Aspen - Golden Substations Virtual Meeting-20260625_121532-Meeting Recording

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Marie C McHewitt (Services - 6) started transcription

Deon L Wright (Services - 6) 0:04

Good afternoon, everyone. We do apologize for this temporary delay. We were having some technical difficulties here in the room. Keep in mind, as we are about to begin the presentation, this will be recorded and posted on the website after we are completed here today. We will still take the time to go through the presentation, make sure that we try to answer any questions that you may have.

at the end of the presentation. So again, thank you for your patience. So good afternoon. My name is Deon Wright, and I'm a member of the Dominion Energy Electric Transmission Communications Team. We appreciate you taking the time to learn more about the Aspen and Golden Substation projects and look forward to sharing information and answering your questions today.

Let's get started.

We will walk through a brief overview of the electric grid and why additional infrastructure is needed, then review the project maps, timelines, and simulations. We will leave time at the end for questions.

The Aspen and Golden substations are designed to support growing electricity demand and strengthen the transmission system in eastern Loudoun County.

This slide provides an overview of the Aspen and Golden Substation projects. The maps shown here highlight the general locations of both projects, which we will discuss in more detail later in the presentation. Together, these projects are designed to support long-term electric reliability in Loudoun County.

The Aspen and Golden Substation projects went through a detailed review process led by the Virginia State Corporation Commission, also known as the SCC. The process included opportunities for public comment, community engagement, public hearings, and an independent review of the need for the project.

After reviewing the information, the SEC determined these projects are needed to help maintain reliable electric service for customers in this region. The SEC's approval was later upheld by the Virginia Supreme Court.

To provide some context, we will begin with a brief overview of the electric grid, how substations support reliable service, and why planning ahead is important as electricity needs continue to grow.
We must upgrade and add new energy infrastructure in Virginia to ensure reliable energy supporting residential homes, commercial buildings, data centers, and vital government services. New electric infrastructure will improve reliability for all customers in the region, enabling EE growth.
EV growth and help distribute cleaner energy. We are actively engaged with our customers and other stakeholders to develop solutions and provide benefits to residential, small businesses, national security, or homeland defense customers.
This graphic shows how electricity moves through the grid, from generation to transmission lines to substations, and finally to homes and businesses. As electricity demand grows, investments in infrastructure like substations are essential to help maintain reliable service for the communities
We serve.
Energy demand is changing rapidly due to electrification, increasing data usage, and the transition to cleaner energy sources.
Electricity demand in Virginia is expected to grow significantly over the coming years, and the forecast is real. The actual demand on the system has outpaced the yearly forecast each of the last five years. We've just experienced another summer system peak just two weeks ago during the June
11th and 12th heat wave. To maintain reliable service, we must continue investing in the electric grid, including substations, transmission lines, and other infrastructure.
Projects like Aspen and Golden help ensure the system is ready to meet current and future energy demands while maintaining
reliability for our customers.
Before we go further, it helps to level set. A substation is a facility that helps move electricity safely and reliably from the transmission system to homes and businesses.
Substations are a key part of the electric grid. They adjust voltage, help manage the low flow of power, and support reliable services for homes, businesses, and schools.
Without substations, electricity could not be delivered safely and efficiently to our communities.
On this slide, we call it what you see and what you don't. Inside of a substation, you'll find equipment with transformers, breakers, and switches, which are normally below the fence line. Some of this equipment is visible above the security fence line, such as

a backbone, which is a structure that holds the electric
transmission conductor to stop the line at the substation equipment.
We know noise is one of the most common questions people have about substations. That is why Dominion Energy developed this interactive noise tool. The tool helps visualize how sounds travel from a substation and compares those two sound levels to typical sounds people experience in their everyday environment.
If you are interested in learning more, you can visit dominionenergy.com backslash subtool. Or you can scan the QR code that's on the screen at this point right now, and we'll pause to give you the opportunity to scan the code. This allows you to go in at your time,
to enter some of your own parameters to see how noise might impact you from there. We'll pause here for just a sec.
Protecting substations is an important part of maintaining a safe and reliable electric system. Across the industry, there has been an increase in attempts to damage, vandalize, or gain unauthorized access to electric infrastructure because substations play a critical role in delivering power.
they must be protected. Dominion Energy uses security measures designed to deter unauthorized access and help protect vital equipment. These security systems are built to meet strict industry standards and are designed to be durable, secure, and effective. Our goal is to protect the electric grid,
keep our employees and public safe, and maintain reliable service for our customers.
The mini energy standard substation security design typically includes reinforced fencing, cameras, lighting, and monitoring systems like those shown on the picture here. For Ashman and Golden, we're partnered with the community to use a security wall that provides the same level of protection while helping screen the facility.
and better blend with the surrounding area. This approach reflects our commitment to both great security and being a good neighbor in the communities that we serve.
I'm going to pause here for a second and I'm going to transfer to one of my counterparts here. She will discuss in detail a little more about the sub station security walls.
Priscilla, when you're available, please join us and go through the next few slides just to share the community about what we're doing out there to partner with them.

