

*Eric Marden*

6

BOARD OF ZONING APPEAL FOR THE CITY OF CAMBRIDGE GENERAL HEARING Thursday, January 13, 2011 7:00 P.M. Senior Center, 806 Massachusetts Avenue  
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139  
Constantine Alexander, Chair Timothy Hughes, Vice Chair Brendan Sullivan, Member  
Tad Heuer, Member Thomas Scott, Member Douglas Myers, Member

[EXCERPT]

(10:25 p.m.) (Sitting Members: Constantine Alexander, Timothy Hughes, Brendan Sullivan, Tad Heuer, Thomas Scott.)

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: The Chair will call case No. 10044, 377-379 Putnam Avenue. Is there anyone here wishing to be heard on this matter?

ATTORNEY NEVEN RABADJIJA: Hi, good evening. My name is Neven Rabadjija. I'm an attorney with NStar Electric Company. And with me here today is Bill Zamparelli who's our community relations representative.

BILL ZAMPARELLI: How are you?

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: Why don't you give those to --

Page 243

BILL ZAMPARELLI: I did.

ATTORNEY NEVEN RABADJIJA: So, again, Bill Zamparelli and John Zicko, manager of the station design engineering. In view of the lateness of the hour, I'm going to dispense with any formal remarks and get right into the substance of the matter.

NStar is looking to install two pieces of equipment at two substations in Cambridge, existing substations; Alewife on Putnam Street. Two pieces of equipment at heat exchangers. They're both identical pieces of equipment. In fact, they're related in functioning and the John will explain that in a minute. Both stations are prior non-conforming uses. And so this addition of this equipment will cause the expansion in non-conforming use in the Special Permit request.

John, do you want to go right in to describing the equipment?

Page 244

TAD HEUER: Can you first just give a sense of -- I mean, why the Special Permit is required, because you're in a Residence C Zone and you're in a Business A Zone.

ATTORNEY NEVEN RABADJIJA: The use itself is non-conforming as a substation use. We're expanding and by adding the equipment.

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: Yes, but in the district you need a Special Permit under the Table of Uses.

TAD HEUER: Yes. Okay.

ATTORNEY NEVEN RABADJIJA: Section 8.22 I think it is.

TAD HEUER: Right. So, these would only be conforming if you were in an industrial zone?

ATTORNEY NEVEN RABADJIJA: Right.

TAD HEUER: Is that right, is that it essentially?

BILL ZAMPARELLI: I think it's required in all zones. It's a Special Permit

Page 245

in all zones to expand.

TAD HEUER: I'm just kind of amused

by the fact that somehow you find yourself in a residence zone.

ATTORNEY NEVEN RABADJIJA: We have substations in all types of zones. So essentially to identical pieces of equipment. We're not adding buildings. It's just equipment. So John will describe the equipment, its function and need for it.

JOHN ZICKO: The equipment is known as a heat exchanger, and it's purpose -- oh, for the record, the spelling of my last name is Z-i-c-k-o. John, J-o-h-n.

It's a heat exchanger, and the electric supply to the center and eastern part of Cambridge is provided with two fluid filled underground transmission lines. Underground transmission lines, like any piece of electrical cable, will heat up. These will help release the heat into the

Page 246

atmosphere and increase the capability of the existing lines to meet the anticipated loads in the area.

TAD HEUER: And is this based on your estimation or your numbers for where power usage is required and demanded? So you're saying that you're immanently putting on your cap for your existing equipment; is that right?

JOHN ZICKO: It's based off of the load forecasts that the company prepares.

TAD HEUER: Okay. And you're representing that you're about to exceed them?

JOHN ZICKO: Yes.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Are you changing the transmission lines?

JOHN ZICKO: No.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: So those don't change, but they're being ripped up more; is that correct? I mean, then that's why

Page 247

there's cooling? JOHN ZICKO: We are providing a path for the heat that gets generated in those cables to come out.

