Town of Rotterdam Planning Commission
Minutes of January 22, 2019 Meeting

The Rotterdam Planning Commission held a meeting on Tuesday, January 22, 2019, at 7:30 p.m. at the Rotterdam Town Hall, 1100 Sunrise Boulevard, Rotterdam, New York 12306

Present:	Jack Denny – Chairman	Excused: Larry DiLallo
	Thomas Yuille	
	Clark Collins	
	Lynn Flansburg	
	Mark D'Alessandro	
	Wayne Calder	
	Peter Comenzo, Town Planner	
	Jonathon Tingley, Attorney	
	Marlo Carter, Secretary	

Chairman Denny called the caucus to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Board Office.

WAIVERS:

1. **Altamont Meats LLC – 834 Duanesburg Road.** The applicant requests a Waiver of Site Plan review for the retail sale of farm and local products in existing tenant space, ±1,000 square feet, on a ±4.9-acre parcel.

Motion was made by Mr. Yuille to approve the Wavier conditioned on the following:

1. Compliance with all NYS Building and Fire Codes.
2. Applicant must obtain a Building Permit and be issued a Certificate of Occupancy from the Town of Rotterdam Building Inspector.
3. Applicant to comply fully with Town Sign Code and obtain a building permit for any signage.
4. Owner/applicant shall install Knox box for emergency personnel. Please contact Rotterdam Fire District #6 for specifics.

Mrs. Flansburg seconded the motion and the vote resulted in unanimous approval of the motion.

Attendance was taken, and it was determined that there was a quorum.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was recited.

Chairman Denny: We need a motion to approve the summary minutes from the January 8, 2019 Planning Commission meeting.

Mr. Collins: I make a motion that we approve the summary minutes from the January 8, 2019 meeting.

Chairman Denny: Motion made by Mr. Collins. Is there a second?

Mr. Yuille: I second the motion.

Chairman Denny: Motion seconded by Mr. Yuille. Are there any questions on the motion? Please call the vote.

Marlo Carter: Mr. Yuille?

Mr. Yuille: Yes.

Marlo Carter: Mr. Collins?

Mr. Collins: Yes.

Marlo Carter: Mrs. Flansburg?

Mrs. Flansburg: Yes.

Marlo Carter: Mr. D'Alessandro?

Mr. D'Alessandro: Yes.

Marlo Carter: Mr. Calder?

Mr. Calder: Yes.

Marlo Carter: Chairman Denny?

Chairman Denny: Yes.

Motion carried.

At this time, I'm going to have to recuse myself from the agenda item because I am a Fire Commissioner at Fire District #6. I'm going to turn the meeting over to Mr. Yuille.

1. **National Grid – 6 Old Mariaville Road. Sketch Site Plan review to modify and upgrade a natural gas regulator station and utilize ±32,705 square feet of leased lands N/F of Fire District #6 property and ±2,500 square feet in existing National Grid right-of-way. Engineer: TRC Engineers Inc.**

Mr. Yuille: Is anyone representing National Grid? Come to the podium please.

Mr. Wyzell: My name is Ben Wyzell and I'm an attorney for Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation doing business as National Grid. We are here tonight to talk about the proposed upgrade and maintenance of the existing gas regulator station located on Mariaville Road.

According to Town Code Section 270-130, in order to complete the proposed work, the National Grid must obtain the Planning Commission approval of our proposed site plan application. Pursuant to this section and our discussion tonight, we hope that you agree for the reasons that I will provide, that the Board should grant our site plan application and issue a negative declaration under SEQR. I will give a brief presentation and I will first start off with a brief history of the station and its purpose and then I will talk about why the proposed work is necessary and then finally I will talk about the scope of work.

With me tonight is Vince Arcuri who is the project manager and Nate Buterra who is the project environmental consultant.

This is natural gas regulator number 434. As I mentioned before it is located on Mariaville Road and National Grid's own right-of-way. It's actually located just west of the South Schenectady Fire District firehouse. The station was built in 1962 and for the past 56 years, it has provided safe and reliable gas to over 2,000 homes and businesses in Schenectady. What it does is it takes natural gas "inaudible…" at a transmission level pressure and it converts it into distribution level pressure so that it can safely enter people's home.

Mr. Yuille: What are those pressures? What is the incoming and outgoing pressure?

Mr. Buterra: "Inaudible…" (Not at microphone).

Mr. Yuille: PSI? That was just for my own information.

Mr. Wyzell: Here are some additional photographs so that you can see and get a general idea if you're not familiar with the area where exactly the station is location. It is located closed to the road in a really small footprint and the reason is because 56 years ago when the station was built, that was the state of the art of natural gas regulators. As you will see from our design now, state of the art has changed dramatically.

