

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE



HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD
APPLICATION FOR HISTORIC LANDMARK OR HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION

New Designation X
Amendment of a previous designation
Please summarize any amendment(s) _____

Property name Potomac Electric Power Company Substation No. 61
If any part of the interior is being nominated, it must be specifically identified and described in the narrative statements.

Address 3215 44th Street NW

Square and lot number(s) Square 1626 Lot 0800

Affected Advisory Neighborhood Commission ANC 3D08

Date of construction 1946 Date of major alteration(s)

Architect(s) Potomac Electric Power Company

Architectural style(s) Georgian Revival

Original use Energy facility Present use Energy facility

Property owner Potomac Electric Power Company

Legal address of property owner 701 9TH ST NW; Washington DC 20068-0001

NAME OF APPLICANT(S) Historic Washington Architecture

If the applicant is an organization, it must submit evidence that among its purposes is the promotion of historic preservation in the District of Columbia. A copy of its charter, articles of incorporation, or by-laws, setting forth such purpose, will satisfy this requirement.

Address/Telephone of applicant(s) 608 Rock Creek Church Rd, NW, Washington DC 20010/
202-904-8111

Name and title of authorized representative Kent C. Boese, President

Signature of representative _____ Date 11/14/17

Name and telephone of author of application Kent C. Boese, 202-904-8111

Date received _____
H.P.O. staff _____

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Potomac Electric Power Company Substation No. 61

Other names/site number: _____

Name of related multiple property listing:

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 3215 44th Street, NW

City or town: Washington State: D.C. County: N/A

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this ___ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___national ___statewide ___local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

___A ___B ___C ___D

<p>_____</p> <p>Signature of certifying official/Title:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>Date</p>
---	---------------------------------

<p>In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p>_____</p> <p>Signature of commenting official:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Title :</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>Date</p> <p>_____</p> <p>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
 determined eligible for the National Register
 determined not eligible for the National Register
 removed from the National Register
 other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:

Public – Local

Public – State

Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)

District

Site

Structure

Object

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

INDUSTRY/energy facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

INDUSTRY/energy facility

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/Georgia Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Brick, Limestone, Concrete, Steel,

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Potomac Electric Power Company Substation No. 61 is a 0.03-acre energy distribution site. It is located on the east side of 44th Street, NW, just north of center between Lowell Street (south) and Macomb Street (north). The site contains a 2-story substation building constructed in 1946 facing 44th Street. The substation building is designed in the Georgian Revival style and constructed of red brick laid in American bond fashion on the north, east, and south elevations. The west (primary) elevation fronting 44th Street is primarily constructed of red brick laid in American bond fashion with the central portion recessed and containing an entry door. The recessed area is clad in limestone.

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Narrative Description

General Description:

Site:

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation No. 61 is prominently located on 44th Street approximately 173.3 ft. south of Macomb Street and 196.1 ft. north of Lowell Street, NW (Lot 800 in Square 1626). The property is bounded on the south by a free-standing residential house and on the north and east by an alley/driveway and parking lot.

Overall, Substation No. 61 is rectangular in plan and is a 2-story brick building constructed with solid American bond red brick walls on the north, east, and south elevations. The 44th Street elevation is primarily constructed of red brick laid in American bond fashion with the central portion recessed and containing an entry door. The recessed area is clad in limestone. The building is covered with a flat roof hidden behind the parapet walls of the elevations.

Substation No. 61 is characterized by its 2-story Georgia Revival-style building form.

Exterior Description

The west (44th Street) façade is solidly built of red brick laid in American bond fashion. It is symmetrical with the entrance door centrally located within an arched recessed niche faced in limestone. The niche is capped with a brick soldier course and a limestone keystone. The door surround is composed of Doric pilasters on both sides of the door which are below an entablature which is surmounted by a pointed cornice. The door surround is similarly made of limestone. To the right (south) of the door surround is a bronze plaque containing "POTOMAC ELECTRIC // POWER CO. // SUBSTATION NO. 61" The area above the pointed cornice and the top of the arch contains a small recessed rectangle. Symmetrically placed on either side of the niche is a single, narrow window with a limestone sill and a brick soldier course lintel. The windows are newer replacements that are divided 2 X 8. Behind each window is a trompe l'oeil painting on board of a roller shade. The paintings are contributing elements of the building. Above the north bay on the second floor is an air grate with a brick window sill. A running limestone band delineates the base of the parapet wall, which is capped with limestone coping. The base of the façade is similarly trimmed in limestone.

The north elevation consists of a solid wall void of fenestration or doors constructed of red brick laid in American bond fashion. The parapet wall steps down by eight courses (20 inches) midway from the west to east elevation. The parapet wall is capped with terracotta coping.

