

DENREC
12/01/2022
Newark

I am Charito Calvachi, from 55 Sunset Rd, Newark, DE 19711 and I write in opposition to the Methane Gas Refinery Plant proposed in Seaford (Bioenergy Devco proposal.)

I want to make three remarks as reasons in which I base my opposition:

1. **Environmental racism.** I have personally visited the neighborhood, talked with families myself four times to speak with the neighbors who live at Sussex Manor Mobile Home Park, located half a mile from the proposed plant, they conveyed to me and to others the following:
 - a. **Lack of knowledge.** The people living in this home park did not have knowledge of the proposed plant. They have heard nothing. Furthermore, I have kept in contact by phone with several of them and the lack of information is stunning. Needless to say, they do not understand the full context of their project.
 - b. **Misleading statements to the public by industry.** The area where Sussex Manor Mobile Home Park is located is zoned residential/agricultural, not zoned industrial, as owners of Devco told a Haitian leader in a conversation. However, the real misstatement to this community is in the “benefits” they claim to provide.

Additionally, there is the issue of **Cultural competency**: DNREC did not follow the advise of a group of leaders who suggested the culturally appropriate ways this community needed to be advised. We mentioned the location has to have proximity and visibility, and both language interpretations were required, not only for understanding what speakers say in the meeting, but also for interpretation when participants ask questions. We proposed to create a sheet of objective information written in a manner that is non-technical, but informative. None of these steps were undertaken by DNREC.

2. **The immoral “neutrality” and negligence by NGOs.** DNREC should not be impressed by the criteria used by NGOs supporting paid staff whose mission is to protect the environment, but adopted a “neutral” position. We understand why this happens: **these NGOs identify more with having “paid staff”** and the businesses that contribute to them, than taking the difficult position of going against the interests of those that “feed” them. This is commonplace and well-known in the NGO community and among the business donors who seek to control the NGO’s voice via donations. DNREC should not base any type of objective credibility in these organizations’ position.
3. **Historic learning from the part of our government.** The historic lessons of the past and present should give DNREC good input to deny the permits. I used to live in Lewes, where decades ago the Consolidated Fisheries Company devastated the Lewes fishery. The menhaden has not come back yet to the area! This was an industry that did not had

parameters of protecting the wellbeing of people and nature. No social or habitat responsibility of any sort was demanded of this industry.

(<https://archives.delaware.gov/delaware-historical-markers/menhaden-fishing-industry/>)

DREC should not repeat this kind of environmental error. Providing permits for the methane gas plant will be to act again as irresponsibly as in the past.

Currently, the lives of undocumented adults (and illegally, but systemically, under-age children) Latinx/Hispanic are being destroyed in the chicken industry. All work as human robots at a rate that goes against the norms of healthy labor. What they get is a body exhausted, and even assaulted with sexual abuse and very little in their pockets to show for a live of suffering.

What to do with the waste produced by this industry would not be a Delaware government concern if strong regulation to protect labor (and nature) were in place. This industry may not be viable except for labor law violations and a broken immigration system.