



TOWN OF UXBRIDGE  
**OFFICE OF THE TOWN MANAGER**

21 South Main Street  
Uxbridge, Massachusetts 01569-1851  
508-278-8600 ♦ Fax 508-278-8605  
[Dgenereux@uxbridge-ma.gov](mailto:Dgenereux@uxbridge-ma.gov)

David Genereux  
Town Manager

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)**  
**Special Town Meeting Articles 2 & 3**  
**Proposed Power Plant, 775 Millville Road, Uxbridge**

As you may be aware, the Town has received a proposal by EMI NextGen to construct a 1-gigawatt power plant at the Immanuel Pit site at 775 Millville Road. The presentation materials provided by the company propose infrastructure improvements, significant annual payments to the Town, along with other potential benefits. The Board of Selectmen has set a *Special Town Meeting, to take place at 9:00 am April 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Uxbridge High School at 300 Quaker Highway* to discuss and vote on changes to the zoning bylaws necessary to site this plant, as well as a rezoning of the parcel, and approval of the borrowing authorization for the new wastewater treatment plant.

These FAQs summarizes questions that have been raised about the power plant and the changes to the bylaws, in an effort to inform citizens in advance of the meeting. Please be advised that the Finance Committee will be holding its public hearing on *Saturday, March 19, at 9:00 am* in the High School Gym.

The questions are broken out by subject matter for easy reference. Many of the technical records are addressed with input from the proposers.

TOWN MEETING AND PROCESS QUESTIONS

**Why has a special town meeting been called to address this issue, instead of putting on the May annual town meeting?**

*A special town meeting was called to address the borrowing authorization for the wastewater treatment plant. When this proposal was received, the manager made the recommendation to the Board of Selectmen that this be included with the wastewater treatment plant article, allowing the annual town meeting to deal strictly with financials and miscellaneous articles.*

**Why did the Town Manager sponsor the articles, rather than having the petitioner gather signatures?**

*Petitioner articles require 200 signatures to be gathered before placement on the warrant. As the Board of Selectmen has charged the manager with work on the zoning bylaws, it made sense for both articles to be sponsored by the manager in order to be able to start the discussion as soon as possible.*

*Special Town Meeting, April 2, 2016, 9 a.m., Uxbridge High School, 300 Quaker Highway*



**Why does the proposed bylaw allow for two plants of this output?**

*The current bylaw allows for up to two plants be sited on industrial land via special permit form the Planning Board, with no town meeting action required. The bylaw changes, as proposed, allows for the same amount of plants, with larger capacity to match today's demand for power.*

**Why are there seven changes to the zoning bylaws?**

*All seven changes are required to make the proposed changes consistent. They are:*

- 1) Current size limitation of a 350 megawatt plant increased to 1 gigawatt.*
- 2) Planning Board currently can only issue special permits to up to two plants with a combined generating capacity of 500 Megawatts to two plants with a combined capacity of 2 gigawatts. Coal and wood burning plants are now prohibited.*
- 3) Definition of "Electric Generating facility" simplified.*
- 4) Change to table of use from Facilities with capacity of 350 megawatts or less to nominal 1 gigawatt or less.*
- 5) Duplicative language removed.*
- 6) Height limitation language for special permit included*
- 7) Height limitation language from above listed on table for easy reference*

**What other industries will be allowed with this bylaw change?**

*None. The bylaw change only allows for larger power generation facilities. The proposed changes actually narrow the scope by prohibiting coal or wood burning power plants.*

**What's the rush in permitting this project?**

*The actual permitting of the Project will take well over a year at the least and require approvals from a number of Town and state authorities, including the Town of Uxbridge Planning Board, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection and the state's Energy Facilities Siting Board.*

*The sole reason for the Town Meeting vote now is to modify the limits on the amount of energy that a plant in Uxbridge is allowed to generate because the present limit is too low to allow the operation of an economically viable plant.*

*If the by law revisions are approved at Town Meeting, that will just allow the permitting process to go forward. Approval of the proposed by law revisions does not in any way mean that the project is approved.*