BILL ZAMPARELLI: I think this is adding additional cooling capacity which will avoid having to install an additional 150-KB line. That's the purpose of it. And it's effectively providing that additional cooling capacity for the existing line so that this will have more capacity, ability.

TAD HEUER: Right. So the line itself can carry excess load. If it did so, it could be too hot and couldn't be used at that capacity.  
it down.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Just has to cool

TAD HEUER: Okay.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Or absorbs the heat. Is that what it is, an absorption?

BILL ZAMPARELLI: It dissipates.

Page 248

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: It dissipates it, okay.

JOHN ZICKO: Functionally it's a radiator. In the simplest form it's a radiator with a fan.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay.

JOHN ZICKO: The fluid is pumped through the radiator, the fan blows the air over the radiator and it goes into the air.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yes.

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: Do you get any kind of state permits as well to do this project?

ATTORNEY NEVEN RABADJIJA: No. We visited with the DPU and the Sighting Board and they gave us letters indicating they're not interested in the jurisdiction.

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: The only relief you need for any kind governmental permission is from our Board.

ATTORNEY NEVEN RABADJIJA: Well,

Page 249

that's for the location of the substation heat exchanges which we're talking about here tonight.

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: Right.

ATTORNEY NEVEN RABADJIJA: There actually will be a discussion with the Pole and Conduit Commission with the pipe and cable being in the streets.

BILL ZAMPARELLI: Grants for location.

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: But tonight's matter, we're the only Board passing on this.

ATTORNEY NEVEN RABADJIJA: That's correct.

TAD HEUER: Can you talk a little bit about the visual impact? Just give us a sense for the record of the size of this for the stenographer so that we have that in the record. We have pictures in the file.

ATTORNEY NEVEN RABADJIJA: We have

Page 250

pictures.

JOHN ZICKO: Yeah, the--there are

pictures in the record as far as the physical footprint on the plan that was submitted.

ATTORNEY NEVEN RABADJIJA: Generally we are meeting all the dimensional requirements.

TAD HEUER: Okay.

JOHN ZICKO: Yes. Just so I get a reference on the physical size. The heat exchanger is 55 feet long by 12 feet wide and it's approximately 10 to 12 feet high.

THOMAS SCOTT: What about noise? Does it generate noise?

JOHN ZICKO: It does as any piece of equipment that has a fan, and it will, this is no different. We are in the process of preparing the specifications for the heat exchanges now. We will be having acoustical sound measurements taken so that we can baffle the noise. We will buy the heat

Page 251

exchanges with the appropriate noise baffling imprint.

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: You didn't have that done before you came before us so we wouldn't have that for purposes of the record. And we can pass on whether you've taken necessary steps to deal with the noise issue. Because I look at it, this heat exchange is only going to be ten feet from the lot line. And if it's going to make noise as you say it will, what's our comfort that you're not going to disturb whoever abuts this property?

ATTORNEY NEVEN RABADJIJA: We're prepared to make a commitment that our design will meet whatever the Zoning requirement is.

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: Well, we don't have a Zoning requirement.

ATTORNEY NEVEN RABADJIJA: There's a noise ordinance.

BILL ZAMPARELLI: We will comply

Page 252

with the noise ordinance.

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: You have to do that whether we do or not. The protection is you're going to comply with the noise ordinance?

BILL ZAMPARELLI: Yes.

THOMAS SCOTT: My question is is that enough?

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: That's my question, too.

THOMAS SCOTT: I mean, if you're in a residence zone --

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: Yes, I would like to know more about this, the noise issue, then just we'll take care of it after you give us relief.

THOMAS SCOTT: If my house was here or here or wherever, and all of a sudden somebody introduced this fan powered heat exchangers, I would be real concerned about the noise.

Page 253

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yes, but I think that that's all the -- I mean, that's the bar they have to meet is to comply with the noise ordinance as it is anybody, in any residential structure putting in condensers on the outside, you know, there is that regulation.

