

MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF LAUREL

OCTOBER 28, 2021

A special meeting of the City Council of the City of Laurel, Montana, was held in the Council Chambers and called to order by Council President Eaton at 6:30 p.m. on October 28, 2021.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Emelie Eaton
Bruce McGee Richard Herr
Scot Stokes Irv Wilke
Richard Klose

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: Heidi Sparks
Don Nelson

OTHER STAFF PRESENT: None

Council President Eaton led the Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag.

Council President Eaton asked the Council to observe a moment of silence.

MINUTES: None.

CORRESPONDENCE: None.

COUNCIL DISCLOSURE OF EX PARTE COMMUNICATIONS:

Council Member Herr stated that he spoke with Staff today to see if he could speak his mind at tonight's Council meeting. He was told that he would be able to speak at tonight's Council meeting.

PUBLIC HEARING: None.

CONSENT ITEMS: None.

CEREMONIAL CALENDAR: None.

REPORTS OF BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS: None.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (THREE-MINUTE LIMIT):

Steve Krum, 249 24th Avenue, stated basically he would like to thank you guys for doing this. For the last few days, I have been going through your City agenda papers and stuff like that. It's very difficult to keep track of everything that is on there, but he would like to commend you for the work you do and try to keep track of everything that is going on out there. But he just wanted to make one comment on Tuesday night's meeting that he did not have in his write-up that I had sent in. One of the things was that at the very beginning of one of the things I wrote was that the City receives an application, and the City Council accepts it, then there is 30 working days before the Zoning Commission meeting. Based on the agenda that's out there, that did not happen. I don't know why, but I am thinking that is something you guys would look at and understand better. And then once we got to the City/County Zoning Board. When you look at the minutes of it, there is almost no value into what was being discussed there because it seems like they asked some basic questions like is it going to be noisy, and the answer was no, all the noise is going to be directed toward the refinery which was not a true answer based on the DEQ report which would have been in the application if those guys were given it, but those guys were given it based on what the code says, they could have read it and could have questioned that answer, which they didn't. Nobody questioned it in there. Because it said in the DEQ report that the noise was going to be 600 feet around the entire complex, other than two the east, which is going to be 555 feet at 65 decibels, and so that is what they reported to the DEQ. Then the Zoning Commission get mislead by information that no, it's going to be quiet; it's not going to be anything. I would guess the reason for getting 12 copies, and it says it in the code that then they get copies to review before you sit down at this meeting, and then they have more information on it so they can better ask questions that really matter. I read in one of the criteria parts in all the paperwork I went through it said something like the City/County Zoning, the City/County Commission has the right to speak with people or address neighborhoods that are more than 300 feet



out if it could potentially affect them environmentally, which that neighborhood can be. The one south of the river. That neighborhood has been down there for 100 years, and nobody asked a question about that. Not one question in that meeting. And those people should have had a say in what was going on there and at least be able to offer their opinion, and that's why we are all here so late. So there was opportunity there that the commission, the City/County Commission, could have asked better questions. But it seems like the NorthWestern representative, who was the only one their kind of mislead them on what they were able to ask. It's almost like they did not have copies of the application. I don't know if that is true or not. It was like it was cut and dry before it even got started. They asked some basic questions, and that was it. So, I think that's all I want to say is that it seemed like they got left out. It seemed like the code process was not followed. So I guess that's what I am trying to say. Thank you.

Aaron Felder, 1434 McMullen Lane, in Tuesday's meeting, we preside that the zoning would be done on November 23rd, which is a holiday week. I know that day is not a holiday, but I am sure there are plenty of people here who might have some family coming in town and would like to spend that week with their family. If we could ask that that gets moved a week before or a week prior, what have you or two. That way we can reserve that for our families. He apricates that consideration.

SCHEDULED MATTERS:

- **(Tabled) Resolution No. R21-108: A Resolution Of The City Council Authorizing The Mayor And City Clerk To Execute An Underground Gas Pipeline Easement For Northwestern Corporation D/B/A Northwest Energy For The Purpose Of Constructing, Operating, And Maintaining An Underground Pipeline To Be Installed And Located Under The City's Riverside Park.**

Motion by Council Member McGee to bring Resolution No. R21-108 off the table for consideration and a vote at tonight's meeting, seconded by Council Member Wilke.

Council President Eaton asked if there was any public comment.

