

McLean Citizens Association Resolution
Dominion Virginia Power
Reddfield Substation at West Falls Church Metro Yard
Special Exception Amendment 85-D-033-03 and 2232-D10-012
Tax Map 40-3 ((1)) 0086 pt.
December 1, 2010

Whereas, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) currently operates a Metro service and inspection yard (Metro Yard) in West Falls Church under special exception permit SE 85-D-033-02; and,

Whereas, the applicant, Dominion Virginia Power, in coordination with the WMATA, seeks to amend SE 85-D-033-02 to construct an electrical power substation, named Reddfield, within the Metro Yard; and,

Whereas, the proposed substation would provide electrical power to the rails inside the Metro Yard, the Silver Line rails between Falls Church and Tysons and the first three Metrorail stations in Tysons; and,

Whereas, the proposed substation would additionally provide power to an area in the general vicinity of Magarity Road, Great Falls Street, Westmoreland Street, Idylwood Road and portions of western McLean, plus East Tysons which is planned for redevelopment; and,

Whereas, the proposed substation would provide electric load relief and emergency support for the power substations in the adjacent service areas, thereby allowing faster restoration of service when power outages occur; and,

Whereas, the proposed substation would comprise two transformers, only one of which would be required to power the rail facilities and the local area; the second would not be installed until needed to satisfy future power demand; and,

Whereas, the proposed substation would additionally comprise a tall backbone structure which the applicant has proposed reducing from a proposed height of 95 feet to 85 feet; and,

Whereas, there is no alternate site for the substation in a commercial or industrial district within 1 mile of the proposed location; and,

Whereas, the applicant investigated 15 alternate sites for the substation in residential districts along the general path of the existing high voltage transmission lines, and all sites were rejected as unsuitable; and,

Whereas, the applicant considers the proposed Reddfield location to be advantageous because the transmission lines and rail facilities are proximate and WMATA is providing the site access and storm water facilities; and,

Whereas, the combination of several unique site conditions preclude the proposed substation from being shielded from the McKay Street properties;

- A substation elevation 20 feet higher than the McKay Street homes,
- An existing 100-foot wide easement for the main transmission lines that limits vegetation height to 14 feet,
- Yet another perpendicular 100-foot wide easement for the transmission lines that feed the substation,
- An existing stream valley RPA between the community and the substation,
- An approved WMATA storm water management facility adjacent to the substation that will result in extensive tree loss,
- Insufficient space around the substation compound to accommodate an effective landscaped buffer,
- An 85-foot backbone structure and other visible substation components;

and,

Whereas, due to the above cited conditions, the applicant is requesting a modification of the transitional screening and waiver of the barrier requirements for the portions of the site that abut residential properties; and,

Whereas, the county staff report acknowledges, “*the proposed facility will have a visual impact on several nearby residential properties*”; and,

Whereas, in recognition of the proposed facility’s visual impact, the applicant has proposed off-site landscaping for screening individual residential properties (with the landowners’ permission); and,

Whereas, the loss of trees due to the construction of the substation and the WMATA storm water management facility would further result in portions of the Metro Yard being visible from the McKay Street residences for the first time since the facility was built in 1985;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the McLean Citizens Association opposes SEA 85-D-033-03 and 2232-D10-012 unless the applicant accepts the following SEA development conditions:

1. The facility backbone structure shall be no higher than 85 feet,
2. Before the start of construction, a conservation easement shall be recorded over the area designated on Plat Sheet 3 as ‘Tree Save Area’ to the north of the substation with the Board of Supervisors of Fairfax County, Virginia named as the grantee of the easement,
3. The conservation easement shall be marked every 30 to 40 feet along the easement’s boundary with permanent iron pipe,
4. With the consent and coordination of the individual property owners, supplemental off-site plantings a minimum of 7 feet in height and 3.5 inches in caliper at the time of planting shall be provided to screen the adjacent residential properties along McKay Street. The exact type, number, and location of proposed trees shall be reviewed by the Urban Forester and recorded on the SE Plat. All off-site plantings shall be maintained by the respective property owner. The applicant shall replace any tree that does not remain viable, as determined by the Urban Forester, within the first ten (10) years of planting, however the applicant shall not be responsible for tree loss due to drought conditions or willful or malicious destruction. The applicant’s offer to provide off-site screening shall

remain in effect from SEA approval until the completion of Reddfield substation or the Metro Yard expansion, whichever occurs later,

5. The power lines leaving Reddfield substation to distribute power to the service area shall be routed underground and not via McKay Street or Eastman Drive.

cc: John Foust, Dranesville Supervisor
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Benjamin Wiles, Staff
Lee Fifer, McGuireWoods
Fairfax County Planning Commission
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