CM **Christiaanna C Mcdonald (Services - 6)** 8:52
So through the permitting process with the county, going through the legislative

process, we've partnered with county staff as
Commission and Board of Supervisors to try and offer more options when it comes to our security wall aesthetics. What you see on this slide are three of our standardized colors currently. We're also exploring some
Additional options that provide a little more of a visual break, including additional what we call I-beam colors, which are the colors of the vertical supports, as well as additional textures that are not
Currently, what you see is a lot of the ledge stone texture, but we also are exploring a more smooth texture, as well as the stone texture, which provides more of a border and some other color variations.
based on feedback that we have gotten from the county and also from the communities. So we are trying to be responsive to the feedback that we've been provided through the permitting process while also maintaining the security
Of the substation.
I'm going to hand it back to Deon.

Deon L Wright (Services - 6) 10:36
Thank you for that, Kristopher. We're going to continue to move forward with the presentation here. Community engagement. Being a good community partner is important to us. Over the past several years, we have engaged with residents, HOAs, and local stakeholders to share information, answer questions, and listen to feedback about the Aspen and Golden.

Christiaanna C Mcdonald (Services - 6) 10:36
Thank you for that, Kristopher. We want to continue to move.

Deon L Wright (Services - 6) 10:57
projects. The next slides provide an overview of those engagement efforts.
We believe strong projects begin with strong community engagement.
Our commitment to share information openly, listen to community feedback, and provide opportunities for ongoing dialogue. The next slide highlights some of the ways we have engaged with the community throughout the life cycle of the project.
Community engagement has been a key part of the project for several years. Since 2022, we have worked to keep residents, property owners, HOAs, and other stakeholders informed through a variety of outreach efforts. Those efforts have

included project mailings, neighbor notifications, website updates,
digital communications, virtual meetings in person, in-person open houses, and opportunities for our questions and feedback. As shown here, hundreds of community members participated in our public meetings, helping us better understand questions and concerns. We appreciate everyone who has taken the time to participate and share their feedback.

One of the reasons we are now holding Aspen and Golden public meetings, in addition to the county public processes, is that we remain committed to being a transparent and responsible partner. We heard the request to better show more broadly what step stations will look like, and we trust these meetings will
Do that.

Next, we will take a closer look at the Aspen Substation location.

This map shows the proposed location. The site is directly south of the existing Goose Creek substation and adjacent to the other electric facilities, including the Pleasant View substation and upcoming Bowling Park substation. The WOND Trail is located immediately next to the project area.

Locating Aspen near existing infrastructure helps support reliability while minimizing the need for new utility corridors. We will continue to move forward with this as we get towards the back end of the presentation. You'll see updated sims to highlight a more detailed version of what we're discussing here.

Now that we have reviewed the Aspen substation location, let's take a look at some of the project details. Aspen is a 500, 230 kilovolt gas insulated substation or GIS substation. This design encloses much of the electrical equipment, creating a more compact facility that is well suited for areas where space
is limited. The project is designed to address transmission constraints, support growing electric demand, and improve reliability in Loudoun County. The project received SEC approval in 2025 when construction anticipated to begin in 2027 with an anticipated in-service date of 2028.

Next, we will take a closer look at the Golden Substation location.

This map shows the proposed location of Golden Substation near Pacific Boulevard and Gloucester Parkway. This site is adjacent to the proposed Auto World and Paragon substations. Planning these facilities together,
Help support future reliability needs by minimizing the need for additional utility corridors in the surrounding area.

Now that we've reviewed the Golden Substation location, let's take a look at some of

the project details. Golden is a 500, 230 kilovolt gas insulated substation designed to support electric reliability and growing demand in the Ashburn area. The project received SEC approval in 2025.
and will be connected to Aspen through new transmission lines. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2027 with an excuse me, anticipated in service date of June 2028.
Nanny, we have shown the locations of both Aspen and Golden substations. Let's take a closer look at how each facility is being designed and the measures being taken to fit within the surrounding area and reduce potential impacts. At this time, I'm going to pause again and pass the microphone back to my counterpart, Kristopher, here.
And she will go through the Sims that we have available here for Aspen and Golden Substations.

