

SKY VALLEY SWITCHING SUBSTATION AND WIRELESS COMMUNICATIONS
FACILITY

VARIANCE REQUEST NARRATIVE

RECEIVED
08/10/2021
CITY OF MONROE

A. STATEMENT OF NEED

- 1) The District is requesting a variance to the MMC table 22.26.050(G) maximum building height of 45-ft within land use GC for the utility transmission line termination (dead end) substation structures. The dead end structures are depicted in the attached S-131-KL2 drawing, which was also provided within the conditional use permit (CUP) application. The proposed site is located at 19622 Tjerne Pl SE Monroe, WA 98272.
- 2) This variance request is driven by the proposed construction of Sky Valley Switching station (station). The District has applied for a CUP for the station and wireless communications facility (WCF).

B. VARIANCE PERMIT CRITERIA FOR APPROVAL

- 1) *The variance shall not constitute a grant of special privilege inconsistent with the limitation upon uses of other properties in the vicinity and zoning district in which the property is located.*

The City's Table 22.26.050(G) sets the maximum building height to be 45-ft in GC zoning. The DISTRICT's proposed project includes transmission poles ranging from 62-ft to 84-ft above ground level. The function of the dead ends are to terminate the transmission lines within the station. The transmission line termination structure (dead end) is the last transmission pole in the transmission line.

During the pre-application meeting with the City – the District requested clarification regarding the status of the need for a CUP for the substation. After reviewing and considering the nature of the proposal the City made the determination that the proposal was designated as a as “Regional Utility Corridor” per MMC table 22.26.040; therefore a CUP was required.

Within a regional utility corridor, transmission poles are commonplace as the nature of such a corridor is to route electrical transmission lines.

As transmission poles are commonplace in properties designated as conforming use “regional Utility Corridor”, allowing the District's dead end structures to match the height of a transmission pole in order to terminate the transmission lines does not grant a special privilege as it is consistent with its designated conforming use, pending approval of the CUP.

Additionally, within GC zoning, the MMC 22.62.030C allows for construction of a wireless communications support structure of up to 85-ft without a CUP or variance. The MMC's differing treatment between a 45-ft building height and an 85-ft high wireless communications support structure, illustrates the differences between these two types of structures as the MMC

allows for a much taller communications support structure. The dead end structure within the substation fence is little different in nature.

The District has sized the dead end structures to be 40-ft, 50-ft and 55-ft high. These heights do not include a small projection of the foundation above ground level nor the addition of a lightning rod – if warranted by code. The District does not need the full height of a typical transmission pole within the station and is requesting only a variance to allow for the transmission line termination structures to be up to a 56-ft above ground level plus a lightning rod height.

- 2) *The variance is necessary because of special circumstances relating to the size, shape, topography, location or surroundings of the subject property to provide it with use rights and privileges permitted to other properties in the vicinity and in the zoning district in which the subject property is located;*

Steep slopes border the subject property to the east where two of the three transmission lines are routed into the station. In order to maintain sufficient clearance above the ground and station security fence taller transmission line termination structures are required.

- 3) *The granting of such variance will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the property or improvements in the vicinity and zoning district in which the subject property is situated.*

Granting of the variance is not materially detrimental to the public welfare or the properties/improvements in the area. If granted the variance would reduce the visual impact to a degree as it would allow the PUD to use less transmission poles to get the lines into the station.

- 4) *The variance is the minimum necessary to grant relief to the applicant;*

The District is requesting only what extra height is needed to preclude the need for additional transmission poles which would likely exceed the height of the dead ends.

- 5) *The strict enforcement of the provisions of this title will create an unnecessary hardship to the property owner;*

Strict enforcement of the height limitation would result in the District adding additional transmission poles atop the slope to the east to maintain electrical clearance above the surfaces below.

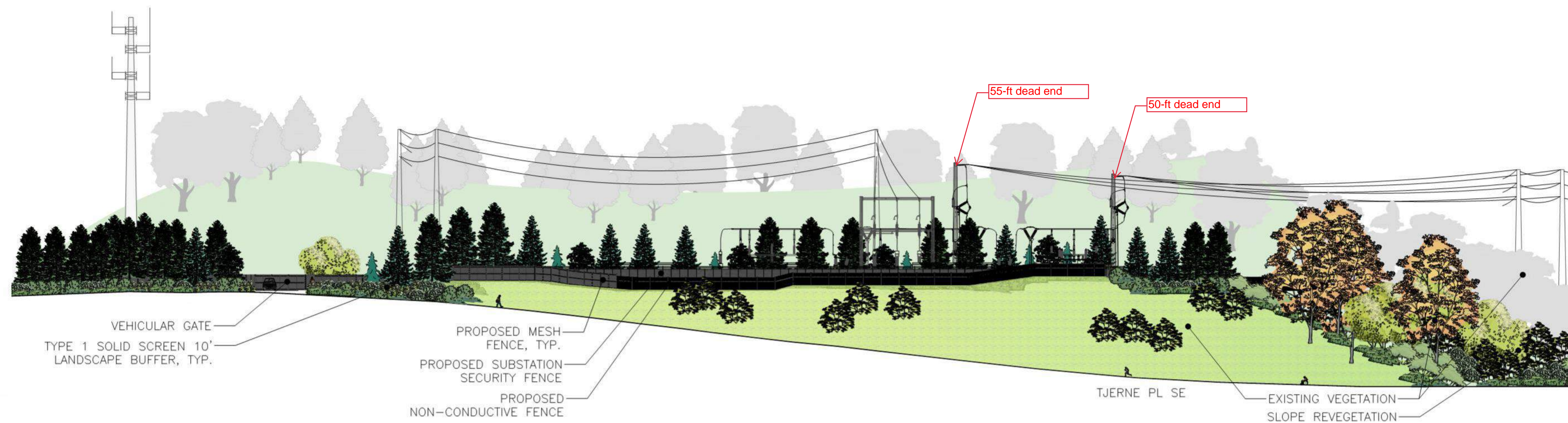
The transmission line termination structures would not be eliminated, just reduced to approximately 40-45 feet heights. The end result would be higher cost to the District, more visual impact, transmission poles atop a steep slope and increased maintenance needs for the additional poles.

