

Agenda No. 5

**BOROUGH OF EMERSON
COUNTY OF BERGEN, NEW JERSEY
RESOLUTION No. 99-19**

**RE: RESOLUTION OPPOSING CONSTRUCTION OF THE NORTH BERGEN LIBERTY
GENERATING GAS-FIRED POWER PLANT**

Whereas, Los Angeles-based Diamond Generating Corporation, a subsidiary of Mitsubishi, has proposed and has requested permits to build a \$1.5B, 1,200-MW natural gas-fired power plant (aka North Bergen Liberty Generating Station) in North Bergen, NJ on a 15-acre parcel near Railroad Avenue on the banks of Bellman's Creek. The electric energy produced by this plant would be transmitted by a 6.5 mile, 345-kV underground and submarine cable through North Bergen, Fairview, Cliffside Park and Edgewater and a new cable trench under the Hudson River to connect with ConED's substation on West 49th Street in Manhattan. All of this electricity would be used by ConED in New York. The project is anticipating permit approvals by the Environmental Protection Agency and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection by the end of 2019, and to be operational by 2022;¹ and

Whereas, this natural gas plant would be one of the largest sources of air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions in New Jersey;² and

Whereas, the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Emerson have a principal responsibility to protect the health and safety of its residents, businesses and institutions; and

Whereas, the people and environment of New Jersey have been increasingly subjected to a build-out of natural gas infrastructure, including but not limited to pipelines and distribution networks, compressor stations, power plants, combustion heating systems, metering and regulation stations, and pigging stations; and

Whereas, peer-reviewed scientific studies³ link exposure between air pollutants emitted from natural gas infrastructure facilities and neurological, cardiovascular and respiratory disease, cancer, birth defects, and other adverse health impacts. Acute health impacts from these toxic exposures can cause burning eyes, headaches, breathing difficulty and nausea for nearby populations and can exacerbate health problems. Chronic health impacts can include certain types of cancer as well as damage to lungs, liver, kidneys, reproductive, nervous and cardiovascular systems; and

Whereas, the American Medical Association acknowledges the hazards of natural gas infrastructure and associated adverse health impacts; and

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Whereas, the best estimates of annual emission from the proposed power plant are based on a careful sample set of EPA data on U.S. gas-fired power plants of the same type (combined-cycle), similar vintage (online since 2012) and comparable size (complexes of over 300 megawatts) but nevertheless may differ from actual results due to a number of variations in the periodicity of EPA data collection and plant operating conditions. However, reasonable annual estimates are expected to be in the range of the amounts shown below. (Note: NO_x refers to nitrogen dioxide and nitric oxide, SO_x refers to many types of sulfur and oxygen compounds such as sulfur monoxide, sulfur dioxide, higher sulfur oxides, and disulfur oxides)

;

- CO₂ = 3.5 million metric tonnes^{10 11}
- NO_x = up to 375,000 pounds
- Methane = 73 metric tonnes¹²
- SO_x = up to 30,000 pounds; and

Whereas, people who live or work in close proximity to natural gas infrastructure facilities such as power plants and compressors are most at risk—particularly developing fetuses, children, the elderly, and those with cardiovascular, lung or respiratory problems and other vulnerable subpopulations, although under certain weather and terrain conditions, these pollutants can have a wider impact. Some homes in New Jersey are within 3,000 feet of the proposed plant and Harlem/Upper Manhattan (where one in four children suffers from asthma), which is downwind of the prevailing winds, is within 3.6 miles; and

Whereas, based on the American Lung Association “State of the Air 2018” report, the counties of Bergen and Hudson, which will be most impacted by emissions from this power plant already have significant populations (in some cases the largest in New Jersey), with pediatric and adult asthma, COPD, lung cancer, cardiovascular disease and diabetes,¹³ whose conditions will only be exacerbated by additional volumes of air pollution; and

Whereas, developing fetuses and children are uniquely vulnerable to exposures as they receive proportionally greater doses of pollutants than adults and have immature organs and detoxification systems¹⁴; and

Whereas, methane is the primary ingredient of natural gas and leaks at every system stage, including extraction, processing, transmission, distribution, and end-use consumption; and

Whereas, methane is an extremely potent greenhouse gas with a global warming potential that is 34 times that of carbon dioxide over a 100-year timeframe and 86 times that of carbon dioxide over a 20-year timeframe; and

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Impact	Incidents per year	Societal Value*	Direct Medical and Other Costs
Premature Mortality	35.3	\$238,712,000	\$10,585,000
Chronic Bronchitis	22.3	\$10,554,000	\$2,700,000
Hospital+ER visits	32.8	\$432,000	\$345,000
Asthma Attacks	724.5	\$43,000	\$42,000
Respiratory Symptoms	32,720	\$1,190,000	\$1,190,000
Work Loss Days	6,374	\$1,160,000	\$1,079,000
Mercury Related	NA	\$12,277,000	\$13,277,000
Total		\$265,369,000	\$29,217,000

*Costs to consumers for which they are not reimbursed.