Kasey Felder, 1434 McMullen Lane, again a long-time resident. Again she would urge the Council to vote no or oppose this resolution. I believe it is directly related to the natural gas plant that is also tabled. I believe this issues should be tabled further or declined until further notice until we resolve the issue with this proposed natural gas plant. I also in looking at thee... I feel there are some issues with the proposed direction of the easement and that it may be crossing under people's lands that have not been notified about. I would say there's reason to believe there's misleading information in here and that further information needs to be gained. I would again urge you to oppose this resolution tonight. Thank you.

Aaron Felder, 1434 McMullen Lane, good evening tonight. I ask that you all say no to this easement. I am looking at an annual cost of \$500 to the City on a \$250 million dollar project. I think you are getting a little bit shafted if this goes forward. Second, this deals with NorthWestern Energy, the same company that wanted to buy Colstrip for one dollar, but they can come up with \$250 million. There is something going on. We have a lot of renewable energy in this State. In the last five years, there has been a lot put forward here. Maybe there needs to be some different thought context on where this renewable energy is headed off too and not being put into this State to start with. Give us more of a first shot. There's a lot of... this is a big impact 175 megawatts proposed by NorthWestern Energy on their impact plan. I feel that we should table this issue again. Let's focus on our air quality, noise pollution, light pollution and not to underplay the wildlife that comes and passes down the river. This year we have had three mountain lions, we have had a black bear, and two cubs, not to mention what else has come in and out. This year we haven't had a moose; last year, we had a moose; the year prior to that, we had a moose. We have a lot of wildlife that comes in and out of that area. We got a lot of these really gorgeous eagles that are up and down this river and call it home. These things should be taken into consideration and not let NorthWestern Energy do what they do best and push their way through. I implore you as the Council here to say no. Let's not overlook all the impact; let's take some time, let's do a study independently. NorthWestern Energy's study and the DEQ study they don't even match; they are not even on the same playing field. I also ask this Council; please let's not have any closed doors. Let's keep everything open. I don't know what you might want to take by that, but let's keep everything open doors. I thank you again for letting me speak tonight, and I ask that you vote no to this or let's table it or what have you. Let's get down to the nitty-gritty of what's really going on. Thank you.

Terry Krum, 1311 E. Railroad Street, I've been a resident of Laurel all my life. I would like to point one thing out. Before you untable this resolution, are they sure of where these lines are going and what these lines are going through? Because there are multiple dump sites on both sides of this river. Are we disturbing something that shouldn't be disturbed, and who is going to be responsible if something is uncovered or disturbed that close to the river? So I would urge you that these things should be considered before you untable this. Thank you.

Amanda Galvan, 607 E. Neil Street Three Forks Montana 59752, I am a lawyer based in Gallatin County, and I am engaging on this issue of zoning as well as the pipeline easement. I understand that Council is addressing the zoning issue in a couple of weeks, and I would urge Council to wait and address...to resolve this easement issue until it's ready to resolve the zoning issue because the two are really a package deal. If the Council grants the easement, it is signaling that it has prejudged the zoning question, and it would be quite a shame to tear up the park to allow the zoning... to allow the pipeline and then not ultimately grant the zoning request. Like I said, I hope the Council will defer and use this intervening time to consider some of the impacts that the Community has shown up here tonight, and at other moments to raise, I have heard folks mention noise and air pollution. There are quite a few unanswered questions about both the pipeline's impacts and the plants' impacts. I think the Council should avoid rushing to judgment on either of those issues. So again, I would urge Council to defer this decision on the pipeline easement until it's ready to resolve the zoning issue after considering all the impacts of the gas plant and the pipeline. I think when the Council has all of those impacts before it, it will find that both of those requests are really inconsistent with the public welfare of Laurel and the surrounding area. Thank you so much all for your time and for letting me speak tonight.

Roy Ishkanian, Manager of Lands and Permitting for NorthWestern 3524 Glenfinnan Road Billings Montana, I just want to thank you guys for being here tonight for sure. I also want to just say for the record that amount being proposed as payment for the easement was an amount proposed by the City, not by us. I just want to make that clear. I believe we should untable this issue and talk about this tonight because the natural gas line under the park will be bored. There will be no surface disturbance. It will be bored down into the bedrock under the river, and we have heard a lot about environmental issues and all that. Ironically the reason we need this is to complement the wind and solar power that we have added to our system, which has provided a measure of instability in fluctuation based on when the wind blows and when the sun shines. So to make up for that and in order to keep the lights on like they are now is we have to have the ability to have a plant that can start up and be up to 175 megawatts in 11 minutes and keep the lights on for everybody, which is our mission. If we don't do this, we end up on the open market buying power at \$500 to \$600 a megawatt hour rather than generating it ourselves for \$30 to \$40 a megawatt-hour. I don't think our customers would appreciate that. It would violate our mission to provide safe, reliable 24/7 power. We picked a piece of property that is already partially zoned heavy industrial, it's next to the City water and sewer plants, next to the refinery, and it's next to our own auto substation there. So we feel it is an appropriate use. We have been through all the approval processes, studies, and emissions. We have met regulations, so I just want to thank Council again, and I vote that you untable this issue and bring it before the Council tonight. Thank you.