And, Ranjit, when the permit is issued, they obviously have to comply with the noise ordinance?

RANJIT SINGANAYAGAM: Yes, there is certain decibels required. There are certain amount decibels allowed during the daytime and nighttime.

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: But the question really, though, is it enough that they're going to comply with the noise ordinance given the location of this exchanger on the property? If they put it somewhere else on the property on Putnam Avenue, I think we have a different

Page 254

consideration.

RANJIT SINGANAYAGAM: I think the noise ordinance, they talk about residential zones and the rest are commercial zones so they have different -- and it's monitored by the License Commission.

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: Okay.

ATTORNEY NEVEN RABADJIJA: If I can add, we do have these in other locations, I was checking with John, and they are close to residential area in those cases as well and there are no issues.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: I mean those are monitored, too.

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: Oh, I'm sure they are. And if not, the neighbors would be monitoring it.  
BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yes. There is actually an inspector that will go out and with a monitoring device.  
TAD HEUER: The nearest abutting

Page255

building is the one right behind the old Polaroid building?

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: No, no, I don't think so.

BILL ZAMPARELLI: The one behind the river is the old Polaroid building.

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: You're right.

TAD HEUER: Who's right behind the Polaroid building?

BILL ZAMPARELLI: Right behind is actually Harvard I believe owns the condominium project that's there.

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: Residential?

BILL ZAMPARELLI: It's condominiums.

TAD HEUER: I'm sorry, so that's Polaroid.

BILL ZAMPARELLI: This is Polaroid.

TAD HEUER: That's where you're

Page256

putting it, right?

BILL ZAMPARELLI: This is

the -- this is the Harvard University's residential development. I think they're -- I don't know if they're condominiums or just apartments.

TAD HEUER: Right. And what's that building?

BILL ZAMPARELLI: That's an office building I believe. I'm not quite sure to tell you the truth.

TAD HEUER: Okay.

BILL ZAMPARELLI: But this is office zone that section in here.

TAD HEUER: Do you know what right behind Polaroid is?

RANJIT SINGANAYAGAM: Office building. Two office buildings there. Two office buildings on this side and house on there.

TAD HEUER: Yes, that's Harvard

Page 257

housing. That's already housing. So where you're planning to put it in, your nearest abutter is actually an office building and not a residence; is that right?

BILL ZAMPARELLI: Yes, that's correct.

TAD HEUER: Okay. So even though you're in a residential zone, I guess the point I'm making is your nearest abutter is not a residential property.

BILL ZAMPARELLI: Right. I think what's important to note is that the unit itself doesn't make noise. It's the fans, the cooling system.

THOMAS SCOTT: And on a hot summer night when everyone has their windows open and they're trying to sleep and the fan kicks or whatever on the one time when the thing is used it's run on peak.

TAD HEUER: Be thankful they have air conditioning.

Page 258

TIMOTHY HUGHES: But on a hot summer night when everyone has their windows closed and their air conditioning is running, you want this electricity to work.

THOMAS SCOTT: Right. Not everybody has air conditioning.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: I agree.

THOMAS SCOTT: I guess my point is, you know, it would have been nice to know if there was -- if it was approaching a problem, maybe not -- maybe you're not able to meet the guidelines, you know, is there a baffling system of some type that could be, that could surround this thing so that it prevents the sound from traveling to the residential areas.

JOHN ZICKO: The heat exchanger that air circulates around it, that's how we get rid of the heat. The baffling that would be installed in the heat exchanger and fan area would prevent the noise from escaping at all.

Page 259

So it would be -- fundamentally it would be a built in sound (inaudible) system.

ATTORNEY NEVEN RABADJIJA: (Inaudible) we're building in the design of the equipment as opposed to having a noisy piece of equipment to try and build, you know, the fences against the noise around it.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: Think of a muffler on a car.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: You're capturing the source rather than letting it escape and then trying to capture it.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: That's more than just a heat exchange but it does heat exchange, too.