The east (rear) elevation contains no doors or windows and is solidly built of red brick laid in American bond fashion. The parapet wall is capped with terracotta coping.

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The south elevation is solidly built of red brick laid in American bond fashion. The first floor is pierced by two doors on either side of a vent in the eastern (rear) half of the wall. The parapet wall steps down by eight courses (20 inches) midway from the west to east elevation. The parapet wall is capped with terracotta coping

Interior Description

The interior floor plan generally consists of a large, open space in which electrical equipment can be placed for the transforming and distribution of electricity to the surrounding community.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

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A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes

B. Removed from its original location

C. A birthplace or grave

D. A cemetery

E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure

F. A commemorative property

G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Engineering

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Period of Significance

1946

Significant Dates

1946

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Potomac Electric Power Company

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

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The Potomac Electric Power Company Substation No. 61 was constructed in 1946, in part, to meet growing electrical demand in the Wesley Heights neighborhood and, in part, in response to Pepco's need to find ways and means of meeting the National Capital's power need during and following World War II.

The Potomac Electric Power Company Substation No. 61 is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the **local level of significance under Criterion A** as it is closely associated with the growing need to provide reliable electric service to the residents in the District of Columbia, particularly those who resided in the vicinity of Wesley Heights. In 1902 Pepco became the sole electric utility company providing electrical service to Washington, D.C. and nearby suburbs in Maryland and Virginia. Beginning with the centralization of generating electric power at the Bennings power plant in late 1906, Pepco substations became the critical link in distributing electricity for the various classes of services for which it was needed throughout the city.

The Potomac Electric Power Company Substation No. 61 also meets **Criterion C** as an outstanding example of a Pepco substation designed by in-house Pepco architects during the period 1939-1960. Substation No. 61 is significant to the work of Pepco architects who developed an architectural style incorporating camouflage (or trompe l'oeil) elements as part of their overall program to improve security for their electrical distribution system in preparation of, during, and following World War II. Buildings constructed during this period mimicked building types typically employed for residential or commercial uses, rather than industrial uses. In this context, Substation No. 61 is a unique example of a substation constructed to be compatible with an affluent residential neighborhood during the brief period between World War II and the Cold War. While many substations were designed to resemble one and two-story Colonial Revival houses, Substation No. 61 incorporates limestone and Georgian Revival elements and eschews any resemblance to a typical domestic dwelling.

The period of significance is 1946 taking in the original construction of the building. The substation is still in use today with minor alterations which do not impact the structure's integrity.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Summary Paragraph;

The Potomac Electric Power Company's Substation No. 61, located at 3215 44th Street, NW, on the eastern side of the street midblock between Macomb Street and Lowell Street was built in 1946 as part of a construction campaign begun in June 1945 to meet the anticipated increased peacetime demand for electric service following the end of World War II. The campaign

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included a new 50,000-kilowatt generator unit at the Buzzard Point station, increasing its capacity to 270,000 kilowatt hours there, and a 50,000-kilowatt steam-electric generator at the Pepco Benning station planned to be online by spring 1947. The improvements at Buzzard Point and Benning were estimated to enlarge Pepco's combined generating capacity by 12% to 505,000 kilowatts.

Substation No. 61 was designed by in-house Pepco architects in the Georgian Revival style and is significant in the area of architecture. As part of Pepco's efforts to keep the power supply safe, the substation is an outstanding example of Pepco's use of camouflage in its architectural designs, and is a unique example of this approach to constructing a substation in an affluent residential neighborhood.

Brief History of the Potomac Electric Power Company

The Potomac Electric Company organized in 1891 with capital stock of \$25,000 and a generating station located on the Virginia side of Chain Bridge. This company went into receivership on July 17, 1893. A reorganization brought about the Potomac Light and Power Company under the same management. Another reorganization brought about the Potomac Light and Power of Virginia. The company put in a bid for street lights in competition with the United States Electric Light Company, which was accepted by the District Commissioners. The United States Electric Light Company took the case to court leading to several years of bitter competition between the two companies.

By 1898, the Potomac Company secured contracts for power to the independent railway lines in the District of Columbia and installed feeders to Brightwood, the Washington Street substation, Eckington and Riverdale, and Montrose Junction on the Tennallytown Rockville Line. This same year, the United States Electric Lighting Company erected a new plant at 14th and B streets, NW.

The following year, in 1899, the United States Electric Light Company and the Potomac Power and Light Company joined forces in a more cooperative arrangement, and when the Washington Railway and Electric Company (WRECo) was formed in 1902, it combined the several independent railways in Washington into one unified system and formally combined the two lighting companies as a subsidiary of WRECo known as the Potomac Electric Power Company (Pepco).

