

NEW HAVEN CITY PLAN COMMISSION COASTAL SITE PLAN REVIEW
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RE: 520 GRAND AVENUE, Site Plan Review including Coastal Site Plan Review for Construction of Replacement Switching Station in an IH Zone (Owner/Applicant: United Illuminating Company).

REPORT: 1437-02

ACTION: Approval with Conditions

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

1. The applicant shall record on the City land records an original copy of this Coastal Site Plan Review report (to be provided by the City Plan Department) and shall furnish written evidence to the City Plan Department that the document has been so recorded (showing volume and page number), prior to initiation of site work.
2. Comments under **Site Plan Review** on page 3 shall be reviewed with the City Plan Department and resolution reflected on final plans:
3. Flood elevation certificate [Flood Development Permit certifying finished floor elevation] shall be filed with the City's building official whether or not a building permit is required, prior to initiation of work by UI.
4. Any work within the public right of way will require appropriate permits.
5. Any sidewalks or curbs on the perimeter of the project deemed to be in damaged condition or damaged during construction shall be replaced or repaired in accord with City of New Haven standard details.
6. Final Traffic Operations Plan including the work on East Street shall be prepared to the satisfaction of the Department of Transportation, Traffic and Parking.
7. As-built site plan shall be filed with City Plan Department, with a copy to the City Engineer, at completion of project. Site Plan shall be submitted in both mylar and digital format [.DWG file based on the State Plane Coordinates (NAD1983)]. Provide version of AutoCAD with submission.

Submission: Development Permit Application, inc. SESC, SPR & CSPR components, Application fee of \$240.00, Letter from Kathleen Shanley 01/21/10, Storm water report/Drainage Calculations by Black & Veatch, Project Narrative, Environmental Information inc. CSPR supplement, Attachments: CT Siting Council: UI Petition for declaratory Ruling and Council Approval, Site Photos (Existing facilities), Technical Description Grand Av to West River 115-kV HPFF Cable Splicing/Freeze Pit Plan, Geotechnical Report: Site Borings.

Letter 2/8/10 from K. Shanley responding to additional questions, update concerning GNHWPCA, Sanitary Connection 2/5/10 and Maintenance of Traffic and Protection of the Public. Revised sheet SK-091203-01 2/5/10.

Plans for Switching Station Site by Black & Veatch: Const Facilities Plan & General Notes, SESC Sections & Details, Existing Site Plan, Sections, & General Notes, Grading & Drainage Plan, Grading & drainage Sections & Details, Grading & Drainage Infiltration bed plan & Details, Grading & Drainage Plan, Roads, Surfacing & Grading Plan, , Sections & Details, Underground utilities Key Plan: Underground Utilities Plan, Sections & Details, Site Arrangement Plan, Connection for Sanitary Sewer Traffic Control Plan.

Cable Replacement & Extension for interconnection to Switching Station: Existing Site Plan, Grand Ave station modernization freeze pit plan & Details inc. operations plan.

PROJECT SUMMARY:

Project: Grand Avenue Switching Station Modernization Project
Address: 520 Grand Avenue
Site Size: 180,016 SF
Zone: IH, CAM
Financing: UI to cover
Project Cost: \$64 million
Parking: 17 spaces shown
Owner: United Illuminating Company **Phone:** 203-926-4695
Applicant: Kathleen Shanley, UI **Phone:** 203-926-4695
Agent: Arron Lewis, Black & Veatch **Phone:** 913-458-2550
Site Engineer: same

City Lead: City Plan Dept.

Phone: 203-946-6379

BACKGROUND

The purpose of the project is to upgrade UI's existing open air 115-kV 13.8 kV substation by its replacement with an indoor gas-insulated 4 bay breaker-and-a half switching station. The project will increase the reliability and safety of the switching station which is an important junction not only on the UI system, but also for the New England electric transmission grid. As part of the project, various transmission lines will be connected to the new gas-insulated switchgear station, all on site except for a section of cable replacement in the East Street right of way. The project is required to bring the switching station into compliance with regional electric system standards.