Jenny Harbine, I am an attorney also in Gallatin County; I wanted to address the issue just raised by NorthWestern's representative and note that the place that decision-makers are to evaluate the need for a new gas plant to meet our State's energy needs is before the Montana Public Service Commission. And NorthWestern had, in fact, sought approval from the Public Service Commission to build this gas plant. And that was the forum for it to say we need this plant in order to sure up our States renewable resources. This is the most cost-effective option for Montana's customers. But NorthWestern choose to withdraw that application. And so I just want to urge you to keep an open mind about whether this is the energy source that the State of Montana needs because that's a question that the Public Service Commission has the expertise to address and will address down the road if this plant is actually constructed, but it is not for this body to decide. Thank you.

There was no Council discussion.

A roll call vote was taken on the motion. Council Members Herr, Wilke, Klose, Stokes, and McGee voted aye. Council President Eaton voted nay. Motion carried 5-1.

Council President Eaton stated Resolution No. R21-108 is the only matter for the Council's consideration at tonight's meeting.

Motion by Council Member McGee to approve Resolution No. R21-108, seconded by Council Member Herr.

Lisa Perry, I am Community Relations Manager for NorthWestern Energy, and I have been before you many times in the past. I've been doing this about 16 years. My most recent time her to talk to you was regarding the LED retrofit project that we did in the City of Laurel. I am sure you will see that looking at your Street Light bills, that the bills did go down after that project. That was just to remind you why I was her last. In my tenure with NorthWestern Energy, we have worked hard to be good residents and citizens of the City of Laurel. I have a number of employees who live here. In addition to providing affordable and reliable power to the residents of Laurel, we support the activities that go on in this Community. Annually we support the Volunteer Fire Department both at Christmas time and the 4th of July festivities. We have an employee who, until just recently, was very active in the Fire Department now; he becomes Santa every year for the children of Laurel. We contribute annually to the Dodgers baseball team. For many years we have participated in Arbor Day, planting trees and what many tell me is South Ponds Park. We have also spent a lot of time at Arbor Day teaching children about vegetation and benefit to the environment. My point is this is not a once-and-done issue between NorthWestern Energy and the City of Laurel. We're here, we provide service to the Community, and we plan to be here for a long time. I fully expect that I will be back in front of you again with another issue as we go forward. We are committed to environmental stewardship during the construction of this plant and going forward with the operation. We are committed to this Community to be and continue to be a great place to live. We hope that our relationship can continue to grow and be fruitful going forward. Thank you.

Kasey Felder, resident of Laurel, I understand a lot of the big corporations donate and do a lot of good things for our Community, and I get that. But what I don't understand is why nobody and many residents in my area have no idea that this plant is even being proposed to go in. So I feel like there is a huge lack of communication for people who are very close to this proposed plant. This gas line ties into this proposed plant. So why can't it be resolved later when more people have been notified and have a chance to speak their minds regarding this issue. Again, this gas line and this easement is directly related to the natural gas plant. I understand that's not what we are talking about tonight, but we are talking about this easement. I think it needs to be held off resolve... and everybody in our area is educated and knows what's going to happen to their property values, and their livelihoods, and their health. Again, please consider opposing this until more information is provided for the people who are close by.

Aaron Felder stated last time he had NorthWestern Energy on his property, they put the fence upside down. They put posts in the ground three inches. I come out there and say, what is this all about, and I thought you was going to put in metal posts and sting up nice fence. Oh no, it's expensive. I hope they do a good job, but they didn't do a good job on my land. We can trust them for this pipeline? Or we can just table this, and we can get some more things looked at. Let's do us, citizens, a little bit of justice, please, Council. Let's table this, let's stop them for a minute, let's take a look at some other issues. Thank you.

