

State Environmental Quality Review  
**NEGATIVE DECLARATION**  
Notice of Determination of Non-Significance

**Project:** Miller Place New Underground Feeders and Overhead Conversion and Reinforcement (C&R) (the “Proposed Action”)

**Date:** August 14, 2024

This notice is issued in accordance with Article 8 (State Environmental Quality Review Act) of the Environmental Conservation Law and its implementing regulations at 6 NYCRR Part 617 and 21 NYCRR LXXXI 10052.

The Long Island Power Authority (“Authority”) has determined based on information provided by PSEG Long Island and the Environmental Assessment Form Parts 1, 2, & 3 prepared by PSEG Long Island that the Proposed Action described below will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment and a Draft Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared.

**Name of Action:** Miller Place New Underground Feeders and Overhead Conversion and Reinforcement (C&R)

**Location:** Miller Place Substation, Mount Sinai Avenue, Canal Road, Chestnut Street, New York State Route 25A, North Country Road, Mount Sinai-Coram Road, Shore Road, Little Harbor Road, Old Post Road, hamlet of Mount Sinai, Town of Brookhaven, Suffolk County, New York

**SEQR Status:** Unlisted

**Conditioned Negative Declaration:** No

**Proposed Action Description:**

The Proposed Action includes the expansion and reconfiguration of the Miller Place Substation (the “Substation”), installation of two new underground 13 kilovolt (kV) distribution feeders from the Substation, installation of underground 13kV cable (underground dip), and upgrades to overhead distribution circuits. The Proposed Action will also include transmission cable and pole modifications along a LIPA right-of-way (“ROW”) located immediately north of the Substation to accommodate the new Substation reconfiguration. The Proposed Action is being undertaken to increase capacity to reduce electric overload conditions.

The Proposed Action will be constructed at the Substation, along an existing LIPA ROW located immediately north of the Substation, and along multiple roadways within the hamlet of Mount Sinai, Town of Brookhaven, Suffolk County, New York (*see* Figures 1 through 7).

The Proposed Action is located within an area primarily characterized by residential land uses, with some commercial and institutional land uses. The Substation is bound by New York State Route 25A to the south, commercial properties to the west, residential and commercial properties to the east, and a LIPA-owned ROW to the north. Mount Sinai Elementary, Middle and High Schools are located approximately 0.2 mile west of the Proposed Action.

The existing fenced Substation is located within a larger plot of land owned by LIPA, a portion of which is vacant and vegetated, and will be utilized for the Substation expansion. The ROW located immediately north of the Substation runs in an east-west direction and is actively used by LIPA for overhead transmission infrastructure. A paved multi-use recreational path (the North Shore Rail Trail) is located within the LIPA-owned ROW.

The overall Substation property is approximately 1.2 acres. The existing active Substation is approximately 0.7 acres in size and will be expanded to the north and east to encompass an additional approximately 0.5 acres of LIPA-owned land, inclusive of the Substation property and a portion of the adjacent ROW. Existing trees, brush and vegetation located within the expansion area will require clearing and removal. The expansion will include removal of the existing fence and installation of a new fence and privacy screen at the perimeter of the newly expanded Substation. New substation equipment will be installed, primarily within the expansion area, including: one 138/13kV 33MVA transformer bank, one incoming transmission structure (H-frame), one switchgear half line-up, one gas circuit breaker, a battery enclosure, several switches and supporting structures, three 60-foot lightning masts, associated supporting substation equipment, and buswork. One switch, bus support and an existing H-frame structure will be removed from the current Substation. Cable connections within the Substation will be completed, as necessary. Existing Substation equipment extends to maximum heights of approximately 24 feet above grade, with the exception of the two H-frame structures (48 feet and 55 feet above grade) and lightning mast structures (60 feet above grade). The H-frame structure to be removed extends to approximately 48 feet above grade.

The new H-Frame structure to be installed will be approximately 50 feet in height. A lightning mast will be affixed to the top of the H-frame structure, resulting in a total approximate height of 60 feet. Other Substation equipment to be installed will extend to maximum heights of approximately 24 feet above grade.

Transmission connections into the north side of the Substation will be relocated to connect to the new Substation equipment, which will require installation, replacement and removal of several transmission poles located north of the existing LIPA ROW, as listed below. Tree trimming and minor vegetative clearing will be necessary in the immediate vicinity of these poles.

