

PILGRIM STATION: Special permit for dry cask storage?

18 petitioners appeal to Zoning Board to require permit

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Wicked Local Plymouth

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Simonson, Diane Buckbee, Susan and John Carr and Patricia and John Carr, Frederick Parris, Sharl and Dr. Eric Heller, local attorney Theodore Bosen, Dr. Phyllis Troia, Richard Wickenham, Christine Bostek, and Norman Pierce, and Kingston residents Pine DuBois and Adam Augello.

“We are going to get sued; that’s a fact,” ZBA member Ed Conroy said during last week’s meeting. “Prepare for it.”

Conroy seemed to reference the possibility that the appellants could sue the town if the ZBA upholds the position that the work doesn’t require a special permit. It is possible, however, that Entergy could sue the town if the ZBA were to rule in favor of EcoLaw’s position that the storage construction require a special permit.

Critics of Entergy and, specifically, Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station, say they are not against dry cask storage, per se. What they want is an approval process that would help guarantee transparency in the manner in which dry-cask storage work is conducted at the plant. Concerns for this nuclear power plant have intensified in recent months with news of leaks and shutdowns hitting the papers. The nuclear disaster at Fukushima in Japan has only added to concerns for the safety of Plymouth’s nuclear power facility in the event of a natural or other type of disaster. The list of “what ifs” is long, including what would happen in a possible earthquake or a rising sea level, or if underground utilities to the storage units should become corroded by seawater.

“Each of the appellants resides within the 10-mile Emergency Planning Zone for Pilgrim, has legally cognizable interests that are adversely affected by the grant of the Zoning permit and denial of the request for enforcement...,” the appeal reads.

The appeal is requesting that the ZBA grant requests including annulling the permit that was granted, requiring Entergy to seek a special permit for the project and granting that permit only if the board determines that the storage is not a prohibited use. The appeal also requests that the ZBA only grant the permit if the units are limited to the operating life of Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station and only if other appropriate and necessary conditions and safeguards are observed.

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