

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
BOSTON REGION I

In the Matter of:

PUBLIC HEARING

In Re:

PSD PROJECT
PIONEER VALLEY ENERGY CENTER

North Middle School
350 Southampton Road
Westfield, Massachusetts

Thursday,
January 12, 2012

The above entitled matter came on for hearing,
pursuant to Notice at 7:00 p.m.

BEFORE:

IDA E. McDONNELL, Manager
DONALD DAHL, Environmental Engineer
RONALD FEIN
JIM MURPHY
UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
OEPO5-2, Region 1
5 Post Office Square
Suite 100
Boston, MA 02109-3912

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(7:13 p.m.)

1
2
3 MR. MURPHY: We will record, and so folks
4 who have wanted to make a comment, I'd ask to fill out
5 the cards. If there's somebody else who wants to add
6 their name to that list, that we still have the cards
7 in the back and you're welcome to fill one out and
8 make a comment.

9 And thank you for your patience and for all
10 the good questions.

11 MS. McDONNELL: Good evening, ladies and
12 gentlemen. My name is Ida McDonnell. I am the
13 Manager for the Air Permits, Toxics and Indoor
14 Programs Unit with the New England Regional Office of
15 the United States Environmental Protection Agency,
16 also known as Region 1. I am the presiding officer
17 for this hearing. The informational meeting is now
18 over, and I am now convening the public hearing. As I
19 will explain in the next few minutes, the nature of
20 this public hearing is different from the informal
21 public meeting that we have just completed.

22 Joining me here tonight are Donald Dahl, who
23 you already saw, who presented the material during the
24 informational meeting. Donald works in my unit as the
25 Permitting Engineer for this permit. Ronald Fein from

1 EPA Region 1's Office of Regional Counsel, is sitting
2 right here to my right. He is the lawyer for EPA
3 working on the permit. We also have several other
4 people in attendance, including a representative from
5 our Office of Civil Rights and urban Affairs, and our
6 Office of Public Affairs. Also, to assist people
7 whose native language is not English, we have provided
8 interpreters in Spanish, French, Russian and Polish.
9 If you would like the assistance of one of these
10 interpreters, please make sure to find the appropriate
11 interpreter.

12 I'd like to begin by setting the context for
13 tonight's hearing. I will first summarize the draft
14 air permit that is the subject of the hearing, then
15 I'll discuss the permitting process so far, the nature
16 of tonight's hearing, and what happens after the
17 hearing. Finally, I'll discuss the process for
18 giving oral comments of tonight's hearing. I will
19 begin with a summary of the draft air permit for
20 anyone who missed the informational meeting.

21 Tonight's hearing concerns the issuance of a
22 prevention of significant deterioration, or PSD
23 permit, to Pioneer Valley Energy Center, which I will
24 call Pioneer Valley for short, for the construction
25 and operation of a new 431 megawatt power plant on

1 Ampad Road in Westfield. The project includes the
2 construction of and operation of a combined cycle gas
3 turbine, along with other equipment necessary to
4 safely operate the new plant. EPA has reviewed the
5 information in the application and other documentation
6 and has issued a draft PSD permit for Pioneer Valley,
7 along with an accompanying fact sheet which explains
8 the decisions made in the draft permit. The draft
9 permit has been available for public comment since
10 December. After EPA has received and considered
11 comments received during the Public Comment Period and
12 comments again received at tonight's hearing, EPA will
13 make a final permit decision.

14 The legal and factual background for the
15 draft air permit is explained in detail in the fact
16 sheet, and we have just finished an informal public
17 meeting in which Donald Dahl of my office explained
18 the draft permit. But, I will give you a short
19 summary. The project is expected to emit several air
20 pollutants at levels that are high enough to require
21 federal Clean Air Act permitting. Those air
22 pollutants are particulate matter less than 10 microns
23 in diameter, otherwise known as PM10, particulate
24 matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter, known as
25 PM2.5, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, greenhouse

1 gases, and sulfuric acid mist.

2 A PSD permit is a Clean Air Act permit that
3 makes sure the facility installs modern technology to
4 reduce air pollution, and that it does not cause
5 unhealthy levels of air pollution. A PSD permit
6 requires the facility to install best available
7 control technology and to conduct air quality
8 modeling. The air quality modeling must show two
9 things: first, that the project's air emissions do
10 not violate National Ambient Air Quality Standards or
11 "NAAQS," which are designed to protect public health;
12 and second, that the air emissions do not violate the
13 PSD increments, which are designed to protect air
14 quality that is already better than the National
15 Ambient Air Quality Standards.

16 For this project, EPA is proposing to
17 require Pioneer Valley to install an efficient
18 combustion turbine, to install emission controls for
19 nitrogen oxide and carbon monoxide., and to use low
20 emitting fuels to control emissions of greenhouse
21 gases, particulate matter, and sulfuric acid mist.
22 The air quality analysis showed that the total
23 emissions increase from this project is below the
24 NAAQS and PSD increments.

25 EPA released the Draft Public Comment, the

1 Draft Permit for Public Notice for this facility on
2 December 5th, 2011, which opened the Public Comment
3 Period through January 24th, 2012. The legal notice
4 for this hearing was published in the Springfield
5 Republican on December 2nd, 2011; Westfield News also
6 on December 2nd, 2011; El Pueblo, a Spanish weekly
7 newspaper on December 8th, 2011; and a web site for
8 the local Russian Community in December. Copies of
9 the public notice were sent to people who commented on
10 EPA's earlier draft last November.

11 Since December 5th, the Draft Permit, Fact
12 Sheet explaining the Draft Permit, and the supporting
13 documents have been made available for interested
14 parties to review and to comment on at EPA's Boston
15 Office. While some of the documents are technical, we
16 have also provided a one-page "Community Update" that
17 summarizes the major issues, and this Community Update
18 has been translated into Spanish, Russian, French and
19 Polish. The same information also was made available
20 on EPA's web site. In case you need a copy of the
21 Draft permit or Fact Sheet, some are available at this
22 hearing tonight as well as on our Web site.

23 Tonight's hearing is an informal, non-
24 adversarial hearing providing interested parties with
25 the opportunity to make oral comments and/or submit

1 written comments on the proposed permit. There will
2 be no cross-examination of either the panel or the
3 commenters. Any questions directed to a commenter
4 from a panel member will be for clarification purposes
5 only. The Public Hearing is being recorded. The
6 transcription will become part of the Official
7 Administrative Record for this permit. However, in
8 order to ensure the record's accuracy, we highly
9 recommend that you submit written statements in
10 addition to any comments that you make tonight. If
11 you want to submit a written comment in addition to or
12 instead of speaking tonight, you can give it to us
13 tonight, or send it to us in the mail or e-mail before
14 the end of the public comment period.

15 As previously mentioned, the Public Comment
16 Period will close at midnight on January 24th.
17 Following the close of the Public Comment period, EPA
18 will review and consider all comments received during
19 the Public Comment period, both in writing and in
20 tonight's public hearing. EPA will prepare a document
21 known as the "Response to Comments: briefly describing
22 and addressing the significant issues raised during
23 the comment period and what provisions, if any, of the
24 Draft Permit have been changed and the reasons for
25 these changes. The Response to Comments will

1 accompany the Final Permit for Pioneer Valley when it
2 is issued. Notice of the availability of both the
3 Response to Comments and the Final Permit will be
4 mailed or e-mailed to everyone who commented on the
5 Draft Permit. To save paper, we encourage you to
6 provide an e-mail address if you have one, and are
7 willing to receive notice through the e-mail.

8 After the final permit has been issued,
9 anyone who wishes to contest the Final Permit must
10 file a petition for review or appeal with the
11 Environmental Appeals Board, also known as the EAB. A
12 couple of important things to remember if you are
13 considering appealing the final permit; first, the
14 petition for review (or appeal) must be received by
15 the EAB within 30 days of the date the Final Permit is
16 issued. More information on how exactly to calculate
17 this period will be included in the attachment to the
18 Final Permit. Second, only persons who filed comments
19 on the Draft Permit during the Public Comment Period
20 or who provided comments during the Public Hearing may
21 petition the EAB to review final permit conditions.
22 Third, any person seeking review of a permit decision
23 must raise all reasonably ascertainable issues and
24 submit all reasonably available arguments supporting
25 their position during the comment period, including

1 any Public Hearing. Issues or arguments that are not
2 raised will not be considered by the EAB on appeal.
3 There is one exception to the above: Any person who
4 failed to file comments or failed to participate in
5 the Public Hearing, may petition the EAB only to the
6 extent of the changes from the Draft to the Final
7 Permit. More information on the appeals process can
8 be found on the EPA Web site and at that time of the
9 Final Permit decision.

10 To begin hearing your comments, I will first
11 request comments from Federal, Tribal, State and Local
12 officials. I will then request comments from members
13 of the public. I will use the attendance cards to
14 call on people who wish to comment. The cards will be
15 called in the order they were submitted. These cards
16 will also be used to notify persons of our subsequent
17 Final Permit Decision.

18 Speakers should come to the podium right
19 here, where we have a microphone, to speak. Even if
20 you do not wish to speak tonight, you may want to fill
21 out a card and include your contact information so that
22 you will be notified of our subsequent final permit
23 decision.

