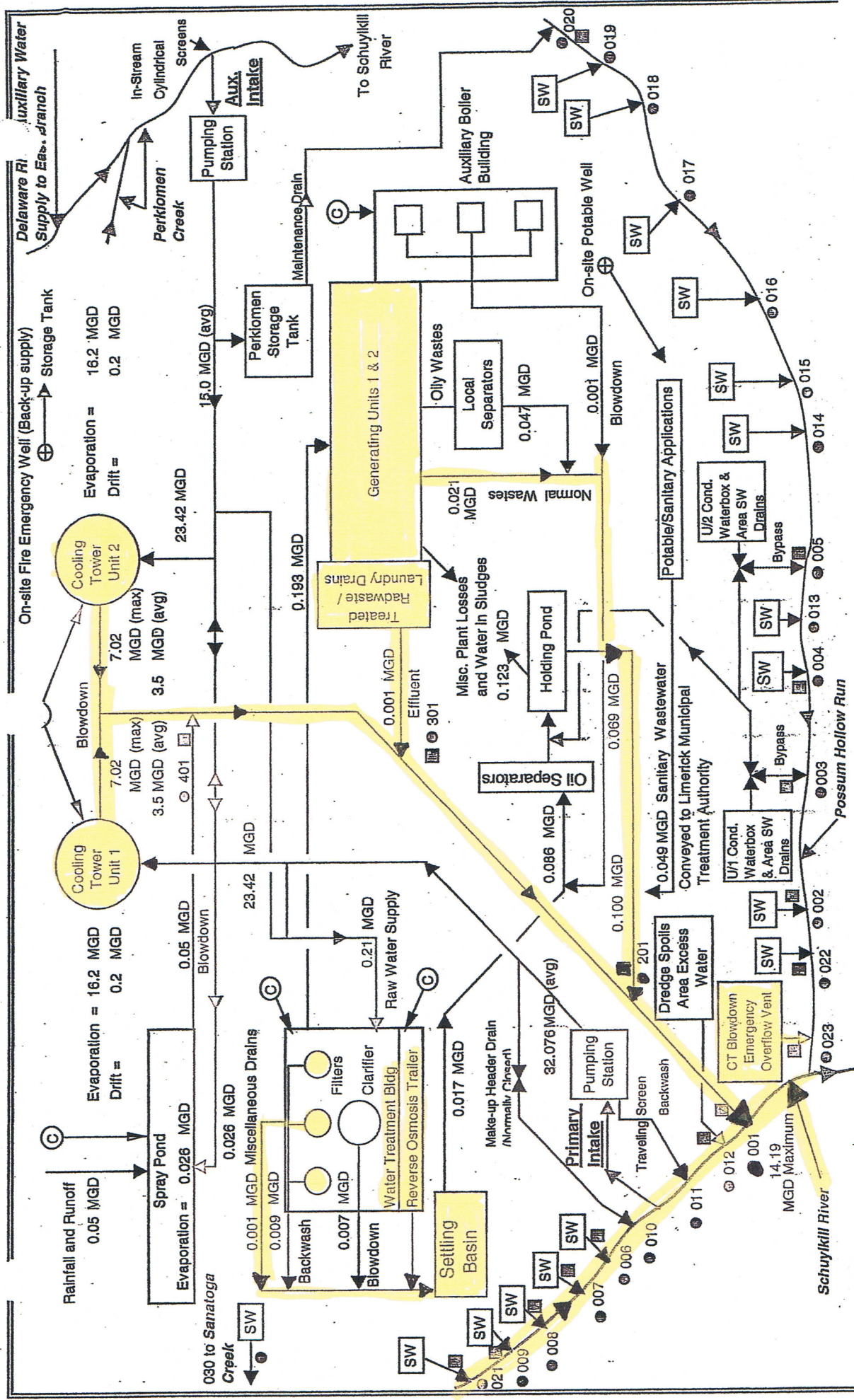