**Aside from Town Meeting, what boards control the permitting process?**

*Planning Board, Conservation, Water & Sewer Commissioners, Public Safety and possibly the Board of Health will all have to be consulted as part of the permitting process. There would also be state and federal permitting.*



**Does another vote come before town meeting?**

*No. Two plants can currently be sited and approved without town meeting. If the bylaw change is approved the project would move on to federal, state and local permitting.*

**How often can you change the zoning bylaws?**

*Changes to the zoning bylaws can be put forward by the Planning Board, other boards or committees, by the manager, or via citizen's petition at any town meeting.*

**PROJECT QUESTIONS**

**What will be the wattage of the Project?**

*The Project will have a nominal capacity of 1000 Megawatts (1 gigawatt), but the actual watts generated will depend on the ambient conditions, particularly the outside temperature and humidity.*

**How much acreage will the property use for the plant?**

*It is anticipated that the plant will take up approximately 25 acres and be located primarily in the disturbed area of the property that previously served as a gravel pit.*

**The town bylaw currently allows for two standby plants, with a maximum wattage size of one at 350 megawatts. How much larger, in physical size, is this plant?**

*The technology advances in combustion turbine materials allowing for increased firing temperatures, enhanced compressor design and increased cooling flows over the last 10-yr's has resulted in plant efficiency's and MW output increasing significantly without a linear increase in physical size. A 1000MW plant today (two 500MW blocks) is only marginally larger than a 500MW (two 250MW blocks) plant back in the early 2000's. Also with the advancements of the single shaft design in the United States the overall plant footprint is reduced, which is the configuration being proposed for the Town.*

**How tall will the stacks be?**

*The final engineering design is not complete but the company estimates that the stacks will be approximately 180 feet high to ensure proper dispersion. One of the reasons they selected the Immanuel quarry as the site for the Project is because the stacks will not be visible from most vantages outside of the property. Visual simulations are being prepared that will demonstrate what will be visible after construction from a variety of points in the surrounding neighborhood. Those simulations will be available for public view in the near future.*



**How much noise would the plant emit?**

*Massachusetts has some of the strictest noise control regulations in the United States, and the company will not be permitted to commence construction until it is demonstrated that the project will satisfy those controls on noise emissions and whatever additional requirements the Town may have. DEP will not permit a plant to emit noise greater than 10 decibels over the sound level measured in the neighborhood at the quietest time and it is possible that the Energy Facilities Siting Board will impose an even tougher standard. We will adopt whatever practicable Best Available Control Technology (BACT) is needed to ensure we meet the state's toughest standard and the Town's requirements.*

**How often and for how long would the plant operate on a weekly basis?**

*As the plant is not anticipated to be a peak producer, it will be designed to be in continuous operation. However, there may be low demand periods when the plant is offline.*

**What will be emitted into the air?**

*Unlike older power plants, the only "plume" coming from the stacks of the Project, and only on cold days, would be condensed water. The Project would emit carbon dioxide and minimal amounts of NO<sub>x</sub>, carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide and what is called particulate matter (PM) but these are emitted at low levels as to have no meaningful impact on the air in the neighborhood, much less the surrounding areas, and there will be no discernible smells emitted by the Project.*

*EMI NextGen will be required to do extensive modeling of the air in a 10 kilometers radius of the Project using 5 years of weather data to demonstrate that the amounts of emissions from the Project will not have a material negative impact on Uxbridge or surrounding towns. Using those emission models, the company will be required to prove that as to each possible emission, the Project satisfies the applicable National Ambient Air Quality Standard. The Project cannot be built until it is proven that the Project can meet these very stringent air standards enforced by DEP.*

**Will diesel fuel be stored on the property?**

*ISO New England, which governs the generation and transmission of energy in New England, has established a structure for energy generation that necessitates that gas fired plants such as the Project have Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel available as a backup fuel. Because the Project would be sited adjacent to a main natural gas line, the company's expectation is that the plant will be able to run solely on natural gas. But they would have to have USLD on site in the unlikely event that they are directed by ISO to operate and gas is not available. The USLD will be stored in double containment tanks that will be required to satisfy stringent storage and use requirements.*