24 And to help make tonight's permit hearing as
25 smooth as possible, I ask you the following. First,

1 before you begin your statement, please identify
2 yourself and your affiliation, if any, for the record.
3 Second, please speak clearly into the microphone for
4 the transcript. And when you use your own name or
5 anyone else's, or any abbreviations, please spell them
6 out loud for the benefit of the transcript. If you
7 are making your comment in Spanish, Russian, French or
8 Polish, please allow the interpreter a chance to
9 translate your comment. Third, please focus your
10 comments on EPA's draft PSD permit and issues related
11 to this permit.

12 Fourth, please remember that this is an
13 opportunity for you to state your comments. EPA will
14 carefully consider everyone's comments after the close
15 of the public comment period. This means EPA's
16 responses to your comments will come in a written
17 response to comments not tonight. Fifth, I ask tat
18 members of the audience please refrain from
19 interrupting or making excessive noise while someone
20 is speaking. In order for as many participants as
21 possible to get a chance to express their views, I ask
22 that you limit your comments to five minutes.
23 Assisting you in this, we will show cards indicating
24 when you have two minutes left, have one minute left
25 then zero when it's times to wrap up. At any time, if

1 you are asked to stop and you have not finished, I
2 will ask that you defer the remainder of your comments
3 until each person has had an initial opportunity to
4 comment. Then, if there is time at the end of the
5 evening, we will give you a short opportunity to
6 finish your comments. If you have a written
7 statement, you may read it if it can be done in the
8 time period allowed. And, if not, then I ask you to
9 please summarize your statement. In either case, I do
10 encourage you to submit the written comments tonight.

11 With that, let's begin with the comments and
12 I will call out the names based on the cards in the
13 order that I discussed before.

14 Will each of the interpreters step forward
15 and let everyone know who you are and why you're here.

16 INTERPRETER: Speaking in Spanish.

17 INTERPRETER: Speaking in French.

18 INTERPRETER: Speaking in Polish.

19 INTERPRETER: Speaking in Russian.

20 MS. McDONNELL: Thank you.

21 The first person that I have is Ora Cormier.

22 ORA CORMIER: Hello. My name is Ora
23 Cormier. That's O-r-a C-o-r-m-i-e-r. I live in
24 Westfield and I'm a Westfield concerned citizen. We
25 have seven grandchildren living in the area and six of

1 them go to school in Westfield. My husband and I own
2 a tractor-trailer truck. I drive a school bus and I'm
3 familiar with the diesel emissions laws and the laws
4 regarding idling of diesel engines. Years ago, a
5 truck could idle to keep the driver warm in the winter
6 and cool in the summer and there was no laws governing
7 that.

8 Now, he has five minutes that he can idle
9 the truck and is prohibited to idle longer than that.
10 School buses cannot idle in front of a school because
11 of the air quality and they cannot idle at bus stops
12 longer than five minutes. All this is due to air
13 quality, an article and the health of our children.

14 I have information here from the
15 Ethnological Society of America saying that the
16 exceedance of critical loads of nitrogen in our area,
17 if you can see, it's a map of the United States and
18 red is above the critical limits of nitrogen from
19 emissions. Again, the red is over the critical limits
20 already of mercury all up and down the East Coast.
21 And above the mercury in the tissues of fish and in
22 our ecosystem, the aquatic ecosystem, the levels of
23 mercury is already above.

24 And there's an article from the
25 Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection.

1 It says here -- it's from the Massachusetts Department
2 of Environmental Protection. It says here that blue
3 clouds and wax soot are the most obvious forms of
4 emissions from diesel. And it is the pollution that
5 we cannot see or smell that is most harmful. It poses
6 a greater risk with fine particles that penetrate deep
7 into the lungs. It causes aggravating respiratory
8 conditions, asthma, bronchitis and increasing heart
9 disease. It leads to cancer and even premature death.

10 Common sense governs our desire for clean
11 air, but it's science that proves that we do not --
12 that we should not approve such a power plant.

13 Again, the maps and literature from the
14 Ecology Association proves that. I have an article
15 written by the Westfield Water Resources Department
16 that says that Westfield water is vulnerable due to
17 contamination, due to the absence of hydro geologic
18 barriers. The barriers could prevent contamination
19 due to the presence of high threat land use, such as
20 autobody repair shops, railroad, machine shops, the
21 airport, transportation corridors, traffic and illegal
22 dumping. Again, that's written by our Westfield Water
23 Resources Department.

24 It's been scientifically proven that air
25 quality programs such as the 1990 Clear Act -- Clear

1 Air Act, and its amendments have helped to clean up
2 our air, but they don't adequately help protect the
3 ecosystems and they have no -- they have no address to
4 the long-term damage being done and they do not
5 address the ammonia emissions.

6 Where ecosystems are concerned, there's what
7 they call a tipping point. Once we reach that tipping
8 point, there is no return. Let's not reach that
9 tipping point in Westfield or surrounding towns.

10 I request the EPA to do a health air quality
11 assessment. Please do not make matters worse. Solar
12 and wind energy is the energy for the future.

13 Thank you.

14 MS. McDONNELL: Thank you.

15 (Applause.)

16 MS. McDONNELL: Excuse me. Ms. Cormier,
17 would you like to submit those into the record?

18 MS. CORMIER: Yes.

19 MS. McDONNELL: Claire Miller.

20 MS. MILLER: Good evening. My name is
21 Claire Miller and I'm a community organizer with Toxic
22 Action Center. Toxic Action Center is a public health
23 and environmental nonprofit that works side-by-side
24 with communities working to clean up or prevent
25 solution. Thank you for the opportunity to testify

1 tonight.

2 FROM THE FLOOR: It's hard to hear you.

3 MS. MILLER: Is the mike on?

4 FROM THE FLOOR: Yes.

5 MS. McDONNELL: Yes, you need to be right up
6 against it.

7 MS. MILLER. Great. Thanks ---

8 MS. McDONNELL: There you go.

9 MS. MILLER: --- for the tip.

10 I want to keep my comments brief tonight
11 because I'd rather hear more from concerned citizens
12 here in Westfield.

13 My main focus tonight is that I would like
14 to ask the Environmental Protection Agency to do a
15 health impact assessment. It's my sense that
16 Westfield is, in fact, an environmental justice
17 community. For folks who don't know what
18 environmental justice communities are, it's
19 communities that are low income or communities of
20 color historically, being overburden to the sources of
21 pollution. And my sense from having spent a good deal
22 of time here in Westfield over the last year and a
23 half is that you are, indeed, an environmental justice
24 community, and it would not -- definitely not hurt to
25 do -- to take a moment, slow down and actually take a

1 health impact assessment and look at what is this
2 community burdened with and how would this impact
3 that.

4 Thank you.

5 MS. McDONNELL: Thank you.

6 (Applause.)

7 MS. McDONNELL: Kathleen Barker.

8 MS. BARKER: Good evening. I'm Kathleen
9 Barker of 59 Eggleston Road. I'm a member of the
10 Westfield Concerned Citizens. Thank you for having
11 this meeting. We appreciate your time.

12 I live approximately a half mile from the
13 proposed power plant site and my concerns are as
14 follows. Contradictions with the PVEC agree, City of
15 Westfield Planning Board's special permits as it
16 applies the same conditions of the EPA draft air
17 permit. PVEC has moved forward with the EPA's air
18 permit knowingly and without requesting adjustments to
19 parallel the conditions of the Westfield Planning
20 Board permit.

21 PVEC entered into the local request -- the
22 local permitting of the power plant agreeing to be
23 bound by 63 conditions. I ask that the EAP uphold and
24 incorporate any local permitting common conditions
25 into the Mass. EPA air permit or deny the permit.

1 The most obvious contradiction is No. 38 of
2 the Westfield Special Permitting, stating the
3 applicant owner will use ultra -- ultra low sulfur
4 fuel with no daily limit of more than 10 million
5 gallons per year or 720 hours, 30 days per year at the
6 maximum heating rate.

7 The EPA draft will allow for double. The
8 burning of the oil fuel will produce much higher
9 levels of pollutants, including the component of
10 sulfur acid mist.

11 I ask the EPA to require a full health
12 impact assessment, specific to Westfield with
13 additional data reflecting that of school aged
14 children, low income residents, elderly and the
15 residents with illness or chronic health conditions as
16 they relate to air quality.

17 I also ask that an air monitor be placed on
18 Southampton Road in Westfield between the Mass Pike
19 exit and entrance, and the north entrance to Service
20 Star Industrial Way, requiring air monitoring for at
21 least three to six months before any decision of a
22 final permit is issued and continue indefinitely. The
23 results analyzed by an independent entity and the
24 mailing of results to all residents within one mile
25 radius, and to be published on a monthly basis in

1 local newspapers.

2 The PVEC should be required to incorporate
3 and uphold all local permits, not as a mere courtesy
4 or to promote any false image on a local level.
5 Please protect this community.

6 Thank you.

7 MS. McDONNELL: Thank you.

8 (Applause.)

9 MS. McDONNELL: Emma Figueroa.

10 And please remember to spell your name.

11 MS. FIGUEROA: Okay. Hi. I'm Emma, that's
12 spelled E-m-m-a, last name F-i-g-u-e-r-o-a.

13 I'm not just a Westfield concerned citizen,
14 I'm also a student of one of those five schools in the
15 area of where the power plant will be built.

16 I want to talk about my health, my friends'
17 and, of course, my family's.

18 For -- from the toxins -- from the toxins
19 being released into the air, into the air from the
20 power plant, it could give kids asthma or with the
21 elders that already have breathing problems, that
22 could become death.

