

**Public Meeting, Citizens Working Committee on Hydrofracking (CWCH)
Tuesday, January 8, 2013, 7:00 PM, Rush Town Board Room**

Present: Carol Barnett, Ted Barnett, Beth Hoak, Jordan Kleiman, Bob Powers

Absent: Kathy Hankins, Marianne Rizzo, Town Board Liaison Bill Riepe (Ms. Hankins and Ms. Rizzo asked to be excused to participate in the first Citizens Committee meeting on the use of the BOCES property, scheduled at the same time.)

Members of the Public Present: Patricia Kraus, Robert Kraus, Carolee Powers, and Joan Starkweather

The Citizens Working Committee on Hydrofracking met on 1/8/13 from 7:00 PM till 8:20 PM.

This public meeting was held in order to update the townspeople on the activities of the Committee, to answer questions, and to solicit comments and concerns on the issues of hydrofracking as part of the Committee's fact finding phase. Robert Kraus praised the Committee for holding the meeting and giving this opportunity to the residents of the town. Mr. Kraus asked what progress the Committee had made. Jordan Kleiman said that the Committee's mission authorized by the Town Board was to assess the possible impacts of gas drilling on our town, and in light of that assessment to recommend what steps the Town Board should take to protect the town after the moratorium ends. To achieve that goal, the Committee has conducted exhaustive fact-finding and research, focused on specific impacts on the quality of life, character, and needs of our town. The Committee is close to being ready to present a report with recommendations to the town.

During the wide-ranging discussion at this meeting, there were many areas of concern and issues identified, including the following:

Why is there a need for our town to be protected against hydrofracking? While those present at the meeting were convinced of the need for the Committee's work, they agreed that many people may think that hydrofracking is a remote threat to Rush and other areas not in the Southern Tier of New York, and as a result they are not concerned .

Jordan Kleiman replied that it is a misconception that only the Marcellus Shale is of interest to gas developers. Our town sits atop the Utica Shale, which may be of even greater interest to developers in the near term, because the low market price for "dry gas"--the type of natural gas found in the Marcellus formation--has sparked interest in the natural gas liquids found in the Utica Shale.

Also, while low natural gas (i.e., "dry gas") prices have depressed gas development for the time being, it can be expected that at some point the industry will start liquefying

natural gas for export on a larger scale, which will raise demand and prices. That will spur interest in all areas with potential for development, including our town and county.

Road Use and Preservation. Beth Hoak commented that, even if there are no gas wells in Rush, if there is hydrofracking anywhere in New York State, our roads will undergo increased stress and use. Jordan Kleiman said that the Committee would likely recommend that the town consider adopting a road use ordinance, of the type recommended by the New York Municipal Insurance Reciprocal (NYMIR) in a September 2012 report. We agreed that there are a number of factors to consider, including the complicated network of state, county, and town roads in Rush. It was noted that we are limited in what we can do to regulate state and county roads.

Emergency Response. Rush has the last remaining volunteer Fire Department in the region, and relies on a complicated system of "mutual aid" to deal with emergency calls, including those involving hazardous materials. Jordan Kleiman reminded us that the advent of hydrofracking in our town or region could bring a kind of "double whammy." Not only would emergency calls increase, especially those involving hazardous materials; the kinds of jobs that fracking would bring, at least on a temporary basis, might attract people who work or volunteer as first responders, thus reducing the available pool of volunteers and pushing us towards paid employees for emergency response, and thus higher cost for the town.

Activity on the State Level. Those present were aware that, in December 2012, the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation issued revised regulations for hydrofracking, with a comment period running until January 11, 2013. The actions of the DEC have an impact on Rush and all towns in NYS. The Committee encouraged those present to submit comments to the DEC during the few remaining days.

What's Next for our Town. Audience members were interested in the next steps the Committee intended to take. Committee members said that they plan to present their report to the Town Board on January 23, with the hope that the Town Board will act on their recommendations in a timely fashion. Also, another showing of the Tour of Hydrofracking Sites in Pennsylvania (field trip video) is scheduled on **Monday, February 4 at 7:00 PM at the Rush Pavilion**; the Committee hopes at this meeting to reach a wider audience than saw the video at the 11/13/12 Town Board meeting. The Committee said that it would keep everyone apprised of important meetings, including any public hearings, as they are scheduled.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Barnett