

Lower Makefield Township
Electric Reliability Committee (ERC)
January 19, 2016
Meeting Minutes

Present: Bernard Griga
John Kingham
James Kirlin
James Ferraro

Apologies: Jeff Benedetto, Richard Gorelick

The January 19, 2016 meeting of the Lower Makefield Township Electric Reliability Committee (ERC) was called to order at 7:10 PM in the offices of the Yardley-Makefield Fire Company, Station 80 by Chairman Kingham.

Agenda: The meeting agenda is appended to these minutes. ([Attachment 1](#)).

1. Approval of past minutes: The minutes of the meeting of September 3, 2015 were approved (Griga/Kirlin).

2. PECO reliability

a. Public feedback: It was agreed that, in the absence of any significant weather events, there have been few, if any, public complaints. Mr. Griga made the point that any feedback will only be negative since no one calls to praise the Township or PECO when the lights are consistently on.

There was discussion centered on the “Alberta Clipper” winds that briefly hit the area on the night of January 12th. It was noted that, even though several trees fell on power lines, the relatively short power interruptions and the timely incident and response reports on PECO’s outage map appear to be positive outcomes from PECO’s upgrade work.

b. Communication wires vs. PECO power Lines: Chairman Kingham advised the committee that, in response to a complaint to the Township from a resident about trees growing around power lines on Edgewood Road, he had surveyed the area and had prepared a PowerPoint presentation. This shows the vegetation is in fact clear of the high voltage lines but it does harmlessly grow around the phone and data communication cables which are also strung on the poles. The presentation is appended to these minutes as [attachment 2](#).

3. PECO vegetation management

Discussion on this item was taken up under item 5 below.

4. Communications

Similar to item 3, discussion on this item was taken up under item 5 below.

5. ERC future – Is our job done?

In the light of the apparent improvements brought about by the implementation of the PECO upgrade plan, the committee discussed its past work and whether or not the ERC has outlived its purpose. From this, the committee arrived at a number of points to be presented to Mr. Benedetto for consideration by the Board of Supervisors. The points are as follows:

- a. **Ongoing political efforts:** The committee agreed that, without intervention by the elected State representatives, notably Senator McIlhinney and Representative Santarsiero, PECO would not have implemented its system upgrade plan in lower Bucks County. **Consequently, this political help must continue.**
- b. **PECO refusal of LMT help:** Despite offers of positive help from LMT with public communications, PECO has consistently refused to accept any assistance via the LMT website. PECO has also refused to allow any direct communication with the ERC. **It is recommended that the Township management revisit this issue** with PECO with the following requests:
 - i. Read and comment on the ERC minutes on the LMT website.
 - ii. Nominate a person that can act as a liaison between the ERC and PECO.
- c. **PECO upgrade completion:** It was noted that one positive outcome from the efforts by the Township governance was the fact that, in September 2015, PECO chose the LMT building as the venue for its presentation to municipal leaders on the completion of its upgrade work. **LMT should continue to take the lead** whenever the opportunity arises.
- d. **Reliability data and infrastructure upgrades:** The ERC has noted that the reliability data submitted to the PUC by PECO shows that equipment failure is the major cause of power interruptions. However, in public meetings PECO has consistently pointed to vegetation as the major cause without any mention of its aging equipment. In contrast, the committee noted that PECO has recently gained approval from the PUC for a rate increase (Distribution System Improvement Charge – DSIC). This is aimed at funding a major equipment upgrade program. ([See attachment 3 for the PECO notice circulated to all of its customers](#)). More importantly, during its presentation at the Township in September, **PECO asked for municipal support** of its DSIC application. In return, the committee believes that **LMT should exert political pressure to ask PECO to support ERC requests for PECO cooperation.**

In addition, on the matter of the reliability data, the committee requests that **LMT, through the Township solicitor**, make a request to the PUC for a copy of the latest public version of the PECO quarterly reliability report.

- e. **Vegetation management:** The Township should seek PECO participation and support for a **joint ERC/EAC meeting on vegetation management**. Ideally this should include both the PECO and LMT arborists.

- f. **PECO vagaries:** Despite the fact that the upgrade program has been completed and despite the fact that there does appear to be real progress as far as reliability is concerned, PECO has consistently been very vague about the details of its work within LMT. In its presentations to municipal representatives, PECO stated that, prior to the upgrade work, it had analyzed the power outage data and had identified “pocket outage areas” where a relatively small number of consumers had experienced multi-day outages. Even so, citing security constraints, PECO stated that it could not provide details of the areas or the work to be done.

The committee agreed that, while it understands the security concern, PECO could provide some hard-and-fast detail of what has been done. The committee believes that, without giving any details of its circuits, PECO could refer to areas by readily understandable street or neighborhood names and speak in generalities about the types of work done. To this end, **the committee requests that LMT apply pressure to PECO to provide the committee with an engineering spokesperson that could be less vague about what has been done within LMT.**

6. Next ERC Meeting:

It was agreed that the next ERC meeting will depend on the availability of Supervisor Benedetto. The Chairman undertook to liaise with Mr. Benedetto with a view to establishing a range of possible dates.