23 Tell me, do you guys really want to be the
24 cause of families that are getting sick from the
25 toxins in the air?

1 I think that's it. The toxins from the
2 power plant, that could kill others and that could
3 just be a whole lawsuit waiting to happen, and I don't
4 think any of the Westfield concerned citizens want to
5 go through that and I don't think you guys want it
6 either.

7 MS. McDONNELL: Okay. Thank you.

8 (Applause.)

9 MS. McDONNELL: Maryann Babinski.

10 MS. BABINSKI: Thank you. Maryann Babinski.
11 That's -- do you want me to spell it?

12 MS. McDONNELL: Yes.

13 MS. BABINSKI: M-a-r-y-a-n-n B-a-b-i-n-s-k-
14 i.

15 I'm a Westfield resident and I am here today
16 representing the Westfield Concerned Citizens.

17 WCC, which is the Westfield Concerned
18 Citizens, is a community action group made up of
19 individuals who have come together because of a common
20 concern for the health and well-being of our neighbors
21 and our environment in general. WCC supports energy
22 solutions that will educate the public on energy
23 efficiency, conservation and sustainability.

24 We are therefore concerned by the many
25 environmental assaults that have been levied on our

1 neighborhood by numerous sources of toxic air
2 pollution. We are here to deliver a message to the
3 EPA regarding the draft air quality permit that the
4 Pioneer Valley Energy Center developers need to build
5 their 431 megawatt gas and oil fired power plant on
6 Ampad Road in Westfield.

7 We are a mixed neighborhood with a
8 significant number of low-income residents and we are
9 tired of having sources of air pollution continually
10 dumped on us. We want energy solutions that are
11 sensitive to environmental justice issues. Solutions
12 that do not take advantage of certain neighborhoods
13 and there for put them at greater risk. This plant is
14 no a solution. It is going to become a very big part
15 of our problem, and that's what you're not taking into
16 consideration. Put this in a box and do all the tests
17 you want, but we are a neighborhood here that is being
18 overburdened with many sources of pollution.

19 We did not come to this conclusion
20 frivolously though, because we have been actively
21 involved in gathering as much data as we could over
22 the past four plus years. All evidence tells us that
23 this plant, if it is built, is most assuredly going to
24 be an environmental injustice to this neighborhood.
25 This neighborhood's air quality is already compromised

1 by multiple sources of air pollution. Yet here we are
2 again, having to defend it against another assault
3 because the plan is to add a monstrous power plant
4 that will add tons of air pollution to our
5 environment, pollutants that human health -- that will
6 harm human health and destroy the environment.

7 The proposed site is too close to several
8 schools, daycares and elderly housing facilities.
9 Children and the elderly are the ones most adversely
10 affected by these toxic emissions. This is not a
11 fairy tale. This is fact. This is a horror story for
12 us. We are a neighborhood that does not deserve
13 this.

14 We're not here today to tell the EPA about
15 all the adverse health effects these emissions will
16 have on human health. We are not here to document all
17 the reasons why this plant shouldn't be built so close
18 to schools, elderly complexes and residence. We are
19 not here to educate them on regarding the poor air
20 quality that already exists in Hampden County. And
21 we're not here to give details and statistical data
22 about the adverse health impact that emissions from
23 hundreds of diesel truck, trains, highway traffic and
24 airport emissions can have on nearby residents,
25 particularly children and in the elderly This data is

1 already well documented on their own Web site.

2 We fit the profile and it indicates that
3 this is a bad idea for this neighborhood. We believe
4 that agencies that have as their mission, the
5 protection of the environment, to take actions for
6 people. If we cannot depend on these agencies, then
7 we do not -- then we -- then who do we turn to for
8 help in defending our environment against these
9 assaults? Our local Board of Health has already let
10 us down. We look to the EPA to do us justice. We are
11 concerned about the cumulative effect of these
12 emissions.

13 You cannot simply look at figures on a piece
14 of paper and conclude that this plant will do no harm.
15 You must look at the area. We want you to look at our
16 area. Our air quality is at risk and that risk is
17 going to increase with the addition of this plant. We
18 believe that clean energy does not come from a smoke
19 stack. We believe that health and safety of all people
20 should come before power, politics and profit making.

21 There's no need for extra energy, and that's
22 the only reason why this is going to be built here.

23 It is for these reasons that we ask the EPA
24 -- I would want to say we demand that EPA deny this
25 permit. It is for this reason that we ask the EPA to

1 require that the PVEC do a health impact assessment.

2 Please do a health impact assessment.

3 I thank you for your time.

4 (Applause.)

5 MS. McDONNELL: Fred Lakoma.

6 MR. LAKOMA: My name is Fred Lakoma, L-a-k-
7 o-m-a, and I live on 59 Kitridge Drive, which is
8 probably just a stones throw from here. And I'm here
9 because I'm concerned about the endangerment both to
10 our children and our neighborhoods.

11 There's quite a few unanswered questions if
12 an incident of severe magnitude should occur. There
13 is no full safe technology to compensate for either
14 mechanical failure, human error, lack of
15 attentiveness, sabotage or climatic change to ensure
16 that we have a 100-percent safe operation. The stored
17 amounts of ammonia and oil is far too great to prevent
18 a catastrophic incident.

19 I've worked for an explosive company for 20
20 years in supervision and management, and this company
21 has been around for about a 176 years. We recently, a
22 few years ago, received the Shingle (phonetic) prize
23 for manufacturing excellence. Whenever we started a
24 new process or operation, we always conducted a PHA,
25 which is a process hazard analysis, which is similar

1 to a health assessment.

2 What if scenario questions were always
3 asked? Okay? And we always answer these questions to
4 ensure that we met all safety and health concerns for
5 not only the operators, but the neighborhood, in
6 general, because if there was an incident, you wanted
7 to make sure it was confined in that area and it
8 didn't exceed a radius of that incident.

9 We work not only with explosives, but we
10 also work with caustic chemicals, fuels, oxidizers and
11 carcinogens. Quantities were kept to a real low
12 minimum in case there was an incident of severe
13 magnitude. If we couldn't guarantee that health and
14 safety concerns were met in all cases, we didn't start
15 up any process. My concerns with the draft permit are
16 that there is a lot of questions that are unanswered
17 and they're not specified in their emergency draft.

18 PVEC should guarantee a spill or an incident
19 of severe magnitude will not happen.

20 You know, they reference a contingency plan
21 for major spills or fires in their emergence response
22 draft. We don't even know what this contingency draft
23 is. You know, they talk about fires in incipient
24 stages, while these fires are able to be confined with
25 an extinguisher, something that you and I could use.

1 And who is able to handle an incident of severe
2 magnitude if our local fire department cannot? And
3 how long before the emergency personnel are assembled
4 and they arrive at the site? We don't know that.

5 What is the safe zone? What is the area of
6 safe zone for a worse case scenario and how large is
7 that affected area? How long would it take to
8 evacuate an area after an incident of severe
9 magnitude? We have six schools within a half a mile -
10 - within one and a half miles.

11 And what is the immediate and long-term
12 impact to our environment for a major spill? We have
13 experienced an earthquake and a tornado last year.
14 And how do we know how large of a containment area
15 that can hold 15,000 gallons of liquified ammonia or
16 750,000 gallons of oil? How big is this containment
17 area? And what are the full safe technological
18 measures to prevent an accidental major incident?

19 Once again, there is no 100-percent safe
20 operations. We need to ask the what if scenario
21 questions which haven't been asked. We have a right
22 to ask these questions. Our elected officials have
23 the obligation to ask these questions even though it's
24 not in their backyard. And PVECA needs to answer
25 these questions truthfully.

1 Thank you.

2 (Applause.)

3 MS. McDONNELL: Jean Carpenter.

4 MS. CARPENTER: Okay. My name is Jean

5 Carpenter,

6 C-a-r-p-e-n-t-e-r. I'm a Westfield resident. I am a
7 member of the Westfield Concerned Citizens and I
8 request that you deny a prevention of significant
9 deterioration permit to PVEC.

10 We attended a health department meeting in
11 September of 2010 and asked about the emissions that
12 would be released by Pioneer Valley Energy, PVEC.
13 They claimed -- this is the health department. They
14 claimed they didn't know. I asked specifically about
15 the PM2.5 particulates. Was told that I needed to
16 show them proof the PM2.5 particulates would be
17 produced by -- in PVEC's emissions.

18 Obviously, our health department never
19 looked into the effects this company would have on
20 Westfield residents and school children on the north
21 side, including the school we are in now, which is so
22 close to the proposed site, the power plant.

23 At the meeting the following month I gave
24 the board of health a stack of information about PM2.5
25 particulates, some of which came from PVEC's own

1 manuals, the rest from EPA, Journal of American
2 Medical Association, New England Journal of Medicine
3 Research, American Lung Association, as well as other
4 medical and research facilities. I asked a few
5 questions and asked that the health department notify
6 me with the answers. I waited for months and nothing.
7 So I wrote a letter and asked seven questions
8 pertaining specifically to the PM2.5 particulates and
9 hand delivered it to the health department at city
10 hall.

11 I received a brief e-mail the next day
12 stating, in part: While I understand your concerns,
13 the project as proposed does not appear to be in
14 violation of codes or statutes. Further, as I have
15 communicated to you in the past, which he did not,
16 health department input on the project has not been
17 solicited by any department or agency.

