within the table on page 8 of the Stormwater Management Measures Maintenance Plan and Field Manuals must be shown.
15. The Stormwater Management Measures Maintenance Plan and Field Manuals should be revised to include the name, address, and telephone number of the person or persons responsible for maintenance of the system.
16. The Stormwater Management Measures Maintenance Plan and Field Manuals for Stormwater Management Facilities and any future revisions to the plan must be recorded upon the deed of record for each property on which the maintenance described in the plan must be undertaken. Prior to recording, the form of the deed must be approved by the Zoning Board Attorney and our office.
17. Revise the Stormwater Management Measures Maintenance Plan and Field Manuals to include the preventive maintenance actions and the corrective maintenance actions for the existing AquaShield.

D. LIGHTING COMMENTS

1. Revise the plans to clarify the proposed timers and hours of operation for all light fixtures. Currently, proposed 'down lights' are indicated to be on "at night" or when activated.
2. The Applicant should provide testimony regarding the necessity of uplighting. In accordance with Section 25-14.2, lighting is to be directed downwards, as up lights are not dark sky compliant.
3. Provide manufacturer's catalog cuts for all proposed light fixtures, for further review. Also, include proposed color and finish.

The Applicant is hereby advised that any revised plans or other documents submitted to the Board should be accompanied by a cover letter which addresses each of the comments in this review letter and also details any other changes that have been made to the plans as these may not be readily apparent.