One of the earliest initiatives of Pepco was to establish a new central power plant. Of the possible locations near Washington, the site at Benning on the Anacostia River was ideally located for the generation of electrical energy. Work began at Benning in April 1906 with operations beginning by December of the same year. By 1907, it was possible for Pepco to shut down all of the older generating stations with the exception of the Edison equipment at 14h and B streets. The centralization of electric generation in Washington gave rise to the need for a power substation distribution system to supply the various types of energy needed throughout the city.

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During the fifteen year period from 1907 to 1922, there was no notable change to Pepco's method of generating or electric distribution system. Following 1922, demand for electrical power experienced a rapid increase leading Pepco to install generators capable of supplying more power and the addition of new substations.

During the 1930s, Pepco experienced a building boom largely caused by the displacement of its headquarters, generating facilities, and distributing operations at 14th and B streets due to the U.S. Government's plans to develop the Federal Triangle area. This led to the construction in 1930 of a new headquarters building at 999 E Street, NW, a new service station at 10th and Florida Avenue, NW, and a new substation on Champlain Street. The decade also witnessed the construction of the Buzzard Point Generating Station which began in October 1932 and was completed within the year. During World War II, Buzzard Point would become Pepco's base load generating plant.

Today Pepco continues as Washington's sole supplier of electricity, though the company no longer generates electricity. On June 7, 2000, Pepco sold generating plants with a total capacity of 5,154 megawatts to the Mirant Corporation, including four generating stations located in Maryland and Virginia. From this time, Pepco has operated primarily as an energy supplier distributing electricity through its system of substations.

Substations of the Potomac Electric Power Company

The addition of the 6600 volt, 25 cycle, three phase turbo-generators in Pepco's Station B (14th and B streets, NW) prior to 1905 is considered the beginning of electric substations as they are known today – this being that high tension energy was delivered to the substation by means of high tension feeders from the generating station. Upon delivery, the energy is transformed, converted, and redelivered for the various classes of services for which it is needed.

With the completion of the Benning power generating plant in December 1906, it was possible for Pepco to shut down all of their older generating stations with the exception of the Edison equipment at 14th and B streets. It was then necessary to rely almost exclusively on substations to form the connecting link between the generating station and the consumer as it was impractical to generate all classes of energy at one location to reach all consumers.¹

Four new substations were immediately added to the system with the opening of Bennings – nos. 2, 10, 11, and 12. The new substation no. 2 adjoined the old substation no. 2 at 450 Washington Street, NW. Substation no. 10 was a purpose built brick structure designed by architect Frederick B. Pyle and located in the alley between H, I, 14th, and 15th streets, NW. Substation no. 11 was located in a remodeled office building abutting the streetcar carbarn at 13th and D streets, NE, and substation no. 12 was located in the old steam power station at 33rd and K streets, NW, in Georgetown.

¹ Santamaria, Cesar, *History and Evolution of the PHI Electric System*, p. 6.

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In 1907, Pepco's proposal to construct a new substation at Harvard Street and Sherman Avenue was met with opposition from the surrounding Columbia Heights community which attempted to prevent its construction through court action. After a two-month delay, construction of Substation no. 13 proceeded. The Harvard substation (no. 13), designed by Frederick B. Pyle, is notable for being the first purpose built substation built outside of Washington's central core in one of the city's growing suburbs (Columbia Heights). It is also the most architecturally significant of Pepco's early substation designs prior to 1928. Prior to construction of the Harvard substation, the small number of Washington suburban substations that existed were co-located with streetcar carbarns.

After 1907, Pepco not only designed and built substations to conform with the zoning laws in the section of the city they occupied, but also adopted a philosophy of designing the buildings to harmonize, as much as possible, with the types of buildings prevailing in the surrounding neighborhood. A review of known Pepco substation design from 1899 to present reveals that Pepco's philosophy of creating substations that architecturally harmonize with their surroundings has evolved over time.

Pepco's substation design in Washington D.C. falls into four major categories that correspond to the era in which they were constructed. These are:

- Early substations (built prior to 1928): The substations are largely utilitarian or industrial in character. Several were built as extensions of streetcar carbarn facilities, as alley structures, or in preexisting buildings converted for substation use. Two notable substations from this era are substation no. 13, located at Harvard Street and Sherman Avenue (1907), and substation no. 8 (1927), located at 2415 Martin Luther King Jr., Avenue. Substations nos. 13 and 8 exemplify Pepco's best efforts to harmonize substation design with their surrounding communities during this era.
- Substations constructed from 1929 to 1939: The design of substations during this period was dominated by architect Arthur B. Heaton, who not only elevated the architecture of Pepco substations but created an Art Deco aesthetic that unified both the service buildings of Pepco and its parent company, the Washington Railway and Electric

**Power That Flows Freely
to YOUR SERVICE**

**The Sub-Station
OPERATOR**

*One of a Series
"Personalities of Pepco"*

JUST like the heart pumps blood to the arteries of the body, the flow of Pepco Power is guided to your service through Sub-Stations. Night and day vigilant operators at these places are on duty to keep in close touch with demand and attend to its supply.