18 Obviously our health department does not
19 feel it needs to respond to health related concerns
20 from a group of residents. Incidentally, he never
21 answered one question. Therefore, we hope that EPA
22 will step in to help the residents of Westfield
23 protect our right to cleaner air.

24 There are many people in my neighborhood
25 with respiratory problems, including myself. We

1 already have emissions from the airport, with the F-
2 15s which were relocated here from the Cape, costing
3 the taxpayers over \$77 million. Was it because of the
4 high emissions and the cancer rates at the Cape?

5 I have not been able to find what the actual
6 emissions are from all of the planes at Barnes
7 Airport. Why is this information not readily
8 available? There are maybe thousands of trucks daily
9 on Route 202 from Duie Pyle, Genco, Lowe's, Home
10 Depot, CNS and many other companies on the north side
11 that travel to and from Exit 3 of the Mass Turnpike.
12 These trucks go to North High and North Middle School,
13 where we are now; Southampton Road School and Kitt's
14 Place, all on Southampton Road. All of the trucks,
15 plus the school buses and other traffic are emitting
16 emissions that the residents are constantly breathing
17 in.

18 I recently was at a bank on 202 and counted
19 20 tractor-trailer trucks passing that point in eight
20 minutes time. That would be roughly over 1200
21 tractor-trailer trucks per eight-hour day passing by
22 the schools. And to that, the pollutants from the
23 trucks that go to Exit 3, to other areas of town, plus
24 the routine turnpike traffic, all about a half mile
25 from these schools. Plus add the emissions. I've got

1 a lot more to go.

2 Add the emissions from the trains in the
3 area and the school children and residents are already
4 inundated with a high rate of emissions and pollution,
5 every day, all day, all night.

6 According to the Mass DEP, PVEC has to
7 conduct a two-week air monitoring, especially for
8 PM2.5 particulates before it can start building, just
9 to see how polluted our air already is. PM2.5
10 particulates are so microscopic that they are easily
11 breathed in, especially by children and the elderly.
12 They can cause lung and heart problems and even
13 cancer, according to many health studies.

14 We don't need to add another million and
15 half tons per year of pollutants into this valley
16 produced by PVEC. The Westfield Board of Health
17 admitted we have inversions on the north side, which
18 means this valley holds the emissions and pollutants.

19 Mass DEP has also stated that PVEC has to
20 pay the state \$4 million per year in offsets to
21 compensate for its overpollution from this power plant
22 emissions. However, that will not get rid of these
23 pollutions, they will remain here in the valley for a
24 long time.

25 PVEC's location is by wetlands. So some of

1 the emissions and pollutants will fall into the
2 wetlands and ponds, which can eventually leach into
3 the aquifer located beneath the City of Westfield. As
4 we know, the wetlands ---

5 MS. McDONNELL: Excuse me. You're going to
6 need to wrap up. We have a lot of people ---

7 MS. CARPENTER: Okay.

8 MS. McDONNELL: --- wanting to speak.

9 MS. CARPENTER: As we know, the wetlands
10 feed the aquifer as well as several neighboring towns
11 in our waters, drinking water, from the Barnes
12 Aquifer. We don't want the aquifer contaminated.

13 I have more stuff, but I'll be back.

14 (Laughter.)

15 (Applause.)

16 MS. McDONNELL: Pam Perreault.

17 MS. PERREAULT: Hello. I'm Pam Perreault,
18 P-e-r-r-e-a-u-l-t.

19 And this will be a repetitive theme. You've
20 heard some of these from all of us already. Reasons
21 to not allow PVEC to place a 431 megawatt power plant
22 on Ampad Road. Let's see. Location, location,
23 location, pollution, pollution, pollution. Let's
24 start with pollution.

25 No matter what kind of spin, gas companies

1 or PVEC and to wrap around this project with comments
2 such as that's available technology and clean energy,
3 you can just look at that data indicating the
4 emissions from this plant and realize this is not
5 clean energy. And this is not the only gig in town
6 for pollution. As already stated by some my
7 compadres, our air is already saturated with emissions
8 from a significant amount of truck traffic and fully
9 operational airport with an incredible amount of jet
10 fuel emissions, a train and a heavily traveled
11 turnpike. There is not an air quality monitor in our
12 specific area that currently assesses the air that we
13 are breathing today.

14 Now, let's consider location. We have
15 elementary schools, middle schools, daycare centers, a
16 densely populated residential area within a half a
17 mile, if not closer to this power plant, as well as a
18 high school within a one-mile radius. To quote
19 information from the EPA Web site, everyone, parents,
20 communities, environment and health agencies share the
21 vital responsibility and interest in protecting the
22 health of children in every possible way, including
23 protecting them from environmental risk where they go
24 to school.

25 When selecting a school location, it is

1 important to identify and balance environmental risk
2 and benefits. EPA recommends that local education
3 agencies seek to avoid locations that are in close
4 proximity to pollution sources, especially collections
5 of multiple sources. So if the EPA wouldn't even
6 allow a school to be built under these circumstances
7 in this area, why would they allow another polluter to
8 be sited here?

9 Due to the already multiple sources of
10 pollution that I've already stated in this immediate
11 area, as well as our location in the Pioneer Valley
12 with an air quality rating of F minus, with a
13 nationally disportion of high number of asthma and
14 COPD cases, it is an environmental injustice and a
15 health burden to place a power plant in this area,
16 especially when this project is unnecessary. since
17 there is no need for new energy sources current day.

18 At the very least, the action I urge the EPA
19 to take is requiring a health impact assessment. But
20 ultimately I urge the EPA to deny PVEC the right to
21 build this plant in this location by denying this air
22 permit. I urge you to not let big business with big
23 money make big profits by violating our rights to
24 cleaner air and by adding even more pollution. It is
25 your job to protect us. You are all in a position to

1 move this nation as a whole, to cleaner energy. You
2 can change the tide by endorsing only clean air
3 projects, such as solar.

4 Clean air does not come from smokestacks.

5 Thank your for your time.

6 (Applause.)

7 MS. McDONNELL: Kathleen Barker.

8 Staci Rubin.

9 MS. RUBIN: Good evening. My name is Staci
10 Rubin, S-t-a-c-i R-u-b-i-n, and I am a staff attorney
11 at ACE, Alternative for Community and Environment.
12 ACE is providing legal services to the Westfield
13 Concerned Citizens regarding this power plant. I
14 offer these comments on behalf of the Westfield
15 Concerned Citizens who ask that EPA not grant a PSE
16 permit to PVEC because it does not meet the Clean Air
17 Act or public health standards.

18 Thank you, EPA, for granting the residents'
19 request to hold a public hearing concerning this PSE
20 permit tonight. Clearly, there is significant
21 interest.

22 I also appreciate that EPA Region 1 staff allowed
23 me the time to explain ACE and Westfield Concerned
24 Citizens environmental justice concerns back in
25 August.

1 Since we raised environmental justice
2 concerns and highlighted the previous draft permit's
3 environmental justice analysis and its flaws, EPA's
4 staff has spent time doing a more detailed analysis.
5 However, I encourage EPA to do more.

6 According to EPA's environmental justice
7 2014 plan, EPA had submitted to building a strong
8 scientific foundation for supporting environmental
9 justice and to building disproportionate impact
10 analysis, particularly the methods to appropriately
11 categorize and assess cumulative impact. The 2014
12 plan states that the agency is in process of
13 developing scientific tools and we ask that EPA use
14 those tools to complete a health impact assessment
15 here in Westfield. The bottom line is that Westfield
16 is an environmental justice community and it is an
17 environmental justice concern.

18 According to Dr. Daniel Faber's report
19 titled, *Unequal Exposure to Ecological Hazards*, some
20 27 power plants in Massachusetts are responsible for
21 over 114 tons of combined sulfur dioxide, nitrogen
22 oxide and volatile organic compound emissions. These
23 emissions are a major source of respiratory disease in
24 Massachusetts residents, particularly in low-income
25 communities, such as Westfield.

1 Westfield has a higher than average asthma
2 rate according to the Asthma Regional Council. The
3 three-year average annual, aged-adjusted rate of
4 emergency room visits due to asthma by the community
5 health network area in 2003 through 2005 is
6 significantly higher, based on statistical
7 significance than the statewide rate.

8 The current environmental justice analysis
9 is incomplete. There are multiple approaches to
10 define the proximity and potential exposure to hazards
11 in the environmental justice literature.

12 In concluding that the .63 mile radius and
13 one mile radius around PVEC did not include the
14 state's recognized EJ community, EPA concluded there
15 was no need for additional fine particulate matter
16 analysis. The buffer radii in EJ studies often extend
17 to three miles from the source and takes into account
18 cumulative impact.

19 Further, the national ambient air quality
20 standards are not health based. The current fine
21 particulate matter standards were remanded to the EPA
22 by the Federal DC Circuit in 2009. It has been
23 nearly three years since the court's decision and EPA
24 has yet to propose additional action to address the
25 deficiencies identified by the Circuit Court. By

1 EPA's own analyses, each year of delay results in
2 thousands of avoidable deaths.

3 EPA should not grant the PSE permit because
4 of flawed analyses and they much be reconciled. If
5 EPA disagrees and issues a final permit, then please
6 add several conditions. One, no ultra low sulfur
7 diesel can be burned on days when the air quality
8 index value exceeds 100, require continuous fine
9 particulate matter emissions monitoring and do not
10 allow ULSG to be burned more than 30 days per the
11 planning board conditions.

