

Energy plant plans revealed at Town of Beloit open house

By Whitney Helm whelm@beloitdailynews.com | Posted: Thursday, March 26, 2015 4:00 pm

Alliant Energy held an open house for Town of Beloit residents Wednesday to help explain plans for its new Riverside Energy Center power plant.

The \$725 million project was announced in December and will be near Alliant's existing location in the township and will be on the property the company owns at 1401 W B-R Townline Road.

Ben Lipari, senior manager of project development for Alliant, said recently the company designated the western portion of the site as the primary location for the new plant in plans submitted to the state. The company will also be adding solar panels on the southern portion on the site. The solar panels will cover 15 acres of the property; they will be a collaborative effort between Alliant and Electric Power Research Institute to conduct research on the panels.

"We expect the solar panels to provide an offset to the power needs of the plant and improve the environmental profile of the site," Lipari said.

Town of Beloit resident Brian Rosander said when he retired from Wisconsin Power and Light more than 20 years ago, the environment wasn't a concern.

"They're monitoring for things I didn't realize were a concern," Rosander said.

Rosander attended the open house with Mike Stluka because he wanted to see the designs for the new plant.

"I spent my whole life working for a plant — I was interested," he said.

Alliant bought the current plant from Calpine Corp. in 2012. The company announced last year the need for a new energy source to fill the demand as older plants faded out.

The existing plant is 675 megawatts in a combined-cycle natural gas-fired generation plant with 25 employees and two gas-fueled and one steam-fueled generating unit. The new plant will bring in 25



The man with the plan

Alliant Energy Representative Joe Ell explains the company's latest plans for its natural gas fueled station proposed at the existing Riverside Energy Center in the Town of Beloit. From left: Mike Stluka, Brian Rosander and Joe Ell.

new employees and at least 200 construction workers. It will be a 650-megawatt combined cycle plant using steam and natural gas power turbines facility.

Combined, both Town of Beloit facilities will generate power to produce 1,300 megawatts — roughly enough to power 1 million homes.

The Town of Beloit currently receives more than \$1.7 million annually through the state's shared revenue program, which could increase with the expansion. Town Administrator Brian Wilson said the town could make an additional \$800,000 in shared revenue.

The energy company will be filing for regulatory approval of the plant with the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin on April 17. The process could take between 60 and 120 days. If approved, construction would begin in 2016, with expected completion in 2019.