

RESOLUTION - REQUESTING THE NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION AND NY THRUWAY AUTHORITY TO ASSURE OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEANINGFUL PUBLIC AND MUNICIPAL PARTICIPATION IN THE SCOPING PROCESS FOR THE STATE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY REVIEW OF THE PILGRIM PIPELINES PROJECT

WHEREAS, Pilgrim Pipeline Holdings, LLC, has proposed to construct two pipelines carrying crude oil and refined petroleum products between Albany, New York, and Linden, New Jersey, cutting through the Town of Rosendale and 31 other towns, cities, and villages in the Hudson Valley, Catskill Region, and Capital District Area; and

WHEREAS, the State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) process for this project is underway, and a decision may be made any day with regard to a Declaration of Significance and the Scoping Process; and

WHEREAS, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) Acting Deputy Commissioner and General Counsel Thomas Berkman stated in a letter regarding lead agency, dated December 21, 2015, that “there is the potential for significant adverse environmental impacts associated with the construction and operation” of the pipelines, “including, but not limited to, impacts to hundreds of acres of forest, regulated water bodies and wetlands;” and

WHEREAS, Deputy Commissioner Berkman further stated that the SEQR process for this proposed project “will be extensive and complex due to the myriad of issues likely to be raised, the number of involved State and local agencies, and the demonstrated public interest in the project”; and

WHEREAS, the construction and operation of pipelines poses significant risks not only to communities in the pipelines pathway but also to the many communities along the rail line delivering oil to these pipelines, which could see a two or three-fold increase in crude-by-rail traffic if pipelines operate at full capacity; and

WHEREAS, the very large number of affected communities demands a scoping process that can accommodate their effective participation to identify issues of local and regional concern; and

WHEREAS, their participation will require time-consuming research by municipalities and the public to analyze the proposal and identify potential impacts on local land, water and air resources, cultural, historic, and community resources and economic development; and

WHEREAS, broad public input in the SEQR process is vital, given the millions of people potentially impacted by this project; and

WHEREAS, any local issue or concern related to the proposed Pilgrim Pipelines will only be examined in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement if identified in the scoping process, making community participation in this step vital to a comprehensive review.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Town Board of the Town of Rosendale, as a potentially involved agency, requests the NYSDEC and the New York Thruway Authority, as Co-Lead Agencies, to provide a minimum 90-day public comment period following the release of a Draft Scoping Document; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Town Board of the Town of Rosendale requests that public information sessions and hearings be held in every county in the pipeline pathway, and at least one meeting along the crude-by-rail route that would serve the pipelines; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Co-Lead Agencies make an extraordinary effort to maximize public engagement regarding the scoping process, to make all the meetings and comment deadlines widely known, and to help the public understand the significance of their opportunity to participate in the scoping process; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be sent to NYS DEC Commissioner Basil Seggos, N.Y. Thruway Authority Acting Executive Director Bill Finch, and Governor Andrew M. Cuomo.

Motion made at a regular meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Rosendale, August 10, 2016 by _____ and seconded by _____.

VOTING MEMBERS:

- Councilman Hughes _____
- Councilwoman Metzger _____
- Councilman Pryslopski _____
- Councilwoman Lipari _____
- Supervisor Walsh _____