

CITY COUNCIL

Resolution No. _____ of 2019

RESOLUTION COMMENTING ON THE DANSKAMMER BUILDOUT
PROPOSAL

WHEREAS, Danskammer Energy, LLC (“Danskammer”), seeks a permit through the State’s Article 10 power plant siting process to build and operate a new gas-fired power plant with a potential generating capacity of 525-575 megawatts on the shores of the Hudson River in the Town of Newburgh, referred to as the Facility Repowering Project, and

WHEREAS, the City Council has received and reviewed presentations on the proposed Facility Repowering Project from Danskammer and from Scenic Hudson, and received public comments from residents expressing concerns and opposition to the project; and

WHEREAS, the current power plant located at the site operates only when electric generation demand reaches a peak so that it operates about 5%-10% of the year to meet peak power demand; and

WHEREAS, when the current plant was in full operation, it was the largest single source of air pollution in the Hudson Valley, and a major contributor to the area’s “D” rating in air quality from the American Lung Association [confirm]; and

WHEREAS, the new power plant would operate year-round as a base load facility and if built would have a decades-long lifespan; and

WHEREAS, the new facility would use an air cooled-condensing system which will eliminate use of the Hudson River’s water for cooling; and

WHEREAS, the new power plant would use fracked natural gas as its primary fuel, with provisions to use ultra-low sulfur diesel (ULSD) for up to 30 days as a back-up fuel; and

WHEREAS, New York State banned fracking to protect our health and protect the climate, but this facility would use fracked gas, which is especially dangerous to air and water quality of the communities outside of New York from which it is extracted, and the City of Beacon does not seek increased harms on any community, including outside of New York State; and

WHEREAS, fugitive methane from fracking, pipelines, compressor stations and other transport is a highly potent greenhouse gas; and

WHEREAS, gas-powered plants produce pollution that harms local air quality and the public’s health through release of contaminants; and

WHEREAS, children, the elderly and anyone with a pre-existing health condition affecting their lungs, such as asthma or emphysema, are especially vulnerable; and

WHEREAS, the new gas-powered plant operating at baseload capacity would produce pollution

that will fuel the growing climate crisis, contrary to the interests of the City of Beacon and in contradiction to the State's Energy Plan and Clean Energy Standard of 50% renewable energy generation to be available on the electric grid by 2030, which Governor Cuomo more recently increased to 100% by 2040; and

WHEREAS, the city recognizes the critical economic importance of local construction and permanent jobs at living wages; and

WHEREAS, Danskammer has filed a Preliminary Scoping Statement with the Siting Board, which informs the Siting Board, other public agencies, and communities about the project, including a description of the proposed facility, potential environmental and health impacts, proposed studies to evaluate those impacts, proposed mitigation measures and reasonable alternatives to the project; and

WHEREAS, Danskammer will conduct various studies to identify and evaluate the potential impacts of a project on the environment, public health, and other public interest factors; and

WHEREAS, after the public involvement program and preliminary scoping statement are filed, Danskammer must then submit a formal Article 10 application to the Siting Board, which includes the same information as the preliminary scoping statement but in greater detail; and

WHEREAS, the City Council recognizes that Danskammer is at the beginning of the approval process and must still hire experts, conduct various planned studies, file its Article 10 application, and conduct public hearings before obtaining final approval to construct the project.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of Beacon based on the information currently before it, opposes the construction of a new power plant on the Hudson River in the Mid-Hudson Valley; noting that the Council will fully and objectively take into account any new and additional information provided by way of the full formal Article 10 application process; and further noting that for a positive recommendation, such additional information would have to demonstrate the statewide necessity of such additional power capacity, as well as the statewide inability to provide any alternative timely sources with lesser impacts on air quality and economic harm in less populated areas..

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of Beacon urges Governor Cuomo and the Power Plant Siting Board convened under Article 10 of the State Public Service Law to consider the concerns stated herein as well as the city's current stance regarding a new power plant in the Hudson Valley when considering Danskammer's proposal to build and operate a larger, new facility.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of Beach urges Governor Cuomo and New York State to focus economic development resources into the Hudson Valley to provide living wage jobs for the construction and operation of clean power generation, brownfield clean-up, or other appropriate economic development projects in an area with the physical beauty, extensive tourism assets and population as has the Hudson Valley.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Clerk of the City of Beacon is directed to submit this statement to the Public Service Commission and to send a copy of this resolution to

Governor Andrew Cuomo.