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MEDIA ADVISORY



INGLESIDE CITY COUNCIL TO ENBRIDGE: 'NO AMMONIA PLANT HERE!'

Public hearing filled beyond capacity as residents turn out in force to urge their elected officials to stop the proposed ammonia facility on the former Navy base

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

INGLESIDE, TX: The Ingleside City Council voted unanimously to deny Canadian behemoth Enbridge and Norwegian based Yara (Ingleside Clean Ammonia Partners, LLC) an “Objectionable Use Permit” on Tuesday night after a five hour public hearing in which more than 100 people attended. The permit would have allowed the construction of an ammonia facility that would have been located within two miles of an Ingleside elementary school and the entire city of Ingleside on the Bay.

The Coastal Action Network’s (CAN) Ingleside on the Bay Coastal Watch Association (IOBCWA), along with Texas Campaign for the Environment and Indigenous Peoples of the Coastal Bend braved frigid temperatures and marched alongside concerned residents in the hours leading up to the City Council meeting, carrying signs warning of the dangers of ammonia.

Once the doors to the Humble Youth Center were open, the location quickly filled beyond capacity, and some who wished to speak in opposition were turned away to wait in the cold. Many Ingleside residents spoke of their children, fearing that the daily exposure to the dangerous chemicals that would be emitted from such a plant would cause asthma and damage young lungs. Allies of the Karankawa emotionally testified about protecting the McGloin’s Bluff archeological site, a sacred burial ground. Others spoke of the very real fear of a deadly ammonia accident, warning the council that it wasn’t a matter of “if,” but “when” such a disaster would happen. More than 40 people offered comments, the vast majority in opposition, with a handful of Enbridge supporters, including Signet (which supplies tugboats when vessels move in and out of Enbridge) and representatives of the Corpus Christi Regional Economic Development Corporation speaking in favor.

When representatives from Enbridge gave their presentation, they actually warned the council that if they denied the permit, they had the right to build it anyway, claiming Council granted an “Objectionable Use Permit” in 2012 to OxyChem. Asking a puzzled Enbridge spokesman if they could also do “dead animal storage” onsite, Ingleside City Councilman Diehl made the point that the

Objectionable Use Permit of 2012 was only for petroleum product storage (specifically LPG, LNG, and crude & condensate), not for every “objectionable use” listed in the ordinance, and certainly not for an ammonia plant.

Before the vote, Diehl asked each Enbridge employee in the room where they were from and not one of them was from Ingleside, illustrating the job creation myth that is so often used to justify these harmful permits. On a motion by Diehl, the vote to deny the Objectionable Use Permit was unanimous.

“Ingleside on the Bay Coastal Watch Association, and the citizens of Ingleside and Ingleside on the Bay gave a loud cheer last night when the Council voted unanimously to deny the Objectionable Use Permit to Ingleside Clean Ammonia Partners. I was very proud that our effort to research and document the issues as well as rallying the community voices paid off last night. It is motivating us to keep this momentum going,” said IOBCWA Treasurer Charlie Boone.

This victory was the result of a months-long campaign to stop the ammonia facility in San Patricio County. IOBCWA President Patrick Nye spoke to numerous city councils in San Patricio County, as well as the Commissioners’ Court last year. IOBCWA also paid for billboards and newspaper ads in the local newspapers. CAN groups showed up in force to Enbridge’s “Open House” in October, and CAN sponsored a San Patricio Town Hall where the dangers of the proposed ammonia facility were presented to more than 80 attendees in December. CAN also waged a direct mail campaign, warning residents of the threat to their community. These efforts prove that when people unite, they can fight for and win battles against multi-billion dollar international corporations who want to use the Coastal Bend as a sacrifice zone. It’s a fight CAN will continue to battle against polluters and their allies.



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