



# Save the Pine Bush

## August/September Newsletter

Aug/Sept 16 No. 131 • 33 Central Ave., Albany, NY 12210 • email [pinebush@mac.com](mailto:pinebush@mac.com) • phone 518-462-0891 • web <http://www.savethepinebush.org> • Circ. 600

**Join Save the Pine Bush for a  
Community Meeting  
Sponsored by AVillage  
Wednesday August 17, 6:00 p.m.**

**Judith Enck**

**Environmental Protection Agency Regional Administrator**

**Christine Ash**

**Environmental Justice Coordinator**

*will meet with residents of Ezra Prentice and the public about*

## **Health and Environmental issues in the South End and Ezra Prentice related to Bomb Trains and Diesel Truck Traffic**

The biggest threat to the survival of the Pine Bush – after developers and their bulldozers – is climate change. All of the work SPB has done over the past 38 years, may become un-done unless climate change is reversed.

SPB plans to join with efforts of other organizations to work on issues related to climate change. Our first event is to attend this Community Meeting at the Ezra Prentice Community Room, organized by Dominick Calsolaro and sponsored by AVillage. EPA officials Judith Enck and Christine Ash will attend the meeting, speak, and listen to the residents and people who attend.

Bomb trains are an issue of climate change. We should not be building any more infrastructure for oil, gas or coal facilities. Instead, we must put our resources towards renewable energy.

We also cannot forget the terrible environmental injustice of the trains' location being so close to where families live in Ezra Prentice and on Mount Hope Drive. We must stand with our South End neighbors, and do what we can to stop the bomb trains and promote renewable energy.

**At the Ezra Prentice Community Room, corner of S. Pearl St and Mount Hope Dr, 625 South Pearl Street, Albany, NY.** The entrance to the Community Room is from the parking lot. For more information, please email [pinebush@mac.com](mailto:pinebush@mac.com).

**Everyone is welcomed to attend the meeting. See Page 4 for more information.**

## **Wind Energy**

*by Tom Ellis*

ALBANY, NY: Julien Bouget of Sun Edison was the speaker at the June 15 SPB dinner. Mr. Bouget has been in the wind business since 1999. He was born in France.

He was introduced by Tim Truscott. Tim told me later that Mr. Bouget studied physics in college.

Mr. Bouget said we need wind power to replace fossil fuels that spew carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. Greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise, he said. Electricity and transportation produced 39 and 34 percent of US 2014 carbon emissions; carbon electricity emissions are 75, 22, and 4 percent from coal, natural gas, and oil.

Wind and solar power electricity do not use water for cooling purposes unlike fossil fuels

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## **Albany Solid Waste Problem Still Not Addressed Openly**

*by Tim Truscott*

The month of June turned out to have some news related to the City of Albany's solid waste disposal plans.

It became known that the Mayor had created a Solid Waste Planning Committee which included her office, the landfill manager (Joe Giebelhaus), the Recycling Director (Frank Zeoli), a couple of the mayor's friends on the Common Council and a representative of the City's solid waste consultant (Barton & Loguidice).

The committee had been meeting monthly for about six or seven months without reporting back to the Common Council. Council Member Judd Krasher (not a member of this special committee, since he is a frequent critic of the Mayor) requested, in writing, copies of the audio recordings of the meetings, but was denied his request. He was told, in writing, by the City Corporation Counsel, that he was not entitled to this information. It seems odd.

Apparently, in an effort to pacify annoyed Council Members, a Common Council General

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## *Wind Energy, continued from page 1*

and nuclear generation. He said France had to temporarily shut down some nuclear stations during the 2003 heat wave because the cooling water was too warm or there was not enough of it. Thermal cooling from power stations have multiple impacts including higher water temperatures and a resulting death of fish. He said fossil fuel electricity generation is inefficient because much heat is wasted when transferred into the water.

USA electricity generation today is 42, 22, 6.5 and 4.5 percent from coal, nuclear, hydro, and wind, although the wind component was one percent ten years back. He said 60,000 megawatts (mw) of wind electricity capacity had been installed in the US by 2014, and 6200 mw of solar. The wind capacity today, he said, is probably about 75,000 megawatts. [One mw equals one million watts.] He said the National Renewable Energy Laboratory in Golden, Colorado estimates the US has 10 million and 80 million mw capacities for wind and solar.

He said wind installations can be sized to enormous limits; the limiting factor for land-based systems is the difficulty of transporting large or giant-sized blades to the generation sites. With off-shore installations, the blades could be constructed near the shore and shipped to and installed on a platform. He said a station three nautical miles off Bloch Island will be completed this year; the blades will be 75 meters each. Each station will have a rated power of 6 mw.