Steve Krum, I live west of Laurel. My daughter is exactly right. Corporations do a lot for the Community. But right now, we are sitting here in the City of Laurel with no representation whatsoever for the folks that are going to live right south of this plant. And this pipeline is what's going to feed that plant, with no concern for them at all. There wasn't one mention of these folks in the City/County Commission meeting. I didn't hear one mention about these folks in the meeting Tuesday night. You aren't even considering these people. There are children that live out there. There's kids that live out there. There's people who have been there for a hundred years. Older than all of us, not now, but that Community has been there. That neighborhood has been there, and there is no consideration. The light plant is going to be there. The smokes going to be rolling down on them. Where's the consideration for those folks. I'm not hearing it here. That's not right. It's not right, people—your talking about dollars for the City. And nothing for them. You're just going to take from them. It is not right. Thank you.

Council President Eaton read into the record a comment from Melanie Tripp, 1519 McMullen Lane; see attached.

Council President Eaton read into the record a comment from Barbara Behike, Behike Consulting, Inc., see attached.

Council President Eaton read into the record a comment from Patricia Hogan, 1650 S. 12th Street W. Missoula, MT, see attached.

Council President Eaton read into the record a comment from Gary Matson, Milltown, see attached.

Council President Eaton read into the record a comment from Kate Rossetto, 2055 Andromeda Lane, Billings MT, see attached.

Council President Eaton read into the record a comment from Kathie Daviau, 216 Lexington Drive, Billings MT; see attached.

Council President Eaton read into the record a comment from Heidi Anderson, P.O. Box Gardiner, MT; see attached.

Council President Eaton read into the record a comment from Mary Dostal, 2211 Pryor Lane Billings, MT; see attached.

Council President Eaton read into the record a comment from Linda Healow, 312 Clark Ave., Billings MT; see attached.

Council President Eaton read into the record a comment from Norman Bishop, 4898 Itana Circle, Bozeman MT; see attached.

Council Member McGee stated so this turns out to be a very difficult seat to sit in tonight. Because obviously, there are some concerns, and a lot has been brought up. I want to remind everybody involved this evening that tonight's resolution is about an easement. It is not about zoning change. Because these two projects are so closely linked together, there seems to be a lot of overlap in that discussion. I am pretty resentful of anybody suggesting that I occupy this seat and that I don't have the best interest of the peoples and the communities that I represent in my best interest. That is extremely disconcerting; that's the suggestion that anybody is making. All of our citizens are very, very, extremely important to us. As well as our working relationships with industry and others including NorthWestern Energy. I want to say that we're doing the very best that we can with the information we have. This matter wound up being tabled three weeks ago. It could have been history, and people would not have even had the opportunity that they have tonight in order to bring to Council's attention that the things that concern them and what they want. So don't suggest to me that I'm not doing my job and don't suggest to me that I don't care for my citizens because I very, very, very much do. And don't suggest that taking into the consideration the needs of a large cooperation like NorthWestern Energy is some kind of sell-out because it's not. So I want that for the record to be said. I think tonight we can pass this resolution in good conscience. We can take out the other concerns that have been brought up about the zoning change at a later date and time when that comes before the Council. Thank you.

Council Member Klose stated, first of all, I would like to thank everybody for being here tonight and exercising your democratic right to speak your mind. Thank you for that. However we vote on this issue or the upcoming zoning change, this body is winding up walking out of here with horns and a pitchfork. Because half of you are going to be happy, and half of you are going to be calling us names. However, we vote we represent, how Bruce [Council Member McGee] said, we represent the Citizens within the City limits of Laurel to start with. For my part, I have not heard anybody from my ward speak to me for or against this proposal. This issue has been on the TV, it's been in the Billings Gazette, and it's been in the Laurel Outlook for months. You people have not been here to speak your mind at previous Workshops and City Council meetings until Tuesday night, this last Tuesday night. So I think that's not right on your part, but however we vote is going to have an impact not only on the City of Laurel but on the surrounding immediate area, but on the State of Montana as well as to what everybody views as to industry and businesses wanting to move into Yellowstone County, Laurel, Billings, or Montana itself. We have a lot of weight on our shoulders; I apologize to the people who are going to walk out of there mad at us tonight. But that's the way it is. Thank you.

