

Resolution # 2016-005

Resolution Regarding the Kinder Morgan Northeast Direct Pipeline

WHEREAS, Kinder-Morgan has proposed the location of a large, high-pressure natural gas pipeline called the Northeast Direct pipeline through the Town of Bethlehem; and

WHEREAS, the American Medical Association passed a resolution in 2015 recognizing “the potential impact on human health associated with natural gas infrastructure” and called for a comprehensive health impact assessment regarding the risks that may be associated with natural gas pipelines; and

WHEREAS, the Medical Society of the State of New York passed a resolution in 2015 recognizing “the potential impact on human health and the environment associated with natural gas infrastructure” and supported a governmental assessment of the health and environmental risks that are associated with natural gas pipelines; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Pipeline & Hazardous Materials Safety Administration in 2016 listed 150 fatalities and more than \$397 million in public costs due to pipeline accidents between 2005 and 2015; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Kinder Morgan Northeast Direct pipeline would pass close to homes, businesses, historic sites such as the First Reformed Church of Bethlehem which is on the National Register of Historic places, and infrastructure in the Town of Bethlehem; and

WHEREAS, Kinder Morgan’s proposed Northeast Direct pipeline is opposed by numerous landowners who will lose control of portions of their lands, in some cases through eminent domain; and

WHEREAS, Kinder Morgan’s proposed Northeast Direct pipeline is opposed by numerous adjacent landowners whose health and properties could be harmed by leaks or accidents on the pipeline; and

WHEREAS, researchers have found that natural gas leaks from well fields, pipelines, and old urban infrastructure are so high that, combined with the greater potency of methane as a greenhouse gas, natural gas is as problematic for climate change as other fossil fuels; and

WHEREAS, in 2015 Governor Andrew Cuomo underscored the State of New York’s commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by signing the international Under 2 MOU; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Bethlehem committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions as part of adopting the Climate Smart Communities pledge in 2009 and initiating the Sustainable Bethlehem Program in 2012; and

WHEREAS, a 2015 report released by the Massachusetts Office of the Attorney General concluded that additional natural gas from Kinder Morgan’s proposed Northeast Direct pipeline

was not needed to maintain electric power system reliability in New England; and

WHEREAS, the Bethlehem Town Board is committed to promoting and protecting public health and safety by all reasonable means, reducing the production of greenhouse gases in our Climate Smart Community, continuing to implement the Sustainable Bethlehem Program, and combating global climate change;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That the Town of Bethlehem recognizes the potential impact of natural gas pipelines on human health and the environment and requests the State of New York to perform a comprehensive Health Impact Assessment regarding risks posed by the proposed Northeast Direct pipeline, and that the Governor order the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation to suspend issuance of state permits pending completion of the comprehensive Health Impact Assessment; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, further, That the Town of Bethlehem recognizes that the pipeline is not needed and urges the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to not issue a certificate of public convenience and necessity authorizing construction and operation of the proposed Northeast Energy Direct pipeline; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Town Clerk send copies of this resolution to:

- Governor Andrew Cuomo;
- NYS Department of Environmental Conservation Acting Commissioner Basil Seggos;
- NYS Department of Health Commissioner Howard Zucker;
- Berne Town Supervisor Kevin Crosier, Knox Town Supervisor Vasilios Lefkaditis, and New Scotland Town Supervisor Douglas LaGrange;
- Albany County Legislators Andrew Joyce, William Reinhardt, Joanne Cunningham, Charles Dawson, Richard Mendick, and Michael Mackey;
- State Senators Neil Breslin, George Amedore, Kathleen Marchione, and James Seward;
- Assembly Representatives Patricia Fahy, Peter Lopez, Angelo Santabarbara, and Steven McLaughlin;
- Senators Kirsten Gillibrand and Charles Schumer;
- Congressmen Paul Tonko and Christopher Gibson; and
- Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Commissioners Norman Bay, Tony Clark, Colette Honorable, and Cheryl LaFleur.

On a motion by Councilman VanLuven, seconded by Councilwoman Becker and approved with the following vote:

AYES: Supervisor Clarkson, Councilwoman Becker, Councilwoman Davis, Councilwoman Sasso, Councilman VanLuven

NOES: none

ABSENT: none

This resolution was adopted on February 10, 2016.