

It is Time to Rethink Wakefield's Participation in New Fossil Power Plant

On Friday, the Wakefield Item ran an article announcing a public forum happening tomorrow, Tuesday, June 22nd, to learn more about a new 55-megawatt power plant proposed to be built in Peabody, MA. The article, based on a media advisory issued by project developer Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company (MMWEC), fails to mention that (1) the project will run on greenhouse-gas emitting natural gas and oil, (2) 14 municipal utilities, including Wakefield, have committed their ratepayers to pay \$85 million for the construction and operation of the project for the next 30 years; (3) the project is located within half a mile of at least two environmental justice populations; and (4) until now, no public forums have been held by either the developer or participating utilities in the six years the project has been under development.

Less than three months ago, our legislature passed, and our Governor signed, a comprehensive climate change bill to achieve net net-zero emissions by 2050. Carbon emitting projects, like the Peabody power plant, run a very real risk of becoming costly stranded assets under existing and emerging state and federal energy regulations.

In October 2020, I asked the Wakefield Municipal Gas & Light Department (WMGLD) to reassess their participation in this project. As a Town Councilor and Council liaison to the WMGLD, I have witnessed first-hand the impressive strides the WMGLD has made over the last few years to embrace increased renewable and energy efficiency programs, but the Peabody power project is inconsistent with town, state and national climate goals. Please join me in expressing opposition to this project at tomorrow's forum. Additional information is available on my website at www.julieforwakefield.com/peabody-power-plant.

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