

Press



Release

11 New Hempstead Road, New City, NY (845) 638-5100 Fax: (845) 638-5675 Email: legclerk@co.rockland.ny.us.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Hon. Harriet Cornell
Laura Incalcaterra, Community Relations Coordinator

(845) 638-5753
(845) 638-5184

Cornell Asks Public Service Commission to Direct Suez New York To Formally Abandon Water Supply Project

Preliminary Costs Already Very High; Focus Of Attention Must Be On Conservation, Infrastructure Upgrades, More

New City, NY (Dec. 15, 2015) – Rockland County Legislator Harriet D. Cornell (D-West Nyack) today sent a letter to the Secretary of the New York State Public Service Commission asking the agency to direct Suez New York to formally abandon the Haverstraw Water Supply Project.

A decision may be rendered when the PSC meets on Thursday, Dec. 17.

In her letter to Secretary Kathleen H. Burgess, Cornell also asked that a clear decision be issued so that Suez New York, formerly known as United Water New York, and the County can focus on important issues.

Cornell wrote: “I also respectfully request that the Commission issue a clear decision taking the Haverstraw Water Supply Project completely off the table, thereby enabling the energies and initiatives of both Suez and the County of Rockland to focus on conservation, best practices, public education and participation, enlightened water management and repair/replacement of aging water mains and pipes.

“If the door is left open to the continued possibility of the Haverstraw Water Supply project, the interests of the company will always be mixed, and the opposition long demonstrated by the Rockland public will continue. The preliminary costs of the project are already very high; leaving it ‘on the shelf’ will run up still more costs, as the issue continues to fester.”

Cornell is also Chairwoman of the Rockland County Task Force on Water Resources Management, which resulted after United Water's effort to build a costly Hudson River desalination plant energized residents into opposing the facility in favor of additional studies of the existing supply and demand, and deeper exploration of alternatives.

In November 2014, the Public Service Commission determined that while Rockland may one day need more water, it doesn't need it until at least 2020. In the same decision, the PSC said opponents of the plant would now have the time they needed to implement conservation measures designed to delay or possibly prevent the project.

Suez and the Rockland Task Force have been working productively on conservation planning. But, Suez's anticipated 2016 rate request filing with the PSC is not expected to cover all the conservation possibilities being aggressively studied and developed by the Task Force with public input, Cornell wrote in her letter.

“With a clear decision rendered by the Commission, all parties can move forward together, productively,” Cornell said. “A partnership between Suez and the Rockland community that focuses on mutually desirable goals and results in a sustainable water future for the residents and businesses of Rockland is a far better outcome.”

The Rockland Task Force next meets at 5:30 p.m. Jan. 25 in Room 301 at Clarkstown Town Hall, 10 Maple Ave. in New City. All meetings are open to the public. Visit the Rockland County Planning Department at <http://rocklandgov.com/> and click on the Task Force tab for more information.

###

Visit us: <http://www.rocklandgov.com>
Like us on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/rockleg>