As the Board may be aware, National Grid is a public utility under the laws under the State of New York. As a public utility, we are obligated by law to provide safe and reliable natural gas to our customers. Recently National Grid team members determined that due to station conditions including mild corrosion on piping at the site as well as equipment age require that the existing station and associated pipes would need to be retired and replaced in order to continue to provide safe and reliable natural gas to our customers.

This is a drawing of the existing station. As you can see this is our right-of-way, existing NG right-of-way, and the station equipment is in a little square very close to Mariaville Road. As I mentioned before, that's the old safe version. The new safe version includes replacing the existing equipment and putting new equipment along the right-of-way further back from the road. The equipment is separated some are 50' from each other, others are 100' from each other and Vinny, if you don't mind coming up to explain why those pieces of equipment are separated.

Mr. Arcuri: Good evening, my name is Vincent Arcuri and I'm a project developer with National Grid. What Ben mentioned about the 50 of 100 foot spacing and the reasons behind those spacings are first for the 100' you have an existing right-of-way, the fire station is over here, you have some high-voltage powerlines that are about 34 kv and the

current National Grid design practices requires us to have any appurtenance that could have gas blow off that is an emergency relief 100'away from any power line. That is the reason for those 100' spacings. Fifty feet (50') spaces are all for really two reasons. First is that we put mercaptan in our gas that gives that rotten egg smell and the reason we do that is so that you know there is leak. If everything is on top of each other, how do you find the leak? You have all these things pushed in too close to each other and it's hard to find the leak if there is one. The other reason is for doing work, general maintenance, any kind of repair work that we have to do at the station which gives us plenty of room so that we can bypass the gas around it and we may be repairing and updating and keep the rest of the station functioning.

I would like to walk you through what we see here on this site plan. Everything I'm going to mention is above ground. What you see here is much of this green and black lines, those are all underground pipes. Right up here is what we call a transmission valve. That is a valve that we use to control the gas flow, transmission pressure to the station. That will be replaced, and it will be brought above ground. This appurtenance here, it's called a cow horn, it's more modern valving that is also going to be above ground. By above ground it usually sits three feet (3') off of ground level.

All in the ground piping will connect this valve to the next appurtenance that you see here, this is one of the actual regulators. That is going to sit inside a roughly, 10' wide by 3' deep by approximately 6.5' tall large aluminum cabinet. The regulator sits inside that. More underground piping to the next cabinet. It's an exact copy of this one. It does the same thing and it's a back up in case there is ever an issue that that regulator failed immediately this regulator would pick up and continue the pressure it 34 pounds.

The next cabinet here is an addition to the station. It's a monitoring station. It monitors the pressures, the flows in the station and sends all the information to our gas control station in Long Island. There they have real time monitoring of any place that has these cabinets, they have real time monitoring of the pressures, the flows, they can immediately tell if there is any kind of issue at the station. It is monitored 24/7.

Next appurtenance is this valve. This valve currently exists at the station. It is one of the valves that we are going to be removing and replacing. This is the valve that controls flow out into your community. That will be brought above ground. All of the appurtenances, right now in that station, are below ground. Current design practices want to get them out of the ground so that we can look at them, physically inspect them for any kind of issues and the other reason is when you have to do work on those valves you're not digging up the ground and possibly hitting a gas line, a sewer line, everything is right there where you can do the work on it above ground.

The other two (2) appurtenances that I want to mention that are new to the station and something that are not there now which is this item here which is called a station blow off and that item there is a carbon copy of this one. One of the upgrades that we are making to this station is that we are putting in safety redundancies. Right now, the station has a controlled regulator. We are adding this monitoring regulator, carbon copy of this, is the one that picks up the pressure if there is ever a failure. There is a third redundancy that we put into place which is here. If there are ever two (2) failures, this is the final safety for the regulator station. This valve is a safety for the transmission line valve.

Did I explain that well enough? What I am trying to tell you is that there is going to be several cabinets that don't exist there now and that is because we are bringing things above ground and adding some safety features.

Mr. Yuille: Are you finished with your presentation?

Mr. Arcuri: I am.

Mr. Yuille: Are you?

Mr. Wyzell: I just have one final comment. So, for all the reasons that we just gave, it is our opinion that this work is a public necessity for the reason that it's required to continue to provide safe and reliable gas. Obviously, the old regulator station worked for 56 years and we are hoping that this upgrade will allow us to operate for the next 50 to 100 years.

Mr. Yuille: Mrs. Flansburg do you have any questions?

Mrs. Flansburg: So, what is happening to what is there now? You had said the one line out near the road is going to be replaced and still used and that is the line that distributes out to our community, what about the rest of the…

Mr. Arcuri: Right now, you have a regulator and a blow off right next to each other and that valve controls out to the community is buried under the ground here. All that is going to be pulled out and replaced with brand new appurtenances. The valve is still going to be there, and it will be a new valve and above ground. Does that answer your question?