ACTING as sentries for the great army of horsepower Pepco Service brings to your instant disposal, substations are important. They occupy sites which are selected after exhaustive engineering surveys and enable your electrical source of supply to keep in close touch with demands for service in the sections they serve.

Substations are constructed to conform to the zoning laws of the section they occupy and to harmonize, as much as possible, with the types of buildings prevailing in their neighborhoods. Here again Pepco's spirit of co-operation with civic beautifying projects is evident

Electricity cannot be stored. It must be used as it is generated—or there will be waste. As generated at the Power Plant it must be at high tension, to meet every possible demand. Further than that, transmission at high voltage reduces losses over the wires considerably. Substations take high tension current and, with the least possible waste, reduce it to the voltage, you require for instant response to your "push" on the button.

The POTOMAC ELECTRIC POWER CO.
—Matchless Service—
MAIN TEN THOUSAND

(Ad from the *Washington Post*, 1927.)

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Company. Heaton was concerned with promulgating high standards of design beyond the monumental core of Washington and his work was recognized on several occasions by the Washington Board of Trade for elevating architectural design in private development.

- Substations constructed from 1939 to 1960: During this era, Pepco architects designed substations that were camouflaged with their surroundings. Beginning in September 1939, small substations constructed in Washington neighborhoods were designed to resemble Colonial revival residential properties or, when on a commercial corridor, as a storefront. While this policy led to some of Pepco's most architecturally harmonious designs in residential sections of Washington, they also had the dual purpose of decreasing public awareness of substation locations which, in turn, helped address concerns related to keeping Washington's electrical system safe and secure in the years leading up to and during World War II and afterward during the Cold War era.
- The Modern Era: Contemporary substation design follows no singular design aesthetic, although Pepco continues to consider location, the character of the neighboring buildings, and the technical requirements of delivering reliable electrical service as they design new substation buildings. Today, substations tend to be larger than substations of earlier eras, and a number of unique design solutions have been used to continue the practice of employing creativity to both achieve buildings that harmonize with their surroundings and a low level of public awareness.

The Potomac Electric Power Company, Protecting the Electrical System, and Subterfuge

In the early spring of 1939, the Potomac Electric Power Company began working with the National Defense Power Committee to develop a plan for meeting the Nation's power needs in the event of war. Nearly as important as being prepared to meet the expected increase in demand for electricity was the need to develop plans for defense against sabotage, air attack and mob violence. In response to the anticipated needs in the event of war, Pepco began to build and expand Washington's electrical system. Between 1939 and the end of 1944, Pepco spent more than 34½ million dollars on new buildings, cables, generators, turbines and other equipment – increasing its electricity producing capacity of its plants by 60%. By 1944, more than 1,600,000,000 kilowatt hours of electricity were supplied to the metropolitan Washington area, an increase of 88% over the amount supplied to the city at the time of Germany's invasion of Poland.²

In addition to expanding the power network to keep pace of wartime Washington's increased demand for electricity was the equally important task of protecting the utility. Precautionary measures for the protection of vital utility service and industries against sabotage in the National Capital was underway and being perfected by 1940, according to War Department officials. The coordinated civil defense program required that generating stations be secured to avoid or prevent sabotage by enemy agents. Pepco's efforts included fortifying fences with barbed wire and flood lights at both Benning and Buzzard Point Generating Stations, doubling its armed guards to severely limit access to those facilities, and launching a shortwave broadcasting system

² Gerrity, John F. "Utility Firms Do Herculean Job for Wartime Washington." *The Washington Post*, Aug. 26, 1945.

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to link Pepco headquarters with its hundreds of emergency, trouble shooter, and line trucks. The Coast Guard removed derelict boats from the Anacostia River in the vicinity of Buzzard Point to help prevent saboteurs from taking up residence next to the facility, and PEPCO began to issue photo identification passes to employees for the first time in its history.³

Tensions were heightened in July 1940 when an employee of a contracting firm working on Pepco property boasted that he could wreck the Buzzard Point power plant. Pepco's investigation determined that the threat involved a man of about 30 who had pronouncedly pro-Hitler views. A month later, prowlers climbed the fence of the Buzzard Point plant, where Pepco guards chased them before they escaped. Pepco reprimanded the guards for failing to shoot the prowlers.⁴

In addition to Pepco's efforts to strengthen security at its power plants, Pepco undertook efforts to make the entire system of energy distribution in Washington more secure. The result of these efforts went well beyond barbed wire and armed guards, and resulted in Pepco changing the very architectural design of its electrical substations – a break from an established design aesthetic developed a decade earlier by Arthur B. Heaton.