JOHN ZICKO: That's exactly what a muffler on the car does. It contains the noise before it gets out into the atmosphere.

ATTORNEY NEVEN RABADJIJA: Keep in mind that our specification for the design will require them to meet the noise

Page 260

ordinance.

TAD HEUER: And in terms of

screening, what kinds of visual screening do these generally have? Is it just, you know, would it be something like this? Do you, you know, put up shrubs?

BILL ZAMPARELLI: It's pretty much an industrial site. That's what we have.

TAD HEUER: Okay.

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: You're not proposing to do any landscaping?

BILL ZAMPARELLI: We weren't. But, you know, we'll listen to anything --

TAD HEUER: I'm only asking because in the other case, the Alewife Brook case, there is a condition in that previous grant for elimination of visual impact, and there's a screening and landscaping requirement condition if granted the Variance itself. So I don't know if that one is -- not to go out of turn, but I'd be interested in knowing

261

what that was in a worse, so to speak, zone. In a commercial zone up in Alewife Brook, where here it's a residential zone around residential type properties, whether similar type screening is viable.

ATTORNEY NEVEN RABADJIJA: If I may, I think in the Alewife case, that was perimeter screen for the substation. It had nothing to do with the installation.

TAD HEUER: All right.

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: Further questions or comments from members of the Board?

Is there anyone here wishing to be heard? Yes, sir. Wishing to be heard come forward, please.

ELIE YARDEN: My name is Elie E-l-i-e Yarden Y-a-r-d-e-n. I live at 143 Pleasant Street. I've lived there for 15 years. I can speak to you as an abutter or I can speak to you as a citizen. If I speak

Page 262

to you as a citizen, then I also have to reveal, I suppose, that I'm an active member of the Green Party, and I'm also involved with the Climate Action Committee in Cambridge. And so I have other concerns.

My concerns as an abutter have to do with the non-conforming presence in a residential neighborhood, and something which might properly belong in an industrial zone. I have seen very little regard on the part of the proprietors, the corporation, for the fact that it is not only in a residential neighborhood, but it has a fairly long street frontage which my unit overlooks. The maintenance of the frontage is not like that of a business or a residential frontage. It's a neglected slum site. For many years there has been some improvement as a result of extensive complaint. Unfortunately I happen to be in Whole Foods at about 8:15 in the morning and there's another aspect. It says

Page 263

here that this is an unattended site. Not only is it unattended, but the gate can be wide open. When I passed by, I barely was able to make my way on the other side of the street because of the snow removal, and the kind of snow removal that had been done made it hazardous. This is a frequent occurrence. And it is related to other aspects of this as well. So, between the failure to clean this site and leaving the gates wide open with no one there to make sure that no one is coming in at eight o'clock this morning, there were two cars parked there, the gate thrown wide open, any kid could have walked in.

I went to Whole Foods, did the shopping that I had to do and went home. Then there was only one car there, but the gates were still thrown wide open. I thought well, maybe they're shoveling snow inside, etcetera, etcetera. Because the lot inside was walkable, whereas the sidewalk fronting

Page 264

it was not. Mr.Zamparelli is aware of the fact that I've complained about this situation many times, and somehow or another it doesn't get done. And I would say that an important part of the reason, having been an industrial worker myself, is that industrial workers frequently look down upon people who -- there's something macho about it. And people who are not into it are somehow or another civilians, call it that or anything else you want. These complaints are not understood by the people who work at that site. Nor are they at all considerate of the fact that they are in a residential zone. So speaking to them directly is a bad idea, but I knew that ahead of time no matter how polite. But if I were very polite,I would get even further. So this is one of the problems that I've experienced as an abutter. Of course in the summer it becomes a dumping ground for trash.

