



BOROUGH OF HIGHLANDS
COUNTY OF MONMOUTH

RESOLUTION 20-091

A Resolution Re-Affirming Opposition to the Northeast Supply Enhancement Project and Requesting the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection to Extend the Public Comment Period and Conduct a Public Hearing in the Bayshore Area

WHEREAS, Williams-Transco is proposing to build a 23.4-mile methane gas pipeline through the Raritan Bay, Lower New York Bay, and Atlantic Ocean from Old Bridge, New Jersey to Rockaway, New York; called the Northeast Supply Enhancement Project; and,

WHEREAS, the alleged purpose of the proposed project is to transport 400 million cubic feet of methane gas, extracted through the environmentally destructive process of hydraulic fracturing, from the Marcellus Shale to New York thereby significantly contributing to climate change; and,

WHEREAS, on January 21, 2020 Williams-Transco submitted a new application for the proposed project to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, which marks the fourth time the applicant has sought approval by the Department for the project; and,

WHEREAS, the project will in no way serve the interests of the State of New Jersey, or its residents, and will only supply climate-altering-methane-gas to Brooklyn, Queens and Long Island New York; and,

WHEREAS, the Williams/NESE pipeline will have severe negative impacts to the Raritan and Lower New York Bays, such as disruption of roughly 14,165 acres of the seabed of the Raritan Bay, the discharge of 690,000 gallons of drilling fluid and chemicals into the bay, the re-suspending over 1,090,000 tons of toxic muck contaminated by PCBs, dioxin, lead, mercury, and arsenic, and the destruction of over 1,000 acres of benthic habitat that houses marine fish, shellfish, and larva; and,

WHEREAS, the project poses serious concerns related to environmental harm to marine and coastal ecosystems, as well as negative impacts to the safety, health and wellbeing of Bayshore coastal communities, resulting in well documented public opposition; and,

WHEREAS, the Williams/NESE pipeline will endanger marine and wildlife through decreased water quality from re-suspended toxins, the sieving of over 3.5 million gallons of seawater destroying any living thing that is caught in the process, and the creation of loud sounds and powerful vibrations that accompany pipeline development which will impact migration patterns, communication systems and other important biological processes; and,

WHEREAS, the Williams/NESE pipeline will adversely impact industries important to the New Jersey Bayshore communities, disturb commercial and recreational fishing and shell fishing activities, and potentially damage the tourism industry; and,

WHEREAS, on June 5, 2019, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection denied Williams- Transco's application for the development of the pipeline based, in part, on the significant impacts to the water quality and ecosystem of the Raritan and Lower New York Bay; and,

WHEREAS, Williams-Transco is seeking to dump over 735,000 cubic yards of contaminated dredged material produced from the construction of the NESE pipeline off the coast of New Jersey at the Historic Area Remediation Site which was designed to remediate the former Mud Dump Site; and,

WHEREAS, the ocean disposal of the contaminated material would harm the marine environment by leaving the contaminated sediment exposed and subject to bioaccumulation in the food chain, and would utilize the limited remaining capacity at the Historic Area Remediation Site which must be preserved for needed maintenance dredging for navigational projects; and,

WHEREAS, the Williams/NESE pipeline will have significant upstream environmental impacts that will directly harm the Raritan Bay, such as negatively affecting 41 acres of wetlands, including approximately 20 acres of forested wetland; and,

WHEREAS, the NESE project also calls for the construction of a new methane-gas-powered compressor station in Franklin Township, called Compressor Station 206 which will emit known harmful air pollutants such as Carbon Monoxide, Particulate Matter 2.5, Nitrogen Oxides, Sulfur Dioxide, Volatile Organic Compounds, and Formaldehyde;

WHEREAS, New Jersey has never achieved federal air quality standards for ground-level ozone, which is a pollutant that is unhealthy for children, the elderly and those with respiratory ailments, and the construction of the proposed Compressor Station 206 will further reduce air quality by increasing ground-level ozone; and,

WHEREAS, the American Lung Association's 2019 "State of the Air" report gave Monmouth County an F for the second consecutive year for ozone pollution, and notes that ozone can cause respiratory problems, including worsening of asthma and other respiratory diseases, and cardiovascular effects, including cardiac arrhythmia, heart attacks, and stroke; and,

WHEREAS, despite being directly affected by the proposed Williams/NESE pipeline, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection has failed to conduct a public

hearing in the Bayshore area on the proposed project during any of the previous three permit evaluations; and,

WHEREAS, the Williams/NESE pipeline will increase dependency on fossil fuels, thereby contributing significantly to climate change through increased carbon dioxide and methane emissions; and,

WHEREAS, the companies Williams and associate Transcontinental Gas Pipeline Company (Transco) demonstrate a history of mismanaged facilities that resulted in explosions and fires, and do not show results of pipeline tests to governing bodies in any municipalities through which the existing pipeline runs.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that on this date, March 4, 2020 the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Highlands hereby re-affirms its strong opposition to the construction and installation of a 23.4 mile methane gas pipeline through Raritan Bay from Old Bridge, New Jersey, to Rockaway, New York. Construction of the pipeline will negatively impact the health of the Bayshore, coastal ecosystems, marine life, benthic habitats, and coastal communities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Highlands urges the company Williams-Transco to eliminate any further consideration for a pipeline.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Highlands urges the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection to deny any permit application for the project and any other pipeline, and urges its representatives of the New Jersey Legislature, United States Congress and United States Senate, as well as the Governor of New Jersey to oppose this pipeline and the current applications pending at the state and federal level.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Highlands urges the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection to extend the public comment period for the pending applications related to the proposed NESE Project by sixty days so as to allow for increased public engagement.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Highlands urges the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection to conduct a public hearing on the proposed NESE Project in the Bayshore area to allow for the residents, whom will be directly adversely affected by the proposed pipeline, to voice their opinions on the applications.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution be certified and forwarded to New Jersey Governor Philip D. Murphy, Commissioner Catherine R. McCabe of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Joslin Tamagno, Environmental Supervisor of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Division of Land Use Regulation, New Jersey State Senator Declan O'Scanlon and New Jersey State Assemblywoman Serena DiMaso and New Jersey State Assemblyman Gerard Sharfenberger.

	INTRODUCED	SECOND	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
BRASWELL				X		
MAZZOLA			X			
RYAN	X		X			
VALKOS			X			
BROULLON		X	X			

This is a Certified True copy of the Original Resolution on file in the Municipal Clerk's Office.
DATE OF VOTE: March 4, 2020


Matthew Conlon, RMC, Municipal Clerk

