

## Ashby Voters

This local non-binding resolution will be up for a vote at

### Town Meeting on May 3rd\*

## RESOLUTION TO BAN “FRACKED GAS” PIPELINES AND TO CHAMPION SUSTAINABLE ENERGY

Whereas a proposed High-Pressure Pipeline carrying natural gas obtained through hydraulic fracturing may come through Ashby, or neighboring communities, bringing said fuel en route to Dracut, Massachusetts to be used for electricity generation; and

Whereas said pipeline goes against current Massachusetts commitments to renewable energies and combating global climate change; and

Whereas said pipeline would destroy unknowable amounts of forest, conservation land and farmland with the installation of the pipeline and maintenance in perpetuity of a 50 foot right-of-way through the use of herbicides; and

Whereas said pipeline would destroy unknowable amounts of wetlands and the flora and fauna dependent upon Ashby’s rivers and streams, all of which have been identified as outstanding resource waters; and

Whereas said pipeline would adversely affect property values of properties within 300 feet of the pipeline as well as probable use of eminent domain to secure parcels along the pipeline route; and

Whereas a high-pressure gas pipeline, by its nature, carries the potential for leak, rupture or devastating explosion causing untold damage to property and lives; and

Whereas said pipeline has the potential to ruin wells and drinking water through blasting activities and/or leakage of methane gas; and

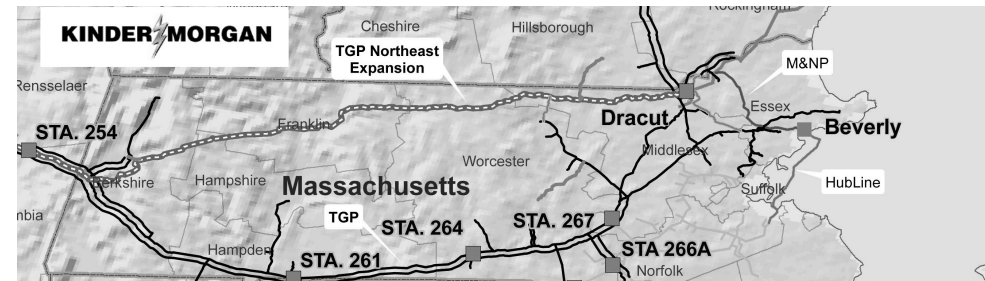
Whereas the cost of said pipeline would require Massachusetts citizens to pay a utility bill tariff as well as environmental costs not required by law for Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company, L.L.C. (“TGP”, a subsidiary of Kinder Morgan Energy Partners, L.P.), making ratepayers bear financial risk for the endeavors of a private corporation; and

Whereas, we the citizens of Ashby, Massachusetts choose not to participate in such encumbrances to the life, vibrancy, economic stability, and general well-being to our neighbors in New York and elsewhere, wherever hydraulic fracturing is occurring and the pressurized pipeline is running; now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, that the people of Ashby, Massachusetts:

1. Hereby call on our Selectboard to stand in opposition to TGP’s high pressured pipeline and not allow it within our town borders;
2. Oppose said pipeline, and any pipeline carrying natural gas obtained through hydraulic fracturing, within the borders of our Commonwealth; and
3. Hereby instruct our state and federal legislators and executive branch officials to enact legislation and take any such other actions as are necessary to disallow such projects that go against our commitments to life, the environment, our economic well-being and our bodily safety, and, instead, to legislate more stringent energy efficiency and further exploration of and subsidies for renewable energy sources.

\*The resolution is subject to review and revision by Town Counsel prior to the Annual Town Meeting.



### What is the Northeast Expansion Pipeline project?

The TGP Northeast Expansion is a high-pressure fracked gas pipeline being planned by Tennessee Gas Pipeline Co.(TGP), a subsidiary of Kinder Morgan, to enter Massachusetts in Richmond, near Pittsfield, and go through to Dracut, directly north of Lowell. According to their company’s memo, intended customers are local distribution companies, electric generators, industrial end users and developers of liquefied natural gas (“LNG”) projects in New England and Atlantic Canada. This proposed path would run through some of the states’ most sensitive eco-systems including conservation lands, wetlands, wildlife reserves, state parks, farmlands, town owned lands and even crossing over or under the Deerfield, Connecticut, Nashua, and Merrimack Rivers.

This project, aside from causing environmental disruption during the construction phase, would pose many hazards if there are leaks, ruptures or explosions and off-gassing at compressor stations. Compressor stations are place approximately every 50 miles along the pipeline. These hazardous events have all happened regularly on similar high-pressure pipelines throughout the country. At least part of the Project costs would be passed along to rate payers through new tariffs recently requested by ISO-NE for approval by Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC).

#### ***Where the Northeast Expansion Project is now.***

TGP’s Northeast Expansion project is in the planning stages.

- TGP/Kinder Morgan has been approaching landowners about surveying properties in towns in Western Mass and across the northern tier of towns in Worcester and Middlesex Counties.
- TGP/Kinder Morgan has also started contacting town officials and planning boards along the proposed route. They have been reluctant to supply vital details for informed decisions on the part of the towns.
- TGP/Kinder Morgan is accepting bids from possible customers for their gas, largely but not entirely electric generation plants. Bidding closes March 28, 2014.
- TGP/Kinder Morgan representatives have begun meeting one-on-one with state legislators, but not holding public meetings with townspeople.
- TGP/Kinder Morgan is hoping to start building in April of 2017 and finish by March 2018.

