



NORTH FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP

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Washington, PA 15301

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July 15, 2022

Rosemary Chiavetta, Secretary
Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission
Commonwealth Keystone Building
400 North Street
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Secretary Chiavetta:

I am writing to you on behalf of the Board of Supervisors for North Franklin Township regarding the Uprating Incident at 100 Park Lane, Washington, PA 15301 ("100 Park Lane"). On July 31, 2019, at approximately 4:00 PM, a natural gas explosion occurred at 100 Park Lane, a residential home in the North Franklin service territory of Columbia Gas. The homeowner, Deborah Braden, and three (3) North Franklin Township Volunteer Firefighters were onsite at the time of the explosion. These four (4) individuals were injured as a result of the explosion. No fatalities occurred. The explosion demolished the entire residential structure at 100 Park Lane and caused severe damage to three (3) vehicles that were located on the property. One other residence was condemned as a result of the explosion, and numerous other homes were reportedly damaged.

As a result of this incident, North Franklin Township endured months of additional workload for the Board of Supervisors and the Township staff. The Volunteer Fire Company was dealt a severe blow because the Chief, the Assistant Chief, and the Chief's son were injured in the blast and were unable to return to work or to fulfill their duties to the Fire Company. The Township staff spent countless hours fielding calls and damage reports from residents, processing Workmen's Compensation claims for the firefighters, and acting as a liaison between the affected residents, insurance companies, and Columbia Gas. The Township Road Department spent weeks cleaning debris from the streets in the neighborhood of the explosion and assisting residents with debris removal from their properties. With the Chief and Assistant Chief both injured, the Fire Company was unable to hold its normal fundraisers and it required mutual aid assistance from nearby departments to respond to fire calls. The community as a whole was affected by detours, closed streets, damaged homes, and a lingering fear as the Columbia Gas upgrade projects continued through the following years.

While we understand that the State of Pennsylvania incurred additional expenses dealing with the aftermath of this incident, we would ask that the State also acknowledge the additional expenses that were incurred by the Township and the Fire Company, as well as the lasting affect the incident had on the Township as a whole. We are asking for a portion of the \$990,000 Civil Penalty that Columbia Gas pays to be granted to the Township for the benefit of the community that was directly affected by the explosion and the Fire Company that was so heavily impacted. We recognize that the State needs to cover the expenses incurred by the Public Utility Commission

and the Bureau of Investigation and Enforcement, but we believe that a fair and equitable settlement would include some compensation for the local government and the impacted community.

I thank you for your consideration of our request and hope to hear from you soon regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Erin Dinch".

Erin Dinch

Director of Planning and Development

North Franklin Township

724-228-3330, ext. 4

e.dinch@nftwp.com