



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Maritime
Administration**

Southeast Federal Center
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

July 8, 2013

Mr. Bruce Ferguson
Catskill Citizens for Safe Energy
P.O. Box 103
Fremont Center, NY 12736

Dear Mr. Ferguson:

We are in receipt of your enclosed July 1, 2013 letter regarding the Port Ambrose Deepwater Port License application. In your letter, you state that the application, if granted, will allow imports and exports to the proposed deepwater port facility. You also request the Maritime Administration and U.S. Coast Guard hold public hearings in upstate New York and Pennsylvania, as well as stop processing the application to allow for an extended public comment period of at least one hundred twenty days.

Although the Deepwater Port Act was amended to allow exports, the application to own, construct and operate the proposed Port Ambrose facility is an application for a natural gas *import* terminal only. The authority to export natural gas through the Port Ambrose facility would constitute such a significant change from the proposal now under review that it would require a new license application in its entirety. To be clear, the export of natural gas is not considered in the application, nor would it be included in the license, if the application were to be approved. As such, the areas of upstate New York and Pennsylvania will not be affected by the proposed Port Ambrose project and no public meetings will be scheduled in these areas.

Both of our Agencies recognize that public scoping meetings cannot be universally attended; however, physical attendance is not required to participate in the scoping process. As you know, the public may participate in the scoping process by submitting comments on the Port Ambrose application to the Federal Docket (USCG-2013-0363) online at regulations.gov; by fax at 202-493-2251 or via postal mail by submitting comments to: Department of Transportation, Docket Management Facility, West Building, Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590. Comments to the Federal docket may be submitted at any time during the application review process, as the scoping process is intended to present the application to the public and assemble comments in the whole.

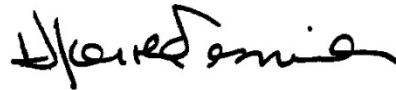
We further note that the purpose of stopping the regulatory clock is for the Maritime Administration and the U.S. Coast Guard to gather information from the applicant in order to process the application, not for the purpose of an extended public comment period, as the two items are independent of each other. As a result, the regulatory clock will not be stopped for the purposes you have requested. However, the Council on Environmental Quality's regulations allow for flexibility in setting timelines during the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review process, provided that the limits are consistent with the purposes of NEPA and other essential considerations of national policy, such as the statutory requirement to process the Port Ambrose application within 356 days. The standard comment period used in deepwater port licensing applications has been thirty days after the Notice of Intent is published in the Federal Register. However, due to the high level of interest in this particular application, the public comment period for the scoping meetings will be extended an additional thirty days from July 23, 2013 to August 22, 2013. A Federal Register Notice announcing the extension will be published in the very near future.

Thank you for your participation in the public review of the Port Ambrose deepwater port application.

Sincerely,



M.A. Prescott
Chief, Deepwater Ports Standards Division
U.S. Coast Guard



H. Keith Lesnick
Associate Administrator for Intermodal
System Development
Maritime Administration

Enclosure

P.O. Box 103
Fremont Center, NY 12736

July 1, 2013

Ms. Yvette Fields
Director, Office of Deepwater Ports
Maritime Administration
1200 New Jersey Ave. SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Mr. Mark Prescott
Chief, Deepwater Ports Standards Division
U.S. Coast Guard
2100 Second St., SW
Washington, D.C. 20593

Re: Docket Number USCG-2013-0363

Dear Ms. Fields and Mr. Prescott:

On Friday, June 14, the Maritime Administration published a notice of application for the above-referenced project, a proposed liquefied natural gas (LNG) deepwater port called “Port Ambrose” to be located in coastal waters in the vicinity of Long Beach, New York, and Sandy Hook, New Jersey. On June 24, the public was informed that the Maritime Administration intended to schedule only two public scoping hearings on the project, and that the public comment period would conclude just thirty days later, on July 23. This is the minimum number of hearings, and the minimum amount of time allowed by law, and we think it is inadequate given the scale of the project, and its potential impacts.