12 I will file written comments before the
13 public comment period closes. Thank you for taking
14 these environmental justice concerns seriously and the
15 Westfield Concerned Citizens respectfully request
16 clean air, please.

17 Thank you.

18 (Applause.)

19 MS. McDONNELL: John Armstrong.

20 MR. ARMSTRONG: Thank you. John Armstrong,
21 J-o-h-n A-r-m-s-t-r-o-n-g.

22 I'm here tonight to address the false
23 notions that natural gas is a clean source of energy
24 and an alternative to coal and oil, as I understand is
25 part of the reason why this is proposed.

1 These are lies touted by the gas industry.
2 Indeed, the gas industry spent \$747 million in the
3 last ten years in campaign contributions and lobbying
4 at the federal level and a fortune in an advertising
5 campaign aimed at duping the American public into
6 believing that gas is clean. They tend to prey upon
7 low-income communities in focusing their efforts. The
8 truth is that gas is dangerous and dirty from
9 extraction to combustion. The reality of natural gas
10 is toxic water contamination, lethal air pollution and
11 increased rates of cancer and respiratory illnesses.
12 But the gas industry's money lobbying has not gone
13 without return. The gas industry is barely regulated
14 and enjoys exemption from most environmental laws and
15 standards.

16 Tell me this: If gas is so clean, why has
17 the industry spent so much money to win exemption from
18 the Clear Air Act, the Clean Water Act, the Superfund
19 Act and the Safe Drinking Water Act?

20 Where does it come from? Over 90 percent of
21 gas is now extracted in the U.S. by a dangerous
22 process called fracking, hydraulic fracking. Fracking
23 entails drilling over a mile underground and generally
24 horizontally up to a mile and blasting apart the shale
25 down there with a cocktail of one to nine million

1 gallons of water mixed with sand and hundreds of toxic
2 chemicals. Among these chemicals are toluene,
3 mercury, diesel and various known carcinogens such
4 benzine. More than 25 percent of over 500 chemicals
5 used in fracking have been demonstrated to cause
6 cancer or mutations. Across the country in 34 states
7 where fracking is taking place there are well over a
8 thousand known cases of ground water contamination
9 with these same chemicals and a string of sick
10 families, including heart breaking cases of children
11 with developmental problems and barium poisoning in
12 their blood.

13 Unfortunately, fracking pollutes the air
14 just as it pollutes the water, from intense levels of
15 diesel exhaust, spewing from thousands of industrial
16 truck trips necessary to frack each well, to benzine
17 and volatile organic compounds released at well heads
18 and to burning methane flares 60-feet high at frack
19 sites, to formaldehyde produced by natural gas
20 compression stations, to combustion in power plants,
21 fracking pollutes our air.

22 This is more and more evident -- there's
23 more and more evidence of associated impact, including
24 increased cancer rates, severe asthma cases and
25 respiratory illnesses.

1 In regions of Wyoming, where fracking
2 development is taking off for example, the air quality
3 there in a few short years has gone from pristine
4 mountain air to air worse than Los Angeles on a bad
5 day. That is not clean.

6 Similarly, natural gas is far from clean for
7 the climate. The holistic process of natural gas
8 extraction, transportation and combustion leaves a
9 tremendous amount of methane, which is a particularly
10 heavy greenhouse gas.

11 Recent science from Cornell University shows
12 that natural gas from fracking is holistically worse
13 for the climate than coal. In the 20-year horizon
14 research shows that gas is twice as bad as coal and
15 equally bad or worse on a hundred horizon. Although
16 they are exempt from laws requiring disclosure of how
17 much, gas power plants release the same methane into
18 our air, as well as a host of hazard air pollutants
19 and fine particulate matter. Where will these impact
20 the scheme? Right here in Westfield, in the form of
21 increased cancer rates, more emergency room visits,
22 children absent from school because of asthma.

23 At the same time, we have ample
24 alternatives, such as energy efficiency, wind and
25 solar. Westfield may be low income just like many

1 places, the gas industry is exploiting the fracking.
2 By permitting this plant and burying the lies of
3 natural gas would be to sacrifice the health of this
4 town and the children who breathe the air here.

5 Thank you.

6 (Applause.)

7 MS. McDONNELL: Mark Pickford. Mark
8 Pickford.

9 MR. PICKFORD: Good evening. My name is
10 Mark Pickford, M-a-r-k P-i-c-k-f-o-r-d.

11 I'm a respiratory nurse. I work at the
12 Western Mass Hospital. I've taken care of respiratory
13 patients for over 15 years. I myself have asthma, my
14 daughter has asthma. We live within three miles of
15 where the proposed plant is going to be. My grandsons
16 go to school here. My other grandson goes to the
17 other school within a thousand yards of here. Two of
18 those grandsons have asthma. My concern tonight is,
19 they already have asthma, and if you're putting more
20 toxic chemicals into the air, how is that going to
21 affect them in the future? What is their life going
22 to be like with emergency room visits, with hospital
23 time, with loss of school? How am I going to deal on
24 a daily basis, coming out of my home and trying to
25 breathe?

1 I carry my asthma inhaler with me wherever I
2 go, because I never know from day-to-day how my asthma
3 is going to kick up and how I'm going to feel on that
4 day. My concern is, don't make the air quality worse
5 than it already is in this valley.

6 Thank you very much.

7 (Applause.)

8 MS. McDONNELL: Paul Gour.

9 MR. GOUR: Paul Gour. P-a-u-l G-o-u-r.

10 I'm a Westfield resident. I'm also an
11 electrician. I think a lot of people think their
12 electricity comes from magic. They're used to have
13 taking a flashlight, putting batteries in it and light
14 comes out the end. Well, what happens when the
15 batteries die? They throw them away. So what happens
16 with those batteries? They become a disposable
17 problem. It's waste. Humans make waste. We're toxic
18 -- we give away toxic emissions out of our bodies all
19 the time.

20 I think electricity has been taken for
21 granted. And you think it just happens? Where's it
22 going to come from? Say solar and wind. There's wind
23 plants in this state that are still under lawsuit.
24 Every single one that's been brought up in the state
25 has been brought up under a lawsuit because they don't

1 want it in their backyard. They don't want nuclear,
2 they don't want wind and they don't want solar. There
3 was a solar plant in Amherst that got shot down by the
4 residents because they don't want it near them. They
5 want magic to happen and electricity comes from
6 nowhere.

7 Well, it has to come from somewhere. And
8 this is a good start.

9 Excuse me, ma'am. Everybody was quiet when
10 you talked, weren't they?

11 FROM THE FLOOR: Throw him out.

12 MR. GOUR: Thank you.

13 FROM THE FLOOR: You're out of here. You
14 don't need to ---

15 MR. GOUR: In my opinion, there should be
16 more of these built. This is the cleanest plant in
17 New England. If you got rid of all the dirty ones,
18 we'd be breathing a lot cleaner air. And then it
19 makes way for cleaner electric vehicles and everything
20 that goes along with that.

21 If you want to clean up the air, this is one
22 of the stepping stones, in my opinion.

23 The free market will take out the dirty
24 plants. That's how it works. The free market will
25 take them out. They're not going to subsidize the

1 coal plants to keep them going.

2 Now, when you have solar, there's night.
3 And when you have wind, there's calm. So what happens
4 on a calm night? You don't get any electricity
5 Where's it going to come from? You don't want
6 anything else to happen, this has to happen.

7 Now my daughters go right up the street up
8 here. One of my daughters, and both of them will be
9 going here next year. And they're going to be coming
10 to this school. I have no problem. This is one of the
11 cleanest plants. And Pioneer Valley has guaranteed
12 safety. They said this is going to be safe. It's
13 going to be a safe project and we believe them. We've
14 seen their plans.

15 The air quality has to start getting better.
16 It's a necessity and this is one of the ways that it
17 will start.

18 Now, I fully support this plant. I'm sorry,
19 I don't have a prepared statement. I kind of
20 scribbled.

21 MS. McDONNELL: That's okay.

22 MR. GOUR: So -- oh, this -- it also got the
23 Massachusetts permit, which is one of the toughest in
24 the state. So I fully support this and I thank you
25 for your time.

1 MS. McDONNELL: Thank you.

2 (Applause.)

3 MS. McDONNELL: Seven Dowd.

4 MR DOWD: My name is Steven Dowd. I live at
5 43 Eggleston Road, Westfield, Mass. The last spelling
6 of my name is D-o-w-d.

7 I'll make this as short as I really possibly
8 can. I won't stick with what I originally had
9 written. A lot has been covered, more -- probably
10 better than I could have done. And I'd especially
11 like to thank the last speaker of his lecture on how
12 electricity is made. It's kind of insulting to us
13 Westfield residents that I think are a little bit
14 higher mentality than that.

15 Thank you.

16 I guess we all know what comes out of these
17 stacks is bad for us. For those of us that think it's
18 fine and it's not harmful, I truly challenge you to
19 place your head over one for a few hours, breathe very
20 deeply for those same few hours and let's see how you
21 make out. Then we can build our plant with safety if
22 you come out okay.

23 Thank you very much.

24 By the way, any takers?

25 (Applause.)

1 MR. DOWD: Any takers that want to stick
2 their head over that plant? How about Mr. Palmer?

3 (Laughter.)

4 (Applause.)

