

*Town of Weymouth
Massachusetts*

*Rebecca Haugh
Weymouth Town Council
District One Councilor
75 Middle Street
Weymouth, MA 02189
(781) 340-5020*



July 27, 2016

Daniel Gilmore
Wetlands Program, Bureau of Water Resources
MassDEP Southeast Regional Office
20 Riverside Drive
Lakeville, MA 02347

Dear Mr. Gilmore:

I am writing in regards to Spectra's request for a Superseding Order of Conditions in regards to the Weymouth Conservation Commission's denial of the Wetlands Permit needed for the siting of the compressor station.

I fully support the Weymouth Conservation Commission's decision in this matter. The commission fully vetted Spectra's proposal in over 8 hours of public meetings. They are given full jurisdiction of these decisions by order of the Wetlands Protection Act (WPA) and the Weymouth Wetlands Protection Ordinance.

Spectra produced numerous reasons why they are challenging the Commission's decision.

1. Concerns about Safety.

Spectra states, "The Commission appeared to recognize that pipeline integrity and safety standards, including standards for compressor stations are set and enforced by the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, a federal agency with exclusive jurisdiction, and that the Wetlands Protection Act does not provide the Commission or MassDEP with authority to deny or condition a project on the ground that PHMSA standards are inadequate."

However, this is a false claim. The Congressional Research Service produced "Pipeline Transportation of Natural Gas and Crude Oil: Federal and State Regulatory Authority" on March 28, 2016.

(<https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R44432.pdf>) This document states verbatim:

No federal law broadly preempts state and local siting requirements for these pipelines. Construction or operation of any oil or gas pipeline, whether interstate or intrastate, may require additional federal or state authorizations or consultations, depending on the proposed route of the pipeline and its potential to discharge pollutants or affect natural, cultural, or historical resources. States retain broad authority to regulate to control pollution, as well as to protect and conserve natural, cultural, and historical resources.

Spectra is trying to scare both our town and state in stating that we do not have control in what we can and cannot live with. Spectra's claims go against the Constitution of Massachusetts and is trying to violate our rights.

2. Concerns about Inundation

Spectra states, “The Commission’s decision failed to consider that Algonquin has designed the station and its facilities with full attention to its coastal location.”

There are no compressor stations directly on the ocean on the Algonquin Line. If you explore all of Spectra’s lines throughout the country, you will see there are no compressor stations directly on the ocean. They do not have experience dealing with how to properly construct and maintain a compressor station which is subject to salt water, storm and waterfront exposure.

4. Riverfront Area

Spectra states, “The Commission’s denial asserted that Algonquin had not met its burden of proof regarding the performance standards for the riverfront area.”

The Conservation Commission has every right to determine whether or not the applicant proved its case as it is given this authority through Home Rule in the Wetlands Protection Act. In this case, Spectra did not meet its burden of proof required of the Conservation Commission and this decision should be respected.

I fully support the Weymouth Conservation Commission as the local elected leader who represents the portion of Weymouth which will be affected by the siting of a compressor station and I hope MassDEP will respect their authority and decision as well. Thank you very much for your consideration in this matter.

Respectfully,



Rebecca Haugh
District One Councilor
Weymouth, Massachusetts

CC:

Senator Edward Markey
Senator Elizabeth Warren
Congressman Stephen Lynch
Governor Charles Baker
State Senator Patrick O’Connor
State Representative James Murphy
Mayor Robert Hedlund
Weymouth Town Council
Weymouth Conservation Commission