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Frontline Environmental Justice Leadership Celebrates Discontinuing of Process for New Fossil Fuel-Burning Power Plant in Sunset Park, Brooklyn

Like many historically marginalized communities, Sunset Park, Brooklyn has been the reluctant host to many fossil fuel burning and polluting infrastructure. Residents of Sunset Park live with the pollution from three peaker power plants, two solid waste transfer stations, the Gowanus Expressway and thousands of daily diesel trucks, and brownfields.

Astoria Generating Company (AGC) is the private owner of the two largest peaker power plants, the Gowanus and Narrows plants, in Sunset Park. The Narrows facility is 352 Megawatts and the Gowanus is 640 Megawatts, and both plants have burned dirty fuel oil and natural gas - polluting the community for over 50 years. AGC planned to build a new fossil fuel peaker plant or “re-power” the two peaker plants that were at the end of their lifetimes.

UPROSE was leading the opposition to the Gowanus Repowering in Sunset Park. UPROSE was engaged in the re-powering application process as an intervenor through Article 10 that allows community participation & input. UPROSE with the technical support of PEAK Coalition members pushed for AGC to develop clean energy and energy storage alternatives that are consistent with the Green Resilient Industrial District (GRID)- the community’s comprehensive plan for the Green Re-Industrialization of New York City’s largest working waterfront and New York State’s Climate Leadership & Community Protection Act- the most progressive climate legislation in the nation that codifies economy-wide emission reductions and equity.

This climate justice victory comes on the heels of the State’s announcement last month to deny two permits for new fossil fuel power plants. UPROSE is encouraged to see the decades of frontline community leadership and hard fought climate policies set strong precedents that fossil fuel burning power plants- overwhelmingly sited in communities of color and low-income communities - only exacerbate disparities, are legally inconsistent with the climate policy, and will not be allowed by the State to achieve emissions free electricity sector by 2040.

In Sunset Park, high levels of local air pollution has caused generations of health problems from asthma, heart disease, diabetes, COVID, and other upper respiratory issues. For the community, this major victory means cleaner air, less exposure to toxic pollutants that harm our health, and more opportunities to create well-paying local green jobs in clean energy!

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