

Article published August 10, 2010

Decision advances East Toledo coke plant

Panel backs role of co-generation

By TOM HENRY
BLADE STAFF WRITER

Backers of the proposed \$800 million FDS Coke Plant and co-generation power plant believe they have crossed another bureaucratic hurdle that has made their project more attractive to investors.

FDS learned on Friday that the Midwest Independent Transmission System Operator Inc., agrees the proposed 135-megawatt co-generation power plant is a viable addition to the project.

According to a final impact study, the project would not impair the region's electrical grid and the plant could be connected to it at a cost of \$2 million or less.

"This is the best outcome we could have ever really hoped to get," said Lance Traves, project spokesman and president of Labyrinth Management Group Inc., of Medina, Ohio, FDS' technical consultant.

Mr. Traves said the report "eliminates the guessing as to what the interconnection costs would be."

He said a one-time \$2 million connection fee for a plant that is expected to generate \$50 million a year in electricity should be attractive to investors.

FDS has not broken ground on the project despite holding an Ohio Environmental Protection Agency permit for it since 2004 and getting it modified to the EPA's liking a year later.

The project is designed for a 51-acre site on the East Toledo-Oregon line owned by the Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority. Large ovens would produce coke, a vital ingredient for steel, with waste steam being piped into the co-generation power plant.

Mr. Traves said he now hopes to break ground this fall.

In March, the Ohio Environmental Review Appeals Commission, a state panel empowered to void Ohio EPA permits, rejected an appeal filed by the Sierra Club and the village of Harbor View, which is downwind from the project site.

Mr. Traves said he expects to have the commission's finding upheld in six to nine months. It is currently on appeal in Franklin County Common Pleas Court.

"We want to certainly break ground before that. We think we have a plan to do that now," he said.

Construction is expected to take 2½ years.

FDS has contracts with Talon Consulting to oversee work for the project and with UHDE Corporation of America for engineering and design.

Contact Tom Henry at: thenry@theblade.com or 419-724-6079.

THE LOCATION

The \$800 million project is to include a co-generation power plant on 51 acres on Maumee Bay.



(THE BLADE
Zoom | Photo Reprints)