

Warrenton: LNG application under review

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Once the record is closed, Kearns will review the staff report and testimony and issue a written decision to the city. The decision is expected to arrive by late October. The city will mail the decision to parties of record, and a 14-day appeal period will begin.

If the current schedule holds, the appeal period will end in early to mid-November. If Kearns' decision is appealed, the City Commission will hold a public hearing on the appeal and any code amendments required for the requested permits. At the earliest, the commission hearing will take place the first week of December.

Whatever decision the commission makes can be appealed to the Oregon Land

Use Board of Appeals, as long as the contesting party is a party of record.

Conditions

Urling's recommendations to approve the terminal and pipeline come with multiple conditions.

The terminal portion will require, for example, that Oregon LNG take measures to mitigate traffic impact and get those measures approved by the Oregon Department of Transportation.

The company must also make roadway improvements to curbs, gutters and sidewalks near the terminal's location. All discharges to the city's shared outfall must comply with an approved permit issued by the state Department of Environmental Quality.

To build the pipeline, Oregon LNG must restore to city public works standards all streets, trails, drainage facilities and other public infrastructure disturbed by the installation. And, before any site work is done, the company must submit the consent of all owners of record for the properties on which the pipeline will be located.

Besides the city of Warrenton, several federal and state agencies are reviewing Oregon LNG's terminal and pipeline applications, including the U.S. Coast Guard, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Oregon Departments Transportation, Fish and Wildlife, Environmental Quality, and Land Conservation and Development.

Steps backward and forward

Though the Oregon LNG project has been lurching forward, any number of factors could kill it.

Earlier this summer, Oregon LNG faced a setback when a federal magistrate judge dismissed the company's challenge to an Army Corps of Engineers easement on the Skipanon Peninsula. The judge ruled that the statute of limitations to bring the claim under federal law had expired, leaving the company — for the moment anyway — without a Warrenton site to build on.

But shortly thereafter, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission released a favorable draft environmental review of the project that concludes Oregon LNG's

harmful environmental impact could be reduced to less-than-significant levels if the company takes certain precautionary steps to protect public safety, water quality and fish and wildlife habitat.

In April, the state Land Use Board of Appeals upheld Clatsop County's 2013 decision to deny Oregon LNG a permit to construct the pipeline. The county cited, among other concerns, potential safety hazards for residents, conflicts with aquatic zone standards, and the risk of "frac-outs" — toxic fluid escapes — during underground pipeline construction as reasons for the denial.

Promises and precaution

Oregon LNG argues that the project would bring millions of

dollars in new annual tax revenues into Clatsop County and create thousands of construction and operating jobs.

Even if these claims are true, however, opponents argue the costs outweigh the benefits.

"It threatens the health and safety and peace of mind of everyone in Clatsop County, but especially those in Warrenton and Hammond. That anyone would place what is essentially a potential bomb — this natural gas terminal — in a residential area, is bad enough. But they want to build it on sand, which is on top of fill, in a subduction earthquake and tsunami zone," Caplan said. "It defies common sense."

Representatives from Oregon LNG could not be reached for comment.

Wyden: Senator learns of obstacles foster kids face

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Ashley Foster, who spent four years in Oregon's foster system, said foster children face obstacles setting up bank accounts, budget and finance. "Identifying the problems we have is an important place to start," she said.

"We get labeled," Foster said. "We have to fall into a category to receive medication. I'm a mother of three, and every time I've gone in to give birth, they bring up my past medical history. It's very upsetting."

Elbert Belcher spent 21 years in Kentucky's foster care system. He urged preventive services, including counseling, transportation and assistance for families and parents on board to take before children are placed into the foster care system.

"I'd like to focus on the sibling connection," Belcher said. "I haven't seen my two younger brothers for six or seven years because they've been readopted after our unfortunate abusive adoption. I think it's inhumane not to have communication with your siblings if they've been adopted in a closed adoption."

"With anyone in this room, regardless if it's a five-star hotel, a garbage bag for luggage, a bed on the floor, if we feel a part of something, or valued in some way, we'll see better outcomes," he added.

Others told Wyden about frequent placements, bullying, abuse from some foster families and lack of contact with overburdened case workers, many of whom are untrained in youth engagement.

"I think there's a powerful moral case for every youngster to be able to have a safe option in these kind of situations," Wyden said. "Even if you don't share my idea for the morality, you should be for what we're talking about because it is so much more attractive financially than what we're going to pay for picking up the pieces, in the welfare system, the law enforcement system, post-traumatic stress and drug addiction."

"I think there are now Democrats and Republicans who are prepared to say that," Wyden said. "There's an excellent possibility of getting



R.J. Marx/The Daily Astorian

FosterClub grads and volunteers with Sen. Ron Wyden, and wife Nancy, center left.

FOSTERCLUB, WYDEN WORK TOGETHER

FosterClub Executive Director Celeste Bodner was selected as Wyden's 2015 Congressional Coalition Adoption Institute "Angels in Adoption" honoree.

Q: What is the purpose of today's visit?

Bodner: We work with Sen. Wyden a lot in Washington, D.C., so his office called last week and asked if they could visit our office. The senator nominated me for an award. Part of this is recognizing that. The other is, he has just introduced a potentially landmark bill that will improve how services are offered for kids in foster care, and he's going to talk to some of our young people about that.

Q: Have you worked with Sen. Wyden before?

A: We bring young leaders to Washington, D.C., to help inform public policy. He's been meeting with young leaders for 10 years. We have a great relationship with his office.

Q: How does the Family Stability and Kinship Care act work?