Beginning with architect Arthur B. Heaton's design for Pepco Substation No. 25 in 1930, Pepco substations had a uniform Art Deco design. So established was Heaton's Art Deco aesthetic that it was also used in the Pepco Service Building (1930), the WRECo bus garage on Georgia Avenue (1930), and the Western Bus Garage (1934). The substation at 1618 L Street, NW, constructed in April 1939 was the last building constructed in this style.

Pepco's approach after the spring of 1939 embraced the art of deception, whereby Pepco architects designed substations that were camouflaged to reflect the built environment around them. Substations erected in residential neighborhoods were commonly designed as either one- or two-story red brick colonial houses. These structures typically included slate roofs, painted shutters, and landscaped grounds. The art of deception was carried out to such a detailed degree as to use trompe l'oeil paintings for the windows of the residential substations. Venetian blinds and curtains were painted on composition board and located within the windows to give an appearance of an inhabited house. Often times, these paintings included flowers or vines in the windows as well.⁵ Alternatively, substations constructed on commercial streets, such as the Harrison substation, were constructed to resemble storefronts and included display windows with changing displays for Pepco, appliances, or the war effort.

³ Beck, William O. *100 Years of Matchless Service*. Washington, D.C.: Potomac Electric Power Company, 1996; pp. 122-123.

⁴ "D.C. Utilities Sharpen Eyes For Saboteurs." *The Washington Post*, July 10, 1940; "Pepco Guards Told to Shoot At Prowlers." *The Washington Post*, Aug. 29, 1940.

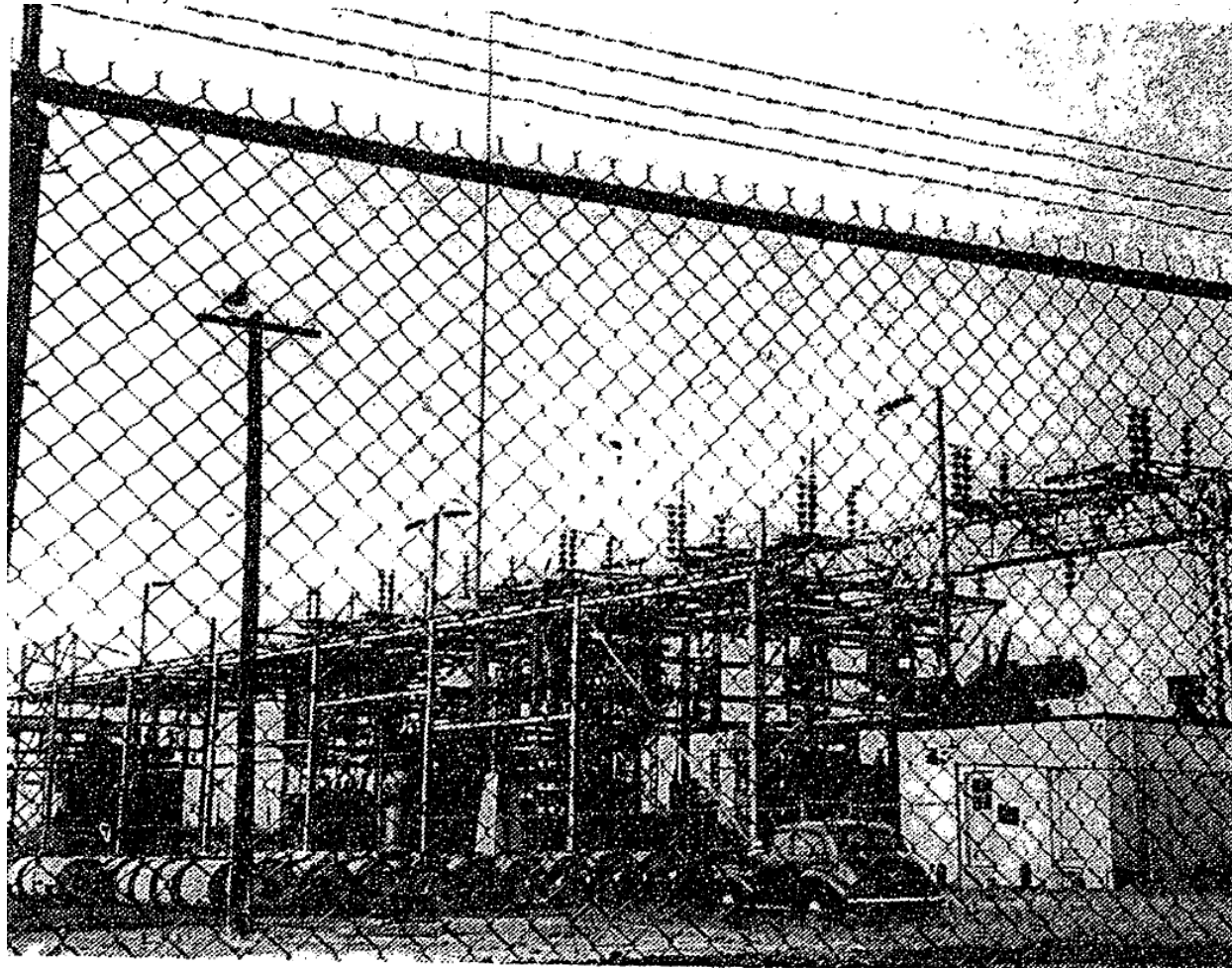
⁵ Herron, Paul. "These Homes Are Really Electrifying." *The Washington Post*, April 4, 1954.

