

KEEP IT CLEAN
KEEP IT GREEN



NORTH BRUNSWICK
ENVIRONMENTAL
COMMISSION

Resolution Opposing Construction of CPV Keasbey Power Plant in Woodbridge, NJ

WHEREAS, Competitive Power Ventures (CPV) has proposed to build a gas-fired power plant (“CPV Keasbey”) in the Keasbey section of Woodbridge, in Middlesex County New Jersey, in a densely populated region within the most densely populated state; and

WHEREAS, North Brunswick Township is less than 20 miles away from the proposed plant, would be negatively impacted by its operation, and is considered an “overburdened community” under New Jersey’s landmark environmental justice law; and

WHEREAS, Middlesex County is already home to at least six major fossil-fuel power plants¹ with a total generation capacity that far exceeds its existing needs, and Central New Jersey already suffers high levels of air pollution from fossil-fuel power plants, which are among the largest pollution sources in New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, the American Lung Association (ALA) *State of the Air 2022* report² gives Middlesex County the grade of “F” for ground-level ozone air pollution, and the entire state is out of compliance³ with the US Environmental Protection Agency’s current national standards for ozone pollution, AND this proposed plant would increase the concentration of ozone precursors (volatile organic compounds and nitrogen oxides) resulting in increased ground-level ozone, which studies have shown causes premature death; and

WHEREAS, the same ALA report also shows Central New Jersey already has significant populations with pediatric and adult asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), and other conditions such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, nervous disorders, and mental disorders which will be exacerbated by additional volumes of air pollution; and

WHEREAS, conditions such as COPD can be exacerbated by even small increases in elevated ozone levels, with a corresponding effect on public health and healthcare costs. One study⁴ showed that a small (10 ppb) increase in ozone pollution was associated with a 0.52 percent increase in deaths per day. This study found that an estimated 3,700 deaths annually in the U.S. could be attributed to this increase in ozone levels; and

WHEREAS, people most at risk from breathing ozone are those who live or work in close proximity to gas infrastructure facilities such as power plants and compressors—particularly children, the elderly, and those with cardiovascular or respiratory problems; and

WHEREAS, the long-term negative impact of polluted air and the poor health conditions it creates or aggravates has contributed to New Jersey’s high death toll from COVID-19, and will continue to put these populations at greater risk; and

¹ U.S. Energy Information Administration Independent Statistics & Analysis, *New Jersey State Profile and Energy Estimates: Profile Overview*: <https://www.eia.gov/state/?sid=NJ>

² American Lung Association report, *State of The Air 2022*, Report Card: New Jersey: <https://www.lung.org/research/sota/city-rankings/states/new-jersey>

³ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Green Book, *8-Hour Ozone (2015) Nonattainment Areas by State/County/Area*: <https://www3.epa.gov/airquality/greenbook/jncty.html>

⁴ Union of Concerned Scientists website (June 2011), *Rising Temperatures, Worsening Ozone Pollution*: <https://www.ucsusa.org/sites/default/files/2019-09/climate-change-and-ozone-pollution.pdf>

WHEREAS, CPV Keasbey’s air permit application⁵ states that the proposed project will potentially emit an additional 2,374,633 tons of greenhouse gases (GHG’s) annually and these emissions would be in direct opposition to the goals of the NJ Clean Energy Act, EO 28, EO 100, EO 274, the 2019 Energy Master Plan, the Global Warming Response Act, and New Jersey’s environmental justice law; and

WHEREAS, if approved, the proposed plant would combine with CPV’s neighboring plant to form a massive facility that would be one of the state’s worst climate polluters, with CPV seeking permission to emit a total of 4.6 million tons of GHG’s every year from both plants; and

WHEREAS, methane is the primary ingredient of “natural” gas and leaks at every system stage—extraction, processing, transmission, distribution, and end-use consumption—and 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

WHEREAS, methane emissions from power plants like CPV Keasbey may be considerably higher than previously thought, according to a 2017 study⁶ that found gas-fired power plants released more than 20 times more methane than the facilities had estimated; and

WHEREAS, CPV Keasbey’s application also shows the proposed facility’s potential annual emissions of 25 tons of sulfuric acid, 50 tons of volatile organic compounds, 40 tons of sulfur dioxide, 149 tons of nitrogen oxides, 110 tons of carbon monoxide, 126 tons of ammonia, 78 tons of total suspended particles, and 123 tons of particulate matter, in addition to many other harmful pollutants including lead; and

WHEREAS, peer-reviewed scientific studies⁷ link exposure to air pollutants emitted from gas infrastructure facilities with neurological, cardiovascular and respiratory disease, cancer, birth defects, and other adverse health impacts. Acute health impacts from these toxic exposures can include burning eyes, headaches, breathing difficulty, and nausea, and can exacerbate health problems. Chronic health impacts also include bronchitis, emphysema, and damage to the liver, kidneys, reproductive system, and nervous system; and

