

Re Public Comment for Russell City Energy Center.txt

From: Dave Fouquet
Sent: Wednesday, September 16, 2009 3:35 PM
To: Weyman Lee
Subject: Re: Public Comment for Russell City Energy Center

Attachments: CLPFA Comment.doc

Mr Lee,

I just wanted to let you know that I have sent a hard copy of the attached letter (same as what I sent earlier), in case it helps to have a copy with my signature. If it's a problem because it will arrive past the Sept. 16 deadline, then please use what you have here.

Also, I didn't put this in our statement specifically, but the CLPFA would also like to see some obligations of the owner/operator to monitor emissions of Acrolein.

Thanks,

Dave Fouquet
Math Instructor, Chabot College
Vice President, Chabot-Las Positas Faculty Association
(510) 723-6868

>>> Dave Fouquet 9/16/2009 12:08 AM >>>

Mr Lee:

Attached is a statement from the Chabot-Las Positas Faculty Association (CLPFA), submitted in regard to the proposed PSD Permit for Russell City Energy Center. The attached document is preferred, but if it helps at all, the text is reproduced below.

Incidentally, I appreciated the chance to talk to you about acrolein after the Sept. 2 hearing.

Regards,

Dave Fouquet
Math Instructor, Chabot College
Vice President, Chabot-Las Positas Faculty Association
(510) 723-6868

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Public Comment
Submitted in regard to Russell City Energy Center (RCEC)

15 September, 2009

Dear Mr Lee,

The comments below represent the opinion of the Chabot-Las Positas Faculty Association (CLPFA), and are intended to supplement the statement I made at the public hearing of September 2, 2009, concerning the proposed PSD permit for Russell City Energy Center (RCEC), in which I expressed concerns over the health risk assessment standards and methodology.

The CLPFA is opposed to this power plant. Despite the relative "clean operation" promised by the applicant, its site is simply too close to the densely populated urban area in which our campus is located.

If we are to suppose that the federal PSD permit may ultimately be granted, however,
Page 1

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the CLPFA is concerned that the proposed "PSD Permit Conditions" starting on page 98 of the Additional Statement of Basis, dated August 3, 2009, appear to be insufficient to protect the health of Chabot College employees and East-Bay residents should RCEC be permitted to operate into the future. We have several major areas of concern:

1. Pollutants not monitored. Several items on under Conditions for the Gas Turbines appear as struck-out text, which normally means they are to be omitted in the final document. To the casual reader, it appears the owner/operator will not be required to monitor emissions of the following pollutants: Ammonia, Precursor Organic Compounds (POC), Formaldehyde, Sulfur Dioxide, and Mono-and Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons. These substances are common components of smog; some are known carcinogens. Even if the emissions levels are projected to be minimal, the CLPFA opines that given the urban location of the proposed power plant, the emissions of those substances needs to be monitored.

2. Oversight. The PSD Permit Conditions do not mention (at least not in an obvious place) that a government or neutral third-party entity will verify (i.e. spot-check) the owner/operator's monitoring of emissions of pollutants. We offer this concern in light of several U.S. citizens having perished from salmonella poisoning in 2008 after consuming peanut butter that was produced at a plant in Georgia, after the owner/-operator (of the peanut butter plant) had wantonly and deliberately violated health regulations. The CLPFA believes there needs to be oversight over any corporate entity to which the health of local residents and workers is to be entrusted, even if the general health risks are deemed to be minor.

3. Emerging Developments. Clearly, there are several components of health-risk assessment and climate change where federal or local standards could become more stringent in the future. Examples include, but are not limited to: (a) PM 2.5 (in which regulatory developments are ongoing); (b) greenhouse gas emissions (in which new national and international goals may come to light); and (c) the area of cumulative health risk assessment (the effect of RCEC emissions on top of pollution from existing sources), upon which the District states: "-under-taking a risk assessment encompassing all emission sources in the region of the facility would require resources that do not exist at this time." (p 97.) For reasons such as these, the CLPFA is concerned that the applicant may be planning to obtain the PSD Permit before such new regulations are in place, so as to be "grandfathered" to operate under older, more lenient terms. The CLPFA believes, however, that given the proximity of RCEC to so many local residents and workers, the PSD permit applicant must accept some risk and responsibility to ensure that the plant does not adversely impact the health and well-being of the local population. Therefore, we request that the following language (or something similar that provides at least the same level of protection) be included in the PSD Permit Conditions:

xx. The owner/operator agrees to be responsive to emerging developments in the areas of health risk assessment and climate change. Specifically, it is understood that, in response to new federal or state regulations, or to developments in scientific research or testing methodologies, including developments in the area of cumulative health risk assessment, the owner/operator may be required to adhere to regulations, imposed at a later date, designed to protect the health of East Bay residents, or to meet greenhouse emissions goals. Such regulations may entail: (1) the monitoring of emissions; (2) the observance of lower limitations on emissions of specified pollutants; and (3) remedial action such as the District may direct.

4. Effects on the Bay. The Class I Area Impact Analysis (in the Statement of Basis dated December 8, 2008) posits that plants (flora) and animals in the marshlands surrounding the site around RCEC will not be adversely impacted by power plant operations. Several faculty members have wondered, however, whether heat introduced into the bay waters by RCEC may in fact promote the growth of certain marshland and bay-water organisms that could, in turn, adversely impact the local ecosystem and bring secondary and tertiary impacts upon local air quality.

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This part of the bay does not get a lot of wash-through, so it stands to reason that some portion of the local waters will experience a permanent increase in ambient heat. For this reason, the CLPFA would like to see some language in the PSD Permit Conditions that would allow the District to require the owner/operator to take remedial action if the events described herein come to pass.

Generally speaking, the CLPFA treats the emissions of RCEC as impacting our working conditions. Since Chabot College faculty, staff and students are unambiguously in the class of people who will "pay the price" for errors made in this process, we hereby request stronger language in the PSD Permit Conditions to assure that the owner/operator of RCEC will indeed be a responsible neighbor (assuming the PSD permit is in fact granted). We sincerely hope the effect of RCEC emissions upon our general health and well being is truly negligible, as claimed. Notwithstanding, our feeling is that if the plant is truly as clean as advertised, the applicant should render no objections to agreeing to provisions such as described above; conversely, if the applicant objects strenuously to such language, we might respectfully suggest that it constitutes grounds for denying the PSD permit.

Thank you,

David Fouquet
Mathematics Instructor, Chabot College
Vice President, Chabot-Las Positas Faculty Association

Chabot-Las Positas Faculty Association

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The CLPFA is opposed to this power plant. Despite the relative “clean operation” promised by the applicant, its site is simply too close to the densely populated urban area in which our campus is located.

If we are to suppose that the federal PSD permit may ultimately be granted, however, the CLPFA is concerned that the proposed “PSD Permit Conditions” starting on page 98 of the Additional Statement of Basis, dated August 3, 2009, appear to be insufficient to protect the health of Chabot College employees and East-Bay residents should RCEC be permitted to operate into the future. We have several major areas of concern:

1. **Pollutants not monitored.** Several items on under *Conditions for the Gas Turbines* appear as struck-out text, which normally means they are to be omitted in the final document. To the casual reader, it appears the owner/operator will not be required to monitor emissions of the following pollutants: Ammonia, Precursor Organic Compounds (POC), Formaldehyde, Sulfur Dioxide, and Mono-and Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons. These substances are common components of smog; some are known carcinogens. Even if the emissions levels are projected to be minimal, the CLPFA opines that given the urban location of the proposed power plant, the emissions of those substances needs to be monitored.
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