



**REQUEST
PROJECT**

Concept Review and Modification Review
NES Central Substation

**Council District
Requested by**

19 – O’Connell
Alan Lowe/Moody Nolan, applicant; Metro Government
Nashville Electric Power Board, owner.

Staff Reviewer

Islas

Staff Recommendation

Approve with conditions and defer without all conditions

Applicant Request

A request to approve modifications to active use requirements, and to approve civic frontage for property located at 419 Gay Street, zoned DTC (2.05 acres), and within the James Robertson Subdistrict of the DTC.

Project Overview

The project proposes to replace the existing NES Central Substation due to additional power demands. The existing Central Substation, located on the same parcel, will be removed. However, the existing enclosure will remain.

Plan Details

The parcel is on the northern half of the block bounded by 2nd Avenue North, Gay Street, and James Robertson Parkway. Only a portion of the parcel is being affected by the proposed parcel. Two vehicular access entries with garage doorways are proposed along Gay Street. The pedestrian zone in front of the new substation will be improved to provide a 9’ sidewalk and street trees. The façades of the substation are proposed to have three unique, yet related, styles of screening. “Patch” - a section of perforated corrugated aluminum within a precast frame will front the segment of Gay Street along the river. A “Weave” wall pattern will be used on either side of that. For the segment of Gay Street between 1st Ave N and 2nd Ave N, a concrete wall with strategic changes in color and texture will be used.

CONCEPT REVIEW

- Is this a successful screening method for a substation?
- How can utility uses be best incorporated into mixed-use urban areas?

MODIFICATION REVIEW

1. Active Use Requirements

- Required: An active use is encouraged on Secondary and Tertiary streets, particularly if that street is the only public street frontage.
- Request: No active use along ground floor.
- Analysis: Due to the utility use of the site, an active use along the ground floor would be challenging to accomplish. Staff finds that reasonable efforts have been made to incorporate visually interesting façades along the entire street frontage.



Downtown Code DRC Meeting of 12/2/2021

2. Civic Frontage

- Required: Civic buildings shall be reviewed by minor modification.
- Request: Review the proposed improvements to the utilities property as a civic building.
- Analysis: The DTC states that civic buildings should be inherently unique, should be designed with prominence and monumentality, should be oriented to streets, and should follow the intent of the applicable DTC subdistrict. Staff finds that these efforts have been made as part of the proposed design.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The proposed substation strives to meet the principles of the DTC to create and nurture the character of the James Robertson Subdistrict with an active and attractive street and streetscape. Given the inherent nature of the use of the building as a utility, modifications to standards are warranted. Staff recommends approval of the conceptual plan and associated modifications with the following condition:

1. Applicant will continue to work with NDOT and Planning on the ROW/streetscape requirements along Gay Street, or additional ROW may need to be dedicated.