



TOWN OF GROTON

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TENNESSEE GAS PIPELINE WORKING GROUP COMMITTEE

Members

Chair John Giger, G-D School Committee
Vice Chair Peter Morrison, Cons. Comm.
Secretary John Llodra, Citizen at Large
Peter Cunningham, Selectman
John Petropoulos, Selectman
Kevin Kelly, GELD Manager
Dennis Eklof, Citizen at Large

Advisors

Mark Haddad, Town Manager
Steele McCurdy, Fire Chief
Takashi Tada (Cons. Comm. Alternate)

Meeting Date: December 15, 2014
Location: Town Hall, First Floor Meeting Room, 173 Main Street, Groton
Members: John Petropoulos, Kevin Kelly, Dennis Eklof, John Giger, John Llodra
Peter Cunningham
Advising Member: Takashi Tada
Handouts: Agenda, copy of Spectra Energy December 8, 2014 press release
November 24, 2014 corrected draft minutes and December 1, 2014 draft minutes

Meeting convened at 5:35 pm. John Giger asked the Committee to review past draft minutes.

Kevin Kelly moved to approve the November 24, 2014 minutes as corrected. Peter Cunningham seconded and motion carried 6:0 (Peter Morrison and John Llodra absent; Takashi Tada voting during Peter Morrison absence).

Kevin Kelly moved to approve the December 1, 2014 minutes as presented. Dennis Eklof seconded and motion carried 6:0 (Peter Morrison and John Llodra absent; Takashi Tada voting during Peter Morrison absence).

Pipeline Safety Trust Conference

John Petropoulos reported on the New Orleans conference attended by 200 people in the industry, municipalities and federal regulators. The theme for attendees was to express what you would like the energy industry to know. John Petropoulos said that it is a common impression that residents are surprised by proposed pipelines whether that is true or not. Another common impression is that local communities are rolled over by the large pipeline company. John heard many examples of instances when localities managed to assert concerns that were heard and acted upon by the pipeline companies. The municipalities did not stop the pipeline, but instead had some control about the way that the pipeline was sited or built. John Petropoulos offered to the conference that the pipeline industry did not gain credibility by not answering questions that were asked by the public. Also, the maps provided by Kinder Morgan that showed few houses and little detail of recent development led people to believe that the company was obfuscating the magnitude of the impact.

Member John Llodra joined the meeting.

John Petropoulos shared advice offered by Lindsay Sandler, a contractor who advised pipeline companies. Ms. Sandler suggested the concept of point to point. To have traction, a municipality should approach the company first with a proposed point for entering the town and a point for the pipeline to exit the town. Explain to the company how you would like those points to be connected. If you wait until neighboring towns or municipalities set agreed upon pipeline paths with the pipeline company, then your municipality will lose bargaining power and/or end up with restricted options.

John Petropoulos received the impression that negotiating an alternate route with a pipeline company can be successful because the pipeline company does not want the delay that comes with local opposition to its original proposed route. Also, there was an example of a town that valued walnut trees and opposed broad cutting plans. Intense focus by town to try to change the pipeline company's plans resulted in a specific tree by tree evaluation rather than a blanket bright line cutting rule that the pipeline company typically applied in such situations.

Spectra Energy Update

Dennis Eklof said that his contacts at Spectra Energy have declined to share information with him today. As the Committee knows, Spectra Energy did issue a December 8, 2014 press release announcing partners for gas supply from the Appalachians to be brought into Massachusetts and the Northeast through capacity improvements to its existing pipelines and storage facilities in the Algonquin Transmission Line.

Kevin Kelly noted that Worcester is presently the end of a gas transmission line which results in lower pressure. So any new pipeline north of Worcester would most likely have laterals south to benefit Worcester and the area north of Worcester. Extra loops serving Worcester that are high pressure would be beneficial.

New England's Near Brownout

Kevin Kelly explained that the potential for rolling blackouts across Massachusetts was present on December 4th when the electric grid experienced a 12 hour pause in Hydro-Quebec's transmission of 2 gigawatts of electricity. Even though every fast start diesel generator turned on – prompted by an attractive \$1.00 per kilowatt hour price – the system was still very close to decay of the grid that would have pulled down the electrical generators. In emergency situations, ISO-NE will call for a 5% voltage reduction before there will be mandatory rolling black outs. If more than 5% of the grid's voltage is lost, then there is the opportunity for bad things to start happening to the electric system.

John Llodra asked about the nature of the failure in Hydro-Quebec. Kevin Kelly explained that two transmission lines were lost at the same time. The system is always working with two contingencies. Seabrook is one contingency and Millstone is another one. Each generator may have tripped off twice in the past couple of years. So, those generators are largely reliable, but accidents do happen. As coal, oil and now nuclear generation facilities are eliminated in New England, the system is more vulnerable to a loss.

Comments/Discussion on KM/TGP Draft Environmental Report filed with FERC on December 8, 2014

Peter Cunningham reported that the Selectmen discussed the new report at its recent meeting and expressed the sentiment that it is prudent to have this Committee continue working on the project. Committee members expressed various opinions ranging from a belief that New Hampshire politicians are approving of the New Hampshire route to a concern that the pipeline path may snap back to a route traversing Groton at any time.

Focus Team Reports

For the EVALUATE focus team, Dennis Eklof has been following the Commonwealth's study on calculating Massachusetts's need for natural gas. The contractor who is preparing the study has postponed the final stakeholder meeting twice and at the very last minute each time. For the MITIGATE focus team, there is no particular report. For the EDUCATE focus team, John Giger will be posting more on the Town's pipeline page in the next few days.

Committee Meeting Schedule

Committee members discussed a monthly meeting schedule in order to share information, but to be ready to meet more frequently after Kinder Morgan files its expected formal submission in February, 2015.

Future Pipeline Working Group meetings planned are: January 12th, February 23rd, and March 23rd.

Kevin Kelly moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:35 pm. John Llodra seconded and the motion carried 7:0 (Takashi Tada voting during Peter Morrison absence).

Notes by Fran Stanley.