“There's other ways you can make money without harming us”
Community members pack public hearing in Brooklyn to speak out against National Grid’s proposal to raise bills for new LNG Vaporizers

Greenpoint, Brooklyn - Yesterday, at two public hearings, community members and North Brooklyn elected officials slammed National Grid’s proposal to build two new fracked gas vaporizers at its storage facility on Newtown Creek.

The first hearing was held at Cooper Park Houses, a public housing complex across the street from the facility.

"We are a hurt community," said Elisha Fye, Cooper Park Resident Council Vice President. “These vaporizers are harming this community. I've been here for 68 years and I've watched so many people occur medical conditions. There’s other ways you can make money without harming us.”
“With the safety issues and the health issues that this project contains, our community, this community of color, this low-income community, we consider this project to be a race massacre,” said Karen Leader, Cooper Park Resident Council Secretary. “Cooper Park Resident Council executive board members along with our residents demand that you move towards clean energy and stop looking to invest in fossil fuels.”

“We need to be focused on assessing the vulnerabilities of our waterfronts. National Grid's proposed project fails to address these coastal vulnerabilities,” said Annel Hernandez, Director of Climate and Environmental Policy for Council Member Sandy Nurse, District 37. “The Greenpoint Energy Center is located right in both the FEMA 100-year and 500-year flood plain, as well as a hurricane storm surge zone. We've seen with Hurricane Katrina, Sandy, Harvey, Maria… floodwater inundation can dislodge chemicals, fossil fuels, and other hazardous materials, and hurt the nearby communities. We see that these storms are intensifying. We have to protect communities that are already overburdened with contaminated lands, noxious infrastructure, and hazardous storage sites.”

A second hearing was held Wednesday evening at the Polish and Slavic Center in Greenpoint.

“Today is the day that we must end all new fossil fuel infrastructure,” said City Council Member Lincoln Restler. “I strongly oppose National Grid's plan to build two new vaporizers at the Newtown Creek facility. I hope the members of the Public Service Commission hear this community in one loud voice saying hell no to these new vaporizers.”

“Investing in new fossil fuel infrastructure in 2022 is climate denial and to make all of us pay for that climate denial adds insult to injury,” said Assemblymember Emily Gallagher. “I call on the Department of Public Service, the Department of Environmental Conservation and Governor Hochul to deny these permits and the rate increase.”

National Grid said the vaporizers, which reheat liquefied natural gas (LNG), changing it from its liquid form back to a gas form, will cost $65 million. They have filed with the New York State Public Service Commission to recoup those costs by raising monthly gas bills.

National Grid customers have launched a gas bill strike refusing to pay for the North Brooklyn Pipeline, which if completed, would connect directly to the LNG facility. Over 500 customers have signed up to withhold $66 of their National Grid bill, the amount the average customer will pay over time for the pipeline.

“I am one of hundreds of National Grid customers who are striking and are refusing to pay for the North Brooklyn Pipeline,” said Greenpoint resident and No North Brooklyn Pipeline Coalition member Margot Spindelman. “We had no choice but to take this escalated action when New York State failed us. Instead of talking about a rate hike we should be talking about a windfall profits tax on the 3.4 billion dollars of profit National Grid made this year globally. Kathy Hochul’s Public Service Commission needs to show what side they are on and say no to the vaporizers and to the pipeline, never building Phase 5 and shutting off the gas in Phases 1 to 4.”
Several community members representing Mi Casa Resiste and Brownsville Green Justice who live along Phases 1 through 4 of the North Brooklyn Pipeline attended the hearing and called out the state and company for never having any public hearings in Brownsville, Ocean Hill, Bed-Stuy and Bushwick and for avoiding conducting a cumulative environmental review of the project.