Council Member Wilke stated ditto Council Member McGee and also Council Member Klose. I as well, have not heard a single word from any of the constituents in my ward that I represent. Nor have I ever, to be honest. I don't get any emails, calls, or what have you. I get trash dumped on Facebook, but I don't do Facebook. My wife does, and she reports to me what it is, and I just shake my head and walk away. Every time I responded, I got in trouble. Like Council Member Klose said, half of you are going to be really upset with us tonight no matter which way we vote. The other half of you are going to be tickled to death. I don't know how to fix that on either side.

There is always going to be someone that loses. Unfortunately, we are going to say sorry, but we are going to do what we think is best for the Community. Thank you.

Council President Eaton stated I appreciate Council Member McGee reminding us all that we are voting on the easement. I will be voting no on it simply because, as I relayed to you a while back when this matter first was first brought up. The proposed price for this easement was \$4k and some odd dollars based on 27 rods of length that would be crossing City property. It was rounded up then to an even \$5k dollars because NorthWestern Energy hoped to make a one-time payment. The City Attorney said no, we were hoping to receive an annual payment on that easement on the pipeline, which will remain there probably forever. He used the example of how about if we do something like ten years divided by... into the \$5k would equal \$500. It went back and forth a few times, and that is what we ended up with. That example of how to change of what is even NorthWestern Energy said is a fair price for an easement down to something that is ridiculously low. And I do think that it is ridiculously low. It is an annual payment; however, there is no ten-year limit on it, so that part of it is good, but I do think that the City is not getting fair trade for the fact that that land is being used for something other than parkland. So I will be voting no on that for that reason. But we are voting on the easement tonight. The other matters which were brought forward and especially the letters that I read were read because everyone has to have an opportunity to say their peace. This is a public forum, and those were submitted to us, and I chose to read them simply because one had been requested that it be read into the record, and since the other ones were short, I read them. There were seven of them, and I couldn't read fast enough. So it did take quite a while. But that is what I wanted to say.

Council Member McGee stated on your comments there Council President Eaton is that the Mayor and the Attorney both worked together on that amount of money. While we might take some issue with the amount, that is what was negotiated on the City's behalf by both of those individuals. I have no problem with people read into the record or tonight talking about the other things that concern them. I just want to reiterate that on tonight's agenda is just the easement, as you pointed out. Thank you.

Council Member Stokes stated I have to agree with you, Council President Eaton. I also felt that the amount we were getting, the \$500 a year, was drastically lower than I felt it should have been. Take that into consideration when your voting tonight on the amount the City of Laurel is getting...\$500 bucks a year.

A roll call vote was taken on the motion. Council Members Herr, Wilke, Klose, and McGee voted aye. Council Members Stokes and Eaton voted nay. Motion failed 4-2.

ITEMS REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA: None.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS (ONE-MINUTE LIMIT): None.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION: None.

MAYOR UPDATES: None.

UNSCHEDULED MATTERS: None.

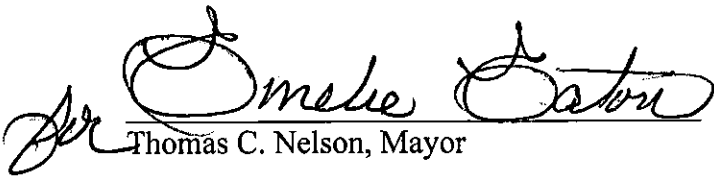
ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Council Member McGee to adjourn the council meeting, seconded by Council Member Stokes. There was no public comment or council discussion. A vote was taken on the motion. All six Council Members present voted aye. Motion carried 6-0.

There being no further business to come before the Council at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 7:29 p.m.


Brittney Moorman, Administrative Assistant

Approved by the Mayor and passed by the City Council of the City of Laurel, Montana, this 9th day of November 2021.


Thomas C. Nelson, Mayor

Attest:


Bethany Langve, Clerk/Treasurer



Brittney Moorman

From: Melanie Tripp <melt@comtechmt.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 27, 2021 1:42 PM
To: Brittney Moorman
Subject: Gas Plant Zoning - Please Consider

Hello City Council,

I am writing to you regarding the proposed zone change to allow a gas power plant in Laurel and just a few hundred feet from the Yellowstone River.

My family and I live in Yellowstone County just south of the river on McMullen Lane. Just as any person would be, I am opposed to any change that allows a power plant to be built directly across from our home on the river, directly south of the proposed site and particularly one that is dangerous to the health and well being of my family. I have listened in on council meetings and would echo the concerns you've heard so far from residents in my neighborhood.