**How often will the USLD be utilized?**

*The USLD will be permitted for a maximum use of sixty days. In reality, the goal is to use the*



*USLD only during the testing phase of the plant, and during periods when the main gas supply is unavailable.*

**What is the risk of chemicals or liquid fuel leaking into the aquifer or the Blackstone River?**

*Combined cycle gas turbine plants like the one proposed for the Project have a record for protecting the environment from exposure to chemicals or liquid fuels. Any chemicals or liquid fuel stored at the project will be in fully contained tanks surrounded by secondary containment. Those tanks will only be permitted for usage after the company demonstrates that they fully comply with stringent regulations that govern their use; and protocols for the use of the tanks and any chemicals and liquid fuels have been established and approved.*

**Would the plant be secure?**

*The plant would have to adhere to all of the safety and security protocols required by state and federal agencies, including having tanks surrounded by secondary containment, emergency shutdown procedures, and public notification policies. The plant itself would be surrounded by protective fencing, with gated access points, and monitored security cameras. The company will also work with the Public Safety Committee to address any other concerns that they may have.*

**How much water will the project consume? How will the project's use of water affect the Town wells and neighboring homeowners?**

*The plant would be air-cooled, which means that it would use far less water than water-cooled plants. EMI NextGen are still working with their engineers and the Town's water officials to determine what the water need would be and the resources available to meet that need without having a negative impact on other users, including homeowners. It's important to understand that the Commonwealth's Department of Environmental Protection ultimately controls water use and if our requirements meant that the Town would need to draw more water than what is currently authorized, DEP would require a full analysis of the impact of the additional draw on the aquifer, among other things. The Project would not be allowed to have a negative impact on the Town's aquifer or the water use of homeowners.*

**What action is the Town taking in order to evaluate the impacts the power plant project will have on the water and wastewater infrastructure?**

*The Uxbridge Department of Public Works (DPW) has engaged their engineering consultants to assist in the review and analysis of the project demands provided by EMI NextGen. The DPW is communicating with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection to further investigate the Water Management Act (301 CMR 11) permitting process, which would be required to expand the Town's water withdrawal. This process will continue and be vetted further through the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act permitting process that the power plant project will be required to complete should they move forward with their project.*



**Are there any state regulations that will supersede local by-laws or will home rule authority prevail?**

*EMI NextGen does not anticipate any conflict between state and Uxbridge regulations applicable to the project.*

**ECONOMIC BENEFIT QUESTIONS**

**The company asserts that it would become a major taxpayer upon plant completion. How would the annual funds be spent?**

*The project is expected to generate between three and four million dollars per year annually in the form of PILOT (Payment-in-lieu-of-taxes) revenue for the Town. These funds would be used for three purposes (Please note that none includes funding of the general fund budget):*

- 1. Infrastructure repair and replacement, including town roads, bridges, buildings, and equipment, which would normally be financed through debt exclusion.*
- 2. Funding of accumulated liabilities that the Town is currently unable to fund, such as other post employment benefits (OPEB), a roughly forty million dollar liability, which is required to be funded by 2040.*
- 3. Tax relief – The Town's average tax bill, is currently lower than Sutton and Mendon, but higher than Douglas and Millville. A portion of these funds would be used annually to reduce the tax levy.*

*While the operating budget would still be strained, having the funding to repair roads, town and school buildings, and equipment would likely assist in economic development efforts.*

**What other potential benefits are there?**

*There are likely to be road and water/sewer improvements, depending on whether the project gets permitted. Ideally, the Town would prefer that the plant be a water/sewer customer in order to help reduce the cost of the wastewater treatment plant to ratepayers. There are also other annual benefits that can be negotiated as part of the PILOT process, such as providing for the payment of certain capital projects, sponsoring activities, or annual scholarships.*

**How many jobs would be attached to the project?**

*According to company literature, 300 – 350 construction jobs would be created during the buildout of the plant, and 22-24 permanent positions.*

**Who should we contact for more information?**

*If you need to speak to someone regarding the power plant project or warrant articles, please contact: David Genereux, Town Manager at 508-278-8600 extension 2001.*