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PATTERN FOR PROTECTION—The Potomac Electric Power Co. has adopted a strict system of pass control to its generating stations. It is protecting the stations with barbed wire and flood lights, and is planning to double its armed guard as part of a program to prevent sabotage. One of the transformers at the Benning plant is shown behind a barbed-wire-topped fence

(Image from the *Washington Post*, July 10, 1940, illustrating Pepco's use of barbed wire at the Benning plant due to increased concern about sabotage and the need for security.)

Pepco constructed substations that blended into the landscape throughout World War II and the succeeding Cold War era. By the mid-1950s, the art of deception had grown to include ground crews mowing lawns and trimming bushes during the warmer months, and lighted Christmas wreaths in the windows during the holiday season. In some neighborhoods, the substation included a lighted Christmas tree in the yard if the majority of the neighbors had them as well. The Colonial Revival substation located at 2 Westmoreland circle also contained a system of switches to automatically turn on the downstairs lights at 8 p.m. The lights stayed on until 10 p.m. when the upstairs lights turned on. All the lights turned off at 10:30 p.m.⁶

⁶ Ibid.

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Pepco slowly ended its practice of subterfuge sometime in the 1960s when newer and larger substations were required by the network. While Pepco presently strives to design buildings that are architecturally compatible with their surrounding neighborhoods, the company no longer employs the art of deception in its design process.

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The Potomac Electric Power Company's Substation No. 61 was built in 1946 as part of a construction campaign begun in June 1945 to meet the anticipated increased peacetime demand for electric service following the end of World War II. The campaign included a new 50,000-kilowatt generator unit at the Buzzard Point station, increasing its capacity to 270,000 kilowatt hours there, and a 50,000-kilowatt steam-electric generator at the Pepco Benning station planned to be online by spring 1947. The improvements at Buzzard Point and Benning were estimated to enlarge Pepco's combined generating capacity by 12% to 505,000 kilowatts.

Substation No. 61's architectural design employs general camouflage and subterfuge techniques first developed in 1939 in anticipation of World War II with the goal of keeping Washington's electrical system safe from sabotage. It had the additional goal of designing electrical substations that were architecturally compatible with the neighborhoods in which they were constructed.

World War II's end in 1945 and the onset of a capital improvement campaign to increase electrical supply for peacetime customers provided Pepco with an opportunity to design Substation No. 61 in an affluent Washington neighborhood with Georgia Revival elements – a departure from Pepco's Colonial Revival residential-style substations. However, the increasingly tense U.S.-Soviet relationship in 1946 and the start of the Cold War in 1947 resulted in Pepco constructing only one- and two-story Colonial Revival residential-style substations for the remainder of the 1940s and well into the 1950s.

Substation No. 61 is an outstanding example of a Pepco substation designed by in-house Pepco architects to address the need for growing demand for electricity in the post-World War II era. It was the only substation designed and construction during the brief period between World War II and the onset of the Cold War, which resulted in Pepco architect's designing a unique building. Substation No. 61 was built in an affluent neighborhood, incorporated Georgian Revival elements, and significantly employed limestone on its primary façade. Furthermore, it was not designed to look like a Colonial Revival residential house – the prevalent design for substations constructed from 1939 to 1945 and after 1946.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Books & Manuscripts

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Santamaria, Cesar. *History and Evolution of the PHI Electric System*. Unpublished manuscript, 2009.

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Potomac Electric Power Company Substation

Washington, D.C.