I am not a scientist or an expert on gas power plants. I am a long time small business owner, a mom and a grandmother. I can only speak to you as an eye witness and a citizen of Yellowstone County asking your help to represent myself and families in Laurel in standing up to any multi million dollar company looking to change the landscape and quality of our city.

In our home are my husband and myself, our 3 daughters, son-in-law and two very small grandbabies. It's a busy household with many family members and guests visiting daily. We have a hobby farm and a couple dozen farm animals. Our property has an easement to walk to the river and use of the river's beach area. Our family, kids and grandkids have spent many days and hours at the river enjoying wildlife and the beauty it allows while still living close to town. The river and it's surrounding area is the reason any one of us will tell you is THE number 1 reason we love our home.

After 5 years of spending time on the river (directly south of the proposed plant) I can attest the area is bursting and teeming with an incredible amount of wildlife and recreation. Just an hour in the spot where we enjoy will grant you dozens of opportunities to see river wildlife like you've not seen before. This includes but is not limited to blue heron, hawks, bears with cubs, mountain lions, deer, foxes, fish, toads and so much more. These last years we've watched a pair of eagles nesting and raising eaglets just a short distance west of our area and northeast of Riverside Park. Did you know bald eagles will mate for life?

Also from our vantage point we watch many people pass and float by during the low water times of year with their children and dogs. Between Riverside Park and the BLM area, this is a busy area and many of your citizens use this area to fish, recreate and create memories with their children as they swim, splash and play in water and air we hope is clean and safe for them. With all of the humankind in the areas... This is a peaceful and quiet area to enjoy. The only audible sounds are those of the river and nature in the background.

This is a beautiful and picturesque place we are tasked to care for and are absolutely fortunate to have available to us as a city.

Imagine all of the above recreation and river landscape with the addition of noise and air pollution that's been shared the plant will bring. Imagine much of the recreation and wildlife disappearing from our area with the amount of noise and pollution being proposed. People will move and leave that area as it become dilapidated and in disrepair where it will now be the city's responsibility to try to revive a large dying section of properties around the plant. A much more difficult and expensive task to turn the area back to it's glory days once we've begun down that road.

The more I read about the noise and air pollution this plant will generate, the more concerned I become for my family's

safety and well-being. A quote from the Missoula Current regarding the DEQ's suit states the plant "would emit nearly a thousand tons per year of air pollution, other than greenhouse gases. This includes particulate matter, nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, volatile organic compounds, and sulfur dioxide."

And (Yellowstone County's) "air is already below normal quality because of sulfur dioxide, which causes respiratory symptoms, aggravates asthma and other negative health effects, according to the EPA."

I can also assume the pollution will have a potential negative impact on water quality. Many of the homes along River Road as well as ours are on wells for drinking water.

With all of the impacts our citizens already experience from industrial plants in Laurel, I cannot help but wonder...

Why are we building yet another plant here in our city?

Why so close to our beloved river area where we've spent so much time and effort to revive and draw locals and tourists to Riverside Park?

Are there not better suited and safer areas to build this plant without such a steep safety impact to the mental and physical health of our humankind in and around the city of Laurel?

Does the plant really need to be in so close of proximity to our schools, businesses, families, and our children in Laurel?

Can we continue to work and do better to create a Laurel that is thriving, beautiful and an impressive community to move to and live in?

Lastly will the addition of this plant assist in building a better, safer and more enjoyable atmosphere for our Laurel businesses, families and all residents?

Upon visiting the City of Laurel's website I found this Mission...

Our Mission

The elected officials, appointed committee members, employees, and volunteers of the City of Laurel are committed to developing and enhancing our community's quality of life while preserving the City's unique character...

With that I will close by sincerely saying...

Thank you City Council Members for serving your city and its citizens. A large portion of my time has been spent volunteering with members of Billings City Council on task forces and legislation. Because of this I have come to understand serving on Council is a very tough job with many often thankless hours of volunteer time.

