

When the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission granted Spectra Energy Corporation a certificate of approval to begin work on the West Roxbury Lateral Pipeline segment of the Algonquin Incremental Market Project CP14-96-000 - when they denied rehearing requests with their standard “tolling order” they gave Spectra permission to sue for eminent domain and enter the City of Boston waving their certificate declaring “We own these streets.” They gave them permission to begin construction at breakneck speed while those opposed were forced to legal silence. They gave them permission to bypass the permitting and licensing process, break a water main day 1 and ignore it, leaving area residents without water for days. They gave them permission to dig up streets and reroute bus lines without notice, creating traffic accidents and dangerous crossings. They gave them permission to knock over power lines, leaving young and old without air conditioning during a prolonged heat wave. They gave them permission to break another water main, block a third one, and cover dig holes so negligently that an inspection truck fell into one. They gave them permission to start loud and disruptive work before 7am and continue beyond 10pm 7 days a week.

And they gave them these rights to run a 750PSI pipeline across a soccer field and down densely populated urban streets to terminate at a site where a home had crumbled to its foundation because of weekly seismic blasting from the quarry across the street. And they granted these extraordinary rights to a corporation with a terrible safety record, whose own former employees went on the record with evidence of their intentional disregard for safety. A company the FERC itself placed under (admittedly mild) corrective action for drilling without a permit and which is currently under PHMSA corrective action order for 400 miles of infrastructure following an explosion of one of their “recently inspected” lines in PA, itself the site of area explosions.

Not only did FERC allow Spectra to self-certify the safety of locating a massive high-pressure Metering and Regulating station at a blast site in a densely populated city neighborhood, they approved the project in typical isolation, ignoring the reality of powering up a key component of AIM, whose true purpose is export.

When the Massachusetts Attorney General requested a regional, non-segmented review of energy needs, she was refused. When our Senators asked for an investigation into powerful evidence of AIM inspectors’ conflict of interest, Norman Bay replied that their ethics standards and review processes covered that. When MA Senators Warren and Markey pressed for documentation supporting that claim, they were greeted with 3 months of silence, which conveniently coincided with the go-live date for the WRL. When Congressman Stephen Lynch wrote to FERC commissioner Bay requesting a moratorium on Spectra infrastructure projects in Massachusetts, pending investigation of recent and increasing fatal gas pipeline explosions\*, he was ignored. When he made the request a second time, FERC issued approval for the WRL to go into service. Even more amazing, this go-live approval was made without the safety review promised to the Mayor & first responder officials of Boston, forcing them to urgently petition the FERC to hold start of service until this review is complete.

In response, residents and supporters took the only action possible to halt the progress of this outrageous project. And yet, despite 194 acts of NVCD (that's arrests) a minimum of 1500 WR residents are facing the imminent reality of living in an incineration zone. At this moment, like so many other populations affected by this very wrong process, we are considered disposable. And as a region and a nation we are facing the reality of becoming permanent subjects to an amoral fossil fuel corporatocracy and the federal administration that supports it. When a process that values the risk tolerance of corporations expanding operations for profit over the risk tolerance of the many, many people damned to live in the personal, public, and climate sacrifice that results, that process must change. That's why forums like this are so important, As we say at our actions, the people united will never be defeated. And I thank you, Maya, and everyone who made the trip here for your powerful testimony, for giving us the opportunity to prove this.

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- Compendium of Scientific, Medical, and Media Findings Demonstrating Risks and Harms of Fracking, 4th edition November 17, 2016 from Physicians for Social Responsibility. Page 163: New pipelines are failing at a rate on par with gas transmission lines installed before the 1940s, according to an analysis of federal data by the Pipeline Safety Trust, reported by S&P Global Market Intelligence. "The gas transmission lines installed in the 2010s had an annual average incident rate of 6.64 per 10,000 miles over the time frame considered, even exceeding that of the pre-1940's pipes. Those installed prior to 1940 or at unknown dates had an incident rate of 6.08 per 10,000 miles." The director of the National Transportation Safety Board's Office of Railroad, Pipeline, and Hazardous Materials Investigations "agreed that the rapid construction of pipelines in the US is likely a contributing factor."

The footnote is: Smith, S. (2015, September 9) As US rushes to build gas lines, failure rate of new pipes has spiked. SNL Financial. Retrieved from <http://www.snl.com/InteractiveX/Article.aspx?cid:A-33791090-11060>