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“Nine Zoning Appeals Are Granted After Public Hearing.” *The Evening Star*, Jan. 4, 1940, p. B-1.

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“Sabotage Protection Curtailed By D.C. Law Passed in 1898.” *The Evening Star*, Aug. 28, 1940, p. B-1.

“Threat of Sabotage Leads Pepco to Place Barbed-Wire Barriers.” *The Evening Star*, July 9, 1940, p. A-1.

“U.S. Takes Steps For Protection Of Utilities.” *The Evening Star*, June 6, 1940, p. B-1.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
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County and State

University

Other

Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 0.03 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 38.932994 Longitude: -77.085989

2. Latitude: Longitude:

3. Latitude: Longitude:

4. Latitude: Longitude:

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

1. Zone: Easting: Northing:

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
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- | | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation No. 61 occupies Lot 0800 in Square 1626 in the Wesley Heights neighborhood of the District of Columbia.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation No. 61 is on its original site and encompasses the boundaries of the Lot at the time of the substation's construction.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Kent C. Boese
organization: Historic Washington Architecture
street & number: 608 Rock Creek Church Rd, NW
city or town: Washington state: DC zip code: 20010
e-mail kcboese@hotmail.com
telephone: 202-904-8111
date: November 14, 2017

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
No. 61

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Pepco Harrison Street Substation

City or Vicinity: Washington

County: N/A

State: D.C.

Photographer: Kent C. Boese

Date Photographed: November 11, 2017

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1) General View looking east showing 44th Street façade
1 of 8.
- 2) General View looking southeast from 44th Street, NW
2 of 8.
- 3) General View looking southwest showing northern elevation
3 of 8.
- 4) General View looking west showing rear elevation

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
No. 61

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4 of 8.

Washington, D.C.

County and State

5) General View looking northeast showing southern elevation

5 of 8.

6) Detail of Limestone niche on 44th Street façade

6 of 8.

7) Detail view of trompe l'oeil painting in western façade

7 of 8.

8) Detail View of identification plaque on west façade

8 of 8.

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Pepco Substation No. 61

Washington, DC

November 11, 2017

Kent Boese

General View looking east showing 44th Street façade

1/8

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Pepeco Substation No. 61

Washington, DC

November 11, 2017

Kent Boese

General View looking southeast from 44th Street, NW

2/8

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Pepeco Substation No. 61

Washington, DC

November 11, 2017

Kent Boese

General View looking southwest showing northern elevation

3/8

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
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Pepco Substation No. 61

Washington, DC

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Kent Boese

General View looking west showing rear elevation

4/8

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
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Pepeco Substation No. 61

Washington, DC

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Kent Boese

General View looking northeast showing southern elevation

5/8

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
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Pepco Substation No. 61