<b>Pole #</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Existing Material</b>	<b>Proposed Material</b>	<b>Current Height (feet)</b>	<b>Proposed Height (feet)</b>
120.5	Install New	--	Steel	--	85
121	Replace	Steel	Steel	88	77
122	Replace	Steel	Steel	88	77
122.5	Install new	--	Steel	--	85
8M-1	Remove	Wood	--	65	--
8M-2	Remove	Wood	--	65	--

The two new underground feeders will include installation of approximately 5,000 feet of cable in conduits, with additional spare conduits. Both feeders will extend from a new switchgear half line-up within the Substation. As shown on Figures 3 and 4, one feeder will extend south to an existing utility pole, and the second feeder will extend to a new pad-mounted switchgear that will be installed immediately north of the Substation, where it will then travel in two directions: i) north from the Substation and west along the existing LIPA transmission ROW, connecting to an existing utility pole, and; ii) north from the Substation, east along the existing LIPA transmission ROW, and north along Mount Sinai-Coram Road, where it will connect to a replacement utility pole. Five manholes will be installed along the underground feeder routes. Feeder installation along the transmission ROW will be installed via horizontal directional drilling (HDD); HDD laydown will occur within the ROW. The remainder of UG feeder installation will be via open trench. Approximately 0.15 acre of vegetation consisting of low-lying brush and shrubs will require clearing for HDD cable installation and laydown.

Additionally, approximately 550 feet of underground cable will be installed via open trench along Mount Sinai-Coram Road and North Country Road to create an underground dip that will provide additional switching capabilities.

Overhead distribution upgrades will include the in-kind replacement of 74 wood utility poles, installation of eight new wood utility poles, and replacement of overhead wire. The new poles will be of similar height to existing adjacent poles and will range from 37.5 feet to 42 feet in height. Anchors and pole-top equipment (switches, capacitors, cross-arms, and transformers) will be installed and replaced as needed.

In total, the Proposed Action will require approximately 0.9 acres of ground disturbance of which approximately 0.5 acres will be for Substation expansion activities.

### **Reasons Supporting This Determination:**

The SEAF evaluates the effect of the Proposed Action upon land use, natural resources, visual resources and community character, energy use, environmental hazards, and human health resources. Key findings are outlined below.

Substation expansion will occur within a vacant vegetated area. While utilizing this property as a Substation represents a change to the land use, this land is owned by LIPA and currently abuts the active Substation and transmission ROW where existing electrical infrastructure exists. Expanding the Substation into this area will not result in any significant adverse impacts to land use as new equipment installations will be substantially similar in height and appearance to what exists in the immediate vicinity, and as it is located on utility-owned land adjacent to properties that are actively used for electrical purposes. The transmission and distribution components of the Proposed Action will occur within or along ROWs or roadways where active electrical infrastructure (UG and OH) exists, and therefore will not result in any significant adverse impacts to land use.

The visual changes associated with the Proposed Action are depicted in the renderings and photo simulations provided in Attachment A. The Substation expansion will occur within a vacant vegetated area. Privacy screening will be installed on the Substation fencing and additional vegetative beautification will be completed in front of the Substation after construction is completed. Any damaged or dead plantings will be replaced, and additional trees will be planted, similar to what currently exists near the Substation entrance. Renderings of the Substation are provided in Attachment A, Views 1 through 3.

The transmission pole activities will occur within an existing transmission ROW, where transmission poles and infrastructure of similar height and appearance currently exist. While a local multi-use recreational trail (North Shore Rail Trail) is located within the ROW, wood and steel transmission poles along this trail are currently unobstructed and visible (*see* Attachment A, Views 4 and 5), and have been fully visible since the trail's development. The transmission modifications will not result in an increase to the number of transmission poles. The utilization of wood or steel pole construction will not significantly impair the current viewshed given the high level of visibility of the existing wood and steel transmission infrastructure. Therefore, neither the Substation nor the transmission modifications will significantly hinder or impair the public's use or enjoyment of this trail. In addition, the existing Substation, transmission poles, and other electrical infrastructure, including a 60-foot Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) pole, are currently visible from neighboring properties (*see* Attachment A, Views 6 and 7). Therefore, the Proposed Action activities will not result in any significant adverse visual impacts compared to what currently exists, nor will it have a significant adverse impact on the surrounding community character.

Distribution feeder and cable installation will be underground in areas where subsurface utilities exist, and distribution pole replacements will be in-kind. New distribution pole installations will

be installed within or at the end of existing pole alignments consisting of poles similar in height and appearance. Therefore, the Proposed Action will not result in any significant adverse visual impacts.

The Proposed Action is partially located within the following Critical Environmental Areas (CEAs): the Route 25A Corridor CEA, the Central Suffolk Pine Barrens CEA, and the Central Suffolk Special Groundwater Protection Area (SGPA) (*see* Figure 8). While the Proposed Action is within the Central Suffolk Pine Barrens CEA, it is not within the regulatory boundary of the Central Pine Barrens Commission. These CEAs have been designated to protect drinking water, public health, open space, wetlands, or groundwater. No work activities in these areas will involve vegetative clearing, work within or adjacent to regulated wetlands, or the introduction of hazardous substances into the subsurface. Based on the excavation depths anticipated for construction within these areas, and corresponding United States Geological Survey (USGS) depth to groundwater data, groundwater will not be encountered nor impacted. Depth to groundwater at work areas located north of Mount Sinai-Coram Road is approximately 10 feet below grade, and work activities in this area are not anticipated to exceed 8 feet in depth. Depth to groundwater south of Mount Sinai-Coram Road is greater than 100 feet; work activities in this area will not encounter groundwater. Given this information, the Proposed Action will not result in significant adverse impacts to these CEAs.