He said Holland is covered with wind stations that have little land impact because each sits on a small platform. Farmers who allow wind stations on their land have new sources of large and steady income, enhancing their lives, and allowing them to improve their food quality. He said considerable site wind speed research is now in progress. Maintenance costs, he said, are low compared to the initial investment.

Among the hurdles to increased wind reliance are grid access, availability of sites, and environmental impacts such as proximity to eagle nests and impacts on bats. Grid access, he said, is the greatest obstacle at present. In the US, wind conditions are best on the Great Plains but that is where there is the least demand for electricity due to low population densities. He acknowledged some proposed wind generation sites are inappropriate due to environmental concerns and hurricane threats.

He said research is ongoing on constructing transmission lines from the Great Plains to where the highest electricity demand occurs. Considerable wind potential exists off shore northeastern states, he said. The problems of moving electricity long distances, he said, are

political, not technical.

Wind turbines, he said, have a perception of being unreliable due to intermittent wind patterns. He said summer peak electricity demand is in late afternoons while peak generation just off shore northeastern states occurs a few hours earlier in the day. He said energy storage research and development is occurring and encouraging, and would occur at the generation site. Another option, he said, would be for users to buy energy storage batteries. He noted cars sit parked most of the time. Car batteries could receive and store electricity when parked at night when electricity prices are low, and pump it back into the grid during the day time.

Wind station managers can increasingly predict output six to 24 hours in advance, and with smart meters, buyers could time some of their electricity use to when prices are lower. He concluded saying renewables could provide ninety percent of US electricity by 2050 even with a much larger use of electricity in transportation than now.

During the Q&A, he said blades can break if struck by lightning and wind station bearings can fail costing millions of dollars to repair. He said multi-unit wind stations have round-the-clock on-site maintenance staff; drones and telescopes with cameras can monitor the blades, and data can be analyzed, often from off-site locations.

He said there are about ten big turbine manufacturers in the world today, the largest is a Chinese firm, General Electric is second, and the industry is consolidating. [Two days after his presentation, it was reported that Siemens and Gamesa had reached an agreement to combine their wind-turbine manufacturing businesses.]

He said, "There is no need for a bridge to renewables. Renewables are here. If anything, we are late." A federal production tax credit that will continue for five years is stimulating the industry in the US.

In response to his comment that transmission lines could be constructed from the Great Plains to the east coast, I said such lines would be extremely controversial in New York, and giant battles were waged in the 1970s and 1980s in opposition to in-state proposed lines. He responded that public opposition is real but that since the society as a whole would benefit from the lines, those negatively impacted from their construction should be compensated.

In response to another question, he predicted that some day, giant wind farms will be developed simultaneously with high voltage transmission lines to bring electricity from New Mexico to California.

Final thoughts: Mr. Bouget obviously believes in wind power and sees it as a partial

solution to our electricity needs and a great way to combat climate change. He is employed in the construction of giant wind turbines; he had nothing to say about small or tiny wind generation stations of one to ten kilowatts, nor was he questioned about them. I think he is overly optimistic about energy storage technologies. Being an immigrant, he may be unfamiliar with how controversial high voltage transmission line proposals are in the US. Power lines are opposed for visual, health, and environmental reasons. Many people would rather see electricity generated close to where it is used than transported a thousand miles or more. Buying electricity generated in Nebraska will not produce jobs here in New York whereas small-scale energy efficiency, ground-source geothermal, conservation, and solar will stimulate local economies, keep local wealth circulating within the state, and generate state and local taxes of many kinds. Siting large power stations are often controversial and many people no more want to see a 300- or 400-foot-tall wind station than a cell tower.

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## *Albany Solid Waste Problem Still Not Addressed Openly, continued from page 1*

Services Committee meeting was held on June 29, at which time a few of the committee's activities were reported.

Much of the meeting was consumed by a detailed description of new recycling collection trucks which the City has ordered for a pilot program. These trucks would require special, large 16-gallon bins which would be compatible with an automated arm to pick up the bins and load the bin contents in the truck. It would have nothing to do with increasing recycling and everything to do with taking people's jobs away from them.

It was also reported that the Rapp Road landfill would reach capacity and close in about five years. This was not a surprise, as this was predicted since the most recent expansion of the landfill came into use several years ago. But during those intervening years, why weren't efforts undertaken to extend the life of the landfill by increasing recycling and reducing the amount of organics going into the landfill? In spite of our urging of the mayor, nothing was done. But I guess we shouldn't be surprised.

It was also reported that construction of a solid waste transfer station was discussed, the purpose of which would be to load the city's garbage onto large tractor trailers and ship it to one of the mega landfills, like Seneca Meadows, in the Waterloo/Seneca Falls area west of Syracuse, or High Acres landfill, near Rochester.