I would like to Thank you again for your time and for your consideration,
Melanie Tripp

Owner/CFO, COMTECH Audio Theater Security, Billings Private Gym and Koenigstein Eis
Zonta Club of Billings Director and Vice President Zonta Club of Billings Foundation
Co-chair - Yellowstone County Area Human Trafficking Task Force and Red Sand Project Billings

1519 McMullen Lane - Laurel, MT
406-208-6548

From: Barbara Behlke <hwy.2.now@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, October 12, 2021 2:15 PM

To: Brittney Moorman <bmoorman@laurel.mt.gov>; City Mayor <citymayor@laurel.mt.gov>

Subject: Re: THE LAUREL CRUDE OIL PLANT RADIATION EMISSIONS is too HIGH to SUPPORT ANOTHER POWER PLANT which will OVERWHELM the COMMUNITY with ILLNESS

10-12-2-21

To: Governor Greg Gianforte
Senator Steve Danes
Senator Jon Tester
Laurel City Council Members

RE: THE LAUREL CRUDE OIL PLANT RADIATION EMISSIONS is too HIGH to SUPPORT ANOTHER POWER PLANT which will OVERWHELM the COMMUNITY with ILLNESS

Number one, the plan for the plant is within 2 miles of the other plant and in the city limits. Most power plants opt not to be in the center of town to avoid the bantering of complaints that go with their business. The plant should be placed west of Billings.

Second, the condescending message to veterans in front of the existing crude oil plant is pretty oppressive, calling it the "Veterans Cemetery " which is a pretty good indicator there is too much radiation emitting from the existing plant. The forms of radiation emitting from Laurel crude oil is projected onto drivers entering Laurel. One needs a helmet, breast plate, and astronaut outfitters to assure no one gets a stroke or brain hemorrhage near this plant. Knowing how much oppression there is now, tell me why Northwestern Energy would add to the health burden with a natural gas plant emitting more radiation. The umbra of radiation and darkness from the plant sits on top of the entire city, despite not being heavily wired.

Third, Northwestern Energy's plan involves a 270 MW with 10 workers. Imposing more health risks to the entire community just to employ 10 workers is not worth the health risks.

Fourth, more concerning, the plant will be within 2 miles of the crude oil plant. Every power plant has the highest degree of security and the highest concentration of radiation emissions, especially at night. The residents in Laurel will likely get ill from too much radiation exposure and their blood being impaired. When blood is exposed to radiation for long periods of time, the blood cells begin to cluster or coin which can morph into tumors, growths, cancer, strokes, brain hemorrhages, heart attacks, leukemia, ADD, ADHD, mental health disorders, brain cancer, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's, kidney diseases, and much more.

Laurel should place emphasis on education being the primary goal. There is a documentary out on you tube about how radiation impairs the brain, blood, and heart. Use the documentary to show how blood cells are impaired when exposed to low to high concentrations of radiation. Newspaper articles should show the city residents and people what the long-term impact might be to the community. These articles should show that the benefit of more jobs will be displacement of the entire city from illness, where job growth will likely come from people outside the area who will likely depart when their work day is over with.

What is the lifespan of the current crude oil company? Ask if wind power turbines would be a better alternative. Radiation emissions are minimal in comparison to crude oil, coal fired, or natural gas power plants. There are a number of pipelines outside this area the plant could hook up to away from the community too. Growth should be west of Billings not in the mountains. Open areas allow radiation plumes to dissipate or dissolve better into the atmosphere. In valleys that are shaped like a fishbowl, pockets of radiation get trapped and lead to a meltdown of the residents. Look at El Paso, Texas as an example of what not to do in mountainous areas. They have every chain store in the world in a densely populated area, with security systems in each business that adds to their remorse and sorrow of daily pain.

The closer a plant is to rocks and minerals compounds or magnifies the intensity of the electronic charge from radiation making more radiation, intensifying the shock of radiation.

The jobs may lead to more casino resorts, bigger, fancier, resorts. However, the city should decide if that is how they want to be known and how much health risk they want to take on. If it was me, I would make the Laurel people and their citizens a priority and keep a safe environment that safeguards their health and wellbeing.

To Laurel and Less Harmful Energy - Good Luck,

Barbara Behlke
Administrative Chief
Behlke Consulting, Inc.
A Public Environmental Health and Safety Consultant

City Council: protect Laurel's quality of life!

Thu 10/21/2021 8:53 PM

Dear Councilperson Eaton:

Please require noise and lighting restrictions for the proposed Northwestern Energy methane gas plant before rezoning the land and allowing development to begin.

Sincerely,

Patricia Hogan
1650 South 12th Street West
MISSOULA, MT 59801

proposed gas generator

gjmatson@montana.com <gjmatson@montana.com>

Fri 10/22/2021 9:21 AM

Tom Ward 12 ward1b@laurel.mt.gov

Dear Ms. Eaton,

I write as a person who is not only concerned that the proposed methane-fueled generating station in Laurel is inappropriate for Montana but also concerned that plant would be bad for Laurel residents. I live near Bonner, Montana where the bitcoin mining operation at our industrial site created constant noise that was driving everyone nuts. Homeowners considered moving, but were concerned that the noise was lowering their property values. The noise issue was solved when the miners installed quieter cooling fans for their computers.