Page 265

Now, I am looking at think and I studied this carefully and I must admit I do not understand it. If the corporation proposes to install a four mile long pipe, I am sure that this will be in a city, a very, very costly operation, and I don't see that an investment of this kind would be made without a return. I have nothing about the figures on this and what makes this worthwhile other than to increase the load beyond what might be desirable from a technological point of view as well as any other. This is all based upon old technologies, has nothing to do -- relies completely on the notion of the grid. Everything has to be done through the grid. It does not involve the technological demands five, eighty, years down the line. It does not involve the new technologies which will supplant many of the existing ones in terms of providing power. I see no vision or recognition of where we are at in this

Page 266

project. The whole purpose of it--if you read this, the second paragraph of the thing that I received says very simply: Carrying away locally heated fluid that may arise from external heat sources such as steam lines. In other words, how much heat loss is involved in this project? How much energy waste is involved in this project? I don't know about any of these things.

My recommendation to you would be get some good engineering invites from an outside source. I know that governments usually make the mistake of relying on the engineering know how of the corporations and prefer their word to their own agency's supervision or external agencies. That is unfortunate. I would not like to see it happen locally.

And do you have any questions?

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: Just an observation is your suggestion about getting

Page 267

independent engineering advice is a very good one. We don't have any resources to do that. We don't have the wherewithall. We have a zero budget.

ELIE YARDEN: That's what I'm saying. Therefore, your approval of this is -- earlier I heard words that I like to hear, hardship. What is the hardship?

CONSTANTINEALEXANDER: Those cases involved a Variance. And that's the legal standards, part of the legal standard that has to be satisfied. This is not a Variance case. Under the Zoning Laws of Cambridge, the City Council has made a lesser standard for what they want to do. It's a Special Permit, which is almost granted unless we find some -- automatically entitled to be granted unless there are things like hazard or creating safety issues and the like.

ELIE YARDEN: Okay.

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: That's the

Page 268

way the Zoning Law as it's written.

ELIE YARDEN: Okay.

A question was brought up earlier about noise ordinance. A transformer hum is something that we've learned to live with. It is a constant irritant. There are 120 units of housing right on that block of One Pleasant Street. I'm on the other side of the street. There are a large number of units of housing that are already subjected to transformer hum day in,day out. I don't know how to measure the effect of that. Fortunately our unit is very well

insulated, and it needs a manhole cover lifted in the middle of the intersection by a blowout for us to notice the noise outside. I see very, very little reason for putting a heat exchange unit in this area, increasing energy waste and so forth. What the public benefit is is beyond me. I don't get it. I don't even understand the thinking, the corporate

Page 269

thinking that leads to overloading lines and then trying to deal with the overload by getting rid of more heat.

There's energy waste galore throughout the entire place. That's about it.

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: Well, to your point, I think you raised valid points that needs response to. You're raising perhaps a very valid business issue as to why they're doing this, but that's not for us to decide.

ELIE YARDEN: I didn't think it was. All I'm saying is if it's a non-conforming use, where is the behavior that should accompany a non-conforming use?

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: The dilemma is we're dealing with a utility substation in a residential neighborhood which it really shouldn't be, but that's how it is.

ELIE YARDEN: That doesn't mean it shouldn't be maintained with regard to the

Page 270

neighborhood. CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: That's true.

ELIE YARDEN: And I hope you can make that a condition.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: How long has the substation been there? believe.

ATTORNEY NEVEN RABADJIJA: 1985 I

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: How long?

ATTORNEY NEVEN RABADJIJA: 1985.

BILLZAMPARELLI: We have relocated the substation.

ELIE YARDEN: It was -- excuse me, there was only perhaps one fourth of the amount of housing there.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: So in other words, in very simple terms there was a tremendous increase for the need of electricity. You can provide that electricity, but the byproduct of providing

Page 271

that is a greater heat in the lines, and you need to deal with that heat. Is that basically it in its simplest form?

JOHN ZICKO: That's correct. Those are the laws of physics.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Thank you.

