

CONFIDENTIAL



EDWARD A. DIANA

COUNTY EXECUTIVE

October 21, 2011

Kimberly D. Rose, Secretary
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street NE, Room 1A
Washington, DC 20426

2011 OCT 31 11:20 AM

**Re: Minisink Compressor Project, Millennium Pipeline, LLC
Docket No. CP11-515-000**

Dear Secretary to the Commission:

We are writing today to express concern about the compressor station that is being proposed on the Millennium Pipeline in the Town of Minisink, Orange County, NY. As you may now know, there has been continued and noteworthy public opposition about this project. As a County, we are also concerned about the project's ability to disrupt the quality of life of the residents and businesses in Minisink and the surrounding region.

Orange County was given no formal notification about this project and only found out about the project at the last minute – just a few weeks before the close of the public scoping period. The Orange County Department of Planning ("County Planning") thus expeditiously researched the Proposed Action based upon information available on the Millennium Pipeline website and the FERC website. We sent a letter dated September 15, 2011, to your attention. A scanned copy was uploaded to FERC's elibrary and an original mailed the same day.

Based upon the increased public opposition and additional review of the FERC filing, County Planning has determined that the Proposed Action has the potential to cause significant inter-municipal and county-wide impacts. In addition to the initial concerns raised via the aforementioned letter, we offer the following:

The Proposed Action has the potential to cause not only environmental issues, but may also pose a threat to the health, safety, and general welfare of those in the immediate vicinity of the Project Site, as well as Orange County as a whole. **Orange County urges FERC to allow additional time for the County and its residents to fully research and understand the impacts associated with the Proposed Action. Therefore, in**

accordance with the process outlined in the *Get Involved* section of www.FERC.gov; our office recommends the Proposed Action prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (“EIS”) rather than an Environmental Assessment (“EA”). This would allow the public additional time with FERC and the Proposed Action through the public hearing aspect associated with an EIS.

A number of alternatives were described in the FERC filing; our office recommends clarification and/or expansion of this discussion in the EIS. The clarification and/or expansion should include, but not be limited to the following:

- a. *No Action Alternative:* This alternative speaks to a significant economic benefit being lost without the Proposed Action. Since a large portion of Orange County, specifically in the vicinity of the Project Site, is not serviced by natural gas, it is unclear how an economic benefit could be lost by Orange County and its residents.
- b. *Energy Conservation:* This alternative states that energy conservation implementation is years away. Our office believes that with a ready, increased supply of natural gas, energy conservation implementation has the potential of becoming decades away rather than years.
- c. *Alternative Energy Sources:* Alternative sources are dismissed as a viable alternative in the FERC filing. They may not be valid related to the Proposed Action and the financial gains expected by Millennium Pipeline, LLC, though they may be valid to the health, safety, and general welfare of Orange County and its residents. Economic development efforts in the Hudson Valley have, in fact, been geared toward the alternative energy industry and their implementation.
- d. *Site Evaluation:* Six (6) sites were evaluated within a three (3) mile segment of the pipeline, all within the Town of Minisink. Although rural in nature, significant residential development exists with the vicinity of the sites evaluated. Since the recommended spacing between compressor stations varies between 60 and 100 miles, other locales along the pipeline may be better suited for the Proposed Action and exist with limited or no development near them.

Another alternative that County Planning recommends being validated or denied is the widespread hearsay that some length of the pipeline – potentially located northwest of Westtown - was not upgraded to the larger diameter pipe when other segments of the pipeline in Minisink, Warwick, and other areas were upgraded just a few years ago. Accusations have been made that if this section had been replaced, the compressor station would not be needed. **We urge that this issue be researched and that evidence in**

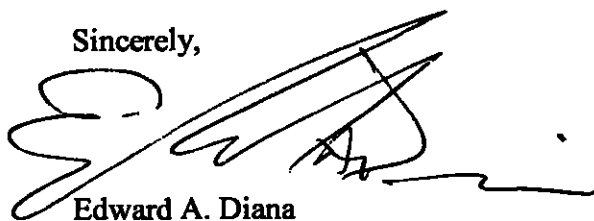
support of, or to the contrary, be disseminated to the Town of Minisink, County Planning, the public, and all other concerned parties.

Since County Planning submitted comments in accordance with the *Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Assessment*, we ask that we receive notification from this point forward related to any additional information regarding the environmental review. We also respectfully request that County Planning be provided with information on the EA or EIS at the time in which the Preliminary version is distributed to the Cooperating Agencies for Review.

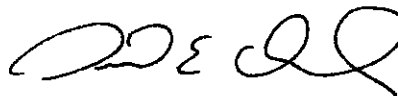
Additionally, Orange County would like to be listed as an "intevenor". This was not completed during the initial filing of the comments on September 15, 2011. We respectfully request FERC to provide information in an effort to be listed as an "intevenor."

Thank you in advance for the consideration of the above. We look forward to reviewing additional information related to the Proposed Action.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. Diana", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Edward A. Diana
County Executive

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Church", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

David Church
Planning Commissioner

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