WHEREAS, gas infrastructure facilities can annually emit hundreds of tons of pollutants including particulate matter and toxic chemicals such as mercury and criteria pollutants that can harm health and the environment,⁸ some of which are known carcinogens such as benzene and formaldehyde, can also be sources of radioactive contamination⁹ and are known to increase the severity of asthma and other respiratory diseases. Recent studies¹⁰ have also linked air pollution to increases in obesity, diabetes, stroke, Parkinson’s disease, Alzheimer’s disease, and other forms of dementia; and

WHEREAS, developing fetuses and children have immature organs and detoxification systems¹¹ and are uniquely vulnerable to exposures as they receive proportionally greater doses of pollutants than adults; and

⁵ CPV Keasbey LLC, Keasbey Energy Center, PSD Air Permit Application, pp. 32-34 (Tables 2-1, 2-2, and 2-3):

<https://opramachine.com/request/18390/response/33093/attach/7/Keasbey%20Energy%20Center%20PSD%20Application.pdf>

⁶ Lavoie, Tegan, et al, *Environmental Science & Technology* (February 21, 2017), Assessing the Methane Emissions from Natural Gas-Fired Power Plants and Oil Refineries: <https://pubs.acs.org/doi/abs/10.1021/acs.est.6b05531>

⁷ PSE for Healthy Energy Repository for Oil and Gas Energy Research: <https://www.psehealthyenergy.org/our-work/shale-gas-research-library/>

⁸ US Environmental Protection Agency website, *Criteria Air Pollutants*: <https://www.epa.gov/criteria-air-pollutants>

⁹ Environmental Health Project report (October 12, 2017), *Health Effects Associated with Stack Chemical Emissions from NYS Compressor Stations: 2008-2014*: http://www.environmentalhealthproject-ny.org/uploads/3/8/5/9/38599771/ehp_health_effects_report.pdf

¹⁰ Beil, Laura, *Science News* (September 19, 2017), The list of diseases linked to air pollution is growing:

<https://www.sciencenews.org/article/list-diseases-linked-air-pollution-growing>

¹¹ Trasande, Leonardo, et al, *Health Affairs* (May 2011), Reducing the staggering costs of environmental disease in children, estimated at \$76.6 billion in 2008: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/21543421/>

WHEREAS, the Harvard School of Public Health¹² found that death rates for older Americans rise as air pollution increases—even when pollution levels meet current standards; and

WHEREAS, the rapidly declining cost of solar energy and storage have already caused the cancellation of projects using gas to generate electricity and is forecasted¹³ to become significantly cheaper than gas in the coming years; and

WHEREAS, trade union workers in our state deserve economic expansion and infrastructure projects that don't negatively impact our public health and environment, and which are forward-looking and will develop needed skills and expertise in renewable energy technologies; and

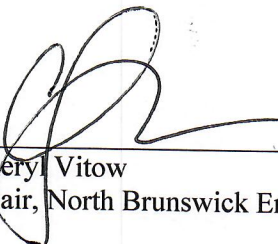
WHEREAS, all New Jersey municipalities will be forced to deal with the consequences of the climate crisis, especially our coastal communities that are at increased risk of flooding; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Edison, the Borough of Highland Park, the Highland Park Board of Education, the City of Hoboken, the City of Perth Amboy, the Township of Franklin, and the Borough of Sayreville have each formally called on Governor Phil Murphy and the Department of Environmental Protection to oppose all fossil fuel projects in overburdened environmental justice communities; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Environmental Commission of North Brunswick, County of Middlesex, State of New Jersey, in the interest of protecting its residents and businesses, opposes construction of this gas-burning power plant proposed by CPV; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we call on Governor Phil Murphy and the Department of Environmental Protection to oppose all fossil fuel projects in overburdened environmental justice communities, and impose a moratorium on same until rules are established pursuant to the state's environmental justice law; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the North Brunswick Environmental Commission shall forward this Resolution to Governor Phil Murphy, Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Shawn LaTourette, US Senator Robert Menendez, US Senator Cory Booker, Congresswoman Bonnie Watson Coleman, State Senator Robert Smith, Assemblyman Joseph Egan, Assemblyman Joseph Danielsen, the Middlesex County Board of County Commissioners, and the North Brunswick Town Council.



Cheryl Vitow
Chair, North Brunswick Environmental Commission

12 OCT 2022
Date

¹² Di, Qian, et al, *The New England Journal of Medicine* (June 29, 2017), Air Pollution and Mortality in the Medicare Population: <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/nejmoa1702747>

¹³ Dyson, Mark, Rocky Mountain Institute website (September 9, 2019), A Bridge Backward? The Risky Economics of New Natural Gas Infrastructure in the United States: <https://rmi.org/a-bridge-backward-the-risky-economics-of-new-natural-gas-infrastructure-in-the-united-states/>