

Resolution regarding FERC CP14-497-000, Dominion New Market Pipeline Project

WHEREAS, air pollution caused from compression stations is a concern for not just the town they exist within, but for the entire region surrounding compression stations and the climate as a whole; and,

WHEREAS, gas drilling and related infrastructure, like pipelines, are a safety concern with respect to all New York State residents; and,

WHEREAS, Dominion Transmission Inc. (DTI), which is headquartered in Richmond, Virginia, has proposed the New Market Project, which is comprised of approximately 200 miles of new and existing pipeline and other infrastructure including two new compression stations and also connects to existing compression stations including the Borger Compression Station in Dryden; and,

WHEREAS, the New Markets Project will use of existing pipelines, some of which are 50 years old, to connect Dominion's main pipeline, which brings gas north from the fracking fields of Pennsylvania to the Finger Lakes, Syracuse, and points east to Albany; and,

WHEREAS, to handle the increased volume, Dominion intends to build two large new compressor stations in Chemung County (Horseheads) and Madison County (Georgetown), expand a compressor station in Montgomery County, and modify its existing compressor stations in Utica and Schenectady, as well as the Borger Compression Station in Tompkins County; and,

WHEREAS, due to the scope of the project described above it can be assumed that gas transported in this pipeline system will have an increased pressure in existing pipelines relative to the current status; and,

WHEREAS, the Town of Ulysses recognizes the possibility of similar projects to be proposed within the boundaries of Ulysses in the future; and,

WHEREAS, Tompkins county fire-fighters and emergency responders are often volunteers and currently not trained or equipped to respond to catastrophic events such as uncontrolled gas fires, explosion, and widespread exposure of the public to gas and airborne toxic chemicals that could be released during an incident that are more likely to occur in high pressure lines; and,

WHEREAS, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) is the agency responsible for reviewing and authorizing interstate transmission projects; and,

WHEREAS, FERC issued a Notice of Intent on September 18, 2014 to conduct a less rigorous Environmental Assessment (EA) on the Dominion New Market Pipeline project, which set only one hearing date and which established only a 30-day comment period; and,

WHEREAS, it is not evident that there was proper notification to either property owners or affected Tompkins County officials regarding this project; Tompkins County would also fall under the category of those who are "potential right-of-way grantors," as they either own roads or road rights-of way along the route; and,

WHEREAS, hearings have been held in the past when significant changes were contemplated to the Borger Compressor Station in Dryden, so it is a reasonable request for one to be held in this instance, either in combination with or following an informational meeting by Dominion about the project; and,

WHEREAS, it has been projected that energy prices are increased if gas is to be exported and priced on the international market; and,

WHEREAS, the Tompkins County Comprehensive Plan contains an element specifically calling for a 20 percent reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 and 80 percent by 2050. NYS has drafted similar goals, but rough estimates show the Dominion New Markets Project will increase greenhouse gas emissions;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

That the Town of Ulysses requests that full information be distributed to all Tompkins County municipalities within the path of the Dominion New Markets Project; and,

RESOLVED that the clock for a 90 day comment period be re-set upon such distribution of information; and,

RESOLVED that a full Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) be prepared opposed to an Environmental Assessment (EA); and,

RESOLVED that a scoping hearing be held in Tompkins County; and,

RESOLVED that FERC should attain an independent analysis, which includes:

- Detailed information for each of the compressor stations, including emissions of direct carbon, methane, and other gasses; and,
- Independently verified information for current gas leakage along the length of the existing pipeline, along with an independent projection of leakage expected from the increased pressure along the length of the pipeline and in each of the affected counties; and,
- The potential impact regarding use of aging pipe to carry the increased volume and pressure of an additional 112,000 Dekatherms of gas per day; and,
- A thorough analysis of all direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts within each of the counties and for the project as a whole; and,
- Safety analysis regarding increased risk of pipeline failure along segments of pipe or at joints due to corrosion, degradation or other stresses that may have occurred over time or due to older welding methodology; and,
- Analysis of risk regarding fire or explosion at the proposed volume and pressure; and,
- The response capability and the need for additional training of first responders; and,
- Maximum allowable operating pressure, as well as how it will be verified and how it will be disclosed; and,
- Examine, consider, and disclose prior safety and compliance records of Dominion; and,
- Conduct a noise impact analysis on local residents and businesses based on the current plan and projected expansion;

RESOLVED that a comprehensive health impact assessment be conducted to evaluate potential effects in short and long terms to residents adjacent to and at expanding distances from each of the compressor stations. This should include effects of potential exposure to volatile organic compounds, nitrogen oxides, ground-level ozone and any other potential hazardous air pollutants. Design alternatives should be explored to protect the public from potential exposure.

RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to FERC, NYS Public Service Commission, Governor Cuomo, The Town of Dryden (Supervisor Sumner), Michael Lane (Chair of the Tompkins County Legislature), Carol Chock (Tompkins County Legislature), (NYS Senator Thomas O'Mara, NYS Assemblywoman Barbara Lifton, NYS Senator James Seward, NYS Senator Mike Nozzolio, U.S. Senator Kristen Gillibrand, U.S. Senator Charles Schumer, U.S. Department of Environmental Conservation, U.S. Department of Energy, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Information for this resolution was compiled from comments put forth to FERC by County Legislator Carol Chock and Dominion's website.

Two maps of Dominion's New Market Project Proposal:

Source: <http://www.nofrackingway.us/2014/10/05/urgent-need-bodies-in-madison-county-wednesday-108-ferc-hearing/>

