

Whitney, Judith

From: Terence Cuneo <tcuneo@uvm.edu>
Sent: Monday, March 12, 2018 9:00 AM
To: PUC - Clerk
Cc: kari cuneo
Subject: NOPV pipeline

To Whom It May Concern,

We are not a neutral party with regard to the construction of the Addison County natural gas pipeline. VGS ran its pipeline through our property against our will, in effect turning our family's life upside down. We looked very carefully at the reasons for why it made sense to run a new pipeline through Vermont and how the state could justify seizing its citizens' property. We could find none that withstood scrutiny.

Like so many issues, we had to determine whether it made sense to trust that this pipeline would be constructed to the highest available standards and maintained according to those standards. We came to the conclusion that there is little reason to have such trust. Businesses are often happy to violate construction codes (it's often cheaper to pay fines if you get caught for such violations), there is a shocking lack of federal and state oversight over the maintenance of these pipelines, and there is an alarming frequency of natural gas explosions.

We did not come to the conclusion that the likelihood of something going disastrously wrong with the Addison County pipeline is high. Rather, we came to this conclusion:

(1) The likelihood of a company being willing to violate codes of various sorts was not low, and that it is imperative for the state of Vermont, in light of the burdens it has imposed on its citizens to construct such a pipeline, to hold a company such as VGS to the highest standards of conduct.

(2) Even if the objective likelihood of something going disastrously wrong wasn't high, the consequences of something going wrong were sufficiently catastrophic that the utmost care and oversight is called for. If there are reasons to believe that code was violated in a pipeline's construction, it is the responsibility of the state to enforce the highest standards. It owes that to Vermont's citizens.

We now have ample reason to believe that the Addison County pipeline was constructed in a manner that involved multiple egregious violations of code. It is the state's job to hold VGS to the highest standards of conduct. The PUC needs to either ensure that the construction issues be repaired or reopen the CPG permit. The NOPV case (18-0395-PET), and the currently pending CPG case for the Monkton Gate Station (17-4909-PET) should both be put on hold until and unless the pending investigation case (17-3550-INV) has included and completed a thorough review of the broadened scope of safety violations.

Terence and Kari Cuneo

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