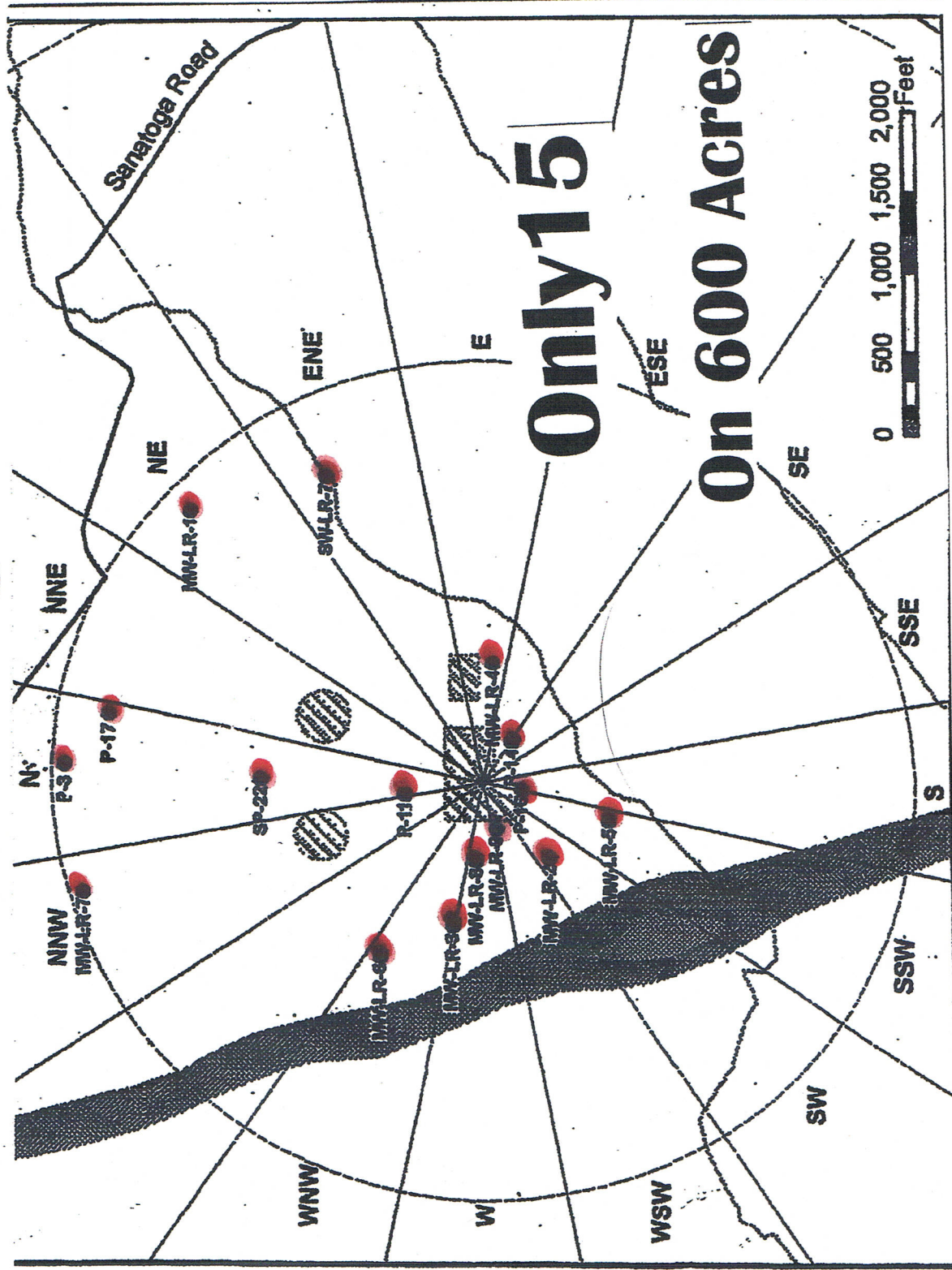


