



## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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### **ALBANY COUNTY LL B - the CLEAN AIR LAW PRESS CONFERENCE**

In 2006, Coeymans was a struggling Hudson River town which had just published a Comprehensive Plan agreed by its residents over several years. It included the ambition to turn the abandoned P&M Brickyard on the Hudson River into a Riverfront Community.

Instead, without any consultation, the Port of Coeymans was built on that site and opened the same year. While the Port's public relations celebrate their assembly work on the Willets Ave & Tappan Zee Bridges, its income is dominated by the management of waste, contradicting a 1990s local law challenging the import of solid waste.

Between 2006 and 2019, there has been a creeping, but rapid expansion of the Port's footprint and business - along with opposition from local people who don't want the Coeymans waterfront converted to heavy industrial use. In 2017, the public learned that the Lafarge Cement plant wanted to burn municipal waste from Connecticut. That began a drive to pass the 2019 Coeymans Clean Air Law, precursor to the Albany County Law. Almost immediately, the business interests organized to vote out the Board members who supported the law. Today, the Coeymans Town Board is wholly controlled by people who work with Lafarge and/or the Port of Coeymans.

For those of us opposing this industrial development, centered on waste and incineration, 2020 has been an alarming year in Coeymans. The Town Supervisor, who worked for the Port of Coeymans, says the Clean Air Law is "unenforceable" - meaning he has no intention of enforcing it. Over a dozen new or revised laws have been approved in seven months. Among them, changes to the zoning laws and the Solid Waste law are the most alarming. Solid waste can now be imported into the town with the permission of the Town Board who will approve a privately-owned transfer station site where it can be handled and connected to rail, road and river terminals. Most alarming of all, TCI - a company that recycles electrical transformers containing mineral oil with PCBs - has now applied for an incineration permit. Can PCBs even be incinerated?

What I see in all of this is an ambition to create a major waste management and incineration site on the banks of the Hudson River in an historical Hudson River town, with significant coastal habitats. There are signs that a Coeymans Transfer Station would accept materials from a proposed BioHiTech waste facility in Rensselaer, making Coeymans the center of an interconnected waste management & incineration business in the upper Hudson Valley, linking

similar sites from Hudson to Glens Falls. Most disturbing, all these developments have taken place without any study of their cumulative impact on the river, the air, the soils and the local community. It has been a largely secretive process without any serious public debate or dialogue.

Is this the future we want for the Upper Hudson Valley? Is this the kind of business that will bring a high quality of life to Albany County and its neighbors? The ability to incinerate waste is clearly at the heart of these plans, which is why every Clean Air Law has been opposed by Lafarge and the Port of Coeymans. It is not opposed by the people who live in and around Albany County - the public comments show that. They know that the quality of the air we breathe and the health of the natural world are the greatest assets we have. They should not be wantonly destroyed.

Dan McCoy should sign the Albany Clean Air Law immediately.