



**UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
REGION I**
2100 RENAISSANCE BOULEVARD, SUITE 100
KING OF PRUSSIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19406-2713

July 18, 2013

Ms. Mary Lampert
Pilgrim Watch
148 Washington Street
Duxbury, MA 02332

Dear Ms. Lampert:

On behalf of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), I am responding to your June 23, 2013, email which refers to a June 21 editorial in the Patriot Ledger, titled "The NRC must be accountable to the public." Specifically, you expressed concerns about the NRC's commitment to openness and the format of public meetings conducted in the vicinity of Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station.

Please be assured that the NRC is committed to openness and will continue to conduct public outreach meetings with the community surrounding Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station to discuss operation of the plant, significant regulatory decisions, and other important activities. We have considered the comments regarding the open house meeting format to which you allude and have determined that at next year's meeting the public will be afforded an opportunity to engage in a more formal Q and A session. The NRC remains committed to openness and transparency and will continue to engage with the public when appropriate opportunities arise. The NRC staff will also continue to work with the Plymouth Board of Selectmen to provide them with information regarding the NRC's evaluation of Pilgrim's operations and other matters of interest to the Board.

The editorial in the Plymouth Ledger you referenced has been responded to in order to more fully describe NRC's future planned outreach activities. I have enclosed a copy of the response for your information.

Thank you for your continued interest in these matters.

Sincerely,

/RA Darrell J. Roberts for/

William M. Dean
Regional Administrator

Enclosure:
NRC Response Provided to
Newspaper in Reply to Editorial

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*see previous concurrence page

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A recent editorial in the Patriot Ledger could leave readers with the impression that the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has spurned all interactions with the Plymouth Board of Selectmen and area residents. That has never been the case, and that will not be the NRC's approach going forward.

We greatly respect the Board's efforts to stay apprised of developments at the Pilgrim nuclear power plant and to keep its constituents informed, as well.

NRC staff members have met with the Board twice in the not-too-distant past: In April 2012 and again this April. While media coverage of the latest meeting focused on criticism of the NRC, the airing of concerns and the lively exchange of views did not differ from many other meetings in which we have taken part. We welcome that dialogue and, yes, we remain very much committed to openness.

Media coverage is not a determining factor when it comes to whether the NRC can support requests to participate in public meetings at the state, county, or local level. The resources it takes to do so, however, clearly do play a role.

The Region I Office provides oversight of 26 operating reactors at 16 different sites. At a minimum, there are public meetings conducted annually near each of these locations, which requires a notable investment of resources.

The NRC is not immune to budget pressures facing all agencies. So resources are a key factor in decision-making on the frequency of meetings in the vicinity of nuclear facilities we inspect.

Nevertheless, we intend to keep the lines of communication with the Board open. For instance, we have offered continued meetings between NRC managers whenever they visit the site. Further, the NRC has suggested future government-to-government meetings between NRC staff and Board members to discuss issues of concern.

The agency will also continue to communicate and interact with the public. Besides conducting Annual Assessment meetings near Pilgrim every year, we will conduct other meetings on matters of high public interest. Of course, there are many other ways we can and will continue to communicate with the public, including our web page, blog, webinars and e-mails.

We are not the only voice on this subject. Pilgrim management also has a role in discussing plant operations with the local community, including the Selectmen. We encourage all of our licensees, including Entergy, to communicate with the public about plant-related matters.

The bottom line is that the NRC's door remains open to future interactions with the Board and the public. If that in any way got lost in translation as a result of our recent interactions with the Board's chairman, we stand ready to do what we can to clear up any confusion.

Enclosure