TAD HEUER: Now, that being said, I'm looking at 10043, and usually we look at these and don't really pay much attention because they don't really have much impact. If someone wants to put a skylight in, it's very hard to find that that would cause a nuisance or hazard or traffic generated or anything like that. Here what we've heard, and I'm looking more particularly at nuisance or hazard would be created for the detriment of the health, safety or welfare of the occupant of the proposed use to the citizens of the city, certainly your counsel is aware of attractive nuisance. In that doctrine I can't imagine you'd want to encourage

Page 272

attractive nuisances through open gates particularly onto utility substations. I mean --

BILL ZAMPARELLI: I would like to address that only because --

TADHEUER: Right, and you will. I want to give you a chance to talk to us about those kinds of things because it seems that at least based on the kind of things we've heard, a condition that applies to the nuisance provision, you know, your thoughts on whether that's reasonable, what you've been doing in this regard. Particularly because as mentioned, you know, the case is coming up after this one is in I believe you're in a business zone. Here you've got somewhat similar innacuristically (phonetic) perhaps, however you want to describe it. Or opportunistically, you're in a residential zone which carries with it the fact that you're -- you know, even though

Page 273

you're on the Memorial Drive side and you're abutting commercial industrial properties, you're other side and your Putnam Street side is a residential street.

BILL ZAMPARELLI: Right.

TADHEUER: Can you talk about some of those issues?

BILL ZAMPARELLI: Let me first address the issue around the frontage on -- we do have I chain link fence that

was a requirement for security around the site. There is a setback on that fence so that you're able to actually pull into, with a vehicle, so that we're not blocking the street. And then there's a gate to enter. There's another gate inside of that gate to get further into the substation, and there is parking within that first gate. There's two structures. There's a -- and I'm not quite sure what the first building was. But the second building was

Page 274

actually the transformers, and that's within the second gate if you will.

In this lot has actually separated with the substation on one lot, and then we have kind of a storage facility to the, I guess if you were facing it, would be to your left. There's a gate, a separate gate for that. And that gate may well be left open, but that's a secure area with no access to the substation. If that's left open, it's probably because somebody had pulled the vehicle out or had pulled back in. But there's no, no access within this safety issues.

We do have contracts. Mr. Yarden had made some issues around cleaning up and addressing the, I guess the --

ELIE YARDEN: Snow removal.

BILL ZAMPARELLI: -- the snow removal. We have contracts with a contractor who comes down. It's automatic.

Page 275

As soon as we get so many inches of snow, an inch of snow, they come down and clean the sidewalks. They clean, they plow the area. This has been, you know, in place for at least four or five years that I'm aware of. I don't know if that's not happening, if there is an issue, I haven't heard of it. You know, we respond to problems, if you will. If somebody raises an issue, we will address it. And I've certainly heard about, you know, when there's trash streaming in front of the building, it's often times not from us. It's often times from Whole Foods or somebody who had been shopping. We tend to--there's a slight corner there, and when the wind comes down the street, it tends to settle right at the gate, the front gate of where our station is. So that's, that has been an issue and we have had a separate contractor come in and clean and pick up there. And we have on occasion actually had them clean on the

Page 276

inside of the fence line. Most of this stuff is on the outside of the fence line, but, you know, we've periodically will have them actually go through and clean anything along the front--inside of the fence line. Most of which, you know, I don't know how it would get in there because there's nobody inside the gate basically. But generally, you know, this is not an occupied station. We don't have people, you know, who work there daily. You know, they do visit the facilities. They maintain it. They, you know, we're monitoring it. This is on our scaler system, so it's all remotely operated. Our system is designed to be, you know, to be self-sufficient if you will. And so what we try to do is try to be a good neighbor. We try to work with the abutters and the neighbors to try to, you know, attenuate any problems that are raised. You know, I'm a little concerned that, you know, the concerns

Page 277

that you raised now, I hadn't heard most recently. You know, I know we've taken steps to try to address these. I wasn't aware that this was a continuing, ongoing problems.

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: I assume now that you've heard that you will take --

BILL ZAMPARELLI: Absolutely. I'll check on this tomorrow morning.

