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2 C E N T R A L P I N E B A R R E N S

3 C O M M I S S I O N M E E T I N G

4 -----x

5 LIPA PSEG-LI MEDFORD OPERATIONS CENTER

6 COMPATIBLE GROWTH AREA

7 HARDSHIP WAVIER APPLICATION

8 -----x

9 October 18, 2023

10 3:00 p.m.

11 Town Hall
12 Southampton, New York

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20 TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

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2 A P P E A R A N C E S :

4 ROBERT T. CALARCO, Governor's Representative
5 DORIAN DALE, Suffolk County Designated Representative
6 DANIELLE HURLEY, Riverhead Designated Representative
7 MICHELLE DI BRITA, Brookhaven Designated Representative
8 JANICE SCHERER, Southampton Designated Representative
9 JUDITH E. JAKOBSEN, Executive Director
0 JULIE HARGRAVE, Joint Planning and Policy Manager
1 JOHN C. MILAZZO, Commission Counsel
2 ANGELA BROWN-WALTON, Administrative Assistant

14 | ALSO PRESENT:

15 Lara Urbat - Permitting Specialist Supervisor PSEG

17 PUBLIC SPEAKERS

18 None

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2 project site, and part of that will be
3 cleared, about half an acre is what they're
4 asking for the waiver. We will need more
5 information on that, on how they meet the
6 waiver criteria.

24 There are two new buildings proposed;
25 one is 16,000 square feet for a fleet garage,

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2 and the second one is a warehouse for utility
3 vehicles at 21,000 square feet. So, combined
4 with the existing building, the total
5 building area is about 47,690 square feet.
6 There will be parking for approximately 409
7 vehicles; that includes staff passenger
8 vehicles and fleet vehicles. So, there are
9 different sizes for parking spaces for those
10 vehicles.

Again, the site is split zoned. It contains -- part of the site is zoned A1 residence, about four and a half acres, and the rest, over 19 acres, is J2. So, the clearing is a combined limit for each of the different areas in different zoning categories. So, 63 percent of the site will be allowed to be cleared, if it was all wooded today and going to be cleared.

Again, this site benefits from pre-existing excess clearing. So, they are going to utilize this cleared area, 19.34 acres and, again, add about another half an acre of clearing for the project. So, it will be cleared to about 82 percent.

Again, this is development and it's material increase of intensity of use. There is a new traffic light proposed as well for the project on Route 112. Again, the traffic impacts showed the level of service degrading from a C to D in at least two instances, and in the Pine Barrens Land Use plan, that is a definition of development regional significance. They have presented information that is necessary for that type of application.

13 PSEG coordinated this application
14 with the Commission two months ago and the
15 Commission deferred lead agency. This also
16 requires -- the Town, I don't believe, is
17 involved because it's a PSEG/LIPA project.
18 The DEC will be involved to approve. There
19 will be permit requirements. And the
20 clearing may need to adhere to habitat
21 restrictions for clearing. It's a state,
22 Route 112, so there will be a new curb cut,
23 and that will be required to get a permit
24 from the DOT. And the Health Department
25 proposed an innovative alternative treatment

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2 system for the project. There are also two
3 large 20,000 gallon above-ground fuel storage
4 tanks that are proposed and will need to meet
5 Health Department requirements.

6 You are familiar with this area.

Route 112 is heavily developed and a heavily traveled corridor. To the north is -- in this area is, again, heavily developed non-residential uses and commercial uses. In the north side of the study area in a cemetery on the northwest side of Route 112 and in the Compatible Growth Area. Again, across the street from the site is not in the Pine Barrens at all, and to the east is industrial, other industrial and commercial development, and to the south as well; gas station, food retail establishments zoning in the area covers J2, J4, multi-family.

20 There's a multi-family condominium.

21 Development adjacent to this site.

2 is, just if they can confirm, they have
3 not -- there's no way they can avoid this
4 clearing. If there is a way to squeeze the
5 project on the over 19 acres that they have
6 that's cleared, that would be ideal to avoid
7 this hardship. They attempted to do that.
8 They can speak more to that today, and they
9 can't do it, so they're looking for an
10 approval of the waiver.

11 There are some large trees on the
12 frontage of this property, and we're asking
13 that they preserve those trees in place and
14 maybe supplement as a buffer but not remove
15 the large trees that are there. It seems to
16 be to their benefit. Maybe they can avoid
17 moving those.

Again, it's up to you, but if you would like to see them to discuss whether they can place this building more up front on the site rather than parking. There's a large parking lot in the front yard of the property. Maybe it would be more appropriate to have the buildings up front rather than seeing parking, over 409 parking spaces.