Countless Opportunities For Breakdowns And Leaks Into Groundwater



Limerick Nuclear Plant Radioactive Groundwater Monitoring Wells



Questions raised over Frick's Lock lease plan

By Phil Ellingsworth Jr.
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EAST COVENTRY

EAST COVENTRY — A lease agreement with Exelon for Frick's Lock village was the main topic of discussion at Monday's supervisors meeting, as members could be voting on a final agreement as soon as February.

Exelon and township officials are looking to enter into a 10-year lease, with the company giving the township eight acres of land and four buildings, also completing restoration and landscaping work to the village.

Township Solicitor Mark A. Hosterman said the two parties are close to a final agreement, but some language in the document needs to be worked out.

One of the recommendations the township would like made in the agreement is if anything happens to the buildings during the term of the lease, neither

If the township decides to terminate its lease, Joseph Szafran, communications manager for the Limerick Generating Station, said Exelon would continue to maintain the property and buildings and would provide tours of the property.

State Sen. Andy Dinniman (D-19th) said he worked on the Frick's Lock issue since the time he was a Chester County Commissioner, and it is finally coming into fruition. "You have a historical treasure in this township," Dinniman said.

He added that he thinks it is wonderful the two parties have gotten to this point and are possibly going to restore the site because it will teach people about the history of the area and allow them to access the Schuylkill River Trail.

Not everyone in attendance at the meeting was pleased about the lease agreement.

Lewis Cuthbert, president for the Alliance for a Clean Envi-

ronment, felt Exelon was not being upfront with the township about environmental dangers Frick's Lock may pose. Cuthbert alleged there is radioactive groundwater contamination at the village, resulting from leaks at the generating station.

"We advise you, give that some thought," he said. "Radioactive contamination is a serious issue."

If there is radioactive underground contamination, it would be a "large-scale problem," something stretching beyond Frick's Lock, Hosterman said.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Nuclear Regulatory Commission and other

agencies constantly monitor the generating station, so walking away from the agreement would not make the alleged contamination go away, Hosterman said.

"It's a huge issue, that is an EPA issue, a DEP issue," he said.

Szafran said the company has strict monitoring of their operations in place, and all documentation of what it does at the plant is made public through the DEP's website.

A resident also fired back at Cuthbert's allegations, asking why the township should stop a process from moving forward based on accusations.

"Why should they stop protecting a historical place because of an accusation?" Robert Preston asked.

The historic canal-era village, one of East Coventry's first settlements, has been abandoned since the late 1960s to early 1970s when the Limerick Generating Station was constructed.

If the lease agreement is approved, the village would once again be opened to the public, schools and other organizations for tours to teach about the area's history.

The supervisors will meet again at 7 p.m. on Feb. 14 to possibly take action on the Frick's Lock lease agreement.

Frick's Locks could end up a financial burden for taxpayers

I wish to commend and recognize East Coventry's historical commission on its work to preserve Frick's Locks. The group has worked hard over the years, and is sincere in their efforts. Unlike some of the other township supervisors, however, I don't believe this is a good enough reason to abandon prudent fiscal management and embrace a liability which is likely to cost East Coventry's taxpayers money. And for what return on investment? No cost-benefit analysis has been performed; instead, I keep hearing phrases such as, "This is a once in a lifetime opportunity?"

For whom? It's not a once in a lifetime opportunity for East Coventry. We've been involved with Exelon (PECO) over the years in different types of arrangements, none of which have benefited the township. "But this time it's different," I'm told. Why? Exelon is proposing to give us \$30,000.

And how long will that money last? No one can answer the question, again, because no cost-benefit analysis has been done. Rather, those who believe this is a good idea keep pushing it along telling us "it won't cost the township anything, you can get grant money." Never mind that most grant money requires some sort of match. Not to worry, "you can get another grant to match the match money you need."

Grants don't write themselves, of course. Our historical consultant who's paid \$75 per hour would write those grants, and unless we can get a grant for her to write grants, she gets paid from our tax dollars. And who would we compete with for grants? Manayunk, Mont Clare, Leesport, etc., readily accessible tourist destinations with watered locks, not just old buildings. I'm just not as optimistic as the person who would get paid \$75 per hour to write these grant requests.

The other question I have is why East Coventry Township? Why should we foot the bill? Why should we accept the liability? The answer's pretty

obvious: It's easier to dupe the local yokels than to deal with county, state and federal officials. You can't blame a giant corporation for doing what's in its best interests.

Likewise you can't blame an elected official for doing his level best to protect the interests of those he was elected to serve. I'm opposed to accepting Exelon's proposal because I believe it's not in the best interests of my constituents, and it may adversely affect them in the future. East Coventry is not the entity best equipped to produce a Frick's Locks renaissance. I'm concerned that unless you let your supervisors know how you feel, they will succumb to the pressures of Exelon and to other advisors who are determined, by hook or by crook, to force East Coventry Township to accept this deal. Please make your voices heard, before it's too late.