A: The federal financing structure has been broken for a long time, and the way federal funding has come down has caused a hardship to young people, in that federal funding didn't kick in until kids entered foster care. And stopped the minute they left foster care. This new bill would make funding more flexible and allow states to use federal funding to prevent kids from needing to go into foster care in the first place, and also provide services after they leave foster care to adoption or a legal guardianship. This would provide support to these kids, too.

Q: What kind of preventive services are you proposing, and why is that important?

A: We believe reducing the number of kids entering foster care, if we can provide services for the family, if the family is struggling with homelessness, or addiction, or mental health, to provide upfront services to the family so the child doesn't have to experience the trauma of going into a foster home. If we reduce the number of kids who come into foster care the system, we will have more capacity to manage those kids and put them in good, healthy places.

Q: How often do you go to Washington, D.C.?

A: I live in Seaside, and I go to Washington, D.C., about 12-15 times a year.

Q: Do you think the Family Stability and Care Act will pass?

A: As advocates we've been pressing for something like this for five or six years, there's been a big drumbeat for it a lot of national advocates are really pressing for it. We're very pleased to have Sen. Wyden in such a strong position.

something done here. And getting it done in the fall. I think we've got an opportunity that doesn't come along

very often. We've got some new momentum to fix these concerns that these young people are talking about."

Burn ban: Event prices have been adjusted in light of changes

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Flame-free family fun

The battles and gunpowder play may be scrapped, but the Civil War living history will carry on full-bore, Jim Munson, the event coordinator, said.

"It should still be lots of fun. We hope the public will still come and support and engage with us and have a good time," he said. "There's still a lot to learn and a lot to see and do."

Spectators and Civil War buffs can still look forward to hearing music of the war and

enjoying a cavalry demonstration, an Abraham Lincoln impersonator, Union and Confederate medical demonstrations, a Sunday church service, daily battalion dress parades and other activities at recreated military and civilian campsites.

The Civil War event at Fort Stevens is among the largest for both the council and the park. Around 800 re-enactors spread out over 7 acres, set up canvas tents, dress in period clothing and uniforms and present life as Americans lived it in Virginia and Penn-

sylvania circa 1863.

Event prices have been adjusted in light of the changes:

The main gate prices have been reduced to \$15 per car (which includes the \$5 day-use fee); the bicycle gate price is now \$3 per person 12 and older; and families of four or more now pay \$10.

"We're going to make every effort to get down there and put on a great show," Munson said.

For more information, visit www.nwcwc.org or the Facebook page at Civil War Oregon.

Astoria: City Council is expected to approve the resolution on LNG

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LaMear said she is not just concerned about residents, but about the Columbia River, "and the fishermen, and the shipping industry and the cruise ships and the recreational boaters and the Coast Guard."

The draft environmental review found that the LNG project would not significantly impact vessel traffic on the river and would have minimal impacts on commercial and recreational fishing, but many, like LaMear, are skeptical of the findings and foresee unavoidable conflicts.

Political message

The resolution, which could go before the City Council next Tuesday, is also crafted to send a political message. The resolution will likely urge all local, state and federal decision-makers to reject the project.

City Councilor Cindy Price hopes the resolution might help influence Gov. Kate Brown and U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., to come out against Oregon LNG.

"And as we know from Bradwood Landing, if the community makes it very clear that they don't want a project like this, it goes away," Price said of a proposed LNG project east of Astoria that failed in 2010 after hitting financial, regulatory and political roadblocks.

In April, the City Council voted unanimously in favor of a motion to intervene in the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's review of the project even though the public comment period had expired. The city had taken a similar step during the debate over Bradwood Landing.

"This is why we're elected," Price said, "is to stand up and give a bigger voice to our constituents on these big issues."

The Vernonia City Council, which also has no regulatory role in the project, passed a resolution in May opposing the project.

Oregon LNG wants to build an export terminal on the Skipanon Peninsula in Warrenton and an 87-mile pipeline connecting the terminal with a natural gas line in Washington state.

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's draft environmental review concludes the project can offset environmental and safety concerns, but several federal, state and local agencies are still vetting potential impacts.

'I think humanity needs to do everything possible to move away from fossil fuels, to avoid catastrophic climate change.'

— Drew Herzig
Astoria city councilor

LaMear, Price and others are concerned about descriptions in the environmental review of Tongue Point as a contractor and pipe storage yard during project construction. The worry is that hundreds of heavy trucks would rumble through Astoria with construction loads.

"It's a sense of the community," Price said of the resolution. "And that's all we can do. It's the best we can do. And it's what we must do."

City Councilor Drew Herzig had opposed an LNG project in Warrenton during his successful run for the council in 2012. "I'm still of that opinion," he said in an email. "I think humanity needs to do everything possible to move away from fossil fuels, to avoid catastrophic climate change."

"I am glad Mayor LaMear put this resolution on the agenda, and I look forward to the council discussing it."

City Councilor Zetty Nemlowill said the council needs to look carefully at whether the resolution is a legally sound method of expressing the city's opposition.

"In my opinion the risks of an LNG facility outweigh potential economic benefits and I don't think most people in Astoria want to see the project happen," she said in a text.

Not unanimous

The City Council is expected to approve the resolution, but the vote will not be unanimous.

City Councilor Russ Warr, who intends to vote against the resolution, said he wished people who oppose Oregon LNG cited "real reasons" instead of what he considers questionable claims about the environment and public safety.

While an explosion last year at an LNG storage tank near the Columbia River in eastern Washington state fueled safety fears, the LNG industry, according to the U.S. Department of Energy, has a strong safety record.

Warr believes many opponents simply "think it's going to look ugly."

"Most of the reasons are totally emotional," he said. "And, in my opinion, most of them are not substantiated by science."

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