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Other items in the discussion

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include, again, retaining the large trees on
the site and submitting plans to protect the
open space and as-built plans to monitor open
space in the future, dark sky lighting, and
to minimize signage on the site.

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And that's all I have. I don't know

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if you have any questions.

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MR. CALARCO: To be clear, this is
before us because this project results in
significance and the traffic impact as well
as asking for the ability to clear beyond
what would be authorized on the spot?

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MS. HARGRAVE: That's correct.

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MR. DALE: You may not be able to
answer this question in context. What is the
approximate operation center to this one and
where is that located?

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MR. CALARCO: That would probably be
a better question for the applicant.

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MR. DALE: Julie finds out so many
things.

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MS. HARGRAVE: Bethpage or Melville.

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MS. URBAT: I do address it in my

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2 this portion of the Island. That would
3 include office space, fleet parking, training
4 area, inventory storage, fleet maintenance,
5 open yard area, EV charging station, and a
6 company vehicle fueling station which will be
7 phased out, as the company is required to
8 move to all electric vehicles by 2030. This
9 is kind of an interim need until the fleet
10 reaches that electric status.

2 quickly.

3 So, this is just an overview of what
4 the site looks like right now. We have
5 New York State 112 on the west. On the east
6 end of the proper is Cedarhurst Avenue, and
7 Granny Road is to the north. As Julie
8 mentioned, the site is currently occupied by
9 an amusement center. It is fairly heavily
10 developed. The front portion of the site is
11 more intensely used, rear portion of the site
12 is mostly occupied by parking and a driving
13 range. The southeast portion of this site is
14 wooded, however it's fairly poor quality
15 woodland. It's been very heavily impacted
16 some landscape dumping. I believe there in
17 some paint ball activity back there. So,
18 even though from the aerial prospective it
19 looks like a pretty good chunk of woodland.
20 That portion of woodland is not in any sort
21 of great quality.

22 So, what site features are we looking
23 to improve the site with? We're looking to
24 convert the existing building into an office
25 building. One of our main goals is adaptive

2 reuse of that building. So, we have worked
3 with engineers and architects to adaptively
4 reuse the building and convert it to office
5 and don't have to knock down the building and
6 put more up. We're also going to have an
7 inventory storage and fleet maintenance area.
8 Again, this is going to be a centralized
9 location that is going to be key to our
10 vehicles, especially the new EV vehicles that
11 are coming in. Of course we have to have
12 parking for both the employees and the fleet
13 that will be utilized on the site.

14 There's an open yard area and that's
15 where we store some of the larger equipment.
16 We have some pole lay down areas and things
17 like that, and that's where our employees
18 need to go pick up the equipment required to
19 do construction as necessary.

20 We also have a training area. Our
21 linemen have to go through fairly extensive
22 training. Currently, we only have one main
23 facility for training and that's in
24 Hicksville. So for our linemen that are
25 stationed on this portion of the Island, it

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2 alternative treatment systems for the
3 sanitary waste water from the building. So
4 the existing building will have been replaced
5 with a new system, and then the fleet
6 maintenance building will also get this
7 alternative.

22 And then invasive species and
23 understory management for the southeast
24 corner of the site, as I mentioned earlier,
25 is a very impacted woodland area, and this

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2 would help to enhance that.

3 So, this is a map of what our
4 proposed improvements are. So, if we look in
5 the upper left corner of the site that's
6 where the existing building is that we're
7 looking to convert to office space. As we
8 move toward the right, you're going to see
9 where we have proposed inventory storage and
10 fleet facility, and then we're going to look
11 to reuse that open existing parking area as
12 an open yard area; that's where we have that
13 pole storage. Fleet parking is proposed
14 behind the office building and in front of
15 the inventory building. And then the
16 fueling/training area, those would all be in
17 the south central portion of the site. The
18 new traffic signal is going to be located at
19 the proposed new entrance of the site.

20 It's important to note that the
21 traffic signal is only proposed for safe
22 egress of our fleet vehicles. As the traffic
23 study demonstrated, there is no change to
24 level of service on 112, and the change in
25 the level of service that Julie was speaking

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of before -- actually, I wanted to clarify --
is actually the site driveway. So, we did
the analysis to make sure we had enough queue
space for any of our vehicles that are
waiting at the light to exit onto 112. If
you'd like, after the presentation, our
traffic engineer can discuss that a little
bit more. But the proposed signal is purely
for safety purposes, as we pull large fleet
vehicles. Of course it takes these vehicles
more time to make turns and maneuvers and we
want to make sure they get onto 112 very
smoothly.