MICHAEL ALBERT MOYER
East Coventry Township Supervisor

ANOTHER VIEW

Nuclear plants pose threat to groundwater

A radioactive groundwater disaster could be unfolding around U.S. nuclear plants, according to a shocking documented report released in 2010, titled *"Leak First, Fix Later"* that can be found at www.beyondnuclear.org.

- 102 of 104 U.S. nuclear reactors leaked radiation into groundwater from aging and deteriorating buried pipes under the reactors.
- There are two to 20 miles of buried pipeline under each nuclear plant which obviously go largely uninspected and unmaintained.

Limerick Nuclear Plant's 25 year old underground pipes may have already leaked. It's virtually impossible to detect all leaks in miles of pipes tangled beneath the plant. Monitoring can easily fail to detect leaks.

Guest
Columnist

This is a fractured bedrock aquifer where radioactive contamination can travel in any direction, at any depth, and fail to ever be detected. Reliable monitoring would be prohibitively costly.

Radioactive leaks from Limerick could impact any of the region's residents, now or in the future. There's cause for concern, precaution, and prevention now, before Exelon is permitted to operate Limerick Nuclear Plant for a total of 60 years. None of the 102 nukes that leaked operated more than 41 years.

- Limerick operated since 1985 (25 years). Buried pipes carrying radioactive water are vulnerable to leaks.

- A 20-year license extension to operate until 2049 would allow 35 years more years of radioactive water transport (60 years total). Think what happens to pipes in older homes.

- We can't trust Exelon to immediately detect or disclose leaks. NRC's oversight and enforcement are extremely lax.

Prevention is the only cure. What happens if groundwater becomes radioactive? There's no way to clean it up from the ground. Filtering is cost prohibitive for many, if not impossible. Over 100 to 200 radionuclides are associated with Limerick Nuclear plant.

Before NRC rubberstamps approval for a license extension until 2049, Exelon should be required to replace all pipes buried under Limerick which carry radioactive water.

Exelon, the company with a vested interest in the outcome, claimed there's no problem at Limerick, based solely on their own monitoring and reporting. Evidence below at other Exelon nukes shows why we can't believe or trust Exelon.

Radioactive water contamination at Exelon's

Braidwood Nuclear Plant in Illinois was called by some "Exelon's Radioactive Watergate." Exelon failed to disclose 22 recurring uncontrolled radioactive spills in buried pipelines from 1996 to 2005. Since then, numerous leaks over a 10-year span were revealed at two other Exelon nuclear plants in Illinois. Leaks were significant. Just two Braidwood releases totaled six million gallons of radioactive water. Exelon supplied bottled water to 600 people for more than four years, but groundwater was contaminated for 14 years. It still is. March 2010, a legal settlement was reached. Exelon will be supplying a water system. But groundwater and soil remain radioactive. The mother of a teen battling cancer said, "If the cancer is in the air we breathe or the water we drank, I don't think there's enough money to go around. I know they admitted to mistakes but how do you put a price tag on the environment?" Another resident said, "It's scary to live here, but who in their right minds would buy homes here?"

At Oyster Creek Nuclear Plant in New Jersey Exelon failed to report radioactive water leaking from buried pipes until 2009, just seven days after NRC issued its license renewal for another 20 years. This radioactive water reached a major New Jersey aquifer that supplies drinking water to much of southern New Jersey (Reported 5/10). New Jersey DEP said the leaked radiation (50 times higher than levels allowed by law) has reached southern New Jersey's main source of drinking water. Julia LaMense, Eastern Environmental Law Clinic, condemned NRC "for letting it come to this." She said, "It's a sad day when the 'wait and see' approach taken in response to yet another 'trust us' from Exelon results in contamination of one of the most significant aquifers in the region."

The Mercury story March 28 by Evan Brandt showed the region's residents are already subjected to too much carcinogenic groundwater contamination. It revealed that toxic plumes from two other industrial sites were contaminating groundwater in Limerick. Toxic, carcinogenic groundwater contamination will continue for decades, if not forever, at Pottstown Landfill and the Oxy Superfund site.

It's long past time for precaution and prevention. Exelon will apply for their 20-year Limerick Nuclear Plant license renewal soon. People who care about safe water for their families should get informed and get involved now. Call ACE at 610-326-2387 and leave your name, phone, e-mail.

DR. LEWIS CUTHBERT
ACE President

THE MERCURY
OPINION