

## Schlumberger Project Presents Environmental Risks

Phase I SEQR Results Released for Horseheads Project

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*Broader View Weekly*, October 9, 2009

For months, Horseheads residents have raised concerns about potential environmental impacts from the proposed Schlumberger Technology Corporation project. Last Wednesday, Horseheads Village officials agreed.

On September 30, the Horseheads Village Board of Trustees conducted the first phase of a State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) on Schlumberger's proposal to locate a natural gas drilling services facility in the industrial park at Horseheads Center. They determined that the project could potentially impact ground and surface water quality, air quality, wildlife and public health and safety.

Of the 20 items listed on the SEQR, village trustees identified 12 that would impact the environment and surrounding community. However, they explained, many of these could be mitigated. On Tuesday, October 6, the trustees met to go over mitigation plans and determine whether Schlumberger will need to complete a more detailed Environmental Impact Statement [meeting report unavailable at press time].

Village trustees agreed that there is potentially a large impact on the neighboring wetland during the construction phase. They also indicated that there could potentially be a large impact on the surface and groundwater quality during construction, as well as during operation of the facility.

While trustees admitted that there would be a small to moderate impact on transportation, they did not foresee that it would result in major traffic problems. They also did not think odor or noise would be an issue.

Trustees indicated that impacts from the truck wash, fueling station and diesel exhaust could be dealt with through mitigation. However, in the event of accident, the risk of explosion or release of hazardous substances, such as chemicals or radiation, would be a major impact on the surrounding area.

While the village board did not think that the Schlumberger project would cause a change in the density of land use, they were concerned that approval might set a precedent for future projects.

Earlier this week the board was to go over the next stage of the SEQR process. That involves more detailed discussion of each of the twelve items identified and possible remediation. On Thursday, October 8 the board held a public hearing on the project and will likely make a determination regarding whether further environmental studies are required before the project goes forward [meeting report unavailable at press time].

*Members of Broader View Weekly's Citizen Reporting Network contributed to this report.*

