

SHARE COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

SHERIDAN HOLLOW ALLIANCE FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY—MARCH 2020



VICTORY! We stopped the proposed power plant! Now let's shut down the old one!

After three years of fighting a proposed fracked gas power plant in Sheridan Hollow that would have polluted the neighborhood to provide heat and power to the Capitol and Empire State Plaza (Plaza), in April of 2019 the Governor and Legislature agreed that the \$88 million in the state budget for the project should be spent on renewable energy. In September, the New York Power Authority (NYPA) announced plans for a number of renewable projects for the Plaza.

“NYPA has taken an important first step in improving air quality in the neighborhood and starting the transition to renewable energy for the Capitol and Plaza, but much more needs to be done.” said Merton Simpson, Albany County Legislator for Sheridan Hollow and Co-Chair of SHARE. **“The climate crisis demands that we stop emitting greenhouse gasses. Transforming the New York State Capitol to renewable energy is a strong message that New York is serious**

about climate action. Shutting down the Sheridan Avenue Steam Plant will show the state’s commitment to environmental justice for Sheridan Hollow residents.”

The proposed power plant was to be sited in the old ANSWERS plant that burned garbage in the 1980s and 1990s. After community outcry over the toxic ash that covered the neighborhood, it was shut down. NYPA is now considering using the building to house battery storage for renewable energy.

The Sheridan Avenue Steam Plant (SASP) has burned fossil fuels in the community since 1911. It currently burns climate destroying fracked gas to heat and cool the Plaza. SHARE demands that the SASP plant be shut down and that NYPA substitute renewable solutions including geothermal energy that do not require the burning of fossil fuels in the community.



SHARE is a coalition of individuals, community and climate groups, faith based organizations, and environmental justice advocates. We demand renewable solutions to achieve New York's bold climate goals for renewable heat and power and the elimination of the toxic exposure of Sheridan Hollow residents.



The New Climate Law and Sheridan Hollow

The Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, (CLCPA), a state law that passed last June, is already having a positive impact. In 2017, when SHARE began its fight to stop the proposed fracked gas power plant, engineers from the New York Power Authority (NYPA) said that renewables weren't feasible for the Capitol and Plaza. However, after the law passed, NYPA justified in part the new renewable measures they were planning for the Capitol and Plaza because of the need to make progress toward meeting the climate goals in the new law. SHARE has been saying all along that renewables are possible. This new law can help move our state government toward making it happen.

The CLCPA requires a 40% cut in greenhouse gas emissions within ten years and seeks to ensure that low income and communities of color do not bear the brunt of air pollution and climate destruction. 35% of the benefits of spending must directly impact low income and communities of color. The CLCPA provides a wonderful opportunity, but we as activists must continue our fight to demand that state agencies meet and exceed the climate goals and include residents of Sheridan Hollow and other similar communities in the planning process.



FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT SHARE'S CO-CHAIRS:

Merton Simpson: robcor295@cs.com or Ruth Foster: rmfosterny@gmail.com
or check out our website: SHAREAlbany.org

Making renewables work for the Capitol

Now that New York Power Authority (NYPA) abandoned plans for two massive, gas-fired turbines in Sheridan Hollow, what will NYPA do with the \$88 million slated for the project? In a meeting with SHARE members, NYPA laid out their plans. They will:

- Shut down the current back-up generator that spews black smoke into the neighborhood and replace it with a cleaner generator that is sited away from people's homes.
- Demolish the ANSWERS smokestack.
- Electrify one of the chillers, replacing one run on gas to reduce gas consumption of the Sheridan Avenue Steam Plant by 18%.
- Install LED lighting in the Plaza to reduce energy use.
- Incorporate on-site solar and energy storage.
- Pursue development of an off-site solar farm under a power-purchase agreement to generate 50% of the electric needs of the Plaza.
- Pursue further opportunities for energy efficiency and emission reductions at the Plaza.

Future planning must ensure that combustion of fracked gas in Sheridan Hollow is stopped for good and as quickly as possible. Geothermal heating must be incorporated as part of the plan for a future in which daily energy needs of the Plaza can be met without fossil fuels. As the climate crisis worsens, New York can establish itself as a model of true innovation for the nation and the world.

Help SHARE

The Empire State Plaza can become a model of our energy future to protect the well-being of current residents and future generations. We want NYPA and the Governor to do a study on heating the Capitol and Plaza with geothermal energy.