CM **Christiaanna C Mcdonald (Services - 6)** 15:58
So what you're seeing now is an aerial image of the location of Aspen Substation. I know there were earlier in the presentation a bit of confusion about which locations were which. This is the Aspen location off of Cochrane Mill Road.
If you look at the SIMs currently on the screen, this is what we had initially proposed. This is the initial growth of what we are proposing as far as vegetative screening that we are proposing to plant along the WNOD Trail to mitigate the visual impacts to trail users. But if you go to what the 10-year growth will look like when these plantings are mature,
Because of its proximity to the trail, it should better visually screen the trail from the substations. And this is proposed on both sides of the trail, both facing Aspen Substation and facing the existing Pleasant View substations in the other direction.
If you look at this sim, this is Aspen from the direction of Boland Park. As you can see, there isn't a huge difference in what you see currently from Boland Park and what
the substation will look like when it is built from the Boland Park perspective.
And again, even at the 10-year growth, it was about the same. On to the golden location, the aerial image, as you can tell, includes a significant amount of planting on the trail side of our proposal. If you look at from the trail, these are
the existing conditions because of development. Much of that will be removed, but this is showing our initial plantings. Also, the golden wall color shows an example of

one of the other colors and textures available. We understand there's a leaning preference to the buff color shown on the Aspen wall.
but wanted to show one of the other options available. We're working with county staff and the board as to what the ultimate preference will be, but we wanted to show a variety in our simulations.
This also shows we are also proposing these potential decorative screen fence options. And there are, again, we are working with county staff and the board to ultimately determine what these will look like to better screen the substation.
And again, this is without the panels. This is at the 10 year growth. So the maturity for many of the shrub plantings. And then an additional, if you see in the front of the shrub plantings, there's also meadow plantings.
And then again, the 10 year growth with the decorative screen fence options.
And then this also shows Golden Substation. This is from the side of 28. This is a digital rendering. So there are some, there may be some variations to real world conditions, pardon me. But again, this is what the initial planting without the screen fence panels would look like.
And then this is with the screen fence panels, which at initial planting do provide some additional screening.
And then at maturity, the vegetation really kind of takes over in terms of screening.
Thank you, Philip Griffin.

Deon L Wright (Services - 6) 20:19
Thank you for that, Krista. We'll continue from here. Again, we thank you for your patience. To summarize what we have going on here, the key takeaways is that transmission infrastructure is essential to maintaining reliability and supporting future growth. Proactive long-term planning helps avoid smaller reactive projects and reduces reliability risk during extreme weather events and periods of high demand. Will plan transmission investments also provide long-term value for customers by strengthening the grid, supporting economic growth, and helping keep costs lower over time.
We appreciate your participation in this this afternoon. Just want to remind you again to keep in mind we are recording this and this will be posted on the website later today. We will now move into the question and answer portion of the meeting. We will pause to organize your questions to provide the appropriate response.
I will turn off my camera temporarily to work with our project team. We will be back

momentarily. Thank you again for your patience.
Thank you all again for your patience. We did have a couple of questions that we had in the Q&A here. The first question is, why does Dominion not bury these lines underground for this project? I'm going to turn this over to Kristopher, again, who you saw earlier, who was able to answer this for us.
Thank you, Kristy.

Christiaanna C Mcdonald (Services - 6) 23:54
So in the case of Aspen's Golden, this line, we did evaluate the option of an underground solution. However, the SEC, who is the ultimate decision maker when it comes to choosing which routes are approved and get constructed,
The overhead route that was presented ultimately was chosen by the SEC and that is what we are required to build. But like I said, we do also evaluate underground routes.
But ultimately, the decision lies with the State Corporation Commission.

Deon L Wright (Services - 6) 24:38
Thank you, Kristopher, for that response. The next question I have is, what does gas insulated substation mean? I'll take that myself. Typically, we have space constraints a lot of times in the engineering solution calls for us in closing some of the substation equipment.
inside of a building. When we do have adequate space, we use what's called an air insulated substation system. But for both of these projects, the proposal is to use gas insulated, again, to place some of those facilities indoors because of the constrained space that we have here.
at this time.
I have one more question, and it says, do these projects have to be approved by the SCC?
So my response to that, what we determine here, the substation portion does not have to be approved. We are currently working with Loudoun County staff and elected officials to approve this critical infrastructure to complete this reliability loop that we have in Loudoun County. Like we stressed before in our conversations, the demand is here now.
And we must address this to make sure that we continue to provide reliable power moving forward.

There's one about data centers.
There's one at that.
So, yeah.
And so, the next question I see is, if this was built near a family home, what would you do?
So, and a lot of times what we do is we go through the evaluation process. We have a detail engineering. We make sure that we're within the proper right of way that's acquired during a project to make sure that it doesn't, I guess, cause inconveniences. to the homeowners. We're within our rights and our limits, because again, we are an electric utility that is regulated by the SEC. So all of the projects that we build continue to move forward, are regulated and have to be approved by the SEC moving forward.
Thank you again. You can find more information about the projects on our website, and you're always welcome to reach out to us directly by email or phone with any of these questions. You also have the opportunity to join us for upcoming in-person community meetings on June 29th.
in July 1st, which are displayed on the screen right now at this point.
Again, thank you for your time and participation. We appreciate the opportunity to share this information with you. Again, like we stated in the beginning, this will be recorded and placed on the website for the review at your leisure later today. Thank you so much. Appreciate your patience. Have a great day.

◉ **Marie C McHewitt (Services - 6)** stopped transcription