

Two Fossil Fuel Power Plants Are Being Built in Stuyvesant Town (CHP Summary)

In 2018, Beam Living announced they would be constructing a power plant fueled by natural gas purchased from Con Ed on the Main level between 245 and 271 Avenue C. The plant would produce steam for 24 buildings, and the electricity would go back to Con Ed to offset management's costs. Renderings of the plant shown to the Tenants Association and to tenants depicted a smaller, less intrusive structure than the final version. The plant was almost complete in 2020 when Beam Living announced a second plant, this one to be constructed under the floor of Garage #1 on 20th Street. Any electricity produced would be sold back to Con Ed.

Stuyvesant Town would be sandwiched between two power plants—and Con Ed on 14th Street would still be pumping out energy and pollution.

What would this mean for our already bad air quality, our health, and the environment? But not just us—anyone and any facility within at least a half-mile radius.

Another essential issue: is the property even zoned to allow a power plant? We are a residential area with a commercial overlay—that's why we have stores, garages, and other commercial spaces on the perimeter. Within the property, though, any commercial space must be what's called an accessory use: for the use and benefit of tenants.

But all the electricity from 20th Street will be sold to Con Ed and available to nonresidents.

What the Tenants Association and concerned tenants have done:

1. We tried to obtain copies of the projects' environmental studies, air modeling studies, and various permits. Management dragged its feet, so we contacted our elected representatives. On October 9, 2020, **State Senator Brad Hoylman, Assembly Member Harvey Epstein, and City Council Member Keith Powers** [sent a letter](#) to CEO Rick Hayduk, asking for a pause on all work.

What we uncovered: Management was **lacking a key permit** to assemble the equipment for the Avenue C project. The NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation **issued a violation**, and work had to stop. In addition, management had to apply for new permits that would cover both power plants as a single project. As a result, the trenching (digging holes for piping) that had begun for the 20th Street plant was temporarily stopped.

2. We began doing research on our air quality—it's the second worst in the city. (See our [PowerPoint presentation](#) for details.)

3. We began gathering zoning, environmental, and air quality experts, and continuing to work with our electeds to counteract the proposed plants.

4. We sent a letter to all the residents of the 13 buildings closest to the two plants, asking them about their concerns.

5. We posted an [online petition](#), which garnered hundreds of responses; eblasted twice to the community; and posted about the project on the [TA Facebook page](#).

6. We alerted Community Board 6 and made a detailed [PowerPoint presentation](#) about the projects on January 5, 2021.

As a result of our efforts, management hired new experts and multiple law firms to bolster their position. They finally posted revised information on their website, including links to local agency permits.

But Beam Living continues to apply for and get permits from the city's Dept. of Buildings for pieces of the project—even though there has been no determination whether the 20th Street plant is allowed under applicable zoning regulations.

7. On January 19, 2021, at the request of the Tenants Association, Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney, State Senator Brad Hoylman, Assembly Member Harvey Epstein, and Council Member Keith Powers sent a [letter to Commissioner Melanie La Rocca](#) of the Dept. of Buildings, asking for a determination of what the zoning allows.

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