The residents of Waterloo and Seneca

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Falls don't want the odor, heavy truck traffic, air pollution and groundwater pollution that comes from Seneca Meadows, just as people in Albany's South End don't want the problems associated with the oil trains and the proposed Pilgrim Pipeline.

One possible location mentioned for such a solid waste transfer station was the Port of Albany. Has anyone bothered to ask residents of the South End neighborhood if they want garbage shipped in and out of their neighborhood? Actually, no one should need to ask, simple common sense dictates that this is not a good idea.

The Port of Albany was mentioned again, this time as a potential site for some sort of solid waste treatment facility. Once again, how about the people who live down there?

It looks like this committee didn't bother to read the 67 pages of comments Save the Pine Bush and Citizens Environmental Coalition members wrote and submitted in November 2010 to the Common Council and the Mayor (when she was City Treasurer) following the publication of the Solid Waste Master Plan. A large part of the comments involved ways to reduce solid waste through recycling. There were also eight or ten pages of comments on the detrimental effects the attempted secrecy of that committee had on moving the solid waste effort forward. If they read the comments, they must have disregarded them.

## Tour Sustainable Materials Management Facilities

On August 12, the Syracuse University Environmental Finance Center (SU-EFC), in collaboration with the New York State Association for Reduction, Reuse, and Recycling (NYSAR<sup>3</sup>), is sponsoring a special tour highlighting New York State sustainable materials management (SMM) operations including materials recovery facilities, composting facilities, anaerobic digestion systems, reuse centers, and more!

At each facility, you will get a first-hand look at how discarded materials such as recyclables, construction debris, food scraps, textiles and more are diverted from the waste stream and given a second life.

Cost: \$15/person. Lunch will be provided with your registration. To pay by check, use the coupon code CHECK. Please bring your check the day of the tour.

Transportation: Bus transportation will be provided with your registration.

Who Should Attend: Materials management professionals, municipal representatives, staff from non-profit and for-profit organizations, educators, and others are encouraged to attend.

Contact: Jesse Kerns, SU-EFC, jekerns@syr.edu | (315) 443-8488

## What is Bethlehem Ecodefense?

We are a group of citizens in the Town of Bethlehem, in Albany County, in the State of New York, concerned with the environmental health of this town, and concerned about three fossil fuel projects being shoved down our throats by large and powerful corporations and their government apologists, namely:

CSX railway terminal and the oil trains that encircle our town.

The proposed Pilgrim Pipelines, a giant double oil pipeline that is planned to stretch from refineries in New Jersey all the way to the port of Albany, crossing the Hudson twice and connecting to both Global Inc and Buckeye. As luck would have it, it would right next to our Bethlehem high school soccer field and seriously threatens our collective treasure, the Hudson Estuary.

The Kinder Morgan/Tennessee Valley "Connecticut Expansion" NY loop, is a 1.3 mile fracked gas pipeline that manages to go underneath both the Vlomankill and Phillipinkill, two local tributaries of the Hudson. It is one pipeline in a three pipeline project impacting MA, CT and NY. It will blast right next to many people's houses and wells. The residents, and the town, were misinformed about the nature of the project, with erroneous maps being circulated in the environmental community. In Massachusetts, the Audubon Society has filed suit on the basis of the project not having an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and not adhering to expected water protection standards.

Bethlehem, claiming this is just maintenance on an existing line, was also unaware that there is a pig receiver attached to this bypass pipeline which is designed to generate hazardous waste by cleaning the gas line by scraping it out. The concentrated radioactive waste will include radon, mercury, PCBs and numerous other toxic hydrocarbons. Since these are bioaccumulative in the food chain, they are of especial alarm to the protected species that Bethlehem traditionally respects. Since these tributaries flow into the estuary, this small project is of regional significance.

We say no to phenomenal public health and environmental risk with no local benefit and we say "LEAVE IT IN THE GROUND." We also function as a legal defense fund to work against the Connecticut Expansion. **Contact: Grace Nichols, 404-337-9916; mtnsbluegreen@gmail.com.**

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## Save the Pine Bush — Addressing Climate Change

*by Mark Schaeffer*

Save the Pine Bush will launch a series of programs on the climate crisis and practical solutions at our September 21 meeting. That meeting will include a discussion of NYRenews (www.NYRenews.org), a new statewide coalition devoted to a rapid transition to 100% renewable energy, environmental justice, and creating large numbers of new living wage jobs in the clean energy economy.

