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Planning Board
Town of Sharon, New Hampshire
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FEDERAL ENERGY
 REGULATORY COMMISSION

July 23, 2015

ORIGINAL

Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary
 Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)
 888 First Street, NE, Room 1A
 Washington, DC 20426

RE: Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company, L.L.C.
 Docket No.4-22-000: Proposed Northeast Energy Direct (NED)

Dear Ms. Bose:

The Town of Sharon, New Hampshire is a small rural-residential town located immediately north of New Ipswich and west of Temple. While not slated to host a portion of the proposed pipeline, it would run within two-thirds of a mile of our border. The Planning Board, within our responsibility of monitoring the safety, health and prosperity of our town, has reviewed information relating to the NED pipeline project and we have very serious concerns about the effect of this project on our town and on the many other towns that will be impacted. We find this project to be of no redeeming value to any of these towns and consider it to be the most egregious challenge to the continuing health and prosperity of the town and region that we have ever faced.

Proponents of the NED pipeline present it as an opportunity to bring more "clean" energy to the region and a reduction to the overall cost of energy. However, New Hampshire is already an exporter of energy. Those regions of the state having sufficient population to support the distribution of natural gas already have established distribution systems. Because of the low population density, it is not economically feasible for the balance of the state to support the infrastructure required for natural gas distribution.

We note the eastern terminal for the proposed pipeline is Dracut, Massachusetts where facilities are available to provide natural gas transshipment overseas. The market price of natural gas in foreign markets is substantially higher than domestic prices. The expanded markets could adversely affect domestic prices.

The proposal that this pipeline be funded in part by a tariff on electricity proposed by the New England Committee of Electricity (NESCOE), a “non-governmental organization”, clearly attempts to shift some of the burden of costs of construction to the backs of the citizens of New Hampshire. This is clearly contrary to FERC’s September 15, 1999 policy statement (Docket No. PL99-3-000) that pipeline expansions are not to be subsidized by existing customers.

NESCOE proposes that electric rates in six states be taxed to demonstrate to the federal government the need for the project to be subsidized by current users to justify the exercise of eminent domain.

Moreover, the construction of the pipeline itself gives us great concern. In the majority of the towns within and adjacent to the proposed line, citizens have private wells. For a distance of over 71 miles, it is proposed to blast a trench at least six feet deep into bedrock granite. In the vicinity of Sharon, there are two aquifers that support the water supply to our citizens that could be breached; these are only two examples of the many local aquifers that could potentially be disturbed. While the noise and disruption expected during construction could be grudgingly endured, disruption of water sources cannot be tolerated.

For Sharon, and for many other towns, conditions will only get worse after construction is complete and the pipeline is in operation. The noise from the operation of 41,000 HP compressors (described as the equivalent of a two or three diesel locomotive engines), will be a significant disturbing factor to the peace and tranquility of both the residents and wildlife of the area.

We understand that up to forty times a year there will be a “blow-down” at the compressor station, consisting of a release of natural gas to relieve the pressure build up. The noise of a “blow-down” has been described as a large jet plane taking off and may last up to thirty minutes. This commonly occurs in the middle of the night, which will be a further disruption to our rest and tranquility.

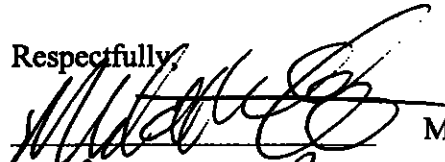
The gas released by these “blow-down” events and even during normal operations, contains a large number of known toxins, such as formaldehyde, benzene, ethyl benzene, xylene, hydrogen disulfide, carbon monoxide and other compounds or elements that are toxic, carcinogenic or neurotoxic. These toxins are released into the atmosphere and will ultimately poison the area around the compressor.

The frequent “blow-downs” will also have a devastating effect on the migration of birds and raptors, who utilize the “lead-line” of the Wapack Range for navigation during the annual migrations. This combined with the pipeline crossing the historic Wapack Trail three times will have disastrous impacts on the local population, both human and animal as well as a corresponding negative impact on local tourism.

The end result of this proposed project will be a serious reduction in the values of homes and properties and a major degradation of the “Quality of Life” for the surrounding area.

In our opinion the proposed NED project's original route through Massachusetts was a much better attempt to assign the burdens caused by the project to the residents of the state that would receive the majority of benefits. The decision to reroute the pipeline through New Hampshire potentially represents an unconstitutional taking from residents of New Hampshire for the benefit of residents of another state. Should FERC permit such an abuse of power, we will strongly support the seeking of redress that the U.S. Constitution provides related to takings, equal protection, and states' rights. We assert that it is FERC's responsibility to advise NED that it must file an application that more accurately matches the burdens imposed with the potential benefits to be received.

Respectfully,



Mitchell Call, Chairman



Gerald DeBonis, Vice Chairman



Gary Backstrom, Member



Marc Carpenter, Member



Donald "Ted" O'Brien, Member

Document Content(s)

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