A portion of the Proposed Action is located within the Mount Sinai Historic District; however, the eligibility of this district for listing on the State or National Register for Historic Places is not yet determined. No buildings that are listed or eligible for listing are located adjacent to the Proposed Action. A portion of the Proposed Action is also located within a New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) designated archeologically buffer area. A consultation request was submitted to OPRHP on January 4, 2024, and OPRHP responded with a letter dated January 11, 2024, that the Proposed Action would have no impact on historic properties, including archaeological and/or historic resources (*see* Attachment C). Therefore, the Proposed Action will not result in any significant adverse impacts to the aforementioned areas.

The EAF Mapper Summary Report identified that the Proposed Action is located on, or adjoining wetlands or other waterbodies regulated by a federal, state, or local agency. Upon further review of the NYSDEC Environmental Resource Mapper, historical NYSDEC aerial photography, and completion of a field wetland delineation, the Proposed Action is not located within the boundaries of any wetland and is located outside of regulated wetland adjacent areas (*see* Figure 9). Therefore, no significant adverse impacts to regulated wetlands or waterbodies will result from the Proposed Action.

One State- and Federally-listed endangered species (Northern Long-eared Bat (“NLEB”)) was identified as being potentially located in the vicinity of the Proposed Action. NLEBs spend winter

hibernating in caves and mines, called hibernacula. They typically use large caves or mines with large passages and entrances, constant temperatures, and high humidity with no air currents. NLEBs roost underneath bark, in cavities, or in crevices of trees during summer. Males and non-reproductive females may also roost in cooler places, like caves and mines. Rarely, it has also been found roosting in structures like barns and sheds<sup>1</sup>.

Substation expansion will require clearing of approximately 0.5-acre of trees and vegetation and UG cable installation and HDD laydown within the ROW will require removal of approximately 0.15 acre of low-lying brush and shrubs. A consultation request was submitted to the New York Natural Heritage Program (NYNHP) on January 4, 2024 to obtain additional information on the presence of NLEB within the Proposed Action area. NYNHP responded with a letter dated March 7, 2024 indicating that NLEB have been documented within 3 miles of the Proposed Action area and Marine Intertidal Mudflats have been documented within 100 yards north of the Shore Road portion of the Proposed Action. PSEG Long Island conducted a site visit on January 23, 2024 to assess the Substation expansion area for potential NLEB habitat since this area will require clearing and removal of existing trees, brush, and vegetation. The area was observed to consist of early to mid-successional species, suggesting that clearing has occurred within the past 10 to 15 years. Non-native invasive species and younger tree specimens such as Japanese knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*), black cherry (*Prunus serotina*), and black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) were the predominant species identified in this area. Given the composition of the area, the existing trees on the site do not meet the characteristics required for habitat and thus are not suitable for NLEB utilization. Additionally, there are no freshwater sources readily available near the project site, which could also be utilized by NLEB. A request for determination that the Substation expansion area does not contain habitat suitable for NLEB and would not result in an incidental take was submitted to New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) on March 5, 2024, and NYSDEC responded with a letter dated April 5, 2024 concurring that “Though Northern Long-eared Bats are known to occur at or near your project location, the DEC does not anticipate your proposed action to result in a “take”.”. UG cable installation and HDD laydown within the ROW will be located immediately adjacent to the paved North Shore Rail Trail and residences in an area that has been recently disturbed during the development of the North Shore Rail Trail. This area is predominately comprised of lower growing invasive herbaceous vegetation and shrubs. The dominant species in this area are Japanese knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*), mugwort (*Artemisia vulgaris*) and black locust saplings (*Robinia pseudoacacia*). Given its location and vegetative composition, this area is no more suitable for bat habitat than the Substation expansion area. Given the lack of suitable habitat, vegetation clearing will not have a significant adverse impact on the NLEB species. In addition, the Proposed Action will not have significant adverse impacts on Marine Intertidal Mudflats as it will not occur within wetlands or wetland adjacent areas. NYSDEC and NYNHP correspondence is provided in Attachment B.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9045>

Based on the SEAF and PSEG Long Island's recommendation according to the standards as set forth in SEQRA, the Proposed Action will not result in any significant adverse environmental impacts and a Draft Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared.

**For Further Information:**

Contact Person: Erin Gorman, Manager, Environmental Projects & Permitting, PSEG Long Island

Address: 175 East Old Country Road, Hicksville, NY 11801

Telephone Number: (800) 490-0025

E-mail: [PSEGLongIslandSEQR@pseg.com](mailto:PSEGLongIslandSEQR@pseg.com)

/s/ Billy Raley

Billy Raley

Senior Vice President of Transmission and Distribution, Long Island Power Authority

Dated: August 14, 2024