

Letters - Dec. 17, 2004 North Shore Sun

McCarrick opposes B'water LNG plan

Dear Editor:

After much consideration, I want to make clear my opposition to the Broadwater Natural Gas Facility proposed to be placed in the middle of Long Island Sound. This proposal, if allowed, would have a liquefied natural gas plant the size of the Queen Mary 2 placed in the middle of Long Island Sound with the purpose of converting the liquefied natural gas to a useable gaseous form for energy purposes.

While I wholeheartedly agree that searching out alternative energy sources to deal with Long Island's limited energy supply is a worthwhile and necessary endeavor, I believe the current plan by Broadwater Energy is not an answer. In fact, this proposal, while trying to solve one problem, could potentially end up causing more problems.

In particular, this plan has the potential of having a devastating environmental impact on an area that already has its share of environmental concerns. My position on this issue is consistent with my leadership in opposing plans by the federal government to dump hazardous dredge spoils into the Sound and a proposed garbage incinerator at the former Shoreham nuclear power plant site.

I repeat what I stated then: Thanks to the involvement of local community groups on both shores of the Sound, working with local and state governments in New York and Connecticut, great strides have been made in restoring the Long Island Sound's environmental quality. Similar to the plans of the Environmental Protection Agency, Broadwater's proposal contradicts and threatens to turn back these continuing efforts.

Even more, this plan is using a recognized environmentally fragile area as a "guinea pig" in a test situation. If completed, this natural gas plant in the middle of the Sound would be the only structure of its kind in the country and one of relatively few in the world. Though representatives from Broadwater maintain that this plant will be safe, my research into other similar facilities have exposed numerous problems, including an accident that cost the lives of 23 people, not to mention the long-term environmental problems it will cause.

In conclusion, I look forward to working with the many organizations on Long Island and Connecticut in fighting to stop this ill-advised proposal and committing that once we succeed, we continue to work together and pinpoint other alternative energy sources that make sense and are compatible with both environmental concerns and energy needs. Not only must we say "no" to the Broadwater proposal, we can use these efforts that are bringing together so many important groups and agencies as an opportunity to continue to sit down (and) come up with a comprehensive environmental improvement program for this vital waterway and create an energy plan that works.

Kevin T. McCarrick
Brookhaven Town Board
District Two

Can't ignore danger of LNG proposal

To the Editor:

The planned facility is located nine miles offshore because they know if there is a breach in the hull, the heavier-than-air gas will asphyxiate area populations — or worse, burn.

A huge tanker floating in the Sound filled with LNG comes ashore on a wicked winter nor'easter. The tanker would arrive along the heavily populated shores of Rocky Point to Miller Place. Large rocks that litter the coast would breach the hull. Gas is swept over bluffs by wind and settles into the hundreds of hollows filled with houses. Bhopal.

The facility should be located where it can be protected from extreme weather. It should be located in Brooklyn or New York harbors, where the fetch is minimal and wave heights are minimal.

Wendelin Giebel
Miller Place

Activist Anker cites many LNG 'risks'

To the Editor:

My greatest concerns with Broadwater's Liquefied Natural Gas floating storage unit, proposed by Shell Oil and TransCanada, are safety and its impact on the environment. Eight billion cubic feet of natural gas concentrated within 10 miles of where I live leaves me with the feeling of being vulnerable to disaster — be it natural causes (nor'easter), human misjudgment or an act by terrorists, the potential is there.

Broadwater's representatives claim that an explosion would be contained within a two-mile radius. There's a published study that contradicts their findings. Broadwater's terminal also has a greater risk in becoming a terrorist target as stated in a Congressional Research Service report ("Liquefied Natural Gas Import Terminals: Siting, Safety and Regulation"). If tankers come within one mile of land (which Broadwater stated they can), terrorists could hijack the tankers, causing significant damage, especially to nuclear power plants.

The company is investing \$700 million in this project and has garnered support from political heavy-hitters, including former Suffolk County Executive Robert Gaffney, former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani and former Suffolk County Police Commissioner John Gallagher. With such an investment, I presume Shell and TransCanada will reap billions in profit. My comments and concerns could be measured as sand on the shore compared to the boulders Shell has lined up to defend and compel this project forward.

Broadwater discussed regional benefits, but what will be the local benefits? Broadwater representatives suggested that it will supply cleaner fuel for our energy needs by supplying gas to power plants. Port Jefferson and Northport power plants, two of the most polluting plants on Long Island, would greatly benefit, however they have not committed to participating with Broadwater.

Broadwater claims local government will benefit. What type of tax would be paid to local governments? On March 24, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission issued a declaratory order asserting exclusive jurisdiction over the approval and siting of liquefied natural gas terminals. In addition, the Natural Gas Act preempts states on matters of approving and siting natural gas infrastructure associated with interstate and foreign commerce.

So this makes me wonder — do we (local government and residents) really have a choice on deciding the fate of the LNG terminal? My answer is yes. The residents of this area have fought Goliaths before: Iroquois Gas, the Shoreham nuclear power plant, American Ref-Fuel and recently the dredge dumping in Long Island Sound. Tens of thousands of people actively protested these propositions introduced by corporations interested in profiting from our natural resources, and guess what? We won.

Until Broadwater can prove on a local level that the benefits outweigh the risks, I cannot support the site in Long Island Sound as a location for a LNG terminal.

Sarah Anker

Mt. Sinai

The writer is the chairwoman of the Community Health and Environment Coalition.

Lack of support disappoints B'water

To the Editor:

Broadwater Energy is disappointed that the Wading River Civic Association has made a decision on the project in this early stage of a multi-year process to identify impacts, benefits and potential ways to achieve a balance that addresses long-term energy needs of the region.

By opposing a new supply of clean-burning natural gas, WRCA has chosen not to accept the conclusions from groups such as the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, C.W. Post's Center for Management Analysis and the National Environmental Trust that detail the need for natural gas as an alternative fuel source in the region. WRCA's opposition to Broadwater is also a decision to oppose re-powering Long Island's electricity generation facilities to natural gas to reduce emissions of NOx, SOx, CO2 and particulates in the region.

Regarding safety, multiple security procedures would make the likelihood of a terrorist incident extremely remote. The scheduled arrival of an LNG carrier is relayed to the Coast Guard at least 96 hours before the ship nears the Sound. Each carrier is scrutinized in an anchorage outside of the Sound before being allowed to proceed to the terminal. The carrier is boarded and under control of a qualified, experienced pilot, and dedicated tugs will be on

station whenever the carriers arrive in the Sound. The safety and security of the people living and working around the Sound will not be comprised by the operation of the Broadwater terminal or the LNG carriers that will deliver their cargoes to the facility.

The assertion that Broadwater promotes the industrialization of Long Island Sound is inaccurate. There is no basis for viewing this project as a harbinger for future development in the Sound. The substantial new supplies of natural gas provided by this project will be adequate to meet public demand and to prevent future shortages for years. Further, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission will be required to assess and deliberate on the public need and market supply during regulatory proceedings to be held for this and any competing project. This process will test our proposal as the most environmentally sound way to provide new natural gas supplies to Connecticut and New York. The alternative to our proposed floating facility is an onshore port, requiring dredging, new jetties and disturbance of the sensitive near-shore environment. Broadwater's proposed offshore location avoids these environmental impacts.

We will continue the dialogue that has been started with WRCA and other groups in New York and Connecticut. This type of involvement will ensure that a best-in-class project is developed to address the region's need for clean-burning natural gas while protecting Long Island Sound's environment.

John Hritcko
Broadwater Energy
regional project director