

Docket Optical System - Fwd: Hayward Russel City Power Plant

From: Tiffany Solorio
To: Docket Optical System
Date: 7/29/2008 1:45 PM
Subject: Fwd: Hayward Russel City Power Plant

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>>> Katherine Combs <k_lou_combs@yahoo.com> 7/29/2008 12:23 PM >>>
 Commissioner Jeffrey Byron:

I write to you now, as a citizen of Hayward, to plead Hayward's case against the Russel City power plant. Please, I ask you: deny the application for extension to build this power plant. I understand that this state is in need of more energy, but taking two steps backwards in technology

I am certain that you have already heard the facts; the Russel City power plant will be built in the middle of a city bustling with life; it will be powered by jet engines modified to take in a fossil fuel that, in a few years, will become too expensive to use; it will spew heinous amounts of pollution into the air that over a hundred thousand human beings will breathe. So I will not bore you with what you have already heard; instead, I will relate to you a story of Hayward.

You may not know this, but the Hayward school district has a phenomenal, nationally recognized vocal music program. The program begins at Eden Gardens Elementary School, where students learn to read and enjoy music. It continues on in Ochoa Middle School, where their abilities grow, and is culminated in Mt. Eden High School, which has a choir that does not just sound *good*, but like a professional college choir.

Where in the world do you find such a thing? I, myself, did not know of this wonderful program until I stumbled into it my Freshman year at Mt. Eden. I remember first walking into the choir room and seeing the awards and pictures and plaques posted all around, and our choir director Mr. Ken Rawdon's opening speech about choir and the commitment we would have to give. I was *terrified*-and yet, somehow, I stuck with it. I am so glad that I did; the program changed me. It not only gave me the chance to sing amazing music, but after all the peer pressure and "be this!" and "be that!" I went through in elementary and middle school, I finally found a place in a school setting where I could just be myself.

I tell you all this because you must know that Hayward is important to so many people in ways you cannot possibly imagine, and putting a power plant here would ruin the few beautiful things we have left here. One of the most important parts of singing is breathing--and if this power plant were to be built, it would choke the air until it would be impossible to sing, especially for children whose lungs are still developing.

I am sure you have heard of the studies saying that children who are raised right next to highways often grow up with asthma. What do you think would happen to children attempting to sing if a power plant that spewed over eighteen million tons of pollutants was built in these schools' backyard? It does not take much guesswork to figure it out. So many children would be suffering from some manner of lung impairment that they would have to close the music program, and this wonderful, unique thing would be lost forever.

Perhaps I exaggerate. Perhaps the pollution could never be so bad. But then, what about real estate? Hayward is in the middle of the Bay Area. It is a convenient place to live, because you can go anywhere in the Bay Area from Hayward under an hour. But would people still want to live in Hayward with such a toxic power plant built there? Would you? I know if I had a choice between two houses, I would live in the house that is not in the same city as a power plant, no matter how convenient the commute might be. Considering this, the power plant would not only harm the health of Hayward citizens, but would devastate real estate and, in turn, the economics of the entire Bay Area.

Despite the many arguments I would give, there is nothing I can do to make you deny the application for extension to build the Russel City power plant. I can only ask that you do not ignore what I have said and that you, at the very least, will consider my plea among the many you will read. I pray that you be given the wisdom to decide what is best for all, and I thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Katherine Combs, Chabot College student and life-long resident of Hayward

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