ELIE YARDEN: If it were a business, it would be like a household. You clean your sidewalk every day.

BILL ZAMPARELLI: Right, I guess the -- the difference is that we're not typically there.

ELIE YARDEN: Exactly.

BILL ZAMPARELLI: There's nobody at that facility.

TADHEUER: But that's actually part of his concern. If this were Whole Foods, you wouldn't say well, you know, I send my guy around twice a week to sweep up, but when he

Page 278

gets there he gets there. You know, you have him out there every 20 minutes sweeping up because you want to do good and do well. And I think here kind of what we're hearing that precisely because it's an unmanned substation that runs itself, nature and other things don't really care that it's unmanned, they will deposit and other trash there.

BILL ZAMPARELLI: I guess what I'm saying is that the source of the trash is coming from other locations. And it's not from us. We don't see it. We don't know about it, but I understand your concern. And we will definitely

address this, you know, to try to, again, you know, try to ensure that this is not an ongoing problem here.  
BRENDAN SULLIVAN: The technicians who go to those stations, it's not their job. It's not my job, man, to pick up the trash or to clean. I'm there to do something and to monitor and then get out of the. But Elie has

Page 279

your business card, right?

BILLZAMPARELLI: Well, I'm sure you have one from before. But I'll give him another one.

ELIE YARDEN: Yes, but you know something, it used to be a lot easier to reach you.

BILL ZAMPARELLI: I'm still available.

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: Other questions or comments from members of the Board?

TIMOTHY HUGHES: Are there other substations in Cambridge that you're going to do this to in the future? case. are two.

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: Yes. Next

ATTORNEY NEVEN RABADJIJA: There

TIMOTHY HUGHES: No, I mean after the two tonight.

Page 280

ELIEYARDEN: Like North Point, are you planning a substation there?

BILL ZAMPARELLI: If and when that arrives, we will have a substation there. We don't build in anticipation. We build to meet the need. If there's a requirement for a substation, we will build it. So I think what we wait to see is what gets developed there and we'll meet the requirements.

TAD HEUER: Just roughly how many substations this size does Cambridge have?

ATTORNEY NEVEN RABADJIJA: These are the two largest.

TAD HEUER: Tens, hundreds?

BILL ZAMPARELLI: These are the largest ones that we have. I think we have one in East Cambridge also down on Second Street.

JOHN ZICKO: Yes.

BILLZAMPARELLI: Then we have some smaller substations; Amory Street, Prospect

Page 281

Street, Aberdeen Ave. There's a number of them throughout the city. And depending on what the load requirements are, they're designed to meet the loads in those areas.

TAD HEUER: And is it only because this is one of the larger ones that, I don't know if this would be equivalent of a trunk line, but this is why this one needs the heat exchanger and the outlying ones don't necessarily because they're running it as --

BILL ZAMPARELLI: This ties to our East Cambridge facilities also, and it's also to the power plant. So that is now on the grid as a result of all of this.

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: Done?

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: We're done.

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: Not quite.

The Chair moves that a Special Permit be granted the Petitioner to install one heat exchanger at the premises of 377-379 Putnam Avenue on the basis of the following:

Page 282

That the heat exchanger will not cause congestion, hazard or substantial change in established neighborhood character.

That in fact this facility is a utility substation in a residential neighborhood and will continue to be such.

That the continued operation or development of adjacent uses as permitted in the Zoning Ordinance will not be adversely affected by the nature of the proposed use. The one effect that it could have would be sound, noise I should say, but there is a noise ordinance that the Petitioner will have to separately comply with in any event.

That no nuisance or hazard will be created to the detriment of the health, safety and welfare of the occupant or the citizens of the city.

We've vetted that issue about a nuisance or hazard and we've concluded that -- we'll find out if we did. We

Page 283

concluded that it would not be a nuisance or hazard from this heat exchanger.

And that the proposed use will not impair the integrity of the district or adjoining district or otherwise derogate from the intent or purpose of this Ordinance.