- 6) *The granting of the variance will not alter the character of the land, nor impair the appropriate use or development of adjacent property; and*

Granting of the height variance for the transmission line termination structure will not result in any of these things.

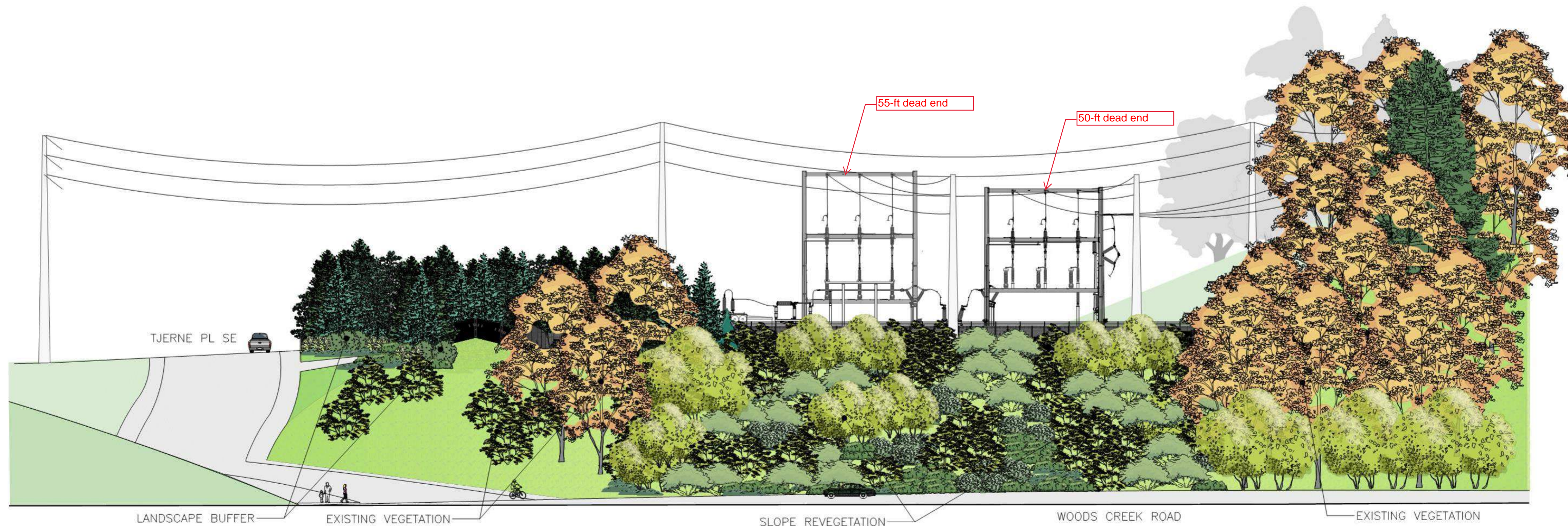
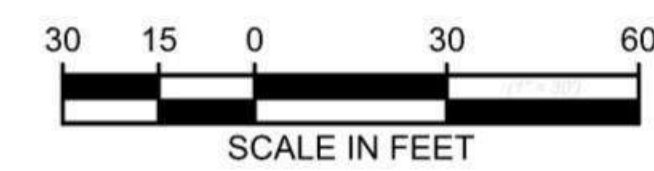
- 7) *The variance is consistent with the policies and provisions of the comprehensive plan and the development regulations.*

The proposal which is driving this variance request is to construct the station and facility are consistent with comprehensive plan goal #6 "Provide and promote both utility and transportation infrastructures that coincide with need, growth and long term objectives." Discussed in B.1 granting this variance is not inconsistent application of policy and development regulations.



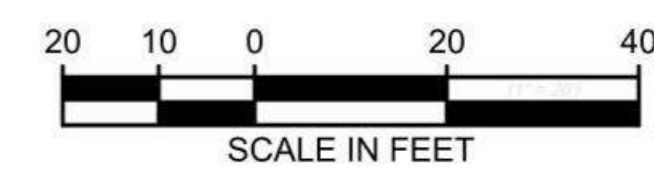
SOUTH ELEVATION (A)

1" = 30'



EAST ELEVATION (B)

1" = 20'



NO.	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION



SNOHOMISH COUNTY
PUD
 PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT NO 1

WO	100057410
TASK	
SCALE	NOTED
DFTR	RG
CHKR	JY
ENGR	
APVD	
DATE	

SKY VALLEY SWITCHING STATION
 LANDSCAPE ELEVATIONS