

Wilmington, Delaware
December 3, 2020

#4890

Sponsor:

**Council
Member
Gray**

WHEREAS, the former DuPont Repauno Works facility located on the Delaware River in Gibbstown, New Jersey has been proposed as a major fuel export terminal site for the transfer of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG); and

WHEREAS, the Gibbstown LNG Export Terminal project intends to ship LNG from a proposed Dock 2 at a deep-water port in Gibbstown, Gloucester County, New Jersey, on the Delaware River for sale overseas; and

WHEREAS, approximately 400 trucks per day, 365 days per year, would travel to the terminal, causing LNG to be continuously transported into the Gibbstown facility by rail and trucks, and then transferred directly onto ocean-going ships; and

WHEREAS, New Fortress Energy, the owner of the project, are planning the overland transport of LNG by truck and rail car for about 200 miles from Wyalusing, Bradford County, Pennsylvania to the proposed terminal dock located upriver from Delaware only 6.32 miles away, that is within a possible impact zone from a LNG release at Dock 2 and other related port facilities; and

WHEREAS, ships loaded with LNG will navigate the Delaware Bay, the Delaware River, and pass under both the Delaware Memorial and Commodore Barry bridges; and

WHEREAS, the LNG received at Gibbstown is not intended for regional consumption or benefit, but exclusively planned as a continuous site of transfer of LNG onto ships for export, and therefore the facility will not develop storage capacity for LNG delivered to the Gibbstown site; and

WHEREAS, the likely LNG truck transportation route across the Commodore Barry Bridge is only 2.85 miles upriver from Delaware, within the potential zone of impact should there be an LNG release incident; and

WHEREAS, inhalation of large quantities of LNG vapors may cause central nervous system depression, nausea, headache, dizziness, and vomiting, as LNG and associated vapor is a simple asphyxiant and may cause loss of consciousness, serious injury, or death by displacing air, thereby resulting in insufficient oxygen to support life (Council on Environmental Quality, 2020); and

WHEREAS, LNG is an extremely cold liquid that can cause cryogenic burns or injury, with a LNG fire or explosion affecting up to 2 miles or more from the source, with second-degree burns that can occur within 5 seconds for those exposed within .69 miles of the fire or explosion, with a fatality potentially occurring from 10 seconds of exposure to the deadly vapor cloud that moves quickly and far from its source (Council on Environmental Quality, 2020); and

WHEREAS, a typical LNG ship can transport at least 33 million gallons of fluid, which is equivalent to 115 million pounds of cold, explosive, hazardous liquid; and

WHEREAS, containers of LNG are typically under pressure and temperature-controlled conditions, and therefore these containers may explode if temperature control is not maintained, resulting in an uncontrollable LNG release as the LNG expands 600 times into a vapor with alarming energy; and

WHEREAS, transloading is one of the most dangerous operations in LNG handling and subject to technological failure and human error and is typically minimized at LNG facilities; and

WHEREAS, the absence of a LNG site storage at Gibbstown demands a high volume of truck and rail connections and disconnections to transfer LNG from land to ship transportation, and the frequency of bulk connects and disconnects will increase the risk of mishaps that could cause catastrophic hazards to surrounding communities; and

WHEREAS, an increased volume of LNG transport by trucks and rail cars will present a significant hazard to motorists and residents along the transit routes from Marcellus gas fields in Pennsylvania to Gibbstown, N.J.; and

WHEREAS, Wilmington, Delaware’s downtown is approximately 26 miles from Gibbstown, NJ, but only 2 miles from the Delaware River, where the Port of Wilmington is directly situated, and

WHEREAS, the ships would traverse the Delaware River and Bay, passing many Delaware communities, including densely populated areas, environmental justice communities, and areas of unique and vulnerable environmental, economic, and natural value, to reach the Atlantic Ocean and foreign ports; and

WHEREAS, the State of Delaware Administrative Code prohibits the development of LNG terminals in the coastal zone in Delaware under current law based on safety and environmental issues which are detailed in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for Delaware’s coastal zone management plan; and

WHEREAS, the Delaware Coastal Management Program FEIS concluded that “The main shipping channel up the Delaware River and Bay also passes, in places, within a mile or two, of Lewes, and not much farther from Rehoboth Beach--both densely populated in the summer. A tanker accident near either city could spell disaster”; and

WHEREAS, the Delaware Coastal Management Program FEIS states that "...the still undefined dangers associated with LNG facilities in areas of population density and the potential impacts of shipments on environmental resources, appear to outweigh benefits related to the potential energy supply;" and

WHEREAS, many residential communities and cities along the inland navigational route will be directly assuming the risks associated with this LNG transport operation, but will not directly accrue the benefits; and

WHEREAS, the primary benefits of the Gibbstown facility will go to investors in the Marcellus Shale Fracking operations, and to Wall St. investors who own an interest in the LNG export business; and

WHEREAS, Governor John Carney is a voting member of the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC), along with the governors of the other Delaware River Watershed states (New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and New York) and the Army Corps of Engineers; and

WHEREAS, the DRBC will be voting in the coming weeks on whether to allow the project to proceed; and

WHEREAS, Delaware refused to permit construction of a Pier and LNG Tanker-Loading facility on the Delaware River in 2008.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WILMINGTON that the Delaware River transport and the Gibbstown, N.J. transfer of LNG are extremely risky and hazardous to the health and safety of residents, workers, and visitors within the City of Wilmington, with the deployment of such a facility and transport operations providing no direct benefit(s) to the local or regional communities of Wilmington

and Delaware which are exposed in close proximity to the Delaware River, and thereby exposed to a clear and substantial risk of accidental or targeted catastrophe.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WILMINGTON that The Honorable John Carney, Governor of Delaware, in his role on the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) is urged to vote in opposition to the proposed development of a LNG transfer facility in Gibbstown, N.J., including the associated hazards of LNG trucks transporting such dangerous gas through public routes and freeways in Delaware and through the Delaware River and Bay waterways.

Passed by City Council,

ATTEST: _____
City Clerk

SYNOPSIS: The Council of the City of Wilmington strongly opposes the conversion of the former DuPont Repauno Works facility at the Delaware River in Gibbstown, New Jersey into a Liquefied Natural Gas transfer facility. LNG is a dangerous substance, which, if handled improperly or with malicious intent, has far-reaching and deadly effects. The State of Delaware, and especially the City of Wilmington, would be at a continuous and great risk should such a terminal be developed, and would receive no benefits. The Council urges the Governor to vote against the facility proposal.