

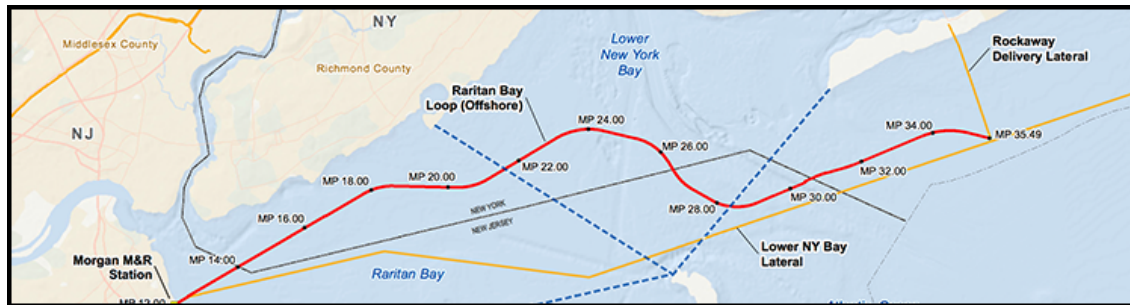


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Downtowns Begin to feel Economic Impact of Natural Gas Moratorium



As the natural gas moratorium imposed after the rejection of the NESE pipeline enters its third month, the economic impact to downtowns, small businesses, affordable housing, mixed use, schools, hospitals, office/industrial space and other forms of development have gone mostly unreported.

Over 2800 applications for redevelopment are now blocked, with that number climbing each day. While National Grid has committed to transitioning energy sources off fossil fuels and towards renewables as part of the NYS goals and plan to address climate change, they cannot do so in a timeframe that would allow applications to be approved. The LI Main Street Alliance and local business owners have also called for an end to the moratorium in order to help grow the local economy.

The natural gas pipeline fight has really begun to hurt a wide variety of local businesses. Some of the buildings being stopped include those being built green, new diverse restaurants in neighborhoods that need investment to provide jobs for folks, and even affordable housing projects that give opportunities for residents to stay in our region. This has cause alternative energy sources to be pressed into service, including diesel fuel generators, oil heat, propane gas, (which all produce further greenhouse gasses) or electric heat and stoves (which comes at greater cost to business owners and residents).

This conflict has led some to believe that none of this has been thought through, which stands in contrast to the common thought that local communities are not creatively planning the issues that are truly local like land use. What has happened here is that there has been no creative planning on a regional level for reliable, affordable, clean energy.

If local communities had the opportunities to plan these energy systems, you can guarantee that residents and businesses would not be hurt like this. When it is left to bigger, more distant regional bureaucracies and interests there is no sense of urgency to sort these matters out.

Vision has supported the NESE pipeline (and hopefully the last pipeline) as a transition to greener energy and a carbon free future following the goals NYS outlined in their climate change legislation. What happens if the pipeline is not approved is anybody's guess, but more stories of businesses suffering are bound to appear.

Like most public issues these days that are driven by the extremes, the positions from groups on the polarizing sides of this debate are what got us here. It will take radically different skillsets to get us out.

You can read more on this important issue at Crain's New York [here](#), and Long Island Business News [here](#).

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