

**For Immediate Release**

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**North Brooklyn elected officials and community members slam National Grid's Greenpoint fracked gas expansion at public hearing**

Audio recordings of some testimony available [here](#)

*Greenpoint, Brooklyn* - Opposition to National Grid's plan to expand their Greenpoint fracked gas storage facility at the apex of the North Brooklyn Pipeline was unanimous Wednesday night at a Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) public hearing.

Community members soundly rejected the investor-owned utility's plan to add two new liquified fracked gas (LNG) vaporizers to their depot on Newtown Creek and called on the DEC to reject an air permit for the project. Many talked about the long history of environmental racism they have suffered from living near the contaminated site and slammed the corporate utility for doing no outreach to them.

"I'm appalled that we weren't even notified," said Elisha Fye who has lived in the community since 1953 and is the Vice President of Cooper Park Residents Council, which represents 701 families living a stone's throw away from National Grid's facility in public housing. "This is something that must be stopped and must be stopped immediately."

Assemblymembers Maritza Davila and Emily Gallagher also came out swinging.

"It is a slap in the face and I totally reject it," said Davila. "I'm asking you to reconsider because we are not going to allow it as a community. Our children deserve more respect."

"I am gravely concerned about the risks to public and environmental health posed by National Grid's pipeline and proposed expansion of their LNG facility in Greenpoint," said Gallagher. "Multiple studies have shown that our district already suffers from disproportionately poor air quality compared to other neighborhoods in the city. The proposed LNG vaporizers will exacerbate this problem by increasing air pollution and making our community even more susceptible to diseases like asthma and lung cancer."

They were joined by Councilmember Stephen Levin and representatives for Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez, Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney, Senator Julia Salazar, Senator Jabari Brisport, Senator Brian Kavanaugh, NYC Comptroller Scott Stringer, Councilmember Antonio Reynoso, and District Leaders Samy Nemir-Olivares, Emile Bazile, and Kristina Naplatarski, who all passionately spoke out against the project.

In their presentation to the public, National Grid tried to greenwash the proposed vaporizers as a harmless, "non-pipeline" solution unrelated to the widely opposed North Brooklyn Pipeline and

the utility's plans to truck in fracked gas. However, multiple rate case documents and filings within a proceeding investigating National Grid's 2019 moratorium show that the projects are physically connected and dependent on each other.

"We understand the pipeline isn't necessarily in the air permit but that's the exact problem we have here," said Fabian Rogers who spoke on behalf of Senator Brisport. "The environmental monster project that we're dealing with has been illegally segmented, and the people the Senator represents in Bed Stuy and Ocean Hill-Brownsville have been left out of the stakeholder conversations."

"This pipeline, I looked at the schematics, it goes through all the Black and brown communities, and ends up in ours which is a Black and brown community" said Fye. "We cannot go on like this, living life in fear cause of big companies doing harm to our communities."

"National Grid has characterized the new LNG vaporizers as a non-pipe solution. This is a cruel and intentionally misleading distinction without a difference," said Greenpoint resident Margot Spindelman. "Pipes are not the problem. What's *in* the pipes and in the tanks and in the vaporizers is the problem. We know that National Grid can only raise our rates by claiming the need for building more infrastructure. They treat our communities like their lottery ticket. We are not their windfall, we are human beings, and the DEC must rescind its negative declaration and deny National Grid's air permit."

In November, the DEC issued a "Negative Declaration" under the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), determining that the project will not have significant adverse environmental impacts which halted the environment review process. Advocates have called on the DEC's to [rescind its Negative Declaration](#), a demand that was echoed by many community members and elected officials during the public hearing.

Community members also blasted the \$54 million price tag for the vaporizers. National Grid is currently trying to raise downstate customers' monthly bills to pay for the LNG expansion and work done on the North Brooklyn Pipeline in 2020.

"I don't want to pay for this rate hike. I'd rather be saving for my son's college education," said Brownsville resident Celina Trowell.

Not a single person spoke in favor of the project during the three hour public hearing. Two more public hearings will be held today, March 11, at 1pm and 5pm. A fourth hearing will be held on March 18 at 5pm.

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NOTES TO THE EDITOR:

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