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Here are some of our proposed

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vegetation and green infrastructure

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components. So, we're proposing a vegetative

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berm on the front of the site along 112 to

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help screen the property, reduce the visual

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impact of the site redevelopment. It was

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something that we had heard from a lot of

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people that it was very concerning to them;

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they wanted to make sure that the site wasn't

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going to be very obtrusive in their visual

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traverses along $\pi\pi$:

23 This, again, is existing wooded area,
24 and the southeast portion of the site is
25 heavily impacted. So, we're looking to do

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targeted understory restoration to include invasive species removal and replacement with native species. And then there's that green amorphous shape in the south central portion of the site; that will also be some more forest restoration to provide that contiguous habitat in that area.

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targeted understory restoration to include invasive species removal and replacement with native species. And then there's that green amorphous shape in the south central portion of the site; that will also be some more forest restoration to provide that contiguous habitat in that area.

25 The site has been developed since

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2 prior to the Pine Barrens Act, and there is a
3 prior application history on this property
4 that demonstrates that. The overall
5 allowable clearing on the site is 15.21
6 acres. Currently 19.34 are cleared. So,
7 again, the proposal is to re-vegetate 5.73
8 acres of native forest and meadow, and we'll
9 have a future total acreage of 10.16 acres of
10 native habitat.

Again, our hardship request is to allow for the redevelopment of the site with minor additional clearing. We have provided significant amounts of mitigation and consideration of the redevelopment, again, just with the restoration, the invasive species management and retention of all remaining buffers.

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We are going to be meeting Suffolk County Sanitary Code Article 7 and 12 requirements for the fueling area through our standard secondary canopy overhead protection, fire suppression for that fuel storage area, again, which is anticipated to be phased out by 2030.

Also, the water is going to be recharged on site, and the wet meadow contributes to that.

MR. MILAZZO: Quick question. When do you think you will start construction, if approved?

MS. URBAT: I don't have that schedule. I would have to reach back out to our facilities manager.

MR. MILAZZO: We're in 2024. I'll defer to them. I'd be interested to know.

MS. URBAT: The restore vegetation on the site is going to create larger contiguous block of native habitat, rather than the fragmented patches of habitat that we currently have on the site. Only .42 acres of the site will consist of fertilizer

2 dependent vegetation which is less than the
3 15 percent allowable maximum. We're going to
4 grade and stabilize the site to ensure that
5 we have stabilize slopes throughout the
6 property and have that vegetative berm on 112
7 to serve as a buffer.

8 So, just in summary, we're going to
9 improve the project through -- improve the
10 site through the significant re-vegetation,
11 innovative waste water systems, creation of
12 the stabilized intersection and use of green
13 infrastructure as of the redevelopment. It
14 will allow for us to have our consolidated
15 operation center which really is critical for
16 serving this portion of Suffolk County. And
17 we have designed the project to meet the
18 standards of the CLUP.

19 So, we're happy to answer any
20 questions you may have.

21 MR. DALE: So, okay, you expressed
22 that the primary objective of this new
23 operation center is to fill -- central and
24 eastern Suffolk. But to what degree is it
25 also in anticipation of the increased amount

2 of generation that is coming in from off
3 shore, I think the enhancements of
4 transmission systems and various other facets
5 that have clearly been in place on the
6 central and eastern portion of Suffolk
7 County?

8 MS. URBAT: You know that's really an
9 interesting question, and it's a little bit
10 hard to quantify that. A lot of the
11 development that we have seen in terms of
12 green energy really involve underground
13 transmission, which requires substantially
14 less maintenance than the overhead
15 facilities. LIPA is primarily an overhead
16 utility. When a lot of these underground
17 transmission lines come in, it doesn't really
18 increase the amount of maintenance that's
19 required after installed. There is a regular
20 maintenance cycle that is part of that but
21 it's not as much, again, as the overhead
22 infrastructure.

23 On the converse side, when you do
24 have to do maintenance of the underground
25 facility, it does take substantially longer,

I would say, than the overhead facilities, because there are challenges accessing.

10 MR. DALE: Right. I mean, there is
11 unquestionably an increased demand for energy
12 on the south fork in particular.

13 MS. URBAT: Yes, there is.

18 MS. URBAT: Yes. We do actually have
19 a separate yard on the south fork. There is
20 a yard in Bridgehampton that serves that
21 area. This yard really is more for the
22 central portion of the Island, you know, and
23 our fleet would kind of radiate out from
24 there. We also have Greenlawn and Brentwood
25 on Suffolk Avenue in Brentwood.