The fact that we need to have a functioning electricity grid system, and this will allow that to happen. On the basis of the foregoing the Chair moves that a Special Permit be granted the Petitioner on the grounds that the heat exchanger be located as shown on plans submitted by the Petitioner and initialed by the Chair. All those in favor of the granting the Special Permit on this basis say "Aye."

favor.  
(Aye.) CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: Five in  
(Alexander, Hughes, Sullivan,

Page 284

Heuer, Scott.)

(11:00 p.m.) (Sitting Members: Constantine Alexander, Timothy Hughes, Brendan Sullivan, Tad Heuer, Thomas Scott.)

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: Chair will call case No. 10045,191 Alewife Brook Parkway. Is there anyone here wishing to be heard on this matter?

ATTORNEY NEVEN RABADJIJA: Yes. Again Neven Rabadjija for NStar Electric,

Page 285

Bill Zamparelli and John Zicko for this case.

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: Now, this

is in a completely different district I mean in terms of the neighboring property.

ATTORNEY NEVEN RABADJIJA: It is. It's a much larger station. It's a C-2 District.

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: And it does have less impact on the residents obviously.

ATTORNEY NEVEN RABADJIJA: Yes. But from a technical standpoint, it's exactly the same use of equipment.

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: Right.

ATTORNEY NEVEN RABADJIJA: If I can say that.

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: Questions from members of the Board at this point?

TIMOTHY HUGHES: Where on the property is this going to be located?

ATTORNEY NEVEN RABADJIJA: To the--

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: Where?

Page 286

BILL ZAMPARELLI: It's near the railroad tracks I think.

JOHN ZICKO: It is, yeah. It is northeast corner.

TAD HEUER: Do you have anyone out there who would ever hear anything like this?

BILL ZAMPARELLI: In this location?

TAD HEUER: Any abutters who are not just like NStar?

JOHN ZICKO: In this location, probably not.

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: That's land where this --

BILL ZAMPARELLI: There's a railroad right of way.

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: That's the railroad?

BILL ZAMPARELLI: Yes. It goes right underneath the Alewife Brook Parkway.

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: I remember the old days when there used to be a drive-in

Page 287

movie theatre there.

JOHN ZICKO: When I was here for the

last Special Permit, somebody on the Board quizzed me on what was there before the substation.

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: Yes, drive-in movie theatre.

Questions from members of the Board? TIMOTHY HUGHES: Can you make this big enough to use it as a drive-in movie screen?

BILL ZAMPARELLI: A big screening facility, yeah.

ATTORNEY NEVEN RABADJIJA: A lightening show for you.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: I'd rather you didn't.

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: Special Permit be granted the Petitioner to allow the installation of one heat exchanger on the premises at 191 Alewife Brook Parkway on the

Page 288

basis that there will be no impact on traffic or patterns of access or egress which would cause congestion, hazard or substantial change in established neighborhood character.

In fact, this site is located in an area that's far from almost anything that would be disturbed by the kinds of proposed use.

That the continued operation of development of adjacent uses will not be adversely affected by the nature of the proposed use. Again, given the nature of the surrounding properties.

And that no nuisance or hazard would be created to the detriment of the health, safety and welfare of the occupant or citizens of the city.

And that the use would not impair the integrity of the district or adjoining district or otherwise derogate from the intent or purpose of the Ordinance.

Page 289

Again, this will allow the Petitioner to more efficiently provide energy for the citizens of Cambridge and perhaps other occupants -- other residents of Massachusetts.

On the basis of the foregoing, the Special Permit would be granted on the condition that the heat exchanger be located as shown on the plan submitted by the Petitioner and initialed by the Chair.

All known in favor of granting the Special Permit say "Aye."

(Aye.)

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: Five in favor. Special Permit granted.

(Alexander, Hughes, Sullivan, Heuer, Scott.)

(Whereupon, at 11:05 p.m., the meeting adjourned.)