5 MS. McDONNELL: Michael Durkee.

6 Michael Durkee.

7 MR. DURKEE: Mike Durkee, Westfield
8 resident. D-u-r-k-e-e.

9 It's funny that you would say that it's
10 insulting to the Westfield residents, but I think back
11 in October we had a little bit of a snowstorm. It
12 wasn't real insulting to all those Westfield residents
13 that went without electricity for five, six, seven
14 days. I was one of those residents. I didn't see any
15 one of you concerned citizens saying anything about
16 the four-, five-, six-hundred generators running to
17 provide electricity for some of us. I don't see any
18 of you concerned citizens saying anything about the
19 wood-burning stoves that people used to heat their
20 homes, they keep going in day after day after day.

21 Of course, there are, with everything in
22 this life, constant progression. Without progressing,
23 we regress. If there's a big issue with air quality,
24 where were you during the idling thousands of vehicles
25 during the construction of Western Mass.'s Little Dig?

1 That's what I thought. With everything that we do to
2 move forward, it's only for the better of the
3 community. Unfortunately, the community might be in
4 shambles now, but in order to move forward, we have to
5 take a step somewhere.

6 How many of you people drive a electric
7 vehicle?

8 None?

9 Solar vehicles?

10 No?

11 We all commute by what? Gas motors, diesel
12 motors, SUVs, minivans? It's a way of life. You have
13 to start somewhere. I say, let's get it done.

14 Thank you.

15 (Applause.)

16 MS. McDONNELL: Kathy Dowd.

17 MS. DOWD: Hi. My name is Kathy Dowd and I
18 live at 43 Eggleston Road. I'm a registered nurse and
19 I am concerned about the health effect of this
20 community. I just want to share something I got off
21 the Internet and pass it in as documentation from the
22 county health rankings.

23 It talks about elevated air pollution, fine
24 particles and ozone. It compares seven different
25 communities in Massachusetts. Of course, the target

1 is zero, and Hampden County is listed as 3, and for
2 the air pollution the ozone days, they targeted as 2
3 as being the baseline, and Hampden County has 15
4 listed. And this was documented, like I said, from
5 county health rankings 2010.

6 I'm just going to read a small paragraph.
7 The relationship between the elevated air pollution
8 particularly the particulate matter and ozone
9 compromise the health, has been well-documented and
10 the negative consequences of the air pollution include
11 -- some of these have been mentioned. Lung function,
12 bronchitis, asthma and adverse pulmonary effects.

13 We live in the Pioneer Valley already and we
14 have already the airport, the trucking. I know with
15 this plant going up, they mentioned in Mr. Palmer's
16 plan that 520 trucks a day are going to be coming in
17 with supplies. And how well are these trucks going to
18 be monitored with their pollution to the air?
19 Granted, that's only going to take a few years to go
20 up, but I also would like to request this assessment,
21 health impact assessment, for the health of the
22 community. I think it needs to be done. Everything
23 is getting passed individually and nobody is taking
24 into account the overall impact of where we live.

25 Thank you very much.

1 (Applause.)

2 MS. McDONNELL: Michael Maperowski.

3 Michael Maperowski.

4 FROM THE FLOOR: He's not here.

5 MS. McDONNELL: Robert Bachman.

6 MR. BACHMAN: Hello. I'm Robert Bachman,
7 99 Glenwood Drive, Westfield.

8 The question I wanted to ask earlier was
9 about the emissions in the regulatory approval of the
10 state and now I know that it is approved and I'm
11 thankful of that.

12 Some of the problems we have in town are
13 other emissions, I believe. I just switched over to
14 natural gas within the last past year and I'm quite
15 happy with it. It burns awfully clean.

16 And addressing the energy issues in our
17 area, I believe that we will be needing more energy in
18 the future, not tying our hands behind our backs. And
19 I believe it's a good thing for our community and the
20 rest of our town.

21 Thank you.

22 (Applause.)

23 MS. McDONNELL: George Delaney.

24 George Delaney.

25 Gordon Patro, Sr.

1 MR. PATRO: I pass.

2 MS. McDONNELL: Can you add it to the record
3 that he passed?

4 Thank you.

5 MS. McDONNELL: Larry Santas.

6 FROM THE FLOOR: He's gone.

7 MS. McDONNELL: Thank you.

8 Steve Sgroi.

9 MR. SGROI: Steve Sgroi. That's S-g-r-o-i.

10 MS. McDONNELL: Thank you.

11 MR. SGROI: I'm a Westfield resident, too.
12 I've attended almost every meeting for this project
13 and I've done lots of research as a resident. And
14 these are some of the things I've learned and
15 concluded.

16 This project will be a state-of-the-art
17 facility. The need for power is there from this town.
18 Living here for 34 years, I've seen several farm
19 fields turn into developments, several new businesses
20 like Home Depot and new Walmart were built.

21 Also in this day and age, EPA would not
22 allow a project like this to be built if air quality
23 was that bad and that bad for us.

24 In the year 2012, unemployment rates are
25 through the roof and job creation is needed.

1 Also, this will be built in the industrial
2 park where industrial things belong.

3 On October 30th, we all know about the
4 snowstorm that happened here. And due to the fact
5 that our power has not been maintained over the last
6 30 years, a power plant is needed to bring more power,
7 otherwise this will continue to hurt and happen.
8 Upgrades are needed and a power plant is needed to do
9 this. I fully support this project.

10 Thank you.

11 MS. McDONNELL: Henry Warchol.

12 MR. WARCHOL: My name is Henry Warchol,
13 W-a-r-c-h-o-l, 2 Sackville Avenue in Westfield, on the
14 north side. And this is not quite -- just a partial
15 EPA comment, more of a comment with question to the
16 company itself.

17 Indications are that this plant will not
18 shut down when there is no demand for electricity, so
19 the plant will use the surplus electricity how? To
20 produce hydrogen in a number of tanks on site. I
21 could find no reference to what happens to the
22 hydrogen tanks in the Middletown, Connecticut, plant
23 explosion here a while back. Hydrogen being very
24 explosive with but a spark and many valves being
25 switched on and off is troubling scenario.

1 If there is an explosion at this plant, at
2 this site, what would be the number of acreages of
3 damage and the number of casualties? This will also
4 create a lot of air pollution, so that is my main
5 question, and I hope you can address it.

6 I have just scribbled this down just before
7 I got here, so I don't have anything to give you.

8 MS. McDONNELL: Thank you.

9 (Applause.)

10 MS. McDONNELL: Gail Bean.

11 MS. BEAN: Good evening. My name is Gail,
12 G-a-i-l, Bean, B-e-a-n. I live at 66 Sherwood Avenue
13 here in Westfield. I'm a registered nurse for over 30
14 years and I'm here basically to support, because I am
15 a member of the Westfield Concerned Citizens, I
16 implore you to listen to our plea to have a health
17 risk assessment done. I think we can all -- many of
18 us can think back to the years when cigarettes were
19 not concerned with health effects. There was nothing
20 mentioned in the health care field. We knew that
21 these things were not good for individuals. We
22 implored the government to put warnings on packages
23 and it took many, many years before the Surgeon
24 General could do this. Filters have been put on these
25 things, you know, trying to cut down toxins that go

1 into people's lungs.

2 I have relatives that have died from cancer.
3 And I guess all I can say is that this kind of reminds
4 me of that smokestack that probably will be coming out
5 of this power plant, if it gets built. There will be
6 filters, there will be buffers, but ultimately the
7 stuff coming out, regardless of whether you say it's
8 within legal limits, et cetera, it's still going to
9 impact our environment, it will impact on all of our
10 health issues. And each individual has a choice as to
11 whether they pick up one of these things and put them
12 in their mouth.

13 As residents of Westfield, we will have no
14 choice when that thing gets built as to what come out
15 of that smokestack and how it affects us. The
16 regulations are there and I just pray that they will
17 get stricter.

18 I think back on the episode in the Gulf and
19 how in drilling for oil and everything was proper and
20 everything was going to be fine, and it was reviewed
21 by the government. And then after the disaster
22 happened, lo and behold we found there were thing that
23 were not in place. I implore, on behalf of the
24 Westfield Concerned Citizens, that you deny this
25 permit; and if it isn't denied, to at least do the

1 health impact assessment. And, please, please, we
2 need clean air.

3 Thank you.

4 (Pause.)

5 MS. McDONNELL: Eric Hadley.

6 Eric Hadley.

7 Ray Frappier.

8 MR. FRAPPIER: You guys amaze me, to have to
9 sit through this city after city. My name is Ray
10 Frappier, F-r-a-p-p-i-e-r. I'm a resident of
11 Westfield and I'm a concerned resident of Westfield.

12 This plant has met all city specifications,
13 has met or exceeded all state and federal regulations.
14 There is no reason not to grant them a permit to work.
15 This is all smoke and mirrors, the argument is, not in
16 my backyard.

17 Thank you.

18 (Applause.)

19 MS. McDONNELL: Dale Ringer.

20 Dale Ringer.

21 MR. RINGER: My name is Dale Ringer and I'm
22 a resident of Westfield for 30 years. I'm simply
23 voicing my opinion to try to have some sort of
24 monitoring if the plant is built or during the
25 construction of it, because that's quite a high number

1 of vehicles that are going to be coming through town.
2 And at that time, during the construction process, I'm
3 looking for some sort of a monitoring process to
4 prohibit air quality going above any kind of unhealthy
5 standards.

