

Environmental Health Coalition

COALICION de SALUD AMBIENTAL

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Media Release

For Immediate Release

March 17, 2009

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EHC demands City of Chula Vista retract MMC letter

Opposition of CEC power plant decision mocks community planning process

(Chula Vista) – Environmental Health Coalition and Chula Vista residents today demanded retraction of a comment letter submitted by the City of Chula Vista that suggests the planned MMC power plant is consistent with the Chula Vista General Plan for land use. The 2005 General Plan, crafted with extensive public participation, explicitly prohibits locating industry near homes, schools, or hospitals.

“It’s now clear that this City has no respect for the community or its own laws,” said Laura Hunter, Director of Environmental Health Coalition’s Clean Bay Campaign. “The General Plan is a constitution for future development and should not be abused in such a cavalier fashion and without public input.”

On January 23, the California Energy Commission recommended denial of the MMC project, saying that it is, “inconsistent with applicable laws, ordinances, regulations, and standards and (it) creates unmitigable impacts under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).” The CEC findings showed specifically that the location of the proposed power plant is inconsistent with the General Plan.

Yesterday, on the final day of the comment period leading up to an April 13 CEC hearing, City officials submitted a letter opposing the CEC opinion. The letter was submitted despite Chula Vista Mayor Cheryl Cox telling the *San Diego Union Tribune* on January 24 following the CEC opinion release that “it’s time to move on” and that the city would “work with MMC on finding a new location for the plant.”

EHC is an official party to the CEC proceedings and officially opposed the project. During the more than two year review process, thousands of residents and EHC members testified in opposition to the expansion at public hearings and participated in rallies and protests voicing their opposition.

“To twist the intent of this community’s input and the purpose of the General Plan makes a mockery of community involvement and the entire planning process,” Hunter said.

MMC, a New York-based corporation, wants to replace the current 44 megawatt peaker plant on Main St. in Chula Vista with a 100 megawatt plant located just 350 feet from homes and 1,300 feet from an elementary school. The immediate area near the plant is a community where 81% of residents are people of color and 16% are below the federal poverty level.

CEC Report: www.energy.ca.gov/sitingcases/chulavista/documents/

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