



THE GENERAL COURT OF MASSACHUSETTS
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1053

February 12, 2009

Ms. Selma Urman, Hearing Officer
Energy Facilities Siting Board
One South Station
Boston, MA 02110

Dear Ms. Urman:

Presented with another opportunity to express the legitimate objections by Chelmsford residents and town officials, we as the elected legislative representatives serving the interests of the town of Chelmsford again wish to express our opposition to the proposed construction of a power plant at 134 Billerica Avenue in Billerica by the Montgomery Energy Billerica Power Partners.

The planned site, although in Billerica, is at a conjunction with both Chelmsford and Tewksbury and also Lowell, so close that what would negatively affect one community would certainly touch the others. Thus, Chelmsford residents have a huge stake in any negative consequences this project has the potential to produce – aside from its profitable energy, which we understand will be diverted elsewhere.

As was noted in the Energy Facilities Siting Board's Tentative Decision issued last week, while a scant buffer zone surrounding the proposed site does not invalidate its potential use, the mitigation of impacts to immediate neighbors and the surrounding area is an issue and needs to be appropriately addressed. There are certainly beneficial aspects to the proposed site that are advantageous to the operators of such a facility, but it seems obvious that the health and energy needs of our communities are being overlooked in favor of promoting this questionable and potentially dangerous business venture.

It has also been brought to our attention that the area involved is not deficient in meeting its current energy needs, and this is a known fact recognized by the Department of Public Utilities. At a recent siting board hearing for the proposed Brockton power plant that is in relatively the same stage of development as the proposed Billerica plant, a DPU representative clearly stated that the region does not need the power the proposed Brockton plant would provide. If this is true of the Brockton plant, can the same not also be said of the Billerica proposal, only a mere 34 miles away? The area does not need another power plant at this time, especially one with such potential costs to its neighbors and surrounding communities.

We must stress again, that unless there are irrefutable assurances that the plant can pass the most stringent environmental legal requirements, health and safety (direct and indirect) standards, we must join with objectors in the several communities, echoing their several major reasons.

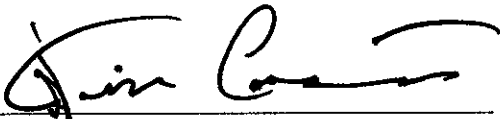
Long-established residential neighborhoods and a Chelmsford school are located less than a mile away from the proposed site which, incidentally, is a very short distance to the shores of the historic Concord River. A few miles downstream in Lowell, the Concord River flows into the Merrimack River, the water supply for several major urban areas.

As we have previously stated, we believe that the cost/benefits to our Chelmsford residents or to those in other affected communities must be given priority consideration in any case, but especially if it should be established that the energy power to be generated is designated for distant regions. The local opponents say – the power plant should properly be constructed somewhere in those distant regions. If the energy produced at the proposed Billerica site is to be sent to distant areas in need of energy, would it not make more sense for such a facility to be built in greater proximity to those in need of its service? On the face of it now, it would seem that the benefits to Chelmsford's residents would be minimal to nil, while the costs to Chelmsford's future welfare could be unpredictably high.

While we certainly support economic advancement and expansion generally, risks to the greater population must be taken into account above the risks and anticipated financial returns to private investors. On behalf of our Chelmsford constituents we urge the Siting Board to reconsider this proposal before making a decision since the investment by all parties in this proposed power plant is intended for the very long term.

Thank you for your attention.

Respectfully,



REP. JAMES ARCIERO
Representative, 2nd Middlesex District



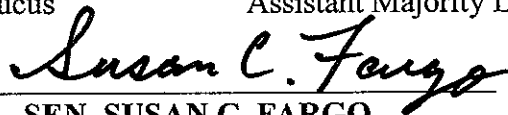
REP. CORY ATKINS
Chair, Science & Technology Caucus



REP. THOMAS A. GOLDEN, JR.
Chair, Bills in Third Reading



REP. DAVID M. NANGLE
Assistant Majority Leader



SEN. SUSAN C. FARGO
Chair, Committee on Public Health