7. Motion for Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Attachments:

1. [Agenda](#)
2. [Communication & power Line presentation](#)
3. PECO rate increase notice

ERC Agenda January 19, 2015 Meeting:

1. Approval of minutes of September 3, 2015 meeting
2. PECO Reliability
 - a. Any public feedback?
 - b. Communication wires vs. PECO power lines
 - i. Edgewood Road survey
3. PECO Vegetation management
 - a. Link to PECO maintenance request form
 - b. Work with PECO on public education
4. Communications
5. ERC future – Is our job done?
6. Other items
7. Set date, time, place for next ERC meeting
8. Motion for adjournment

Lower Makefield Township



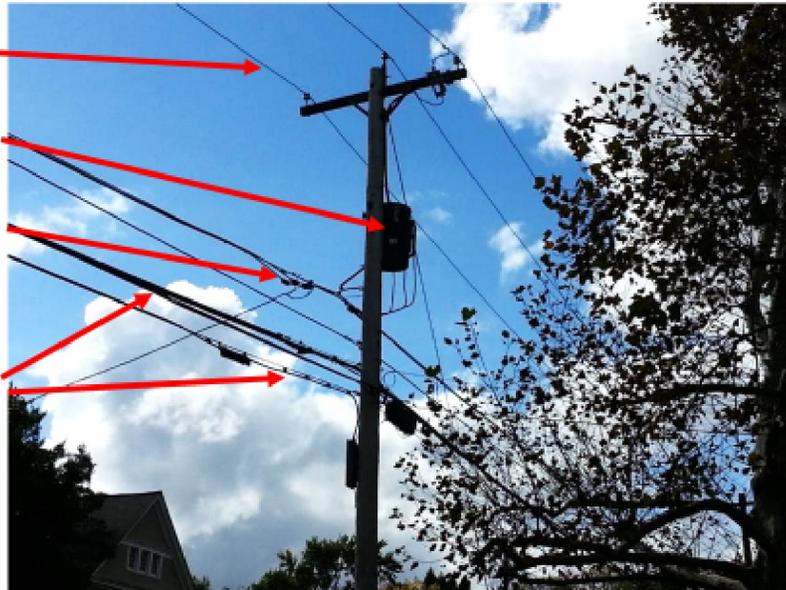
Electric Reliability Committee (ERC)

Edgewood/Makefield/Yardley-Morrisville Roads Area Possible Tree & Power Line Infringement Survey

11/02/15

What is on the Poles?

- PECO High Voltage Lines
- PECO Transformer Supplying Perhaps 4 or 8 Residents
- PECO Service Lines to Residences
- Non-PECO Communication Lines – Telephone, Cable etc Not an Electrical Hazard



11/02/15

Yardley-Morrisville/Edgewood/Makefield Roads 11/2/15

- PECO Lines Clear
- Communication Cables Through Trees
- Not a Power Issue
- Many Mature Trees



11/2/15

Yardley-Morrisville/Edgewood/Makefield Roads 11/2/15

- Tree trimmed to Clear PECO Lines
- Communication Cables Through Trees
- Not a Power Issue
- Tall Trees on Private Property



11/2/15

Yardley-Morrisville/Edgewood/Makefield Roads 11/2/15

- PECO Lines Clear of Lower Growth
- Communication Cables Entwined by Vegetation
- Not a Power Issue



11/2/15

Yardley-Morrisville/Edgewood/Makefield Roads 11/2/15

- PECO Weather Hardened Line Through Mature Tree
- Resists Tree Infringement Damage



11/2/15

Yardley-Morrisville/Edgewood/Makefield Roads 11/2/15

Conclusions:

- PECO Tree Trimming has Cleared Power Lines
- Non-PECO Communication Cables Are in Trees & Vegetation
- Not a Power Issue



11/2/15

NOTICE OF ELECTRIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT CHARGE

The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) recently approved PECO's plan to expand its existing programs to modernize our electric distribution system.

For our customers, this means PECO will accelerate the installation, replacement and relocation of electric equipment and facilities. This will help the local electric system be more weather resistant and less vulnerable to storms.

The PUC also approved PECO's request to implement a Distribution System Improvement Charge (DSIC), which is a rate mechanism that may be used to recover the cost of investing in the kinds of system enhancements described above. Although the DSIC will become effective on January 1, 2016, the initial DSIC rate will be set at zero. Therefore, there will be no change in customers' electric rates at this time because of the DSIC. In the future, PECO may ask the PUC to change the DSIC rate. However, any change in the DSIC rate must be approved by the PUC and PECO would provide notice to customers of the change.

The DSIC was authorized by Act 11, which was signed into law in February 2012. Act 11 allows electric distribution and natural gas companies to use the DSIC to help support the modernization of their distribution systems. Permitting this charge on customer bills will also reduce the frequency and the associated costs of filing base rate cases with the PUC while still maintaining a high level of customer protection through various safeguards that are built into the DSIC.