Mrs. Flansburg: Yes. How do you do all of that? Do you have to shut everything down?

Mr. Arcuri: No, there will not be a stoppage to service. There are two (2) pieces to the work that is done. The transmission line out here, we installed, is called a bypass. It is almost like a big U-shaped piece of pipe. It allows you to flow gas around it while you are working on it. The station piece we are going to be able to flow gas from other stations into your community and back feed it. There will be no loss of service.

Mrs. Flansburg: Thank you. That is all I have.

Mr. Yuille: Mr. Collins?

Mr. Collins: No questions. Like you said, it's a safety thing. I always drove passed that and wondered how no one ever hit it before and now you're moving it back. It's best for the community so I have no questions.

Mr. Yuille: Mr. D'Alessandro?

Mr. D'Alessandro: I agree with Clark. I like that you are moving it back a little bit with bollards and all that. It's nice to see that you are doing the upgrades from the 1960's to now and I think it's a nice project.

Mr. Yuille: Mr. Calder?

Mr. Calder: I think the presentation was very good and it's going to have my vote.

Mr. Yuille: These valves are buried, and they are not in chambers underground, they are all buried underground so you have to dig them up if you are going to service them?

Mr. Arcuri: That's right. So today, this may be hard to see there are yellow caps on the ground and there is a long handle wrench that you would use to actually function the valve open or closed. Today, if we wanted to do maintenance on those valves, yes, we have to dig them up.

Mr. Collins: What is like a water corp, a big corp in there that just turns it a quarter turn to shut it off and on, like a water valve?

Mr. Arcuri: Yes.

Mr. Buterra: In an emergency you could imagine how stressful that is. You are opening a hole in the ground and you are trying to turn it versus now after this work is completed it will be above ground and much easier to work on.

Mr. Arcuri: I believe what is in the ground now is a gate valve, the other piece of this, all of the valves that we are replacing are ball valves which allows us to send our pipe inspection equipment down the pipe lines to inspect them from inside.

Mr. Yuille: On these cabinets everything is going to be fenced in or no? I see a fence around this one here, this is the one that is existing on Mariaville Road?

Mr. Arcuri: Yes, there is a fence around the existing one.

Mr. Yuille: Now you're putting bollards around all of these too in case someone comes off the road, I would assume.

Mr. Arcuri: Yes, there is fencing here with bollards in each corner. This is just an aluminum cabinet with the monitoring equipment in it with no bollards or fencing there. It's a locked cabinet. Like I said these range in height between six feet (6') and seven feet (7') tall and between five feet (5') and 10' wide.

Mr. Comenzo: Just so you are aware I did get copies of what was submitted to the fire district in terms of what was there, what the cabinets look like, it was basically photographs that were part of the negotiations or discussions with the fire district and I did put them in packets here because the comments I got back from the Planning Commission and the conversation that I had with you that this was really difficult to decipher what was occurring. If you look at the last couple of pages in your packet you will see where the bollards are going to be and what is fenced and what is not. I just want to make sure it's accurate.

Mr. Wyzell: It's a rough estimate. These are not computer generated and they are not 100% accurate.

Mr. Yuille: The fenced areas, the ones that are being moved to the fire department property, those are all going to be fenced in with bollards also?

Mr. Arcuri: This section will be fenced in with bollards, this will be fenced in with bollards and those are the only areas that will be fenced with bollards. This will have bollards but not a fence, it's a cabinet and the same thing there with bollards and cabinet.

Mr. Yuille: And you're going to have some shrubbery around the ones that are on the property? Just to hide them from view?

Mr. Arcuri: Yes.

I just want to be clear that this item, this item and that item will have shrubbery.

Mr. Yuille: One of them I looked at in the plans and it was like 10' high. Is that the blow off valve?

Mr. Arcuri: Yes.

Mr. Yuille: That one and the other one?

Mr. Arcuri: Yes.

Mr. Yuille: You can't really hide that, but it is a narrow pole that I saw go up.

Mr. Arcuri: I think it's a six-foot (6') or eight-foot (8') inch diameter.

Mr. Yuille: That was one of the few things that I could pick out in the plan. I'm looking at the big plans and thinking I wouldn't have an idea how to build this. I agree with the other board members that this needs to be upgraded for safety reasons.

Where is the gas coming from there? Is it coming from the consolidated gas station over on Burdeck Street?

Mr. Arcuri: I'm not sure. Are you saying the actual transmission?

Mr. Yuille: Yes. Which way does the gas flow? This way or that way?

Mr. Arcuri: I believe it flows this direction.

Mr. Wyzell: We can find out and let you know.