Project site: The site is located on the south side of Grand Avenue at #520 on the west bank of the Mill River. Across the river to the east is the English Station. To the west is a rail line. Currently on the site is a switchyard, relay house, pumping station for high pressure fluid-filled cables, and supporting structures for overhead switches and electrical components. The station also includes a steel and aluminum lattice structure, which has a maximum height of 81 feet. There are three 900-gallon mineral oil tanks on site. The east side of the site is bulkheaded.

Proposed Activity: Existing obsolete switching station components will be removed and the new facilities will be constructed and connected with transmission lines. A Quonset hut at the streetface and several other small buildings will be demolished. As a first phase of the project, new stormwater infiltration beds and a new connection to the sanitary sewer system and on site water supply will be completed. Then the new butler-type building will be erected and interior equipment will be installed. Following completion of the buildings, the interconnection with the existing grid will be established. For the three underground cables that connect to the station this will require extending the existing lines by approximately 275' to reach the location of the new switching station, all which can be accomplished on site except for two high pressure lines which must be accessed from a splice vault in an existing manhole on the sidewalk on East Street.

Zoning: The Site Plan as submitted meets the requirements of the New Haven Zoning Ordinance for the IH zone. Because the site is located within the Coastal Zone, local Coastal Site Plan Review is required.

Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Review: Silt fencing will be installed along the waterfront and also along the east of an interior roadway. A construction entrance will be installed. Overall, UI will move 6,183 CY of material, remove a total of 3,402 CY of material from the site, and add back 2,781 CY of clean fill. Steve Lux of Black & Veatch Construction Inc. is named as the individual responsible for monitoring the site and also as the on-site monitor to assure there is no soil or runoff entering City catch basins or the storm sewer system. He is also responsible for assuring there is no dust gravitation off site by controlling dust generated by vehicles and equipment during the construction phase. **A soil stockpile in the northeast corner of the site shall be protected from dust gravitation and soil erosion.** All SESC measures are required to be designed and constructed in accordance with the latest Standards and Specifications of the *Connecticut Guidelines for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control*.

Mr. Lux shall be responsible for determining the appropriate response, should unforeseen erosion or sedimentation problems arise. He is fully responsible for insuring that SESC measures are properly installed, maintained and inspected according to the SESC Plan.

Stormwater/Utilities: UI will use an existing lateral connecting to the City's sewer system so no disturbance of grand Avenue will be required. All other utilities are on site. The applicant will contact GNHWPCA to determine any additional requirements. The area around where the new building will be constructed and the roadways on site will remain gravel to allow for infiltration of stormwater and to prevent flushing into the Mill River. Stormwater will infiltrate into the soil beneath the gravel which is well drained.

Construction Operations: During the construction period, a construction management area will be established at the west side of the site with dumpsters for recyclable materials, and other materials to be disposed. There will also be construction trailers in that general location. On the east side at the street face, a construction laydown area and soil stockpile area will be established.

The offsite work under the west sidewalk on East Street will require closure of and excavation under the sidewalk affecting one travel lane for approximately 6 weeks. **A revised operations plan acceptable to the Department of Transportation, Traffic and Parking will be required.**

Circulation/Parking: There is a single main access drive into the site from Grand Avenue. Granite curb and concrete walk are in good condition. A new gravel access roadway will be laid to access the new G.I.S. Control building. There are 17 parking spaces shown on the plan which will remain in place.

Landscaping /Lighting/Fencing: There are 3 street trees planted along Grand Avenue and several empty tree pits. There are more existing trees on the private property behind the ornamental fence. **The Commission requests a revised landscape plan be submitted to the City Plan Department showing additional trees in compliance with the soon to be published City's Complete Streets manual.** An ornamental metal picket fence exists at the street face. The remaining site is enclosed with 14' -24' chain link fencing in good condition. The height of the fencing is due to the secure nature of the site.

Other permits: UI submitted the project to the CT Siting Council for a declaratory ruling in January 2009 and the project received Siting Council approval in February 2009. A Building Permit will be required with the associated Flood Development Permit.