Washington, DC

November 11, 2017

Kent Boese

Detail of Limestone niche on 44th Street façade

6/8

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
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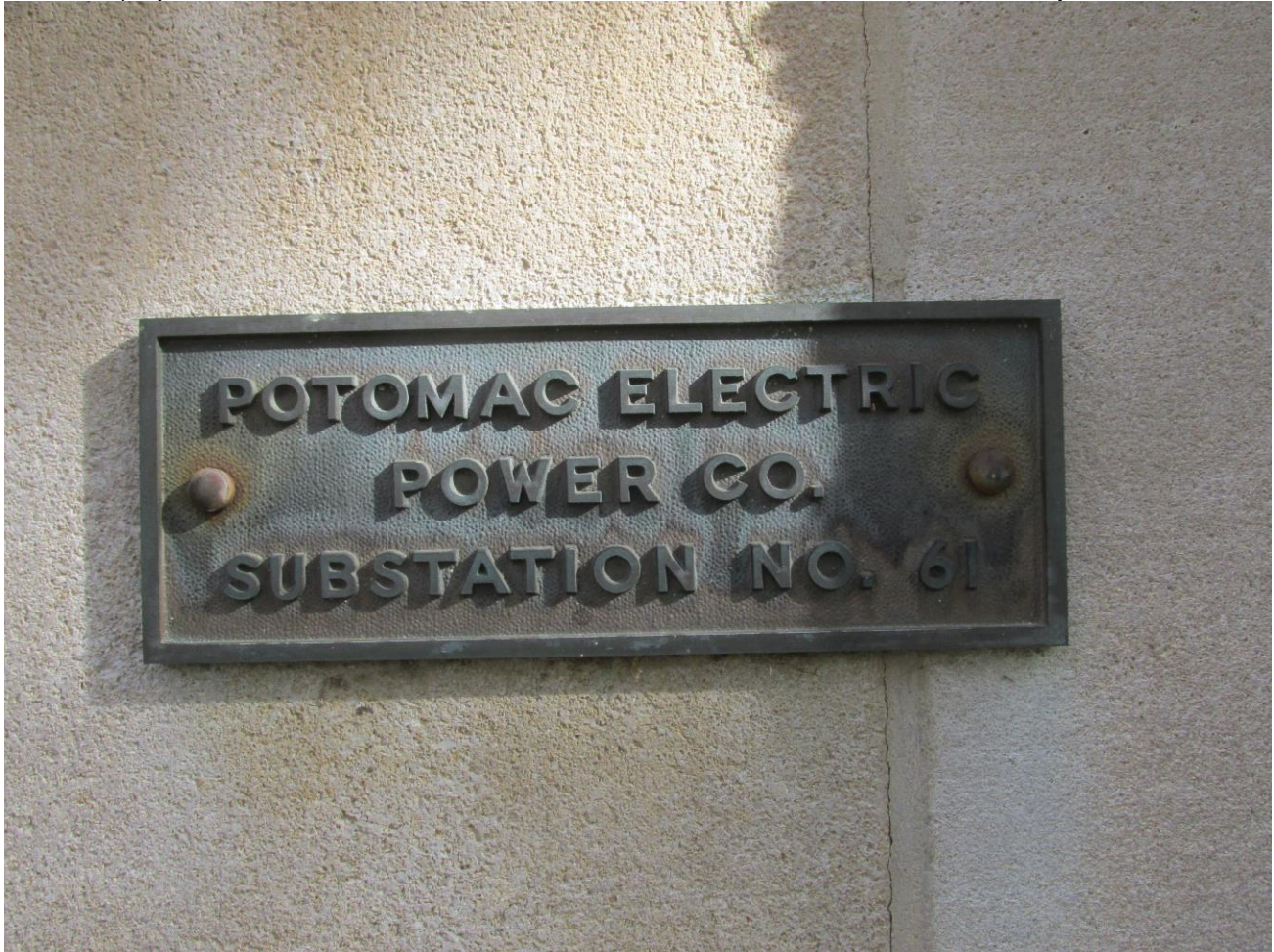
Pepco Substation No. 61
Washington, DC
November 11, 2017
Kent Boese
Detail view of trompe l'oeil painting in western façade
7/8

Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
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Pepco Substation No. 61

Washington, DC

November 11, 2017

Kent Boese

Detail View of identification plaque on west façade

8/8

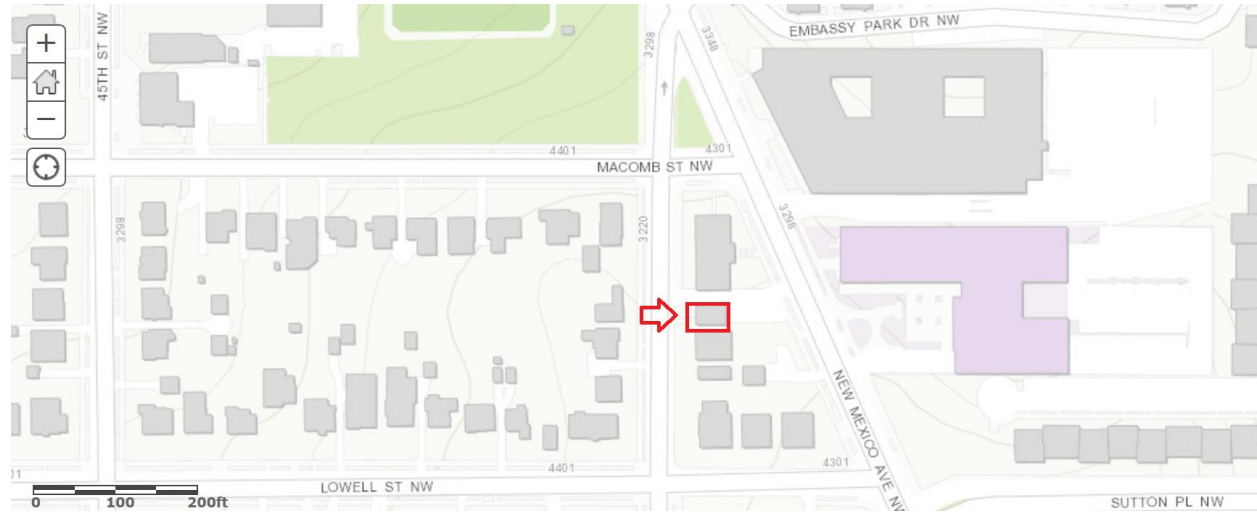
Potomac Electric Power Company Substation
No. 61

Name of Property

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Site Plan:



Site Plan from ArcGIS (viewed November 11, 2017)

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.