

***Town of Weymouth
Massachusetts***

***Rebecca Haugh
Weymouth Town Council
District One Councilor
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April 23, 2015

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
Office of the Secretary
888 First St., NE
Washington, DC 20426
ATTN: Maggie Suter, FERC Project Manager

Dear Ms. Suter,

I am writing to you in regards to the Algonquin Gas Transmission, LLC Atlantic Bridge Project, Pre-filing Docket No. PF15-12-000. More specifically, the portion of the project which is the proposed gas compressor station to be located at approximately 3-6 Bridge Street in North Weymouth, MA 02191. This parcel of land is currently owned by the Calpine Corporation, which operates a natural gas-fired combined-cycle power plant on the westerly side of the parcel. The proposed gas compressor station would be on the easterly side of the parcel.

Spectra Energy hosted two open houses in Weymouth, MA on January 29, 2015 and again on March 19, 2015. As the District Councilor that represents the area in which the proposed station will be located, I asked Spectra's representatives if I could possibly take a tour of an existing compressor station along the Algonquin line so I could have a better understanding of what is being proposed in our community. They were very attentive at accommodating my request and allowed me to have a walking tour of both the facilities and grounds at the Oxford, CT compressor station.

Additionally, I took driving tours and researched other existing compressor stations along the Algonquin line to include Stoney Brook NY, Cromwell CT, Chaplin CT and Burrillville RI. Although I was very impressed with the cleanliness of the Oxford station on the surface, the security measures that Spectra takes at their stations, and the competence of those who work for Spectra who guided me through the tour and have been answering my questions the past few months, I have grave concerns about this proposed station to be located specifically in North Weymouth.

For starters, the five existing compressor stations along the Algonquin line are in relatively rural areas. Populations of the communities that currently host compressor stations on this line are significantly lower than that of Weymouth: Stoney Brook, NY: 13,700. Oxford, CT: 12,680. Cromwell, CT: 14,000. Chaplin, CT: 2,200. Burrillville, RI: 16,000. Weymouth has an approximate population of 54,000 with adjacent Quincy having over 93,000 residents. Furthermore, I find it disturbing how small the proposed Weymouth site is. The Oxford, CT compressor station sits on 77 acres of land owned by Spectra. Chaplin, CT sits on 102 acres of land. The proposed Weymouth site is only 10 acres.

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An additional perspective to consider, there are 17 households within the ½ mile radius of the Oxford, CT compressor station and not a single one is visible from the compressor station property. There are 964 households within the ½ mile radius of the proposed Weymouth compressor station. Additionally, if you stand on the proposed property line in Weymouth, you can physically see over 70 households in Weymouth alone with many more visible on the Quincy side - with the closest Weymouth house being only 150 yards from the proposed property line.

Not only is this proposed site in a highly residential dense area, it is also already an over-industrialized area. This is a region that houses a gasoline/oil depot, a chemical plant, two power plants with transmission lines, a regional sewage pump station, a sewage pelletizing plant, a hazardous waste transfer and treatment facility, smaller oil storage facilities/tanks and the Algonquin gas pipeline is already underground there. Weymouth is also home to NAS Southfield which is a Superfund site, we have also experienced years of cleanup at the Bradley Fertilizer site on Weymouth Neck, and have contamination at the old incinerator site in East Weymouth.

In February 1993, President William Clinton signed Executive Order 12898: FEDERAL ACTIONS TO ADDRESS ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE IN MINORITY POPULATIONS AND LOW-INCOME POPULATIONS. The purpose of this order was to achieve environmental justice by identifying and addressing disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority populations and low-income populations. The proposed Weymouth compressor station location is in an area that already has a significantly higher concentration of environmental harms versus your average community and is currently deemed a Low-Moderate Income Target Area from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. This neighborhood in particular is eligible to receive Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) monies as more than 45% of households in this region are designated low to moderate income.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) uses the term “Overburdened Community” to describe low-income and minority communities that potentially experience disproportionate environmental harms and risks due to exposures or cumulative impacts or greater vulnerability. The EPA further states that this increased vulnerability may be attributable to an accumulation of negative and lack of positive environmental, health, economic, or social conditions within these populations or communities. As the EPA has implemented Plan EJ 2014 in the past several years to integrate environmental justice into programs, policies and activities, I would like to know if and how FERC has been working with the EPA on the Atlantic Bridge Project and if there are any statements from the EPA in regards to the highly populated and condensed area of the proposed Weymouth compressor site.

Upon initially meeting with Spectra representatives in December 2014, I was told the only financial benefit of a compressor station in Weymouth would be the property taxes - such as any other business that opens up shop in town. This compressor station will not employ local workers. This compressor station will not provide extra gas or reduced residential rates to Weymouth customers. This station will add more sound to the already elevated decibel level of the area. The addition of this compressor station will not address aesthetic issues in the neighborhood, in fact, it will most definitely make it worse. As the District Councilor who represents the people in this neighborhood, I will state that this is unacceptable. We have continually gotten everything dumped in our backyards for decades without any significant help from the private companies nor from the state or federal government to better the rest of our major artery/neighborhood district (Route 3A/Bicknell Square). Although the income levels of our zip code may not be up to par with surrounding communities, North Weymouth specifically is comprised of hard working, blue collar men and women who have to look, smell and hear the effects of being an overburdened community every single day of their lives. At what point do we say “enough is enough?”

I am not against Spectra's expansion project as a whole. As I stated earlier, I was impressed with the existing facilities that I have had a chance to see in person. However, seeing them in person made me realize that Weymouth is not the right fit for this. The Atlantic Bridge Project includes expanding pipeline in the Massachusetts communities of Bellingham, Walpole, Franklin, Millis, Medway and Norfolk. These municipalities are less condensed, have more open space and fit the demographics of existing compressor stations along the Algonquin line - Not Weymouth.

I do not support this compressor station being built in North Weymouth and urge Spectra Energy and FERC to seek out an alternative location.

Very respectfully,



Rebecca Haugh
District One Councilor

CC:

Weymouth Town Council
Mayor Susan Kay
Representative Stephen Lynch
State Senator Robert Hedlund
State Representative James Murphy
Quincy Ward 2 City Councilor Brad Croall

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