Whereas, an alternative approach to producing electricity from solar panels which would avoid all of the environmental and health issues noted in this resolution while still providing new jobs and other financial benefits to local towns and would be in conformance with Governor Murphy's goal to increase the use of renewable energy even if all of the electricity was sold to New York City, could potentially gain local support and should be considered; and

Whereas, the NJ Work Environmental Council has stated, "Climate justice is worker justice. We stand together for both worker protections and strong climate policies because we can't have one without the other. An injury to the planet is an injury to us all,"²² and

Whereas, the proposed gas-fired plant will provide electric energy to New York only, residents of Hudson and Bergen Counties and the rest of New Jersey will only incur the health care costs and environmental degradation caused by the plant during construction and operation; and

Whereas, the gas-fired power plant represents a direct threat to one of the state's most crucial ecological resources. Wetlands such as the Meadowlands serve many beneficial functions. They are a natural filtration system, purifying our water. They preserve biodiversity by hosting a number of plant and animal species. They play a crucial role in flood mitigation by absorbing storm waters, protecting urban or residential communities in nearby flood zones. The construction of and pollution from the proposed plant could affect quantity and quality of water flows, thereby harming the delicate animal and plant habitats in the wetlands and undermining their critical hydrological functions. The rehabilitation of the Meadowlands, which has been a triumph for the local groups that have worked hard to recover this area, would be squandered in order to provide power to New York City residents; and

Whereas, the plant will be within the half mile US DOT Evacuation Zone for oil train derailments which have been known to explode and can only be handled by letting them burn out; and

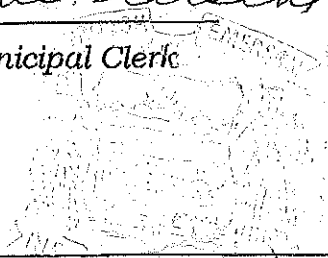
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Whereas, the proposed gas-fired plant will utilize fracked natural gas thus increasing the amount of energy produced by fossil fuels in direct opposition to Governor Murphy's commitment to moving New Jersey to 100% clean renewable energy usage. This type of massive fossil fuel infrastructure will last for several decades due to its large sunk costs (\$1.5B). This will increase long-term dependence on dirty fossil fuels and their associated environmental damage and health risks and is incompatible with the administration's energy goals. The average New Jersey gas-fired power plants went online 23 years ago and 13 percent of the state's gas plants went online more than 40 years ago.

Therefore, be it resolved that the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Emerson, in the interest of protecting its residents, businesses and institutions, as of March 5, 2019, strongly opposes construction of the North Bergen Liberty Generating power plant.

Be it further resolved, that the Borough Clerk shall forward this Resolution to

- New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy
- Commissioner of the NJ Department of Environmental Protection
- State Senator Gerald Cardinale
- State Assemblyman Auth and State Assemblywoman Schepisi.
- Food and Water Watch, 100 Bayard Street, Suite 310, New Brunswick, NJ 08901
- The Sierra Club – New Jersey Chapter, 145 W. Hanover Street, Trenton NJ 08618
- Hackensack Riverkeeper
- Hudson County Freeholders and Administration and all Hudson County Municipal Councils, Boards of Health and Environmental Commissions
- Bergen County Freeholders and Administration and all Bergen County Municipal Councils, Boards of Health and Environmental Commissions
- League of New Jersey Municipalities
- NJ Advance Media

COUNCIL	M O V E D	S E C O N D E D	A Y E S	N A Y S	A B S E N T	A B S T A I N	<p><i>I hereby certify that the above Resolution was duly adopted by the Borough of Emerson at a meeting held on March 5, 2019.</i></p> <p>Attest:</p> <p><i>June Seltzer</i> Municipal Clerk</p> 
Bayley			X				
Hoffman	X		X				
McGuire			X				
Falotico		X	X				
Knoller			X				
Gordon			X				