

June 5, 2019
Weekly Town Board Meeting

The Town Board held their Weekly Meeting on the above date at 7:30 p.m. at the Town Hall, 238 Main Street, Cold Spring, New York 10516.

PRESENT

Richard Shea	Supervisor
John Van Tassel	Councilman
Michael Leonard	Councilman
Robert Flaherty	Councilman
Judith Farrell	Councilwoman

AGENDA

1. Town Board to consider a Resolution expressing their opposition to the Build-out Proposal for the New Danskammer Gas Fired Power Plant in Newburgh, New York.

Supervisor Shea stated that the Board has seen the correspondence on this and the Supervisor has already established his opinion on it. He noted that no one needs more fossil fuel burning plants especially here in the Hudson Valley. He then opened up the floor to comments from the audience.

Malachy Cleary thanked the Town Board for considering this resolution of opposition. He believes that this is a decision to continue any investments in fossil fuel development. Although he thinks the question where is the energy going to come from after the nuclear power plant closes is a valid question. He would like to know how much power we are going to lose from the closing and is it possible to make it up with renewables? He believes that it is, noting that we may experience a few black outs here and there over the next few decades, that's something he would be willing to do. That's considering that the short term costs outweigh the long term losses.

Supervisor Shea responded saying that this town just signed on to the Community Choice Aggregation whereby our electrical source is not coming from fossil fuel. He added that he believes that won't be many black outs, as there are plenty of alternative sources, i.e. Hydroelectric that comes from Canada, and Indian Point has been shut down for long periods of time in the past, without anyone noticing any interruptions in service.

Then the question came up with regard to other areas of the state, such as New York City, the Metropolitan Area, where are they going to get their power? Supervisor Shea reiterated that there are many sources in the northeast grid, and many others that want to get into it. He stated that we have to push to encourage the use of alternative sources. Mr. Cleary ended by saying that if there are plenty of alternative sources providing electricity, then he is total agreement with opposing supporting fossil fuels plants.

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A member of the audience who works with various coalitions opposing fossil fuel also interjected his concerns and his support to oppose the Danskammer Gas Fired Power Plant build out plan. He also noted that the current grid is sufficient for at least another fifteen years. There were two other members of the audience that expressed their support for the opposition to build out plan of the Danskammer Gas Fire Power Plant.

Councilman Leonard stated that he knows about power generation. He went on to say that he agrees with Supervisor Shea and other comments made this evening. He stated that the Governor has made it very clear that this is his schedule for 2050. If we are going to make that goal, we have to make tough decisions right now, we can't wait any longer. Firstly, when you build new power plants, the owners of those are going to expect that they are going to run for at least 40 to 60 years, and maybe relicensed. He noted that they are not short term facilities. It is true, that we are not going to be getting any of the power from this. He also brought to light that we are in a poor air quality area, so it matters to us. Overall, from a state standpoint, every facility other than wind, hydro and solar need to challenge those as to why we need that, and make sure that not only does utilities answer that but the PSC that regulate also provide us with viable solutions. He strongly supports opposing this build-out plan.

Councilman Van Tassel stated that he appreciated the members of the audience that are well versed on this subject to participate with this evenings meeting. He noted that if it was being converted from oil to gas, there would have been more support for that. He added that if it's not a necessity, then he opposes this endeavor. As far as brown outs, that does happen occasionally and that will happen. His other concern is if Indian Point shuts down completely, where the power is going to come from, which mainly affects New York City and Westchester. Councilman Leonard interjected that New York City has actually built small city generation units.

Councilman Flaherty stated that being a climate smart community it seems like the right thing to do. He added that he is for renewable energy. Supervisor Shea interjected that Councilman Flaherty has been working on the solar project at the Recreation Department for over a year.

Councilwoman Farrell agreed with the opposition and stated that Philipstown and the Hudson Valley has long been the leader in protecting the environment and also finding more efficient energy sources. Supervisor Shea interjected that Councilwoman Farrell has spear headed a project that would replace all the lighting at the Recreation facility to LED lighting.

RESOLUTION #94-2019

The following Resolution was presented by Councilman Leonard, seconded by Councilman Flaherty and unanimously carried:

WHEREAS, Climate change requires immediate action, we need to stop incrementally expanding fossil fuel energy generation and fully ramp up on renewables and we need to make tough choices in the face of entrenched, narrow, short-term interests; and

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WHEREAS, these seemingly small and scattered decisions that extend fossil fuel dependency are neither small or insignificant, as they cumulatively add up to a whole system that supports and reinforces the continuation of our reliance on fossil fuels, and we need to diverge from this path; and

WHEREAS, according to Food and Water Watch, " The Danskammer would be a massive, 550 MW fracked gas plant posing huge risks to the air and water of the Local Community-- and worsening our climate crisis by burning dirty fossil fuels around the clock" and

WHEREAS, we have the science and technology and we need to show that we have the will to transition to a clean, green economy; and

WHEREAS, the Danskammer build out proposal is against the stated goals of our governor, is wrong for our economy, our health, and the environment;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Philipstown Town Board call upon the Public Service Commission to reject the Danskammer application; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Philipstown Town Clerk is directed to submit this statement to the Public Service Commission and send a copy of this resolution to U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, U.S. Senator Charles Schumer, Governor Andrew Cuomo, State Senator Susan Serino, State Assemblywoman Sandra Galef, Putnam County Executive Mary Ellen O'Dell and Putnam County Legislator Nancy Montgomery.

Councilman Van Tassel made a motion, seconded by Councilman Leonard to close the Weekly Town Board Meeting at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Tina M. Merando
Town Clerk