2 MS. HURLEY: You said you did a
3 traffic study for this property?

4 MS. URBAT: Yes.

5 MS. HURLEY: You saw no impact.

6 MS. URBAT: No level service
7 increases. The one that Julie noticed,
8 again, was from our vehicles that would be
9 queuing up on the site driveway at the
10 signal. If you have more specific questions
11 about that, again, we do have the traffic
12 engineer here to answer those.

13 MR. MILAZZO: My question about when
14 you were starting. You indicated that the
15 fueling will be sort of phased out in 2030.
16 So the project by '24, it's a six year
17 window. All of the clearing necessary is to
18 locate the fueling station, it looks like.
19 So, is there a way, given that that is sort
20 of a diminishing entity that those could be
21 adjusted for that, if it's only there for
22 five years?

23 MS. URBAT: So, the fueling station
24 it was located there for now. So, believe it
25 or not, we actually do need a much larger

2 training area than what is depicted. The
3 overall goal is, once we abandon those
4 fueling stations, is to make that part of the
5 more robust training area. Lineman training
6 is a very, very intensive thing. Right now
7 it's only depicted to have a pole climbing
8 area, but there is a lot more work that goes
9 into training. So, that is the overall goal.
10 Rather than come back to you in six years and
11 say, "Okay, now we need more area for
12 training." If we can cite something that
13 benefits our operations now and convert that
14 to the training area later on in the
15 currently cleared space. To us, it made more
16 sense to design it that way at the moment.

17 MR. MILAZZO: How are the two
18 areas -- you have the lay down area in the
19 back, adjacent to that.

20 MS. URBAT: This is the parking lot.

21 MR. MILAZZO: That's a lay down area
22 for the larger infrastructure.

23 How tall are the areas to the south
24 of that protected?

25 MS. URBAT: You mean the

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who owns the asset?

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MS. URBAT: LIPA would own the asset.

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MR. CALARCO: Any other questions?

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(No response was heard.)

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MS. URBAT: Thank you so much for
your time.

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MR. CALARCO: Is there anyone else in
the audience who would like to address this
particular application?

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(No response was heard.)

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MR. CALARCO: Seeing none, where are
we?

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MR. MILAZZO: A motion to close.

Keep the record open for two weeks. I think

that's what the staff recommends. If the

applicant wants to supply a hardship criteria
analysis, they should do that in two weeks.

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MS. URBAT: We had provided the
hardship analysis.

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MR. MILAZZO: We have what I'll call
the "Chic" chart, a Chic special. Do you
have the analysis which is sort of the
hardship of "We need this hardship because"?
I don't know if Chic is involved in this

2 project.

3 MS. URBAT: I apologize. I thought
4 it was part of our application package. If
5 it was inadvertently omitted, we can provide
6 it.

7 MS. HARGRAVE: I may have missed it,
8 but I didn't see it.

9 MR. MILAZZO: I'm sure he knows how
10 to write it.

11 MS. URBAT: I will check and make
12 sure that we provide it to you. I apologize
13 if it was omitted.

14 MR. CALARCO: I'll entertain a motion
15 to close the public hearing and leave the
16 record open for two weeks. Do we need an
17 extended deadline on this decision?

18 MR. MILAZZO: No.

19 MS. HARGRAVE: The December meeting.

20 MR. MILAZZO: December.

21 MR. CALARCO: The extended deadline
22 is the December meeting. Is the applicant
23 okay with that?

24 MS. URBAT: We have some contractual
25 deadlines that are very hard. I don't know

2 that I can authorize that. I can take it
3 back and see if there's anything we can do,
4 if I can get back to you tomorrow, if that
5 would be okay.

6 MR. MILAZZO: You can get back to us
7 in November.

10 So, we have a motion to close the
11 public hearing and to leave the record open
12 for two weeks. Motion from Ms. Scherer.

13 MR. DALE: Second.

14 MR. CALARCO: Seconded by Mr. Dale.
15 All in favor.

16 (WHEREUPON, there was a unanimous
17 affirmative vote of the Board.)

18 MR. CALARCO: Any opposed,
19 abstentions?

20 (WHEREUPON, there was no response
21 from the Board.)

22 (Time Ended: 3:53 p.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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5 I, BETHANNE MENNONNA, a Notary Public
6 within and for the State of New York do
7 hereby certify that the foregoing is a true
8 and accurate transcript of the proceedings,
9 as taken stenographically by myself to the
10 best of my ability, at the time and place
11 aforementioned.

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BETHANNE MENNONNA