People Over Pipelines Meeting

Monday, September 12, 2016

In Attendance:

Rita Romeu

Patti Caruso

Jean Kovath

Agnes Marsala

Alex Robotin

Peggy Hallion

Myra Wille

Heidi Setz Kelly

Bill Hlubik

Sue Hlubik

Jack Fullmen

Vince Carabin

John Kocubinski

Lisa Jahn

Mike Marlin

Katie Marlin

Glenn Ashton

Belinda Blazic

Rita related her conversation with Jan Arnett from the NJDEP. She gave the reason for the 4:30 start time. She said it was so everyone could have a chance to speak and it wouldn’t go real late.

A discussion of the pros and cons of the 4:30 start time ensued.

We came to the conclusion that it is NOT in our best interest to have such an early start time. In fact we feel it is entirely for the benefit of Transco and the DEP. Most regular community members won’t be able to get there before 5:30 and will then miss important testimony from experts. The press will most likely be there from the start and will hear only experts and Union members who favor the project before they leave.

We are going to pressure the NJDEP to move the time to 6PM, by posting the phone number and email on Facebook, Next Door and the websites. Rita will try to talk to Jan Arnett again to get her to move it.

We discussed our Press strategy for the October Hearings. We need to step up our game.

Some ideas for media hooks were discussed.

 Get kids marching around
 Science class projects – split into groups that concentrate on different aspects

Future Farmers of America – Northern Group is Nationally recognized with great public speaking skills

 Real farmers maybe a parade of tractors

 Celebrities - Elizabeth Gilbert? Ambush Springteen at Barnes & Nobel?

Peggy will reach out to Northern Burlingtons’ FFA

We then talked about the Educational Forum – Pipelines 101

Rita shared her tentative agenda and that she is working on a presentation.

Bill Hlubik put out feelers and has a list of experts he will share with us.

People Over Pipelines will issue a statement in solidarity with the protesters in North Dakota.

A discussion of Acid Producing Soils and the dangers of releasing heavy metals led by John Kocubinski followed. He shared brand new survey maps.

Jack talked about the revised SRL maps showing stream crossings. The HDD length under Blacks Creek at Arneytown Chesterfield Road is much shorter which brings it closer to both the Creek and the wetlands buffer.

Jack has offered to talk to the County Engineer about this.

Alex shared that NJNG just purchased the farm at 523 Chesterfield Arneytown Road for a substantial amount over market value.

Agnes related her encounter with Rep. MacArthur and Sen. Menendez last Tuesday.

Both said they are willing to meet with us. Rita and Alex have been waiting for a call back from Frank Luna (MacArthur’s man) for weeks.

We discussed having those running for governor next year come and tells us where they stand on methane infrastructure in our area.

We discussed Agnes’ theory concerning asking the EPA for a hearing on how bad a job the NJDEP is doing in implementing the Clean Water Act. There is a mechanism in place whereby the EPA can take back control of the program. This might be a stick we can beat the DEP with.

T-shirts were also discussed. The general consensus is we don’t need to all wear the same shirt to the hearings. We don’t want to be the bullies. We do see value in having t-shirts to sell and for walking publicity.

Another discussion on how best to spread the word included; People Papers, Bordentown Current, Princeton Packet, Trentonian, Flyers in the General Store and Post Office.

With the mention of the Post Office a few people mentioned getting Certified Mail Notices from AECOM with wrong information. We think this is a deliberate attempt to keep large interested crowds away from the Hearings while still maintaining plausible deniability. In other words NJNG can say they sent out the notices but no one picked them up or signed for them. Right, because either the names or the addresses are incorrect!

Rita will bring this up in her conversation with Ms. Arnett.

We ended up talking about the Chesterfield Lawyers idea to combine all 7 lawsuits into one Appeal. We all agree that this is absolutely the wrong thing to do and we want them to continue all suits separately to string it out as long as they can. We think Gilesspie is trying to save the Township money or he just really likes the gas companies. Agnes informed Jill Popko of this notion and she said she would pass it on to their law firms.

A discussion on taxes ended the meeting.

Prepared by Agnes Marsala