Expanding beyond the usual environmental suspects, such as 350.org, Alliance for a Green Economy, Catskill Mountainkeeper, Environmental Advocates, Peoples Climate Movement and Sierra Club, the NY Renews coalition includes New York branches of such major unions as the Service Employees (SSEU), Communication Workers (CWA), Nurses (NYSNA), Teachers (NYSUT), Teamsters and Auto Workers (UAW); community organizations from PUSH Buffalo to the Long Island Progressive Coalition, including ALIGN, Citizen Action of NY, Community Voices Heard, El Puente, Make the Road NY, NY Working Families, Syracuse United Neighbors, UPROSE, and environmental justice groups including NYC Environmental Justice Alliance and WE ACT.

### *NYRenews points of unity*

1. We seek a sustainable future for the earth and its people... all people have a right to live and make a living on a living planet.

2. Climate change represents a serious threat to all and especially to vulnerable people such as workers, people of color, seniors, youth, and the poor. Governments at all levels need to act now.

3. Unchecked corporate power jeopardizes a sustainable future. We support democratic and public control of the energy and finance sectors ...

4. We can address both the climate crisis and the inequality crisis with the same set of policies.

5. We support rapid movement toward 100% clean renewable energy.

6. Climate protection must serve as a means to greater economic justice and stronger local economies. The jobs created by climate protection must be good jobs that respect workers' right to organize. Jobs must be open and accessible to those who have been excluded from and discriminated against

7. Climate protection must challenge environmental and racial injustice. We prioritize climate-vulnerable frontline communities and energy-insecure communities.

8. Workers employed in carbon-intensive industries should be guaranteed work in new industries and be provided strong social safety net benefits.

9. We must ensure community participation and oversight in decision making.

# Environmental Injustice at Ezra Prentice Apartments and Community Health Study

## EPA Regional Administrator to Speak August 17

by Dominick Calsolaro

The Ezra Prentice Homes, an Albany Housing Authority project consisting of 179 units, is located in Albany's South End, at the southern end of South Pearl Street (Route 32). The area where Ezra Prentice is situated is a **designated environmental justice community**. The residents of Ezra Prentice, Old South Pearl Street, and lower Mount Hope Drive, suffer from the adverse health and environmental affects of: Crude-oil-by-rail; other industrial activities at the Port of Albany; traffic from the adjacent highway, I787; a county sewage treatment plant; a recycling center; and hundreds of diesel-engine trucks that drive over South Pearl Street to-and-from the Port everyday.

In addition to these already existing environmental and health stressers, the Ezra Prentice neighborhood, an **Environmental "INjustice"** community, is now facing the prospects of Global's request to construct heating facilities so it can heat rail cars transporting tar sands oil from Canada and the construction of the Pilgrim Pipelines that will be able to carry over 16 mil-

lion gallons of petroleum products everyday. If these two proposals get approval, many, many more crude-oil-by-rail unit trains will be coming into the Port and staging behind the Ezra Prentice Homes.

Due to these hazards, and because of the many complaints residents of Ezra Prentice have publicly pronounced regarding health-related issues, AVillage has enlisted Resident Outreach Workers and, with the assistance of the UAlbany's School of Public Health, Albany Medical College and the College of Pharmacy, is conducting a health survey of the residents of Ezra Prentice. While the survey is not complete, the numbers of people with significant health problems is alarming. As of the end of June, 40% of the way through the survey, a whopping 50% of the residents (many children) are suffering from asthma! Another 20% have other respiratory diseases and 12% have chemical sensitivities. In addition, other health studies show: the maternal mortality rate in zip code 12202 is more than double the State average; infant mortality rate is

23.3/1000 live births; and preterm births are 16% of all infants born.

To help create a clearer picture of what the residents of Ezra live with, AVillage has also begun to count the number of diesel-engine trucks that travel along South Pearl Street, which splits the Ezra Prentice apartment complex in half. The June 30, 2016 count of diesel-engine trucks showed a total of 1089 trucks from 6:00am to 9:00pm. On average, that's 73 trucks per hour. If you eliminate the early and late hours, and concentrate on the hours from 7:00am to 6:00pm, the number of trucks per hour was 91. Five of those eleven day-time, one-hour time slot counts, showed over 100 trucks per hour, with a high of 125 between 9 and 10:00am!

[In connection with this issue, EPA Regional Administrator Judith Enck will be speaking at the Ezra Prentice Community Room, 625 South Pearl Street, Albany, NY on **Wednesday, August 17 at 6:00 PM**. Refreshments will be served by Save the Pine Bush.]

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### Mark your Calendars! Next Save the Pine Bush Dinner Dates:

Wednesday, September 21, 2016

Wednesday, October 19, 2016

Wednesday, November 16, 2016

Wednesday, December 21, 2016

Please note: we will be trying out some new menus!

And, please attend the Community Meeting on Wednesday, August 17 at 6:00,  
Ezra Prentice Community Room, 625 South Pearl Street, Albany, NY

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