6 Also, once the plant is built, if it's
7 built, monitoring should continue so that, you know,
8 if it exceeds -- if they happen to run oil, for
9 instance, as a backup, I think it would be helpful to
10 know when we should be telling the plant, hey, you
11 know, you got something going on wrong here. I don't
12 see how we're going to stop the plant from being
13 built, but if it's going to be built, there should be
14 a way to monitor what comes out of it.

15 I'm not against the plant. I'm against the
16 unhealthy effect if it's here. And you've got a lot
17 of truck traffic coming through. You've got a lot of
18 things that you need to keep aware of. Basically, the
19 water quality in the aquifer itself, it's one of the
20 biggest aquifers in Western Mass. And that should be
21 important to the residents of Westfield and the EPA.

22 So what I'm saying is, monitoring of the air
23 and water during the construction and once it is
24 built, because I'm not against the plant, I'm against
25 whatever unhealthy effects it might have if things get

1 out of control, because we all know that funds have
2 been cut to the EPA and because of that, a lack of
3 oversight contributes to problems. And we're the ones
4 that are going to have to face that problem, in this
5 town.

6 Like I said, I've been here 30 years. I
7 fish in this river, I was catching trout in it
8 yesterday. Okay? I want that to continue. I want
9 this to be a wild and scenic river with what I
10 understand is to be some of the best water quality in
11 the country, not only this part of the state. I'd
12 like to see that continue.

13 Thank you.

14 (Applause.)

15 MS. McDONNELL: Daniel Hitchcock.

16 MR. HITCHCOCK: Hi. Daniel Hitchcock, 65
17 East Silver Street, H-i-t-c-h-c-o-c-k.

18 I've been coming to these meetings for,
19 what, three years now, and I've listened to things
20 over and over again. I'm in favor of the power plant
21 after going through the three years of listening to
22 everything. I truly believe that if there was not a
23 need for power, this power plant would not go in
24 because they would not make money. It comes down to
25 us as individuals to have fluorescent light bulbs,

1 drive hybrid cars or gas efficient cars, buy Energy
2 Star appliances. You know, we all need to do our
3 part.

4 I have two daughters. This is one of them.
5 They could -- we live in Westfield, so the plant will
6 be coming here. I'm not concerned for their health as
7 far as the air quality. But, again, if people can
8 just promote just better living, lower energy
9 consumption as a consumer, recycling, you know, we can
10 make a difference if we all do our part. So thank
11 you.

12 (Pause.)

13 MS. McDONNELL: Kurt Heidinger.

14 MR. HEIDINGER: Thank you for the
15 opportunity to express the opinions of myself. I'm
16 speaking on behalf of the Biocitizens School of
17 Environmental Philosophy, a nonprofit that operates
18 out of Northampton.

19 I want to comment first about the deference
20 of the EPA, which is the lead agency. The deference
21 to the Mass. DEP. I think that it represents a
22 failure of ethics of leadership. I would like a
23 discussion in the permit of why the EPA did not stand
24 up for its standards. Mass DEP needs the EPA to
25 direct it and not the other way around. So this is an

1 ethical issued, but it also will speak to anybody who
2 reads the permit about how the decision was made to
3 back away from, one, the EPA's own standards.

4 I'll just read this from the handout that
5 the EPA gave tonight. This modeling shows that the
6 Westfield area will still meet all of EPA's air
7 quality standards, except ozone.

8 My second point also has to do with the
9 issue of leadership. I'm disappointed with the EPA
10 because it knows the air of the Pioneer Valley is bad.
11 I would like a discussion in the permit that assesses
12 the emissions of this plant as a regional pollution
13 source in terms of long-term and cumulative impacts
14 alone, and along with the proposed power plants in
15 Russell, Springfield and Greenfield, and of new
16 manufacturing and other entities that will create air
17 pollution as projected in regional plans of
18 development.

19 Third, as a resident of Westhampton, who
20 runs a business in Northampton, I want a discussion in
21 the permit of why this hearing was not mentioned or
22 publicized in the media in Northampton, Amherst and
23 Greenfield. Nobody knows about this hearing up there
24 where I live. Most don't even know about this
25 proposed facility, much less the effects it will have

1 on the air.

2 Thank you very much.

3 (Applause.)

4 MS. McDONNELL: Henry Jolen.

5 Henry Jolen.

6 Paul Vassel.

7 FROM THE FLOOR: Pass.

8 MS. McDONNELL: Pass. Thank you.

9 Ermelinda Morizio.

10 MS. MORIZIO: I'm Ermelinda Morizio,
11 M-o-r-i-z-i-o, 432 Montgomery Road.

12 I'm here as a concerned parent. My children
13 are in their twenties but I am concerned and I'm
14 protecting the sort of children that are very young in
15 the Hartford area as a teacher. And I won't take too
16 much time, but I did want to share, again, this very
17 concise pocket guide to chemical hazards. If you flip
18 through this, just looking up ammonia, we're looking
19 at eye irritants, ear, nose, throat, chest pain,
20 pulmonary edema, skin burns. Chemicals speak for
21 themselves and they speak even louder in your personal
22 doctor's office. The emissions are by the tons. Just
23 some things to think about.

24 This plant does not protect our health, our
25 children, our community or our future, including our

1 property values. This is about profit, not safety.
2 I've heard a lot tonight. One of the gentlemen that
3 spoke said that this power plant is the cleanest, but
4 cleanest is not clean. There should be no question
5 that the EPA would automatically request a health
6 impact assessment. It should be a given. If our own
7 health department in the community can't seem to come
8 to the table to protect its citizens, then the EPA
9 most likely would take that step.

10 I just don't see how we would allow a
11 profit-making mechanism to ruin our lives, our health
12 and our children's health. Ask yourself if you would
13 purchase a home and build a future for your family in
14 this community if you knew a power plant was spewing
15 chemicals into your children's lungs.

16 Thank you.

17 (Applause.)

18 MS. McDONNELL: Dan Diamo.

19 Jason Paquette.

20 Jason Paquette.

21 Jack Sweeney.

22 MR. SWEENEY: Jack Sweeney, S-w-e-e-n-e-y.

23 I'd just like to address the EPA and the
24 audience and let you know that first and foremost I
25 empathize with the concerned citizens about the impact

1 of this plant. I happen to be a power plant expert.
2 I've worked in power plants all my life and I
3 understand how our grid system works, and I know the
4 EPA does, too.

5 We have an energy portfolio that drives our
6 country and that portfolio is by and large nuclear,
7 coal, oil, a little bit of hydro, a sliver of solar
8 and a sliver of wind, and you can't store electricity
9 except by pumping it up a mountain into a reservoir
10 and having it come back down later to drive a turbine.
11 We must emit to produce electricity. There's no
12 choice. We must.

13 And as a coal-fired power plant expert, I
14 would like to see the EPA do everything in their power
15 to reduce the emissions from coal-fired power plants;
16 and you can do this by making sure that plants such as
17 this, on the leading edge of technology with regards
18 to the amount of emissions that are produced per
19 kilowatt of power. You can make sure these plants are
20 built, because there is no such thing as surplus
21 power. Any extra power can't be made. There's a
22 thing called the dispatcher system and the dispatchers
23 control which plants produce and which don't.

24 The first to produce are nuclear. They draw
25 straight lines all day long on their control charts.

1 The last to produce are very expensive plants, oil,
2 coal. Gas plants would produce electricity before a
3 coal plant. So when this plant is put in place, the
4 Greater New England air quality will get better
5 because we will dispatch off the grid, Malcom, the
6 coal-fired plants in Upstate New York, the coal-fired
7 plants along the Connecticut shoreline, the coal-fired
8 plants all throughout New England will incrementally
9 be backed down, for every megawatt that this plants
10 produces, all things being equal with regards to
11 demand.

12 There are not going to be any trucks going
13 to a coal-fired -- there are tens of thousands of
14 trucks going to a coal-fired plant. There aren't any
15 trucks that go to a gas plant. The fuel goes in, the
16 exhaust gas goes out. And, by the way, the exhaust
17 gas is hot. It goes up a stack, it creates a plume.
18 It's hundreds of degrees Fahrenheit, it rises high
19 into the sky, it travels tens of hundred of thousands
20 of miles and disperses. The cleanest air is the air
21 right next to this plant because the stack is
22 following a draft and it's pulling in the ambient air
23 to the plant. The only place where the air is
24 polluted is directly at the exhaust and it's going up
25 and it's going away.

1 So in conclusion, I would like to say that,
2 yeah, you should do the environmental health
3 assessment. I'm sure that, in my mind, it'll say,
4 this is the right thing to do. Especially if you take
5 into context that it'll shut down coal-fired plants.

6 I echo the sentiment that people need to
7 really be careful about the energy you consume. You
8 can make a difference. So the EPA has a job to do, do
9 it. Make sure that leading edge, combined cycle, gas-
10 fired plants are the plants that are installed and
11 then make sure they're built right, monitor them and
12 enforce them.

13 Thank you.

14 (Applause.)

15 MS. McDONNELL: Lisa Lannen.

16 Lisa Lannen.

17 Bill Cuture.

18 MR. CUTURE: I'd like to say thank you for
19 everybody that stayed and who listen to everybody
20 else.

21 Most of it, this is about safety, air
22 quality and, you know, danger, the danger of it all.
23 And I just -- you know, a few things were just
24 recently mentioned about how you can, yourself at
25 home, conserve energy by buying, you know, the latest

1 equipment with the All Star, you know, as far as uses
2 less electricity and all. I just -- I would like to -
3 - you know, people with asthma, it bothers me. I
4 coach soccer and different sports, and it bothers me
5 to see a kid with inhalator. It ticks me off. And I
6 don't realize -- know if you guys really realize it
7 yourself, but when it comes down to air quality, the
8 EPA says that your home is ten times more pollutant
9 than the air you're breathing outside. And you've got
10 a highway going by here. You're talking about all
11 these trucks going by here.