The proposed generation station will create constant noise said to be in the range of 65 decibels. The noise would be constant with no way of reducing it. Laurel residents shouldn't be asked to endure the noise, which would affect their health and quality of community life. I think the proposed station should not be built. NorthWestern has other electricity generating options.

Gary Matson

Milltown

City Council: protect Laurel's quality of life!

Kate Rossetto <mailagent@thesoftedge.com>

Mon 10/25/2021 4:50 PM

To: Ward 1B <ward1b@laurel.mt.gov>

Dear Councilperson Eaton:

Please require noise and lighting restrictions for the proposed Northwestern Energy methane gas plant before rezoning the land and allowing development to begin.

Sincerely,

Kate Rossetto
2055 Andromeda Lane
Billings, MT 59105

Comment on zoning for the NorthWestern Energy gas plant

Kathie Daviau <mailagent@thesoftedge.com>

Mon 10/25/2021 5:15 PM

To: Ward 1B <ward1b@laurel.mt.gov>

Dear Councilperson Eaton:

The proposed gas plant from Northwestern Energy needs to have a thorough review of noise and light impacts on our community before this land is zoned for industrial use. Please consider these impacts and require restrictions that work for the community before you vote for a zone update.

Sincerely,

Kathie Daviau
216 Lexington Drive
Billings, MT 59102

City Council: protect Laurel's quality of life!

Heidi Anderson <mailagent@thesoftedge.com>

Mon 10/25/2021 7:52 PM

To: Ward 1B <ward1b@laurel.mt.gov>

Dear Councilperson Eaton:

The proposed gas plant from Northwestern Energy needs to have a thorough review of noise and light impacts on our community before this land is zoned for industrial use. Please consider these impacts and require restrictions that work for the community before you vote for a zone update.

Sincerely,

Heidi Anderson

PO Box 568

Gardiner, MT 59030

Comment on zoning for the NorthWestern Energy gas plant

mailagent@thesoftedge.com <mailagent@thesoftedge.com>

on behalf of

mdostal@bresnan.net <mdostal@bresnan.net>

Mon 10/25/2021 9:44 PM

To: Ward 1B <ward1b@laurel.mt.gov>

Dear Councilperson Eaton:

The proposed Northwestern Energy methane gas plant will add considerable noise and light immediately adjacent to the Yellowstone River, potentially impacting Riverside Park across the river and also affecting nearby private properties. Please consider the industrial noise and light impacts on our community, and require restrictions before zoning this land.

Sincerely,

Mary Dostal

2211 Pryor Lane

Billings, MT 59012

Noisy, dirty air? No thanks!

Linda Healow <mailagent@thesoftedge.com>

Tue 10/26/2021 12:11 PM

To: Ward 1B <ward1b@laurel.mt.gov>

Dear Councilperson Eaton:

I grew up in a rural Nebraska farming community. One of the best things about living there was the lack of industrial impact. There were lights along railroad tracks but nowhere near homes. The only consistent light in the night sky was the glow from Omaha, 25 miles northeast. I found the nightly 3 a.m. train whistle distant, comforting as the chime on a clock. When I returned as an adult and there was no whistle, I missed it. It was part of the fabric of my childhood. The town is now simply a suburb of a sprawling Omaha. The farms are subdivided. The gravel roads paved. The community has stop lights. While this is progress, and there's money to be made, there is also loss.

You all have an opportunity here. The proposed gas plant from Northwestern Energy needs to have a thorough review of noise and light impacts on the community before this land is zoned for industrial use. Please consider these impacts and require restrictions that work for the community before you vote for a zone update.

Sincerely,

Linda Healow
312 Clark Avenue
Billings, MT 59101

⏪ Reply all ▾ 🗑 Delete 🚫 Junk Block ...

Noisy, dirty air? No thanks!

NB

Norman Bishop <mailagent@thesoftedge.com>

Tue 10/26/2021 12:30 PM

To: Ward 1B

👍 ↶ ⏪ → ...

Dear Councilperson Eaton:

Please require noise and lighting restrictions for the proposed Northwestern Energy methane gas plant before rezoning the land and allowing development to begin.

Sincerely,

Norman Bishop
4898 Itana Circle
Bozeman, MT 59715

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