

Heritage Commission

Town of Richmond

105 Old Homestead Highway

Richmond, NH 03470

www.richmond.nh.gov

(603) 239-4232



February 6, 2015

Ms. Kimberly Bose, Secretary
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street, NE – Room 1A
Washington, DC 20426

Re: Comments of the Richmond Heritage Commission in opposition to the proposed Tennessee Gas Northeast Energy Direct pipeline project, Docket No. PF14-22

Dear Ms. Bose:

I am writing in my capacity as chairman of the Heritage Commission of the Town of Richmond, NH to express the views of the Richmond Heritage Commission in opposition to the proposed Northeast Energy Direct pipeline project, Docket Number PF14-22.

Richmond, NH is a small rural community located in the southwestern corner of New Hampshire. It was first chartered in 1735 and incorporated in 1752.

The Richmond Heritage Commission is a town body, organized under NH state statutes (RSA 673 4-a and 674:44-b) and constituted by the voters of Richmond at Town Meeting in March 2014. Its mission is to identify, preserve and protect resources that have historical or cultural significance to Richmond. The formation of the Richmond Heritage Commission is consistent and in furtherance of the vision of the town as identified in the Richmond 2010 Master Plan, namely Section VIII “to preserve and protect historic structures and sites throughout the town”. The text of the Richmond Master Plan is available on the town website, www.richmond.nh.gov.

As currently proposed, the pipeline route will bisect Richmond, disturbing many sites that have been identified by the Richmond Heritage Commission as having historical and cultural significance to the town. These include, among others, historic cellar holes, historic brickyard sites, historic homes, and local areas of scenic beauty. In addition, the route travels through environmentally sensitive wetlands and major aquifers. It traverses conservation lands and will interrupt wildlife corridors and habitat.

Further, its construction and maintenance through our town is contrary to our ideals and vision as expressed in our town Master Plan. See for example the summary of the Town’s vision (Section I of the Richmond Master Plan), entitled “Vision”:

“The Town of Richmond New Hampshire’s Master Plan is a vision of life in a small southwestern rural town that endorses green living through sustainability and

conservation as its fundamental values for land use and development, housing, transportation, utilities and public services, community and recreation”...

‘Sustainability refers to a policy and action which holds up and supports the environment through agriculture, land use, and overall planning that helps communities and individuals therein to participate in an economy that is environmentally and socially friendly, resulting in the reduction and eventual elimination of a distinctive footprint left on Planet Earth globally, regionally and locally.’

Construction of the pipeline through Richmond is therefore contrary to our stated vision for land use within our community, as well as being against our vision of energy development as a whole, since the pipeline is being designed for furtherance of the world’s reliance on non-sustainable resources such as fossil fuels, and more particularly for the furtherance of reliance on fracked fossil fuels from the Marcellus Shale.

Town Master Plans are developed under NH state law, see especially NH RSA 674:2. They express the overall guiding principles by which a town seeks to operate, to be further implemented by forms of local regulation and law making in furtherance of these principles. The Master Plan is developed by the town itself, through a lengthy and thought intensive, time intensive democratic process. Federal preemption of a town’s ability to legislate local law and regulation in furtherance of the town’s master plan makes a travesty of New Hampshire’s concept of democracy. In addition to the many ways in which the proposed NED project violates our land and our sense of place, to the extent it is in clear violation of our Master Plan, it is contrary to any notion of local rule under New Hampshire state law.

In summary, the Heritage Commission of the Town of Richmond, NH opposes the proposed pipeline through the Town of Richmond for the negative impact it will have on the town’s historic and cultural sites, because it is contrary to the vision of the town as expressed in its Master Plan, because it is contrary to the town’s stated position against increased development and reliance on unsustainable energy sources, and because of the negative impact it will have on our community through, among many other aspects, the disruption of open land, aquifers and watersheds, wildlife corridors and natural habitat.

Sincerely,

/s/

Carol Jameson
Chairman, Heritage Commission, Town of Richmond NH

Cc: Senator Jeanne Shaheen
Senator Kelly Ayotte
Governor Maggie Hassan
Congresswoman Ann M. Kuster

Senator Andy Sanborn, NH Senate
Representative Jim McConnell, NH House
Representative Benjamin Tilton, NH House