COASTAL SITE PLAN REVIEW

The Commission's Coastal Site Plan Review, in accordance with Section 55.C of the New Haven Zoning Ordinance shall consider the characteristics of the site, including location and condition of any coastal resources; shall consider the potential effects, both beneficial and adverse, of the proposed activity on coastal resources and future water-dependent development opportunities; follow the goals and policies of the Connecticut Coastal Management Act, as amended, and identify conflicts between the proposed use and any goal or policy of the Act.

Characteristics and Condition of Coastal Resources at or Adjacent to the site:

Coastal Flood hazard area: The building site is located within Flood Zone A6 on FIRM# 090084-0003C, 05/02/83 where the flood elevation is identified at 11. The westernmost portion of the site along the railroad is identified as Zone B, an area of 100 to 500 year flood, and also Zone C, an area of minimal flooding. The site elevation ranges from 12 to elevation 7 in the vicinity of the new structure. The station will be constructed in accordance with the City's requirements as stated in the Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance. The applicant states the control enclosure will be at elevation 12. **A Flood Elevation Certificate will be required to be filed with the City's building official.**

Estuarine Embayment and Navigable waters: The Mill River is an estuarine embayment and is a navigable river. All work will be conducted on upland portions of the site, and will be confined by soil erosion measures.

Developed Shorefront: The project site has been historically developed for industrial uses. The site's topography and waterfront have been substantially altered, over the past approximately 100 years, by artificial filling and bulkheading. The project will be consistent with existing industrial uses. Sand will not affect any significant coastal resources.

Upland Shorelands: The development of the project will have no adverse impacts on the upland shorelands.

Potential Adverse Impacts: The applicant states the project will be constructed resulting in no adverse impacts on coastal resources. No in-water activity is proposed.

Water dependent Use: The placement of the new facility does not preclude water dependent use on the site.

Consistency with the Coastal Management Act: Overall that the project will be consistent with coastal and land use policies and will avoid, minimize or mitigate the potential for environmental impacts in that it will improve the reliability and safety of the electric system, and will provide the needed energy within any significant adverse environmental effects.

Project Timetable: Project start by March 2010-October 2012. Overall project construction activities well occur between 7 AM and 6 PM, except for the freeze pit installation where work will continue 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for 6 weeks.

SITE PLAN REVIEW

Plans have been reviewed by the Site Plan Review team with representatives from the Departments of City Plan, City Engineer, Building, Disabilities Services, and Transportation, Traffic and Parking and have been found to meet the requirements of City ordinances, Regulations and standard details with the following comments:

Transportation:

- *Prior to initiation of work on the East Street component, revised Traffic operation plan for work on East Street, including hard barrier protection for pedestrians, dimensioned lanes, attenuation, and illuminated flashing arrow (possibly solar powered) to be submitted to Transportation Department for review and approval*

City Plan:

- *A revised landscape plan shall be submitted to the City Plan Department showing additional trees in conformity with the City's Complete Streets manual.*

COASTAL FINDING:

Taking into consideration all of the above information, the City Plan Commission finds the proposed activity consistent with all applicable goals and policies in Section 22a-92 of the Connecticut Coastal Management Act and incorporates as conditions or modifications all reasonable measures which would mitigate the adverse effects on coastal resources. The Commission therefore makes a finding of no impact on coastal resources and approval for a coastal permit to be issued.

ACTION

The City Plan Commission approves the submitted Site Plans subject to the standard conditions on Page 1.

ADOPTED: February 17, 2010
Edward Mattison
Chair

ATTEST: 
Karyn M. Gilvarg, AIA
Executive Director

Coastal Site Plan Review, based upon the application and materials submitted by the applicant, was conducted administratively without hearing by the City Plan Commission of the City of New Haven in accordance with the Connecticut Coastal Management Act (CGS, Sections 22a-90 to 22a-112). The Building Official hereby receives the above written findings and any conditions thereof are made conditions of the Building Permit.

DATE ADOPTED: 2/19/10

ATTEST: 
Andrew J. Rizzo, Jr.
Building Official