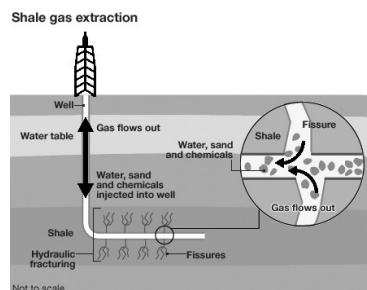
This plan runs counter to our state’s current push toward conservation and efficiency, clean energy production by wind and solar as well as in violation of the state’s own mandated caps on greenhouse gas emissions.

- ✓ Massachusetts is ranked #4 in the country for energy efficient LEEDs standard buildings.
- ✓ Massachusetts is ranked #5 in the country for renewable energy generation. Currently enough renewable energy is generated in Massachusetts to power 70,000 homes.

## What is fracking?

Hydraulic fracturing — modern gas and oil extraction process of drilling many thousands of feet down into shale rock, then drilling laterally for many more hundreds or thousands of feet and pumping in a mix of water, mud and chemicals at high pressure to break the shale apart, freeing up oil and gas for extraction.

Over 600 chemicals used in the process, including EDCs (endocrine disrupting chemicals which affect fertility and hormone regulation), known carcinogens, neurotoxins, VOCs (volatile organic compounds) and surfactants (which dissolve cell walls to allow cell permeability in oils, including in plants, animals and people).



## Gas Transmission Pipelines & Compressor Stations

Fracked gas needs to travel at high pressure, increasing the likelihood of leaks, ruptures and/or explosions.

Even with shut-offs, gas in the ruptured pipeline segment leads to sustained, extremely hot fire after explosions.

Over 990 natural gas transmission line accidents with 137 injuries and 34 fatalities since 2000.

Air samples at compressor stations (placed every 50-60 miles along pipelines) include: benzene, dimethylsulfide, ethyl-methylethyl disulfide, trimethyl benzene, diethyl benzene, tetramethyl benzene, carbon disulfide, naphthalenes, methyl pyridine, carbonyl sulfide, toluene and other known carcinogens and neurotoxins.

Methane emissions along natural gas transmission routes are 25-75% higher than original EPA estimates, particularly at compressor stations. Industry-wide the loss in transmission is about 8 to 12%.

Methane is a greenhouse gas over 20 times more powerful than carbon. So even though carbon emissions are lower, leaks in the natural gas extraction and transmission process have been shown to negate any environmental pluses of natural gas over coal or

Oil.\*("Methane and the greenhouse-gas footprint of natural gas from shale formations", Robert W. Howarth, Climatic Change, June 2011, Volume 106, Issue 4, abstract)

## Construction of a new pipeline

Construction of a natural gas pipeline requires clearing, excavation and sometimes blasting in wild and ecologically sensitive areas, as well as neighborhoods, commercial and industrial zones along the way.

The 2005 Energy Bill contains a measure nicknamed "The Haliburton Loophole" which exempts the gas and oil industries from the Safe Water Drinking Act, Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, CERCLA / Superfund Act\*, and about a dozen more federal regulations \*(CERCLA=Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act)

By agreement between the Independent System Operators of New England (ISO-NE), New England States Committee on Electricity (NESCOE) and all six Governors of New England, the pipeline is to be funded by a new tariff on utility rate payers. \*New England States Committee on Electricity 1/21/14



## Learn about your property rights

- If representatives of Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company or Kinder Morgan approach you about permission to survey your property, *YOU CAN SAY NO*. It will slow the process and let them know right away that you don't approve of the project.
- Let your town's Planning Board or Conservation Commission know, it may be important information that they're not getting from the company.
- If you've already said yes to surveying, you have a right to rescind permission by sending a letter to the gas company. Ask us for a sample letter.
- If they start to mention taking the easement on your property by eminent domain, don't be intimidated. Since they are still in the survey and planning stage, they are not yet at the point of taking your land. There is time to carefully weigh your legal options.

## Get Involved

- Contact your Elected Officials

Because this is an interstate project, it's especially important to contact your members of congress as well as state legislators. Action on all levels, local, state and federal will help.

- Talk to your neighbors and friends about this project and let them know why it's of concern.
- Talk to your local selectboard, planning board, conservation commission about what their plans are or what you think your town's plans should be.
- Write Letters to the Editor to share your concerns with the public.

Focus on Legislative Change

Our nation's natural gas pipeline system is dangerously leaky. Senator Markey is working to address this inefficiency nationwide with two bills in Congress, S.1767 and S.1768.

Massachusetts' House of Representatives just passed a similar state bill — H.3873, which is now under consideration in the Massachusetts State Senate.

Climate Protection Act of 2013, S.332, has several components dealing with fracking, including requiring disclosures relating to chemicals used in the process, reporting of methane leaks and giving some powers back to the EPA to regulate the gas industry.

- Support, and encourage friends from out of state to contact their U.S. senators and representatives, and ask them to support the bills introduced to fix the leaks and inefficiencies in the natural gas infrastructure
- Encourage your State Legislators and the Governor to focus on energy efficiency as a way to close the energy gap, not by bringing in more fossil fuels to feed and fire up more gas-fired existing plants.
- Support the expansion of successful programs already in place like MassSave and Zero Net Energy Building (ZNEB).
- Support the alternative methods of generating electricity: solar, wind, micro-wind, energy efficiency, and conservation measures.

Need for the gas pipeline is attributed to occasional fuel shortages, but as cited in Boston Business Journal, the shortages are only at electric generation plants, and only in cold weather when more gas goes to customers for heating.