Mr. Yuille: I was just wondering about it because I know a substation on Burdeck Street that is where they put the odor in or at least that is what I was told that is where consolidated gas puts the tablets into the gas main so that you get the odor in the gas and the main that comes up from Tennessee there's no odor in it until it gets to that station where it goes out.

Mrs. Flansburg did you have another question?

Mrs. Flansburg: Yes, you mentioned that this equipment is 56 years old. I'm assuming that it was not the only one built at the time. Have you guys done other similar project replacements and upgrades in New York yet?

Mr. Arcuri: The very similar activity that I am most familiar with is a job that we did in Syracuse over this past summer. That was about a 13 week build from the time the shovels hit the ground to the time that trucks left, and grass was planted. So, a little over three (3) months. Almost exact same, but the layout was different, but it was a complete station rebuild, a larger station and it had a heater and a large brick building on it that we had to take down, but it was very similar. We've done these jobs multiple times in New York.

Mr. Wyzell: I'm National Grid's land uses and zoning attorney for all New York State and I've handled these types of hearings in Oswego, DeWitt and in many, many different places. This is ongoing, and we will be doing this for a long time.

Mrs. Flansburg: Thank you.

Mr. Yuille: Mr. Tingley, anything to add?

Mr. Tingley: No comments or questions.

Mr. Yuille: Mr. Comenzo, anything else?

Mr. Comenzo: No comments or questions.

Mr. Yuille: Anybody in the audience? Hearing none, at this point, I would ask for a motion to declare lead agency on this project.

Mr. Collins: I will make that motion, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Denny: Mr. Collins made the motion. Do I have a second?

Mr. D'Alessandro: I'll second.

Chairman Denny: Mr. D'Alessandro seconds the motion. Are there any questions? Please call the vote.

Marlo Carter: Mr. Yuille?

Mr. Yuille: Yes.

Marlo Carter: Mr. Collins?

Mr. Collins: Yes.

Marlo Carter: Mrs. Flansburg?

Mrs. Flansburg: Yes.

Marlo Carter: Mr. D'Alessandro?

Mr. D'Alessandro: Yes.

Marlo Carter: Mr. Calder?

Mr. Calder: Yes.

Motion carried.

Peter, when will you be able to get this back in again, next month?

Mr. Comenzo: Probably the second meeting in February or the first meeting in March.

Mr. Yuille: Stay in touch with Peter.

Mr. Wyzell: We are proposing to start it in April.

Mr. Arcuri: Late April.

Mr. Wyzell: Just to confirm should we appear again at that second meeting?

Mr. Comenzo: We will let you know. Just so you know the process. The board declared lead agency tonight and tomorrow we will send the project out to any interested/involved agencies. The agencies that we have listed are Schenectady County Economic Development and Planning, we are going to also send a copy to DEC, DOT because of its proximity to the state highway, Rotterdam Police Department and Fire District #6. So once that comment period is complete, we can schedule you for a final public meeting. This work doesn't require a public hearing so there will not be a public hearing but there will be a final meeting and we will schedule it and it will probably be the March 5 meeting. We will be in touch and I will forward any comments that I get from the agencies to you as soon as I get them.

Mr. Wyzell: Thank you very much. I appreciate your time.

Mr. Yuille: Thanks for coming and explaining the project to us.

Next meeting is February 5, 2019.

Meeting adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

Motion to adjourn made by Mr. Collins and seconded by Mr. D'Alessandro.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marlo L. Carter
Planning Commission Secretary

Town of Rotterdam
Office of the Planning Commission

John Denny III, Chairman
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Resolution Number PC02-2019
Moved by Mr. Collins seconded by Mr. D'Alessandro
Applicant: National Grid

Applicant:	National Grid
Project Location:	6 Old Mariaville Road & National Grid Right-of-Way Rotterdam, NY
Tax Number or Numbers:	48.-3-3.1 (6 Old Mariaville Road) & 38.-1-2.31 (National Grid ROW)
Proposed Project:	Site Plan review to modify and upgrade a natural gas regulator station and utilize ±32,705 square feet of leased lands N/F of Fire District #6 property and ±2,500 square feet in existing National Grid right-of-way.

WHEREAS, pursuant to 6 NYCRR Part 617 State Environmental Quality Review the above referenced project is an Unlisted Action; and,

WHEREAS, the Rotterdam Planning Commission desires to establish itself as lead agency on this project; **NOW:**

IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED THAT, on this day, Tuesday, January 22, 2019, the Rotterdam Planning Commission hereby declares itself lead agency and authorizes the Rotterdam Town Planner to prepare, file, publish, and distribute all documents as necessary to comply with 6 NYCRR Part 617 (State Environmental Quality Review).

Peter J. Comenzo
Senior Planner

John Denny
Planning Commission Chairman