12 Well, guess what, the Tide you're using to
13 wash your clothes with phosphates, it's polluting --
14 phosphates, they're polluting your waters. Okay? The
15 Glass Plus you use with ammonia. Ammonia? Did we
16 talk about ammonia earlier? How it burns. You spray
17 it on your windows. You are breathing it in, and when
18 you wipe it, your skin is -- all these nurses out here
19 talked about chemicals. Your body is a sponge. When
20 you wipe that, you're sucking in ammonia. Okay?

21 So you want to talk about health. Let's
22 start at home. Your home is more toxic than any plant
23 they're going to build right here. Okay? And you
24 think it's a joke? It's not a joke. You can -- have
25 a kid spray Glass Plus in his eyes, a little one, a

1 two-year old that crawls into the cabinet under the
2 sink and sprays his eyes, he's blind. Sucks some
3 Ajax down when he crawls into the bathroom. You talk
4 about chemicals and chemical burns and things like
5 that. I'm just happy I could speak to you to make
6 your own awareness, because you think it's joke? It's
7 not a joke.

8 How about every time you do something, okay,
9 as far as -- when you convert energy, we're talking
10 about gas, coal, nuclear. I work in a nuclear power
11 plant. The cleanest energy there is. You bounce a
12 couple of atoms together, you got a waste product.
13 Guess what. You got a waste product whenever you walk
14 around and do exercises. It's lactic acid, right?
15 Gee, maybe we ought to do a little bit more it. Why
16 not? Because I feel sore the next day. I don't -- I
17 want -- I'd rather gain the weight. You know what I
18 mean?

19 There's a waste product to every form of
20 energy change. All right? So, oh, I'm sorry, it's
21 going to be built next to a school in an industrial
22 zone? Maybe you didn't look across the street,
23 there's a gol-darn (sic) airport over here that's got
24 fine in stored fuel.

25 I mean, I'm not here to preach. Another

1 reason why maybe they're building it, you've got a
2 coal plant that's over 50 years old down the street.
3 You've got a nuclear plant that's over 30 years old
4 down the street. They want to shut that thing down
5 bad. They probably want to shut down the coal thing.
6 So would you rather have coal flying in and all these
7 other things? You make the call.

8 You know, I mean, I'm not here -- I have no
9 -- I don't know the reason why they're building it or
10 whatever, but obviously there's going to be a need
11 for it. These -- they're cogens, basically 25 years
12 ago, things were built until they come up with a
13 brand-new science that we don't have to use oil or
14 coal. Well, guess what, it hasn't happened yet.
15 That's why we're still driving -- who is this lady who
16 owns a -- owns a trucking company, you know what I
17 mean? Talked about -- yeah, she's talking about, oh,
18 yeah, now you can only let your trucks idle for a
19 couple of minutes now, five minutes.

20 Well, guess what? Is she going to be out of
21 business if tell you you can't use diesel fuel any
22 more? You're not going to get the toilet paper
23 delivered to the store and you're not going to drive
24 to it, you're going to be stranded. All right? Okay?

25 So you need -- right now, until you come up

1 with a better source, good luck.

2 Thank you very much.

3 (Applause.)

4 MS. McDONNELL: Barbara Swords.

5 MS. SWORDS: Good evening. Barbara Swords,
6 B-a-r-b-a-r-a S-w-o-r-d-s.

7 I'm a retired member of the Westfield City
8 Council and I also am a founding member of the Barnes
9 Aquifer Committee. I have a excerpt I want to read
10 from the letter from the Barnes Aquifer sent to the
11 Chair of the Westfield Planning Board on January 19th,
12 2010, when they were hearing the special permit and
13 site plan approval.

14 This is the excerpt that Barnes Aquifer sent
15 to the planning board.

16 Barnes Aquifer Committee has commented on
17 this project during the MEPA review. The revised
18 plans submitted for this review sufficiently address
19 pretreatment, infiltration and containment of spills.
20 Barnes Aquifer Committee continues to be concerned
21 with the long-term culmative (sic) effects of
22 emmission particulate deposition already aquifer.
23 This area includes deposition on land as well as
24 surface water resources, both of which can contribute
25 to pollutants to the aquifer.

1 We ask the planning board and now the EPA to
2 review information carefully relative to this issue,
3 considering culmative impact for the anticipated life
4 span of the facility.

5 Thank you very much.

6 (Applause.)

7 MS. McDONNELL: Nicolina Figueroa.

8 MS. FIGUEROA: Hello. My name is Nicolina
9 Figueroa, N-i-c-o-l-i-n-a. I'm a Westfield concerned
10 citizen and a mother of four.

11 I would like a full health assessment done
12 by the EPA and would also request a public evacuation
13 plan made public prior to the permit being issued, if
14 issued at all, for our health, for everyone. Not just
15 for my family and my children, but the future of my
16 children and their children.

17 I would like to add, I am against the plant
18 being built in Westfield and for that matter greener
19 energy and resources would be a better solution.

20 As far as the diesel fuel comment made by a
21 prior person that was at the stand, the trucking
22 company is going down the tubes because they can't
23 afford the diesel fuel, the cost. It's too expensive.
24 So promise, as far as -- it's nice to see that the
25 local union was here to join us tonight and that they

1 had to add their two cents.

2 I appreciate everybody hearing me out and
3 the EAP for what you do.

4 (Pause.)

5 MS. McDONNELL: Thomas Burke.

6 Thomas Burke.

7 Is there anyone else that hasn't spoken that
8 would like to give a comment?

9 Did you want to come up and finish?

10 MS. CARPENTER: And, again, I'm Jean
11 Carpenter.

12 The health of the Westfield residents is
13 already compromised by the amount of emissions here.
14 We don't need any more environmental or health
15 problems. I ask that the EPA require a health impact
16 assessment so that the agency can make an informed
17 decision as to whether to issue a final permit only
18 after knowing the health consequences of adding PVEC's
19 submission to an already -- an area already home to
20 other sources, industrial and commercial air
21 pollution.

22 Please, EPA, we don't need any more
23 pollution in Westfield. We already have too much. We
24 don't need or want PVEC to site here and give us more.

25 Westfield built the schools on the north

1 side. Southampton Road, North Middle School, where we
2 are here, Head Start, Westfield High, but the City of
3 Westfield is failing to protect the children from the
4 pollution on the north side of town. We don't need or
5 want any more pollution by having that large, 431
6 megawatt power plant to further contaminate the air we
7 all breathe. Too many children already have asthma
8 and other respiratory problems. Adding to -- and
9 adding another million and a half tons per year of
10 pollutants will only make these children suffer more.

11 Evidence is growing of air pollution's link
12 to heart disease and death. The scientific evidence
13 linking air pollution to heart attacks and strokes and
14 cardiovascular deaths have substantially strengthened;
15 and people, particularly those at high cardiovascular
16 risk should limit their exposure. The evidence is
17 strongest for fine particulate matter, PM2.5, having a
18 casual -- causal relationship to cardiovascular
19 disease, a study author concluded. These studies also
20 indicate that there is no safe level of PM2 exposure.

21 Thank you.

22 (Applause.)

23 MS. McDONNELL: Thank you.

24 Does anyone else have any comments they'd
25 like to make tonight?

1 Yes, you can. Just please state name.

2 MS. BABINSKI: Maryann Babinski. Do you
3 want me to spell it? B-a-b-i-n-s-k-i.

4 I just wanted to make an additional comment
5 that some times gets overlooked. Is that this
6 particular power plant is going to be having to pay \$4
7 million per year in offsets for their carbon
8 emissions. That's like a fine, because they are of
9 the emissions that they're going to be sending out of
10 that smokestack. That means somebody else in another
11 part of the state will have the benefit of cleaner air
12 because they're going to be allowed to go above what
13 they should be emitting into the air.

14 I don't think it's been proven, I haven't
15 seen it anywhere, I haven't heard it anywhere, that we
16 absolutely need this extra power. We're hoping that
17 if this gets built, it'll take down some other coal
18 plant or lessen our need for those kinds of energy
19 produces and that this will be cleaner. We never
20 refer to this, within our group, as clean energy. It
21 is just less dirty, that's all.

22 Thank you very much.

23 (Applause.)

24 MS. McDONNELL: Is there anyone else that
25 would like to make a comment?

1 If not, I'd like to thank all of you for
2 coming this evening and for your interest in the
3 permit. Please remember the public comment period
4 ends on January 24th at midnight.

5 The public hearing is now formally
6 adjourned.

7 (Whereupon, the hearing was adjourned at
8 8:58 p.m.)

9
10

CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER & TRANSCRIBER

This is to certify that the attached
proceedings in the Matter of:

PUBLIC HEARING

In re:

PSD PROJECT

PIONEER VALLEY ENERGY CENTER

Place: Westfield, Massachusetts

Date: January 4, 2012

were held as herein appears, and that this is the
true, accurate and complete transcript prepared from
the notes and/or recordings taken of the above-
entitled proceeding.

Diana Strzemienski
Reporter

January 4, 2012
Date

Norton Beecroft
Transcriber

January 24, 2012
Date