We understand that the project’s sponsor, Liberty LNG, is entitled to have its application handled in a timely way, but the public also has a right to fully consider the impacts of an LNG port that could pose a major security threat to a densely populated area, risks burdening the region’s ecosystems with air and water pollution, and will tend to discourage investment in renewable energy supplies. Also, while the project sponsors persist in describing Port Ambrose as an import terminal that will receive LNG from Trinidad and Tobago, a Deepwater Port Act license allows both imports and exports. For that reason, all the “upstream impacts” associated with the extraction and transmission of shale gas should also be considered in assessing the potential impacts of this project.

Notice of the two public hearings (on Tuesday, July 9, in Long Beach, N.Y., and on Wednesday, July 10 in Edison, N.J.) was published in the Federal Register on Monday, June 24, just fifteen days in advance of the first hearing, which is inadequate notice for such important events. Moreover, both hearings are scheduled for the week immediately following the Fourth of July weekend, which is typically one of the most popular vacation weeks of the year. This will make

it difficult or impossible for many interested parties to attend either of these hearings or to prepare for meaningful public participation. Each hearing is scheduled to last only two hours, barely enough time for forty people to speak for three minutes each. Given that an LNG port in coastal waters could negatively impact millions of Americans, a total of four hours of public comment is clearly inadequate.

Finally, the public is expected to provide detailed scoping comments on the proposed project in the absence of critical information. In a letter dated June 21, 2013, Mark Prescott, Chief, Deepwater Ports Standards Division of the U.S. Coast Guard, summarized over one hundred and fifty data gaps in Liberty LNG's application affecting such crucial concerns as air and water quality, noise pollution, biological and cultural resources, navigation issues, multiple use issues, safety and security issues, LNG export and public-need questions, and failures to adequately analyze alternatives. The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management has also raised questions about the impact the LNG port would have on a proposed offshore wind farm sited in the same location as the deepwater port, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has not yet commented on the application.

Under these circumstances, it is manifestly unreasonable to expect either the general public or concerned individuals with scientific and technical expertise to submit thoughtful and comprehensive scoping comments on an application of over fifteen hundred pages by July 24. Therefore we respectfully request that the Maritime Authority use its statutory authority to stop the Deepwater Port Act clock for an extended public comment period of at least one hundred and twenty days and schedule additional hearings in New Jersey and on Long Island. We also request that public hearings be held in the shale-bearing regions of New York State and Pennsylvania, because it is reasonable to assume that these regions will be impacted by this project.

Sincerely,

Bruce Ferguson
Catskill Citizens for Safe Energy

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350NJ

Lyna Hinkel
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Allegheny Defense Project

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NYC Friends of Clearwater

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Oregon PeaceWorks

Marianne Waldow
OWS Environmental Solidarity

Lawrence Hamm, Chairman
People's Organization For Progress

Kevin F. Lind, Director
Powder River Basin Resource Council

Randy Hurst
Protect Orange County

Iris Marie Bloom, Executive Director
Protecting Our Waters

Bill Schultz, Riverkeeper
Raritan RIVERKEEPER

Gordian Raacke, Executive Director
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Len Bjorkman
Residents Against Fracking Tioga

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Rush Citizens Concerned About Hydrofracking

Karen London, Co-founder
Sullivan Area Citizens for Responsible Energy Development (SACRED)

Clare Donohue
Sane Energy Project

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Shaleshock

Alice Slater
Shut Down Indian Point Now

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Sierra Club - Atlantic Chapter

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Jim Gurley, Media Liaison
**Winona Area Citizens Concerned about
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cc: Ray LaHood, Secretary, Department of Transportation
The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
The Honorable Chris Christie
Senator Charles E. Schumer
Senator Kirsten Gillibrand
Senator Robert Menendez
Senator Jeff Chiesa
Representative Robert E. Andrews
Representative Timothy H. Bishop
Representative Yvette D. Clarke
Representative Chris Collins
Representative Joseph Crowley
Representative Eliot L. Engel
Representative Rodney P. Frelinghuysen
Representative Scott Garrett
Representative Chris Gibson
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Representative Brian Higgins
Representative Rush D. Holt, Jr.
Representative Steve Israel
Representative Hakeem Jeffries
Representative Peter T. King
Representative Leonard Lance
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Representative Sean Patrick Maloney
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Representative Albio Sires
Representative Louise Slaughter
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Representative Paul Tonko
Representative Nydia Velázquez